

December 2012

☞ Season's greetings to all our family and friends. We hope you have a joyous, warm, and relaxing holiday. ☞

Our son, Cody, now 22 years old, is in his fifth year at CU, in Boulder, Colorado. He's taking several classes this semester that he was unable to fit in earlier. Cody has also wanted to study abroad and so this past summer he applied for a short term language immersion program in Salvador, Brazil, late June through July. He has taken Portuguese the last few years and really enjoyed it. He spent five weeks in Salvador living with a family and taking language and culture classes. His Portuguese improved a lot during his time there. It was a great experience for him. He gained a lot of self-confidence as well as learning much about Brazil, its people, customs and history.

Cody wanted us to join him in Brazil so we could take him traveling. Brazil is very large and not that easy to get around without transportation. We decided at the last minute to go with him, flying down to Rio de Janeiro first. Rio was jam-packed with the huge 50,000-person Rio+20 UN Conference, so we stayed in a small beach town two hours north called Armação dos Búzios for the first several days. Búzios is compared to St. Tropez, and is a very popular vacation destination for Brazilians and other South Americans. We had a very relaxing time there. The food was delicious too — lots of fresh seafood. We flew back up to Salvador for the last few days, spending time sight-seeing in its historical center, the Pelourinho. Salvador is one of the oldest cities in the Americas, officially established 1549. Cody also did some sight-seeing after we left; a highlight being the Chapada Diamantina, Brazil's "Lost World", a truly spectacular national park. Overall, we really enjoyed Brazil.



Jill graduated from Berkeley Law School in May. She took her bar exam in July and recently found out she passed. She started working as a law clerk at a firm in San Francisco in September doing public utilities and litigation work. She's an associate now, having passed her bar. Rory and I just went to her swearing-in ceremony at the law school. She's very happy with her new career and really likes her co-workers as well. She enjoys living in Berkeley and commutes into San Francisco for work.



The four of us plus Randy and Rose-Lynn (Rory's brother and sister-in-law), traveled to Scandinavia in August about a week after Cody returned from Brazil. (He had a busy summer!!) Cody and I left first for Copenhagen, meeting up with Jill there. (She was already in Europe traveling with her friend, Brielle.) Randy and Rose-Lynn joined us the next day followed by Rory on our last day in Copenhagen. We really enjoyed Copenhagen's charm. We left Denmark and headed up through Sweden to Norway. We visited Oslo, Lærdalsøyri, Bergen, Stavanger and Kristiansand before heading back to Denmark. We took a beautiful fjord trip in Bergen, Norway. We really loved the beauty of Scandinavia and the friendliness of the locals.

It was very cool while we were there — nice to escape the heat of summer. We all had a great time traveling together and visiting beautiful Scandinavia.

It was a hectic year for Rory, work-wise, so our unexpected trip to Brazil was a great respite break for him. Things have continued to be very busy for him although somewhat less stressful. He enjoys the challenges of his job despite the difficult aspects.

I'm doing well after having surgery in October to have a bone spur removed from my neck vertebrae. The spur was causing muscle weakness and tingling in my left arm and fingers. I wanted it taken care of soon rather than risk any permanent damage. My doctor was very happy with the results. I was very nervous prior to the surgery but am very relieved now and feel like my old self again. :) I still enjoy my exercise and walking groups, book club, and all my volunteer work.

Many wishes for a healthy new year to all of you!

Beth, Rory, Jill and Cody

Beth
Jill
Rory
Cody