

# The Goff Gazette

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## Joyeux Noel et Bonne, Nouvelle Année!

Our greeting this year comes to you in French. We still live in Germany, but we took two, long-weekend trips to Paris during the school year as well as a long summer trip to the Normandy Coast and Mont Saint Michel. We send our best wishes this year from the States, where we have not spent a Christmas since 1969. So, from Florida to all our friends and relatives, we send our best wishes for a wonderful holiday season and a prosperous and happy 2001. God bless all of you.

### Mom's Brag

Year 2000 brought many changes for the Goff offspring. In May Sarah graduated from New College with degrees in natural sciences and fine arts. Her double major required papers for each that rivaled a doctoral dissertation as they involved research, length, and defense before an oral board. Her reward was successfully graduating in four years, less than half of the New College students manage that, and completing the work for both majors, a task which seemed impossible at times.

After working hard, she was ready to play hard too. She boarded a flight to Brazil to spend two weeks at the home academy of her capoeira instructor in Sarasota. Capoeira is a combination of a martial art and a dance, complete with its own music and unusual instruments. She arrived back in the States in time to come to Chris Garen's wedding in New York. Back in Florida, she flew to Germany a week ahead of us. After we got home, Sarah took off to meet up with New College friends in Prague. A couple of weeks later she came back home to await the arrival of more college friends who traveled with her back to Prague and overland to Istanbul. Along the way she visited countries not long open to Americans. She especially enjoyed the beauty of the Bulgarian countryside, the Black Sea, and the friendliness of the people who were fascinated to meet Americans.

Home again, she took another side trip to Paris to meet a friend who will be spending the year in Berlin. Another goal was to check out possibilities for fashion schools in Paris.

After much soul searching, she decided to return to the Sarasota area to pursue her dream of becoming a designer. Meanwhile, she is working as a waitress at the Sarasota Yacht Club to support herself while she designs and plans for a possible web business. Her work is being sold in three galleries in Sarasota.

She is also saving for a trip around the USA similar to her shoestring traveling in Europe. An ardent patriot, her travels have



helped her to appreciate her country even more. She wants to create an American line of clothing as she experiences the different regions of the USA.

Sarah finished school in May and Matt went back in July. After his year at Nortel and his years in R and D with IBM, he decided that he wanted a career change to consulting. He applied to UNC Chapel Hill for his MBA and was delighted to be accepted. We get emails and phone calls filled with news of his studies. It is time consuming and exhausting, but he loves it. He is on a two-year leave of absence from IBM. The program requires two, full years and a summer internship.

Both children are extremely happy pursuing their very different dreams.

### Barbara's 2000

I'm still in the "pinch me", honeymoon phase of living in Europe. After over two years, I am still in a state of near euphoria of being happily married with two wonderful children, living in one of the most beautiful places in the world, near myriad, fascinating destinations, and teaching darling children in a school with great colleagues.

The only downside is my continuing problems with my left foot (hurt along with my left ankle which got fixed) and my right shoulder and neck which I fell on a few times too many before my ankle was repaired. I am still unsuccessfully trying to find aerobic exercise I can do—without which I can't lose the weight I gained when I became immobile. Living in a gourmet paradise with limitless restaurants to visit

and ingredients to use at home doesn't help either!

I am learning to be patient. I still want to do everything, but I'm willing to bide my time until the right moment for each in turn. I haven't given up my writing goals, but they are on the back burner to teaching and traveling. To everything there is a season. All of you who chuckled with Ed who is

fond of saying, "Barbara never does anything in moderation...if it can be done to excess!" will be glad to know that I am finally learning to pace myself...except for the shopping. See the "shopping article" if you are interested in the fabulous bargains in Europe.

### Ed's Year 2000

It seems a little strange to be getting older. I still think I am younger than I really am. I guess I think I'm 23 or so. The advantages of being "older" are great. You don't have to worry about impressing the ladies; you don't have to impress your friends by doing outrageous things that would probably kill  
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## Ed...

you now; you have a little more money in your pocket; you don't have to worry about forgetting things because people just expect it anyway; you don't have to worry about pleasing your boss too much because you know that he or she needs you (at least I get comfort thinking so). These are just starters. There are a lot of other advantages too. You get better treatment in restaurants. I guess that's because they think you have enough money to give them a big tip. Your brothers and sisters don't hit you anymore; that's a pretty good advantage. You know that you don't have to work many more years. That's really cool. Yeah, getting old is fun, funner (I know that isn't a word) than I thought it might be.

