

# The Goff Gazette

Volume 23

Bradenton, Florida

December, 2007

## Joyeux Noel et Bonne, Nouvelle Année!

Following our tradition of sending our greeting in the language of a country we visited during the year, we send this "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" greeting in French since we visited France during our Spring break. From our home to yours, we send the warmest greetings and wishes that 2008 be the best year ever for you and all those you love and hold dear. Once again, as we embark on a new year, let us all take a moment to reflect on the good in our lives and to share it through an act of kindness to a loved one and a stranger. Be good to yourself and a friend to those in need. Be happy.

## We All Moved

Ed and Barbara retired and moved from Germany to Bradenton, Florida. Matt and Valérie moved from San Francisco to London and Sarah and Brian got married and moved to Pompano Beach, Florida. Read the details in this year's (2007) somewhat late Goff Gazette.



*Brian and Sarah, Matt and Valérie, and Barbara and Ed in Bradenton, FL in December 2007*

### Ed Packs It In

After a combined total of eighty-one years of teaching, we retired in July and you would think that we would have all the time in the world to do whatever we wanted whenever we wanted. Well, retirement hasn't been that easy.

We celebrated the arrival of 2007 in Florida and returned to Germany where we planned to announce our retirement and start the process of ending our teaching careers. Barbara had injured her knee in a fall at school and had surgery in mid-January. She was expected to be on crutches for six weeks but it turned out being more like six months. This, of course, put a "slight crimp" in our plans to prepare for our big move, and we were determined to  
*(Continued on p. 2, Ed...)*

### Barbara Muses

Was there ever a year of more beginnings and endings for the Ed Goff's than 2007? Sarah and Brian got married; Matt and Valérie moved to London; and Ed and I retired and moved to Florida after thirty-seven years of overseas teaching and living.

Ed's covered our doings well in his "year" article, so I'll just muddle along with my reflections on the events. My two major musings have been on life after work (or should I say paid work) and life in the USA. First, I unexpectedly had to contend with feeling guilty about not working. Now that was a surprise. We were unexpectedly working 10-12 hour days on cleaning up messes our tenants had left behind and making  
*(Continued on p. 3, Barbara...)*

### Matt Moves to London

Last April, after nearly five years in San Francisco, Valérie and I made another big move, this time to London, England. Valérie worked in SF for Gap Inc, managing distribution for their stores in Europe. Since Gap was rap-  
*(Continued on p. 5, Matt...)*

### Sarah and Brian Wed

This year we've been settling into our nice little suburban life. Brian and I got married, we adopted Ojus (our sweet greyhound), we're still working on our cute little house, and I've started spending a lot of time gardening. It's great!

We adopted Freeride Clover in  
*(Continued on p. 5, Sarah...)*

## Ed...

"thin things out" before the pack-out. It didn't happen.

Matt phoned us not long after we initiated the retirement process and announced that he and Valérie were moving to London. Hmmmm.... When we were on Kwajalein, Matt was on the East Coast. When we went to Germany, he moved to San Francisco and now that we are in Florida, he has moved to London. Are we missing something here?

In March, Sarah and Brian called and told us that they had decided to get married. We couldn't have been more pleased. Of course one of our first questions was, "When?" They told us that Friday might be a good time. "Next Friday?" we asked. "Yes", they said, "but we will wait until you come home if you want." We told them that whatever made them happy was fine with us, but we would like to have a party for them once we got settled, and we did. More about that later.

My fortieth year of teaching turned out to be one of my most difficult as I was given eight different preparations and students who were miss-assigned to classes for various reasons. This required a lot of extra time at school. In addition, the retirement paperwork was complicated because we had worked for DoDDS under two different retirement systems and there was a lack of expertise in our district on retirement under these conditions. Numerous irrevocable decisions were required, but no one seemed to be able to help us so we spent a lot of time on the phone and researching our options.

As the saying goes, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy", so we did take time to do a lot of day trips to local flea markets (despite the crutches) and to visit some of our favorite places one last time. And...we did take a spring break trip to France (See separate article).

