

'Tis the season for yet another annual Zeliff Christmas newsletter. It is a rotating responsibility between the two of us to write it. Therefore, you will now be subjected to the subjective and selective memory of the bearded member of this partnership. Without further ado, let's get this thing rolling and stroll through the events that passed in 2013.

As January arrived, our son Jesse was diligently serving in the kitchen of the Los Angeles Dream Center feed over 300 people a meal. He had been awarded a full internship scholarship for the entire year and was continuing to take night classes at Angelus Bible Institute also on a full scholarship. In February, we spent part of Super Bowl weekend with Renee's parents, in Las Vegas for their anniversary, driving them around to see many of the casinos on the strip. Later in the month after celebrating Renee's birthday, we traveled to Portland, OR to spend our anniversary with my brother Chris and his wonderful wife Paloma. Along with bowling and a great dinner, we visited the Northwest's renowned bookstore Powell's, where I stocked up on Star Wars novels that I have yet to finish.



March arrived followed shortly by a last blast of winter snow and so did our first California Poppies a few days later. We ended the month with a visit to LA to take Jesse some things and dinner at Outback in Glendale. Jesse sought our advice over dinner on some things he had been contemplating which was a pleasant development. I started April with a trip into the Mojave National Preserve with the Chief of Natural Resources to observe the USGS demonstrate drones to



perform environmental aerial surveys. We also got together with the Haprov clan to watch the Wrestlemania PPV as we usually do each year. The last week of April included a visit from Jesse as he and his friend Tim headed to Calico for Wild West Fest, a Steampunk festival. I began May with my annual attendance at Adobe Max conference in downtown LA. While in town, Jesse and I went to see Iron Man 3 after grabbing some In-N-Out for dinner. The next weekend we traveled back to LA for a combination Mother's Day and birthday dinner for Jesse. As the month ended, we had a scare as Renee's father Duane had

a bad reaction to anesthetic used on his rotator cuff surgery that stopped his heart. He did recover well from the surgery though.

June began with my company picnic at Disneyland to include free tickets for us. We hadn't been in a few years and rode several of the rides that were new or changed to include the Finding Nemo ride and the revised Star Tours. We received an urgent call from Jesse late June 13<sup>th</sup> that he had a "friend" in need of a place to stay. Three hours later, we were in LA at the Dream Center meeting Sabrina and gathering her belongings to bring her back to Apple Valley. Her leadership program had ended and she was given only 3 hours to relocate. We were told it would only be for a few weeks until she was readmitted to the intern program that Jesse was part of. We met Chris and Paloma in Downtown Disney ten days later for dinner after picking up Jesse at the Dream Center. It was obvious to all at the table that Jesse and Sabrina were soon to be more than friends. Sabrina's stay with us would become an extended one after finding out that her internship was denied due to revisions in the program that now only allows individuals 25 or older. Jesse was grandfathered in since he was already an intern when the age limit changed. Our empty nest status had been voided.

Jesse came home for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend and we headed to San Diego to celebrate Brett's 1<sup>st</sup> birthday with the Arnolds. While there, my best friend Jim gave us a personal tour of the USS Ronald Reagan aircraft carrier. It was a great time in San Diego before returning home and then taking Jesse back to the Dream Center. He and Sabrina let it be known they were more than just friends to which nobody was surprised. We picked him up a week later and we were off to Comic-Con in San Diego for the first time in three years. Sabrina was overwhelmed by the experience and





we all had a great time. We made a trip to Pacific Beach to stick our toes in the sand before heading back to Apple Valley. When we dropped Jesse back in LA a few days later, it was for the last time. He decided it was time to move back in August for some strange reason. After a quick trip to San Diego to celebrate Derek Arnold's (my best friend Jim's other grandson) birthday, we picked up Jesse for the final time from the Dream Center after almost two years serving in the kitchen there. The following weekend, we loaded everyone into the truck so Sabrina could experience Disneyland/California Adventure for the first time. Of course, she had to get her embroidered Mickey ears and stay for the fireworks display too.

September arrived with two young people in our house completing multiple job applications in hopes of attaining employment. Jesse was able to get some entrance tests and interviews while Sabrina kept knocking on doors hoping for one to open. The first two weeks of October were a blur as a result of two trips to GA and FL to help my mother out. I went one time solo and the next time with Renee. On Columbus Day, we took Sabrina to Big Bear so she could experience the forest since she really missed her Northern California environment. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of October, Jesse was hired by the Lucerne Valley School District and started work in the middle/high school cafeteria. He has about a 20 minute drive, but really enjoys his job.

Sabrina landed a job with the Town of Apple Valley as a recreational assistant in November. Like Jesse, she really enjoys her job as she works with students in an after-school program. On the 10<sup>th</sup>, Renee and I returned to San Diego to attend the Chargers vs. Broncos game with Jim and his lady Colby. Just before halftime, Jim jumped up and told me to follow him. We left the girls behind and end up underneath Qualcomm stadium in the hallway outside the Chargers locker room as they exited to take the field for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. His friend worked security and arranged for us to be the personal cheering section for the coaches and athletes of my favorite team just a few feet in front of my face. AWESOME! On top of that, I received a Chargers sweatshirt straight from the locker room. Although my team lost that day, Jim gave me a memory that will last forever. We finished the day with a great meal with the Arnolds before heading back home.



The following week, Sabrina's family stopped in on their way back to Northern California after having a few days of fun at the Magic Kingdom. She was quite thrilled to spend time with them having not seen them for quite a while. We finished the month having our regular Thanksgiving meal with a few additions to the table thanks to Chef Jesse. The month ended with our first family portraits in several years resulting in the photo that adorns the Christmas card you received with this letter.

We are grateful for the innumerable blessings that have come our way this past year. Among them are the friendships old and new that have made our lives that much more enjoyable. As the celebration of our Lord's birth occurs in our home this year, we know that we have already received so many gifts in the form of your friendship and love. May the Lord Jesus bless you above and beyond anything you can ask or think.

Love and Hugs,

Doug, Renee, Jesse & Sabrina