But...there are a few disadvantages too like a few aches and pains in the morning and not being able to sleep a whole night without having to get up (you know what I mean). Also, there is that little thing called death that looms out there. That doesn't seem too cool. But...I diverge. This is about my year. It hasn't been the most exciting year but living in Germany and traveling all over Europe has to be a little exciting and it is.

I guess one of the most exciting things personally (at least that Barbara will let me put in the Gazette) was finishing my 20<sup>th</sup> year of running without missing a day. It happened on August 12<sup>th</sup> while we were traveling in France. We had spent the night in a small city west of Paris. It was a very nice run, typical of those I have while traveling, through narrow streets and by picturesque scenes of people doing everyday things. Running really is a great way to see people and places up close. In case you're interested, the streak continues. Ultramarathon World magazine maintains a list on the Internet which I understand is due to be updated soon (I was ranked 36<sup>th</sup> in the nation last time I checked). If you are interested, the URL is <http://fox.nstn.ca/~dblaikie/n30oc00c.html>

Well, let's see, what else was exciting? Going to Brussels in the spring and Wiesbaden in the summer for training was neat. Having the "kids" here for the New Year was fantastic, as was Sarah's graduation from college and Matt's starting work on his MBA at Chapel Hill. Having friends and relatives visit and visiting them is fun. Going to Turkey, France, Ireland, and the USA was also exciting. Barbara's "new" car

is fun too. It is also exciting to think of our trip to Florida for our Christmas break to help Barbara's parents celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, now there's a streak.

I guess it has been an exciting year. Wow, now I can't wait to see what kind of excitement awaits us in 2001.



## Car Buffs Only

Wheels are just wheels...just a way to get from one point to another! That was my pragmatic view about automobiles. I loved my Toyota Publica in Japan. It was worth every penny of the \$50 I paid for it. How many people have driven a station wagon with only two cylinders? Ed called it my sewing machine, but I thought it sounded like a sports car. In the three years I owned her, she only cost me 75 cents every two weeks for gas, \$6 in repairs, and I could sit in the driver's seat and roll down all four windows. When I tried to sell her for the same \$50 I had paid, I got no takers. I was within weeks of having to junk this perfectly good car for \$35. Whining to friends in the teachers' workroom about having to junk my trusty, reliable friend, I was amazed to hear Ben Clift say, "No one wants a car that costs only \$50. They'll think it's a piece of junk." I took his sage advice, washed and polished her up, moved her to a different parking lot, and sold her for \$75 to the first guy of the rush of calls I received.

Now thirty-one years, later I have revised my opinion that wheels are just wheels. Ed kept urging me to buy a new car with air bags. Racing the B50 highway every day in my commute is doing battle with speed demon pilots and Germans, who tailgate up, down, and around the mountainous curves. I kept telling him I was perfectly happy with my 1988 VW Jetta, but as he dragged me from dealership to dealership, I felt myself weakening. At the Müller-Flegel VW-Audi dealership in Bitburg, I found my little dream

car. It had my three preferences—automatic, sunroof, and CD player. It also came equipped with a fabulous sound system which has a six CD changer and eight Bose speakers, Xenon headlights (turns night into day), fog lights, heated mirrors which dim automatically, heated sport seats with all kinds of electric adjustments for tired, old backs, tinted windows, many interior lights including a black, red, and white dashboard that looks like a cockpit. In short, pretty much whatever you can think of, it has. Other safety features include AWD, ABS and ESP (anti-skid) brakes. Ed's favorite feature (yeah, I let him drive on weekends) is the Navigation System (GPS).

When Ed went down with some paperwork for the car, our salesman told us the car had another, unexpected option—a TV. We laughed thinking we'd never use it, but you'd be surprised how much fun it is to watch Eurosport while I'm stuck in traffic or waiting for someone. The 2.8-liter engine in the little, lightweight Audi A4 took some getting used to. The car is so responsive that I was afraid I'd drive straight through the garage door and out the other side, before I got used to having 193 horses at my command.