We were given very nice retirement parties by our schools and received plaques and certificates from DoDDS thanking us for our service.

Our pack-outs went well but were exhausting. Since DoDDS would only give us three days for the move,

we did Barbara's pack-out before school ended and mine after we finished the school year. We spent several days cleaning our German house of nine years, said goodbye to our friends, and flew back to the States on June 29<sup>th</sup>.

There we discovered that the tenants in one of our rental units had totally trashed it and departed without paying the rent. We had purchased a house in Bradenton in 2003 with the idea that we would rent it out until we retired. Unfortunately, the tenants in that house also moved out unexpectedly before we returned without paying their rent leaving the house and yard in very poor condition. They did not leave a forwarding address and we have not been able to track them down yet. They even changed all the locks on the doors and locked the keys inside the house so we had to hire a locksmith to break in....

We spent the next several months doing repairs to both properties and finally moved in to our house on September 26<sup>th</sup>. Our shipments, two from Germany and two from storage, were delivered over a period of two months; and we soon discovered that we had more stuff than house.

We made a trip up to New York in August for the annual Goff reunion at Rainbow Cove on Seneca Lake. See photos on line at <http://goff-club.com> As usual, we had a fantastic time with all my relatives. We also checked on our 1970 VW camper van which had been in storage for twenty years. We made arrangements with my brother, John, to have it moved to our favorite VW mechanic in September so he could get it ready for us to drive it back to Florida in October. The plan was to see the autumn leaves and beat the cold as the camper does not have a heater.

In early October, we flew back to New York and were hosted by my sister Connie and her husband, Jim, in Elmira. The camper was ready but the mechanic had told John that he thought

we were "very brave" to take the thirty-seven year old vehicle on a fifteen hundred mile trip. We took a 250 mile test drive up to Rochester to return our rental car and, after visiting John and Janice and Dotty and Don (my brother and sister and their spouses), we headed south.

We avoided the Interstates and drove the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway for most of their lengths. The scenery was breathtaking and I would highly recommend this drive to anyone, but allow lots of time as the speed limit in most places is only 35 mph and there are hundreds of scenic overlooks at which you'll want to stop. Also, don't



expect to use your cell phone as there are only a few cell towers along the way.

We stopped in Boone, N.C. for a few days, to visit our long time friends, Dan and Harlene Mitchum. We had seen Dan on a trip to Turkey in 2000 but hadn't seen Harlene since we left the Philippines in 1981. We had a fantastic time reminiscing and visiting the beautiful area in and around Boone and just enjoying their wonderful home high in the mountains.

We also stopped at Carol's and Bruce's (sister and brother-in-law) new home in Anderson, S.C. for a few days. They, too, toured us around the area and we spent a very pleasant and relaxing day boating on Hartwell Lake. Two days later we arrived back home without incident.

We scheduled the marriage celebration party for Sarah and Brian for December 29<sup>th</sup> in hopes of attracting some of the Goff relatives for a warm respite from the northern cold. Our thought was that the time between

Christmas and New Years Eve would be a good time for a break. We had hoped that it would be warm that weekend and we were not disappointed as the daytime highs were in the mid-80s. The party could not have been better. Brian's parents came over from Fort Lauderdale as did some of his relatives and friends. Many of their mutual friends from far and near enjoyed the festivities and gave our pool a good workout. Matt and Valérie flew in from London and two of my sisters, Judy and Carol and their spouses represented the Goff clan. Barbara's parents and her uncle and aunt, David and Marla, represented the Gardner side of the family. Everyone pitched in, and we all had a wonderful time.

So there you have it. Another eventful year has been recorded except for my annual running report. My streak is still intact. On August 12<sup>th</sup> I completed my 27<sup>th</sup> year of running every day without missing a day and at this writing it continues.

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## Beaune, France

We were very fortunate to have almost perfect weather for our spring break excursion. The daytime highs ranged from the high 60's to the low 80's. Night time lows were in the 50's and 60's which was excellent for cheerful fires in the fireplace.

