

December 12, 2004

Dear friends and family,

This year has seen some victories in the face of a discouraging political situation.

Mary's won her nine-year age discrimination case against the US Geological Survey and has now entered upon the battle for fees. In her *Coons v. IRS* case, the Ninth Circuit ruled that an IRS employee did not lose whistleblower protection by talking to the *New York Times* and remanded the case for a further hearing. This resulted in some timely press in the *Times* early this fall. She won whistleblower case against the VA, in completing a sexual harassment trial against Dept of Homeland Security (Saipan) and will try cases against the Dept of Labor, Interior, and USPS. Mary organized a NELA seminar on Federal Employee Rights in Washington DC, spoke at the ATLA, NELA and CELA annual conventions, and planned the Employment Rights educational program at the ATLA conference in Toronto for next summer.

Nora is now a high school junior and has arrived at the beginning of the college search and application process. Take the SAT course or the driver's ed course, apply in state or out of state, live at home or move away, these are what we'll be thinking about in the months ahead. She's been teaching the toddler class in our congregation's Sunday Judaism school. Last summer she completed the second step of her Girl Scout "counselor in training" program in the Santa Cruz Mountains. She is taking college level EMT at John O'Connell High School and doing really well balancing friends, schoolwork and babysitting.

Bob is about to change jobs within Wells Fargo, leaving the shelter of the "systems architecture" group for a position closer to the business. He'll be moving from esoteric "middleware" technologies to electronic document management. Meanwhile, he's discovered the joys of aerobatic flight, doing his first loops and rolls, and is working on a traildragger endorsement. Bob twice went to Nevada to campaign for Kerry and believes that electronic media can never replace face-to-face campaigning.

This year's travel continued our theme of doing some trips together and others separately. We all had a great ten-day vacation in Maui, where we enjoyed the beaches, the volcano, the jungle, and scenic flight to nearby islands with Bob piloting a rented plane. Bob's cousin Steve and his bride Lisa got married this November, and we all enjoyed a trip to Atlanta to celebrate. Mary and Bob spent a six-day weekend in Negril, Jamaica, centered on the Georgia Employment Lawyers conference. It was most successful blend of business and pleasure. Bob and Mary celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> birthdays, 20<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and 30 year relationship.



With love,

Mary, Bob, and Nora

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