Before you worry that I'm in my second childhood and spending my retirement stash, the car was a real deal. When the salesman, Herr Klink, took us to the downstairs sales room to see the car, he said in somewhat laborious, limited English that this was a "very special car". I smiled to myself that car salesmen the world over always had "very special cars." Actually, as it turned out, the car was somewhat unique. Audi makes fifteen of these cars each year and gives them to their executives around Europe with the understanding that they will be returned to dealers inside Germany for sale. Despite all the fun options, my new "used" car with 5,000 miles on it was less than half of the Stateside price. Herr Klink said that the car is wired so that with a simple cable, soon to be available, I will also be able to play DVD's on my TV screen. Now THAT would be excessive!





Street sign in Paris.

## Paris

Paris, the most visited tourist city in the world, was our destination for two, three-day weekends—President’s Day and Memorial Day. We took the train from Luxembourg City for the February trip, as it’s our local friends’ preferred method of transport. For our second weekend, Ed drove from the Bitburg High School parking lot through Friday afternoon rush hour traffic to the heart of Paris at Notre Dame in only four hours. After that, we decided driving was definitely the way to go. Our plan to stay in different areas of the city and explore them thoroughly turned out so splendidly that we hope to visit many more times before our European adventure is over.

Our February visit took us to the Arch d’Triumph area. While there, we had such a fabulous time that we decided we had to return for Spring, so we checked out the area and booked a hotel near the Eiffel Tower for our Memorial Day visit. We like the Rue Cler neighborhood so well, that we are tempted to make that home base on at least some future trips.

Everyone deserves Paris in the spring. It is the usual banquet of incredible food made even more spectacular with fresh spring vegetables and a panoply of flowers in full bloom. Street musicians are out in full force and breezes are gentle and warm. Despite all the dire warnings, we have found Parisians to be warm, friendly, and fun.

I could blather on for pages about the magnificence of Paris, but others have captured it much better; therefore, I will limit myself to saying that if Paris is a destination in your near future, remember we are just a few brief hours away by train.

## Normandy

Summers at home in Metterich are so satisfying, we have to push ourselves out of the nest to explore. Once we get out, even for an afternoon, in a nearby village, we wonder why we are even tempted to go farther afield for fun. Ironically, once we get happily traveling out on the road, we wish we had moved to Europe years ago or we discuss pushing back retirement even further.

One such fabulous trip was our long-awaited trek to Normandy. Ed had been fascinated by Mont Saint Michel for years. I’m sure you have seen haunting, mystical photos of the abbey perched on a rock off the coast of Normandy, where it was once cut off from the mainland by high tides. I wanted to stop off west of Paris to see Giverny, Monet’s home of Japanese garden, water lily fame. It was fully in bloom and even more beautiful than pictures.

After the beauty of Giverny, we drove north to visit our primary destination, the Normandy beaches of WWII fame. I imagine you are all familiar with them from the Hanks/Spielburg movie, *Saving Private Ryan*, or newscasts of the fifty-year anniversary of the landing. If you ever get to the area, the cemetery and memorials are well worth the visit. Our only surprise of the trip was that most of the parking lot was filled with French plates, with a sprinkling of license plates from other European countries. The atmosphere inside was fittingly solemn and awed. The resting-place of too many, far too young, men is full of peace and serenity in stark contrast to what happened there. The sheer magnitude of the place, with rows of monuments as far as the eye can see, kept lumps in our throats and mist in our eyes during the entire visit.

We had never heard of the Pointe du Hoc Ranger Memorial, but the signs intrigued us. It turned out to be amazing. The site has been given by the French government in perpetuity to the US government. It honors 225 US Army Rangers who accomplished the impossible. Fourteen kilometers from Utah Beach, these rangers scaled 30 meters (100 ft.) of sheer cliffs pounded by a hostile sea. They captured gun emplacements and the German command post and fought off German counterattacks for two days. In the end, 81 of the rangers had been killed and 58 more wounded. Since the grounds have been left pockmarked with 3-meter wide bomb craters, visualizing these Rangers heroism is as easy

as their feats were hard.

For years we had heard of the unfriendliness of the French, but we haven’t found that to be true at all. Around Normandy, the respect and affection for Americans was exceptionally striking. The young people have been taught by their elders about the sacrifices Americans had made for their freedom. They are still appreciative. Even in Paris we have encountered nothing but friendly, helpful people. In short, because of the people and their beautiful country, we have fallen in love with France. We plan a spring break in Provence and are envious of our teacher colleagues who own places there.