April 6 (Friday) – Tony (Carmone) arrives from Brussels via train and takes a taxi from Bitburg-Erdorf station to our house. (Jo Ellen was unable to come as her father died, and she had to go back to the States for the funeral.) We wish he had phoned us to pick him up as it would have saved him 10 euros or \$13.70 for a five-minute ride. We went out to eat, but everything was closed since it was Good Friday. We went back to the house, and Barbara whipped up a delicious meal from almost nothing.

April 7 (Saturday) – We departed Metterich about 10:45 and headed for France. About 3:00 PM we exited the toll road (13 euros or \$17.81) and made our way to the gite (445 euros for the week including cleaning

*(Continued on p.6, France...)*

## Barbara...

more decisions on more things about houses than I knew existed, but I still felt guilty in July that I wouldn't be going back to work in September. So much for my previous goal of living in the moment. Thus, my first resolution about retirement was to give up guilt. I have yet to determine if this is a goal I can keep.

Once we got the major house repairs accomplished and the main rooms livable, I expected to slip seamlessly into a retirement full of my favorite hobbies. With my goal of giving up guilt, I decided to ignore the wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling garage full of what didn't fit in the house and/or which we didn't have time to go through before the December 29<sup>th</sup> party. I cheerfully decided to follow Scarlet O'Hara's *Gone with the Wind* advice, and decided that I'd think about that garage later and get on with the fun.

I joined Netflix and marveled that living in the States was incredible. Netflix sent my movie in a day, I sent it back the next, and a new movie arrived only two days later. What happened to the two week postal lag times? And TV....egad the shows were in real time. Oprah interviewed people who were in movies coming out the next day, and I could have actually gone to the movie the next day. I didn't, but just the thought of it had me quivering with the possibilities.

Not only were shows current, they were broken up with ads for products that I could rush right out and buy that minute in my neighborhood stores. Of course, I didn't since the garage loomed large in my imagination....and during unpacking I had moaned to Ed, "If I ever want to buy another anything...except food and cleaning products, please remind me of this moment." Ed, of course, made sarcastic remarks along the lines of how short he believed my memory of this declaration would be. I assured him that even though my short term memory seemed to be going, I would remember my lament about "too much stuff". Actually, I am happy to report that despite many thrilling visits to local arts and crafts fairs, I have come away with only memories of my "visual feast".

Of course, there's an exception to any rule. After years of reading in my

rubber stamping magazines about craft conventions/shows, I finally attended Stampfest in Clearwater last Saturday. Ed, who sounds tough but is a softie, offered to drive me the 1 hour and 15 minutes to the Harborview Convention Center. I planned to be really thoughtful and only stay two hours. It's a good thing Ed brought his favorite PC magazine and is a slow, careful reader, because I left when the show closed, and they kicked me out.

I felt like I was on a sugar high or a kid at Christmas rushing from one present to another and barely having time to play with each. I met Greg, my phone and internet buddy at Marco Paper in Centerville, Ohio, who had helped me part with many a happy dollar while we lived in Germany. The vendor selling Asian stamps, paper, and stencils and I had a frank and fascinating political conversation about world events, Iraq mainly, and foreigners' views of Americans in the last few years. I met myriad vendors demonstrating products that I couldn't live without. I made a couple of trips to the car to store my purchases and check the climate to see if Ed was still cheerful and happy. After going cover to cover on *PC World*, he had finished Anna Maria's newspaper, *The Islander*, and was on to *Money* magazine, his last reading matter. Fortunately, it lasted with a little to spare until the show ended.

I am happy to report that the best thing about retirement, house renovations, and unpacking, and stamp shows is that Ed and I have successfully navigated the 24 /7 together, and have high hopes of remaining married through our golden years.

In writing this article, I have discovered that I have no fabulous insights into life and retirement. My greatest moment of enlightenment came when I realized that when a day ended before I got a project completed, I didn't have to wait until the next weekend to work on it. That sounds like a "duh", but it seemed like a miracle to me. So now I'm lining up all the fun things to do and counting my blessings for the freedom I feel. The only downer about retirement came from Ed who said, "These three-day holiday weekends just aren't as much fun as they used to be!"

