

December 22, 3003

Dear friends and family,

We're all still here, despite the gathering insanity in our culture and in U.S. politics.



*Hamilton Pool, near Austin, TX*

Nora is enjoying her biotech program in high school. She'll be doing a bit of office work at Bay Area Girls Center over the holidays, and last summer went on a 3 week Girl Scout "counselor in training" program. She tells us that she's facing a blizzard of homework from her honors math and English classes

Mary's long running cases continue. The 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit is expected to rule in *Coons v. IRS* case, whether an IRS employee loses whistleblower protection by talking to the *New York Times*. Her age discrimination case against the US Geological Survey went to trial this summer, thanks to AARP. She just completed a US Marshal Service jury trial this past month (sans evidence of sexual harassment) with Richard Vaznaugh. Mary continues to be active in ATLA, NELA and CELA and will be organizing a Federal sector employment law conference in Washington DC next October.

Bob waited out a seemingly endless reorganization at work, and has emerged a bit busier, but no more Dilbert-like than before. He co-organized an all night dance celebration, which we enjoyed last weekend, along with a couple hundred of our closest friends. He's been invited back to Tokyo next spring to talk about data modeling and system architecture.

We traveled less extensively this year than last. We attended a reunion of Bob's family in Atlanta. Mary and Bob spent a revivifying if culturally unedifying week in Ixtapa, Mexico during Nora's summer camp program. At Thanksgiving, we went to Austin, TX to visit friends, and went biking, hiking, canoeing, and flying.

We mourn the passing of our pet snake, aged thirteen, following a long illness.

We wish for a year ahead without senseless war, and for the restoration of democracy in Iraq, Palestine, and the United States.

With love,

Nora Mary Bob



*Gather'd round the modern hearth*

Mary, Bob, and Nora

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