With Normandy beaches behind us, our mood lightened; and we were ready to explore. By amazing luck, we found a tourist town, undiscovered by Americans and their guidebooks, but well known by the French. We got what may have been the last room in town and ate the dinner of a lifetime, at surprisingly reasonable prices. The next day we visited a bell factory famous all over France for its church bells and smaller bells of pure quality which produced beautiful tones. We spent several more hours wandering the streets looking at local crafts. We felt pressured to move on to Mont St. Michel, but we vowed to return. The only hang-up is wondering if we can live long enough to revisit all the places we have come to love.

With the Goff good luck for weather and parking places, we caught beautiful, sunny weather for our whole Normandy trip; but we were especially grateful that we saw Mont St. Michel on a perfect day. We roamed through the warren of streets, shops, cafes, and hotels, up to the abbey. Everything exceeded our anticipated vision. Some tourist sites are disappointing, but this one, like the Taj Mahal, was even more fabulous than its pictures.

Another exciting event of the trip was visiting the Bayeux Tapestry, which retells the story of the Norman Invasion of Britain in 1066. I was excited as an English teacher and Ed especially enjoyed seeing Halley’s Comet (which we had seen on Kwaj) depicted on its trip through our part of the solar system in 1066! He also feels a connection with Halley’s since Mark Twain is buried in his hometown and Twain was born with Halley’s and died with Halley’s.

History and art came alive for us visiting Joan d’Arc’s town and Chartres with its fabulous blue stained-glass. I could write sev-

*(Continued on p. 4, Normandy...)*





Mont Saint Michel

## Normandy...

eral pages describing the food, the incredible food; but just thinking about it makes me so hungry, I've gotta take a break. In short, we love France and are grateful that we live within weekend range of Strasbourg and day range of many border towns. We love any excuse to go. Are you ready for a visit?

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## Ireland

"Do you want to go to Ireland?" said Ed. Ed, the Internet sleuth, had found round trip tickets for \$26 for each of us, including all airport fees! Thanksgiving in Ireland sounded like fun. We had been planning to drive to Beaune, France, to explore the Dijon district; but we'd been trying to schedule Ireland for years.

"Go for it!" said Barbara, hoping that a taste of Ireland, even off-season would be fun.

It was, but there's a very good reason why summer is the tourist season...rain, and gale force winds!

After landing in Shannon, we drove our rental car to the top of the Ring of Kerry. We booked our lovely B and B in Castleisland for two nights with plans to drive the Ring of Kerry one day and do the Dingle Peninsula the other. We found ourselves traveling slowly with a lovely stop with a local potter who was happy to chat in the slow off-season and delighted to sell four of his wife's prints of Ireland including one so Irish anyone would recognize its origin, another of their gallery complete with friendly dog whom we got acquainted with, and flowers we'd have to come back in the summer to see, and the seacoast warf. He directed us onto Valencia Island, where the first trans-Atlantic cable had been laid in 1858, before our Civil War!

The only tourists on Valencia, we found ourselves with the locals in a charming pub. After major ribbing from the boys at the bar

about the U.S. Presidential election (We didn't dare confess that we were voters by absentee ballots from Florida) I went to the ladies' room leaving Ed alone to make friends with an old man by the fireplace. He was shades of Einstein, with flying white hair and a classic, weather-beaten face. Our roast beef lunch arrived and I continued to sit as Ed went out to the car to get the camera to take a picture of the laughing, convivial group of a lady and many gents at the bar. After the photo, the lady suggested Ed get a picture of the old man by the fire. Ed went over and gestured politely to his camera and raised it for a picture. Suddenly, the old man grabbed his Guinness from the mantle and swung it full-armed at Ed. Ed's quick reflexes saved himself and the camera from getting drenched. Embarrassed, he stepped back to the bar uttering apologies and asking the bartender to give the old boy another Guinness to offer peace for apparently offending him without meaning to. After the convivial conversation at the bar halted in abrupt shock, our Irish friends converged on Ed clapping him on the back and saying their own apologies. The bartender refused the drink for the old man, and everyone at the bar tried to make Ed feel better while one young man came over and asked me not to judge the Irish by one old man's actions. He told us we were welcome with them and he hoped we remembered them kindly. We left feeling bad for destroying what had been a jolly group. In the car heading out, Ed supplied another mysterious piece of the puzzle. While I was in the bathroom, the old man had struck up a conversation about Hitler and all he had done for the German society and its people. We wondered if he had somehow misunderstood when Ed said he was from Germany. Ed was quite amazed by the whole dialogue. We couldn't help but wonder if we had met up with Nazi in hiding on this isolated island.