*(Continued on next page)*

## Barbara cont...

My second topic was adjusting to life after Europe. Suddenly, I found myself with time to cook, only to discover that “normal ingredients” found at the tiniest stores in the tiniest towns anywhere in Europe are in the “gourmet” section of American grocery stores or in specialty shops. Regardless of where they are found, they are expensive. A buck wedge of Brie is \$8 and where are the escargots? I can’t complain too much though because Florida is a treasure trove of great veges and fruit. One of my best joys is walking out to the back yard, whenever I feel like it, to pick a lemon for fresh lemonade....the tree is constantly laden with huge lemons the size of oranges or grapefruit.

Another source of joy is that our house is close to amenities, but still private. We look out of practically every window to see trees and pond with no visible houses or people. The pond is teeming with life. We have every kind of local water fowl including blue herons, egrets, cormorants, gulls, and pelicans. We were thrilled to move in and immediately see a bald eagle flying across the pond. What we thought was a rarity turned out to be a regular event as we discovered that apparently they have nested in a tree by our house. Turtles and fish abound. Other frequent visitors are otters who come to eat their daily 25% of their body weight in fish. (Lucky I’m not an otter, although they look sleek and fit despite all that eating.) The otters like to sun themselves on the bank in between playful trips to the water.

I’ve had a ball trying to find beautiful plants for the yard, lanai, and house and trying to keep them alive. My learning curve has been steep....poor plants. Luckily, I’ve figured out the right amount of sun and water for most of them. On Christmas day, we were seated eating dinner when Matt said, “Mom, there’s a bunny out there eating your new flowers.” I had just planted a whole slew of flowers in the front to get ready for Sarah and Brian’s celebration; and that darned bunny, which turned out to be an extremely fat, greedy full-grown rabbit, had devoured all the impatience blossoms. Furthermore, he was a brazen bunny—much to the amusement of

Ed, Mom and Dad, and Matt—who calmly continued to munch on their dinner while watching me use every tactic I could think of to run that stubborn, determined rabbit out of our garden, out from under the car, and out of the yard.

I guess I should end on a cheerful note and tell you about what it’s like to spend six months on crutches while teaching and preparing for a pack out. Awful. Poor Ed took the brunt of it because, in addition to all of his normal duties and responsibilities, he had to do all the shopping and cleaning for months. He would carry bags and boxes of things to sort and put them all around the bed or chair I was in, so that I could go through them. He would run up and down the three flights of stairs in our house to do laundry. Fortunately, then he could dump everything on the bed for me to fold.

Eventually after about two weeks, I was cooking again and learning to carry everything around in plastic bags attached to the front of my crutches. It’s a good thing we didn’t know it would be six months. I saw my doctor at least once a week and every week we thought I would be allowed off my crutches. I finally got rid of them two days before we flew home to the USA on June 29th, but that meant that I had to go through both packouts on crutches, hobbling around trying to help watch and supervise; and Ed had shopping duties all that time.

Details of people’s trips to hospitals and their ailments are boring, but if you’d like to hear about a German version, read on. If not, skip a few paragraphs. The German hospital and post-op treatments were interesting. Amazingly, only one person taking care of me at the hospital spoke English. I was in a room by myself for three days....an oddly quiet existence. Afterwards, my treatment consisted mostly of what Blue Cross considered “nonstandard” procedures, which they refused to pay for. They included shock wave therapy with electronic needles and hammers on the acupuncture points on my shoulder. The doctor would press around tender areas until he found what “really hurt”. Then he would turn on the machine and administer the treatment, which was right up there with the worst five min-

utes of natural childbirth. Afterward, I would drive home, take pain pills, wrap Velcro icepacks around my arm and shoulder, and try to sleep. During those painful times, I cynically suspected that the real purpose of the treatment was to make sure my shoulder hurt so much that I’d forget about my knee surgery.

