

MERRY CHRISTMAS

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Dear Friends and Family,

Did you know there is a book entitled "Christmas Letters from Hell"? We refuse to buy it, fearful text from some of our letters is featured prominently. So, whether you love or hate them for the news or the farce, here's our Christmas letter.

We hosted the Gregg family Christmas gathering last year. Great fun. House decorated inside and out. Enough room that only one person was on a mattress on the floor. High school/college family taught middle aged family (OMG- that's us!) about music. Not bad. But then again, they did not play any EMO.

In January, Becky was thrilled to be part of the American delegation to Kuwait City for a conference for women from 18 nations in the Middle East and Northern Africa. An AAAS article about the conference said "gathered in the elegant hall of the Arab Organizations Building, over 200 women from early in their career to winners of international prizes, some in the traditional dress of their region and others in designer clothes from the West, discussed how women succeed in science and engineering."

In the spring we had 2+ relaxing weeks in France. A few romantic, perfect weather days where Hugh got tired of Becky singing "April in Paris". (Photo - see Becky in front of the Louvre) We met Bruce and Sue for a week at a hillside chalet in the Pyrenees, see the main photo. The enticement for the four of us to leave was a week trip on the canals of France. Hugh really enjoyed driving our barge on the canal OVER the river (see the lower left photo).

Hugh continues to do some work in Europe. In addition to OPCW work in The Netherlands, he was in Bremen, Germany several times, coordinating the fabrication of a special mass spectrometer. Becky joined him over the Thanksgiving week at the end of the 2 week specification check and training visit (in the photo you see the famous Bremen Town Musician statue). Two German staff will be at the Lab in January to install the instrument. All this is in addition to doing two other jobs that are essentially full time assignments. So it has been a really full work year for him.

Lawrence Livermore Lab has a new management contractor for the first time in our 55 year history. We knew it would be different, but weren't ready for the reality. Not surprisingly, they brought outside safety management into Becky's area, including into her position. So she is now doing special projects. But, given that a significant reduction in force is underway, she's thankful to be still employed at LLNL.

This fall Becky arranged for her parents (both in their 80s) to come west for a visit. The trip was timed to coincide with her mother's sister's 90th birthday in LA. Then they visited our home, after which, they flew to visit Becky's sister's home in Tucson. The highlight of the Tucson visit was Mom and Dad meeting their 2 year old great grand daughter, Jade.

Over Christmas we are looking forward to sailing around the San Blas Islands, in the Caribbean off the coast of Panama. We hope you will have a relaxing holiday, too. We wish you health and happiness at this holiday time and throughout the coming year.

Hugh Gregg and Becky Faylor
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