With the short days of winter providing little afternoon light, we found ourselves arriving in a beautiful area as darkness fell. After a brief stop with a visit to a great bookstore in Kilarney, our favorite town on the trip; we headed back to the Riverside Inn in Castleisland for another gourmet dinner of seafood. The next morning we returned to complete the Ring before heading off for the Dingle. Our day there was blustery but beautiful. We enjoyed exploring the town and taking refuge in a bookstore during a rain shower. Fortified with homemade chicken noodle soup, we managed to do all the

sightseeing we wanted before our trek back along the peninsula to another B and B close to Shannon Airport.

We got a Guinness at Ed's sister Connie's favorite pub, Durty Nellie's (the oldest pub in Ireland, named for its first owner who practiced the world's oldest profession along with serving victuals and brew). The restaurant was fully booked, but we drank our Guinness and listened to the standing only crowd in the main bar area belting out favorite Irish sing-along tunes. Across the street in Bunrady Castle's restaurant, Kathleen's, we succumbed to an attack of the tourist virus and ordered Irish stew, which was delicious on another blustery Irish night.

We enjoyed our first trip to Ireland and have vowed to try again when weather's better!

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## Millenium Celebration

In 1996 after the Kwajalein, New Year's, Midnight Run, the conversation turned to where we'd all be to celebrate the millennium. Ed surprised me by saying that we were going to be in Paris. I wondered how that could possibly come about until in 1998 we moved four hours away from Paris, to the Eifel Region of Germany.

Our plans were on track. The kids were both coming and we were all going to Paris when terrorism reared its ugly head again, the winter was fierce, and sensibility struck the old folks at the last minute. Following our state department advisories to steer clear of large city celebrations, we decided to stay home in rural Metterich. As the new year approached, the urge to celebrate drove us from our house and down the highway to Trier.

Now, before you feel too sorry for us missing those spectacular, fireworks shooting from the Eiffel Tower, let me acquaint you with Trier. Trier is the oldest city in Germany, with the legends taking it back one thousand and three hundred years before Rome. Around the middle of the 1st century BC, Gaius Julius Caesar conquered Gaul and integrated the Moselle River region into the Roman Empire. In 16 BC Emperor Augustus established Augusta Treverorum, City of the Emperor Augustus in the land of the Treveri, a Celtic people. Under Emperor Diocletian, Trier became the western capital

of the Roman Empire, a city second in importance only to Rome. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century Constantine the Great made it his imperial residence and capital. Visitors can still see fabulous sites such as his throne room and baths.

Constantine's mother, Empress Helena (later St. Helena), brought the original tunic of Christ, for which the Roman soldiers dined, from Jerusalem to Trier. It was hidden from the public for years, and in 1196 was walled up in the new altar of the eastern choir of The Church of Our Lady. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was shown in 1933, 1959, and 1996.

Two of our family members even share a name connection with famous sites in Trier. The St. Barbara Baths, the biggest baths of the ancient world, were built around 150AD and were used for several hundred years. Even more interesting, when the old church of St. Eucharius was torn down in 1127, the grave of Apostle Matthew was found. As the only apostolic grave north of the Alps, it is also a popular place of pilgrimage.

And so we took our Matthew to the burial town of St. Matthew along with Sarah, our pink-haired beauty, to the Porta Nigra, the oldest Roman gate still standing north of the Alps. When we arrived, scantily clad girls danced wildly to German techno against the backdrop of the Roman Gate. They were followed by the German equivalent of the Three Tenors. I thought it was interesting that the young crowd seemed to appreciate light opera as much as the techno. We were packed into an enthusiastic crowd who counted down the year with a special laser light show, which included our Roman history. Interestingly enough, it was created by Coca-Cola Deutschland and shown only in Berlin and Trier. The fireworks finale was made even more spectacular by the Roman gate aflame (cousin to the famous Rhine aflame and other castles in flame, or lighted with red flares from the inside). We were showered with champagne from the revelers.