I managed to survive this torture on faith in my doctor and the German system until I noticed that I could actually lift my arm again. Within two months, I had gotten back most of my range of motion. The treatment was awful, but it worked.

The other bizarre treatment was a weekly series of 12 shots around my kneecap, where the surgery had been performed. Afterwards, my knee looked like 12 angry mosquito bites, which eventually progressed to a huge inflamed area around my knee, which felt like fire and itched like crazy. Dr. Teusch told me not to scratch and not to take any medicine or use cream to reduce the inflammation. He said that the inflammation was what caused the proper results. Ever curious Ed looked up the name of the injections in our German/English dictionary only to discover that I was being injected with mistletoe! I was beginning to doubt the wisdom of this treatment until one day, without thinking, I crossed my legs yoga style as I was reading in bed. “I can’t believe that. Look what you’re doing!” Ed said. I don’t know how the mistletoe worked, but it had healed the surgical area in record time. Unfortunately, cartilage takes time to grow, so I was still stuck with the crutches.

I followed doctor’s orders and stayed off my elliptical trainer and avoided walking until this Jan. 17th. Now I’m building up my time on the ET and walking regularly. My inactive-for-a-year body needs to lose the weight of an average sixth grader. My dream is to lose that sixth grader ASAP. Then I’ll really be retired.

Every day Ed and I count our blessings. We are delighted to be near family and friends, experiencing the joys of living in a country where we speak the language, live in beautiful surroundings, and have the time to pursue our interests. We look forward to visits from friends and relatives, as long as you



promise not to look in our garage and make ugly remarks using words and phrases like "kick it to the curb" or Goodwill, or garage sale! We know. We're working on it....tomorrow.

## Sarah...

January. That was his racing name, but we call him Ojus. He is a retired greyhound racer, and an angel on earth. I know everyone is crazy about their own pets, but I can't imagine a sweeter more considerate dog. He is such a sweetheart. He loves hiking and going to the dog park so we do that a lot now. He gets a lot of attention when we're out because everyone thinks he is so pretty. He really loves pizza, but he doesn't help himself anymore after he got in trouble the first time. His long nose is right at counter level so he does still sniff around when we're cooking. I don't want this to turn into a greyhound adoption campaign, but if you are looking for a loving, chilled out, considerate, already house trained, low maintenance, clean and never stinky dog you should look into getting a greyhound. Most of them get put to sleep which is a major buzzkill, especially once you see what kind and gentle dogs they are. Anyways, he is wonderful and I hope you can all meet him one day.

...so, yes, Brian and I got married. We eloped I guess you could say. We didn't want to make a big deal about it, but ended up having three events. The first one was when we officially tied the knot at Rick Case Honda, which for some strange reason has a court office located there. It was just the two of us and it was surprisingly romantic.

The second one was a surprise to us. Since our friends "weren't invited" to our wedding, they decided to throw a fake one at Burning Man, an art festival we went to in the desert. We built an art car for the festival which was an oversized old timey railroad-like push cart. Our whole theme was old timey. One evening we all got dressed up in our old

timey outfits and pushed the cart out to a big temple structure to watch the sunset. When we got there, my friends pulled me to the back of the cart and Brian to the front to dress us. Once I saw the ridiculously long and flowing veil I realized what was going on. It was such a nice surprise. We had a lot of musician friends with us and they played here comes the bride on their violins as our friend Jakey walked me down the aisle. Our good friend Keith, who had written us our fake wedding vows, was standing with Brian in front of the temple. It was all very sweet, especially the reception and food afterwards! I feel so



*Brian and Sarah on their wedding day.*

lucky to have such nice friends.

The third event was the party my parents threw at their house. It was awesome too! I was really happy to have so many friends and family there. It meant a lot to me and my parents. I know that the holidays are always a difficult time to travel. Anyways, we had a beautiful day in Florida for the party! We ate food and drank beer by the pool. It was perfect. I was pretty proud of the tiered cake I made too. Til Death Do Us Part!

We are still enjoying our house. It's super fun to be a homeowner and make things exactly as cute as we want. We've started spending a lot of time on the yard. I think last year we had already planted a bunch of fruit trees and bushes: mango, banana, orange, lime, kefir lime, papaya, Barbados cherry, avocado, chestnut, loquat, cashew, passion fruit, dragon fruit, and blueberry. We also built a raised vegetable garden, and it is doing great!! The vegetables taste so much better than the

ones from the grocery store, especially the tomatoes. It's kind of amazing. I've read that heirloom vegetables have been picked throughout the ages for taste and not for their ability to be shipped thousands of miles. I think that makes a big difference. The butterfly garden is doing well too!

Anyways, this year has been great. Suburbia is not so bad!!! I hope you all have a wonderful year! Come visit anytime!!!

## Matt...

idly expanding the number of stores there, they decided to move that function to the European HQ in London. Several of her co-workers were asked to come over for a few months to train the new staff, but since Valérie has dual-citizenship with Belgium, she was offered a permanent position.

We'd always talked about living abroad (again), so this was an exciting opportunity. My employer, CNET Networks also has an office in London; and they were willing to let me stay on in the essentially same role, but working out of the London office.

The move was a bit of a blur. After accepting the offer, we were almost immediately immersed in trying to close out our affairs in the States and planning all the logistics of an international move. It was a stressful time, and a few things really came down to the wire: my car didn't sell until three days before I left, and my work permit/visa was so late that I had to drive to the FedEx depot on the morning of my flight to pick it up.

Thankfully, Gap sponsored our move, so they had arranged for temporary housing in London. It was a real relief to finally walk through the door of our new, temporary home and know that the hard part was done. Little did we know how much work was in store; everything just seems harder to get set up here, from banking (your employer has to vouch for you, even to open a checking account) to renting (we saw 20 flats in a day-and-a-half before we found one that we liked and was affordable) to getting our utilities arranged (nearly two weeks just to get an existing phone line activated). And, it's not even all done

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yet: I'm still working on getting a British driving license (and learning to shift with your left hand is the easy part!).

But everything worked out, and we're finally feeling very settled here. We ended up finding a nice garden flat—it's a classic, English row house divided into a few flats, but we're on the ground floor, so we get the yard—in West Hampstead in northwest London. Although we've had above-average rain in the past year, we've really been enjoying the outdoor space that we missed having in SF.

We both work in central London: Valérie in Mayfair and me in Southwark. Both are very easy commutes on the tube which, despite most Londoners' objections, is a remarkably efficient system. My commute is a 0.7 mile walk from our flat to the West Hampstead tube station, six miles on the Jubilee line, and another 0.3 mile walk from Southwark tube to the office. Since trains arrive every 1-2 minutes in rush hour, and the ride is only 20 minutes, it's rarely longer than 30 minutes.

We've made a few day trips so far and spent a week in France visiting Valérie's family, but we're planning more for this year. We've already booked a vacation in the Canary Islands in late March, and we're in the middle of planning trips to Scotland, Ireland, and Africa. I'll also be spending a few weeks in Asia for work.

Who knows where else this latest adventure will take us—for now we're just enjoying the ride.

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## France...

or \$609.59) in Echevronne. We were met by the owner, who showed us how to run the TV-Satellite system (all French), the plumbing, central heat, dishwasher, fireplace, etc. After he departed, we drove to Beaune (Bone) to explore and have supper. After looking for a place to eat, we decided to buy a few quiches and pizza and went back to the gîte to eat and watch the sunset from the deck. Later, we built a fire in the fireplace and sat around reminiscing and drinking beer.

April 8 (Sunday) – Easter Sunday and our thirty-fifth wedding anniver-

sary. We explored Beaune until late afternoon. After a rest back at the gîte, we went back into town and ate at La Grilladine. We had liked the looks of it earlier in the day. It was “warm and cheerful, with rose-pink tablecloths, exposed stone walls, and an ancient beam supporting the ceiling”, according to the 2007 Fodor's France, who had discovered it before us. We just happened to park at the curb and walk by it. We had menu of the specialties of the region—escargot and boeuf Bourguignon, and crème brulee. All were absolutely delicious. Again back at the gîte, we reminisced old times before the blazing fire.