The scene was even livelier than the annual Roman Wine Fests in the Moselle wine towns around Trier, which also boasts the oldest wine cellars in Germany. The Roman heritage is strong even in our Bitburg area. Gardeners still occasionally overturn an old Roman coin. We have two villas which were unearthed fairly recently. (While rebuilding a downtown street this year in Bitburg, a 500-pound bomb was unearthed...of WWII vintage. History relatively new and old

abounds. We find ourselves amazed to see cornerstones in our local villages with dates on them like 1253AD. Even more remarkable is that sometimes these buildings are referred to as the "new" inn...just kidding.

Our area has been "occupied" by various countries over the years. It was once part of France and was occupied by the French in recent years after WWI until 1933 and after WWII until the 1990's. The French part of our Bitburg base closed about two years before our arrival. We have also been part of Luxembourg. Trier is located about thirty minutes from Bitburg and only a ten-minute drive from the Luxembourg border in the rich wine area of the Moselle, Saar, and Ruwer.

One last historical tidbit, Trier is also the birthplace of Karl Marx. Augustus, Constantine, and Karl Marx aside, the best part of the millenium celebration was having Matt and Sarah here. But we were delighted to be able to bring in the new millenium in such a fascinating, old city.

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## States Visit

Our Stateside visit was short and sweet. We arrived in Elmira, New York, in time to go north to Chris Garen's (Ed's goddaughter) wedding. Our always congenial host, John Goff, and Kristen and Dan opened their home and hearts to us for another wonderful stay.

The wedding and Chris were beautiful and we appreciated the chance to meet up with most of Ed's brothers and sisters. Sarah was excited to see her Goff relatives again. Changing life circumstances make these reunions increasingly more difficult and precious.

Our next stop was Indianapolis, Indiana, where we had a super visit with my brother Gary, his wife Renie, and their son Nick, who had graduated from high school in June and was starting Butler University in the fall. An orthopedic, sports medicine doctor diagnosed my continuing foot pain as arthritis in the metatarsals, caused by my fall which also damaged my ankle. New orthotics help some, but the problem is permanent.

Mom and Dad picked us up for the final stop of our trip, Florida. We enjoyed time with them in Naples and in Spring Hill with Uncle David and Aunt Marla. In between we did real estate tasks in connection with our property on Anna Maria Island, site of

our future (but not eminent) retirement. Uncle David and Aunt Marla came to visit us there and reaffirmed that we had found a little bit of paradise. We talked with a contractor we really like, and we are excited that when we finish our globe trotting days in Europe, we will build our dream house in Manatee County on Bimini Bay.

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## Visitors

Like a character on an old TV show, "I'm happy when a plan comes together!" When Aunt Wanda wrote that she and Uncle Dick were cruising through Europe to Amsterdam and could meet us on the Rhine at Rudesheim, we were thrilled. We mapped out a scenic driving route and arrived before their barge. As several boats sailed by and some docked, we hoped that we really would meet our travelers. We watched the docking, where the townspeople had told us they'd be, until we could see Aunt Wanda's waving hand and smiling face. They were really here! We had last met in St. Louis, where they had whisked us out between flights for a fabulous breakfast buffet at a nearby casino. Our big surprise that trip was that my Uncle James (who had recently had open-heart surgery) and my Aunt Barbara had traveled to St. Louis to meet us too.

This meeting was equally dramatic, and we had a wonderful visit, which included a tour of their floating home and wandering the streets of the village shopping, snacking, and conversing. I wonder if our next meeting will be between flights or stops of a riverboat. What can we do for an encore? I hope it's soon as this meeting was actually summer '99. Ed and I write articles separately, me on my Macintosh PowerBook in a recliner chair, and him on the IBM in his study. Then he places the articles in the newspaper format. Somehow this little, but important, article got lost. Our apologies to a special aunt and uncle.

Our calendar year began with visits from Sarah's New College friends, Brian and Jessica, who stayed with us before doing a January independent study in the Czech Republic. After years of not meeting the kids' college friends, we appreciated being able to host a few. Donna Schucker (former Kwaj. teacher) was our next guest. She wrote

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## Visitors...

that she would be stopping by after completing Operation Smile in Rumania. She arrived at the Bitburg-Erdorf train station the day after we arrived back from the States. My memories of her visit are a jet-lagged blur of Viandon Castle and nearby sights.

Terry Hoggatt (another former Kwaj teacher) had emailed us from Taipei that he had accepted a position at an international school in Prague, lucky them! We were delighted by a phone call in early fall that they would be visiting us during a week's break from school. After touring around the Eifel and hearing about Prague, we all agreed that we were blessed to be in two splendid parts of Europe.