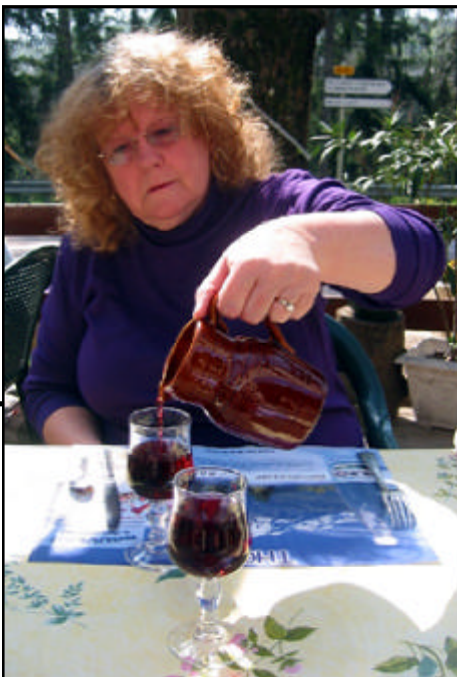
April 9 (Monday) - We drove to Dijon and were amazed at the lack of traffic until we soon discovered that it was a French holiday. We happened to park in front of an excellent restaurant where we enjoyed some regional specialties. Our entrée was oeufs en Meurette (eggs poached in red wine with onions on a large crouton), salmon in sauce, and crème brulee again. After eating, we wandered the nearly deserted old town, stopping in at the Eglise de Notre Dame with three tiers of gargoyles. It was a fine example of 13<sup>th</sup> century Burgundian design. We followed the brass owl-marked path until we found and touched the famous marble owl for good luck. After a frustrating time of discovering that all the cheap gas required a European credit card and there was no cash booth because of the holiday, we finally gave up; but went into the Carrefours' grand marche to buy Italian ingredients, for our master chef, Antonio Carmone, to fix us a splendid dinner of “gravy with peppers and local sausages”. Back at the gîte, he went into action, while Ed built another fantastic fire. Barbara learned that tomato paste should be sautéed in olive oil carefully, so as not to burn, before adding it to the rest of the “gravy” ingredients.

April 10 (Tuesday) - Back in Beaune, we finally visited its main attraction, Hotel Dieu, which was built in 1443 to house the sick (left destitute by the black plague and the Hundred Years War). It is a fabulous Flemish design, with the characteristic, pattered yellow, green, and black lacquered shingles. We had hoped for lunch back at La

Grilladine, but it was closed, so we went across the street to yet another fabulous meal of charcuterie, lamb, and a pear tarte covered with an amazing sauce and ice cream. We bought a pewter snail with matching appetizer forks, and Tony bought some lavender to hang in his car and a bar of lavender soap. Back at home, we enjoyed another sunset from our balcony, while drinking Bitburger or Macon red wine. Ed built another fire and we enjoyed Tony's leftovers, which were even more delicious the next day.

April 11 (Wednesday) - We drove to Autun to view the Roman amphitheatre, gates, and temple to Janus. We had lunch on the village square—the plat du jour, which was jambon persille (ham and parsley) and French fries. Then we were off to Lyon on the expressway to take Tony to Aeroport-Lyon-Saint-Exupery in Satolas, for his BA flight back to London. We got a little nervous about getting there, despite our big time buffer, because it turned to be a 275 mile trip, which took 5 hours, round-trip. Fortunately, nothing went wrong, and Tony had plenty of time at the airport before his flight left.