The Kwaj. connection continues strongly as we anticipate Ray Wiehe's (former Kwaj. student) arriving to have dinner with us tonight. It is a small world. Julianne Fisher-Quale, a former student, is also here with her husband and three children. Who would have believed it?

We are excited about next summer. So many people have promised visits that we hope you'll schedule soon if you're serious. We plan to be in Florida for about ten days in August. We get out of school on June 17. We are tentatively planning to drive to Spain and Portugal while it's cool. We will plan to be back home in July in time for visits.

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## Turkey Trot

Kwajites will recognize the headline as the name of the running club event which Ed directed every November for seventeen years. It was also the name Bud Rumpf gave to a spring break trip he coordinated to Turkey. Through the DoDEA grapevine, we heard about the trip and contacted Bud and Bobbi Rumpf (from our Clark AFB, Philippine days). I warned Ed that our planned trip to Italy would be much cheaper than a trip to the land of carpets and gold. He wasn't phased by the threat, and you can read about our splurges in the shopping article.

The trip was really a Biblical tour of Turkey with visits to Ephesus and other sites of archeological digs. We visited what was reputedly the last house of Mary. Jesus had left each apostle with a task, and John's was to take care of his mother, Mary. We learned the modern Turkish names for many Biblical

places, which came alive for us. We had no idea that so many Biblical places were actually located in present day Turkey.

Turkish cuisine is one of the truly distinct and delicious ones in the world. We sampled the flavors of old favorites and new delicacies while visiting with old friends and experiencing the graceful to frenetic moves of belly dancing.

I remember when the latter was all the rage when we were in the Philippines. Belly dancing was the new "in" aerobic activity just before the jogging craze hit. I signed up on a waiting list, which was two years long! I'll never forget the day I answered the phone to a cheerful voice telling me the good news that I had gotten into the next belly dancing class in only one year and eight months! I regretfully declined as I was seven months pregnant and had no desire to be the largest belly in the class. I told Ed and he laughed his head off at picturing the scene. I told him he'd better not mock me or I would join the class and expect him to buy me a ruby of sufficient size to enhance my newly robust self.

Long time friend, Dan Mitchum, distinguished himself as a dancer and good sport, when he was chosen and dragged onto the floor by one of the dusky beauties. We had a great time on the trip catching up on his and his wife Harlene's future retirement plans. We hadn't seen Dan since we left the P.I. in 1980. The trip made us look forward to retirement and seeing many old friends on future excursions.

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## Shopping

After packing in our 18,000 pounds from Kwaj and Stateside storage, along with 4,000 pounds of books we had mailed, I asked Ed to remind me never to go shopping again. He just smirked. Sure enough, the man who is always right was right again. Before everything was fully put away, I needed a new twelve-step program. My binge buying may be over, however, as every floor is now covered in magnificent carpets. I had planned for years to end our overseas teaching careers in Europe for an oriental carpet buying splurge, so seven new carpets shouldn't be a shock.

The shock was my new addiction, Russian lacquer ware. I had seen a tiny box years ago, purchased in Moscow by a teacher who

traveled across the USSR on the Trans-Siberian railroad. The minute painting and their folk tale origins captivated me. My new best friend is Sveltiana, a Latvian young lady, who travels through Russia collecting the boxes, which she sells at our base's fall and spring bazaars. She also carries carved, painted Father Winter figures that I find irresistible.

Now, before you feel too sorry for poor (literally), dear Ed, my ever-patient husband who ends up lugging most of my treasures home, let me share a moment of insight from the Topkapi carpet shop in Izmir, Turkey. After our group had been shown dozens of carpets and we gathered like sharks at a feeding frenzy to grab our favorites, I identified my three choices; whereupon Ed said, "Oh, I think you forgot the red and blue one that you liked with the large medallion which is the fourth rug from the bottom of that stack." Now, tell me he isn't my cohort in crime.

Anyway, whatever your fancy, I can help you find it. Do you want Christmas ornaments? No problem! Do you want pewter, wood, or hand-blown, leaded hand-painted glass? How about Belgian chocolates? Can't choose between 187 delicious kinds? No problem and the list goes on. Come next summer and discover the joys of the strong U.S. dollar!

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