April 12 (Thursday) - We went in the direction of Nuits-St-Georges to the Au Bois de Charmois inn for lunch. The menu was more than generous sized pate, Samonette with potatoes and carrots, a giant slab of cheese (fromage), and a tarte with raspberries for dessert. Amazingly, wine was included. We sat under a giant spreading tree in a lovely terraced area outside the inn. The sun was warm and bright. Then we headed off back towards Autun to Nolay, where we looked at antique lace and counted cross stitch in a fascinating store where old lace could be brought to be repaired. We also looked in several antique stores. Then we were off to Sully to look at the chateau, before heading cross country to the medieval town of Chateauneuf. The guidebook said that it's been discovered and is a mob scene on weekends, but we strolled the village with only a few other visitors. An old gift shop by the chateau was full of local artists' work. We agonized over lady figurines made from leaves, a framed, calligra-



*Barbara pours the wine as we wait for lunch to be served at the Au Bois de Charmois roadside cafe.*

phy picture which included the actual pen and a variety of points, and an apple made of gnarled wood. We decided on the apple, but then went back into a pottery section, where Ed had spotted an interesting bowl. The elderly lady was gracious about switching our purchase from the apple to the bowl. She even gave us a brochure about the potter and told us that it was microwave proof! That was not an easy task since we speak no French, and she spoke no English.

We drove back through the hilly countryside on a tiny road, which happened to run directly into our village. We did encounter our first few raindrops, but we lucked out on our strolling time. Back at the gite, we discovered that it had not rained there, so we sat out on the balcony to enjoy the birds and view. When it cooled, we went inside and enjoyed another blazing fire in the fireplace.

April 13 (Friday) – Our last full day in France. We really liked the pottery bowl we purchased at Chateaufort and using the information we received with the bowl, we decided to look for the town where the potter lived, Alise-Ste-Reine. A map revealed that it was within a reasonable driving distance (less than 50 miles) so we

headed out. We took a direct route across La cote-d'or passing through numerous small villages and towns and arrived at our destination in less than two hours. Following the signs, we located our potter and searched his shop for treasures. We soon were guarding two "objects de art" from other shoppers. After we made our purchases, the potter gave us a choice of small bowls as a gift. We selected one, but he insisted that we take two which we were happy to do. We told him that we had purchased one of his bowls the previous day; but he didn't understand, so we went to the car and brought it back to show him. At that point, we were ready to leave when we saw a small vase on a shelf behind him and told him that we wanted to buy it. He surprised us by giving it to us. We expressed our gratitude and went on to get our lunch before 2:00 PM, the French deadline for the noon meal. The "menu" offered several options one of which was a type of sausage mentioned in the guidebooks as a delicacy of the region. Bad choice...it smelled like urine and tasted like...well, fill in the blank. Later, we went to a bank machine, got some Euros, and headed back to our gite. We ended the evening with another cheerful fire in the fireplace.

April 14 (Saturday) – We got up early, well, kinda early for vacation, so we could load the car and tidy up before making our final run to Beaune before heading back to Germany. Before leaving "our" tiny village of Echevronne, we stopped by the Lucien Jacob wine cellar to purchase a few bottles of "vin", some local liquor, and take a few pictures in the cellar. We also drove a few hundred meters down the road to buy some fresh goat cheese and some more local cassis liquor. Then, we went on to Beaune and the Saturday market. Oh, the excitement of a French market. We navigated around to get a good parking spot and were then off with Barbara charging ahead in spite of her crutches. After two plus hours, we had satisfied our shopping thirst and headed back to the car for the final leg of our vacation. After a brief stop north of Metz to get a little gas we finally reached Bitburg, running on fumes, just before the gas station closed. \$52 to fill the tank would

have seemed like a lot except that we paid \$108 in France for a tank full. A quick stop at the post office, and we were home before dark. It was a great trip.....over 1200 miles!

## Notes, Numbers, & Links

Since we all moved this year we thought we better bring you up to date on our addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and links to photos.

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### Sarah Goff and Brian Turk:

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email: goffsarah@gmail.com

### Family reunion at Rainbow Cove:

<http://goff-club.com>  
(click on Rainbow Cove 2007)

### Wedding celebration photos:

<http://goff-club.com>  
(click on Sarah's & Brian's  
Wedding Celebration)

