

2015

The Annual Klinges Family Newsletter



Thank you, Rev. Martin Luther King, for many things, one of which is having a birthday almost the same day as mine. A group of my college friends made a trip to Scottsdale for the long weekend (not for my birthday, just to get together). Lots of hiking, cooking, imbibing and laughing.



A wrong number got added to our text message group the first day, as we were traveling from different parts of the country – starting at 5 am. We couldn't figure out how to drop the poor fellow, so as he was trying to sleep, we were pinging away. Imagine getting hours of text messages from 13 women who are sure they are very witty.



When we left off in 2014, Dave was just getting off crutches. Because skiing was out (damn those knees) we started 2015 with a trip to Turks & Caicos (TCI). The lure of Beaches, the massive all-inclusive resort where we stayed, was that the kids could SCUBA dive twice a day. Some of you may remember from past letters how intensely I dislike having my kids dive (on a par with cross-country road trips). Knowing my anxiety, they kept me in the dark when things went wrong. But Grace let slip once: “Today was better than yesterday because David didn’t run out of air today.” And David is the one with asthma.



The kids routinely dove deeper than they were supposed to go and generally made me insane with worry (on my vacation).

There were 12 bars at the TCI resort — that’s how huge it was. On the last night, our two offspring organized a pub crawl among all their new college-age friends, trying to hit as many bars as possible and adding people along the way. It lasted well after the bars closed (when they raided the mini-bar in our room and headed to the beach). This was one of several incidents in 2015 when I had to ask myself: proud or not? I always default to proud. After all, there were important adult skills being demonstrated: They had networked with lots of strangers, organized an event, and they were even getting along with each other.



PUB CRAWL

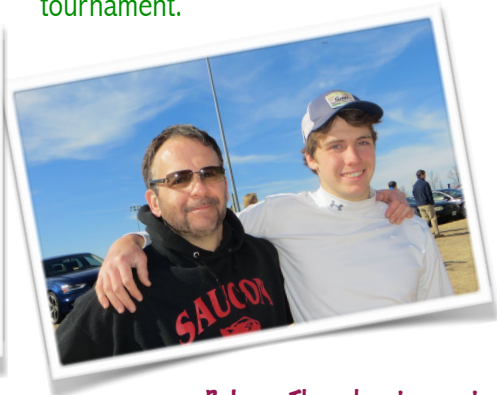
I was literally on a deserted isle (right) when the office called. Really?



Back in Princeton, Dave and I attended an embarrassing number of high school wrestling events given that we have no children in high school. Above, Coach Rashone Johnson and his special tie. He said that when other coaches jealously ask where he got his cool Princeton High School wrestling tie, he says, “Remember that kid who had the cradle? He designed it.”

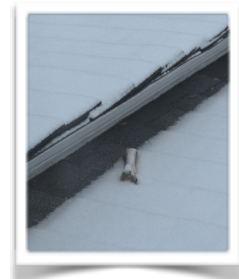
HANOVER FSP

David spent the winter living at Dartmouth but not taking classes (a Hanover Foreign Study Program, for those in the know). He worked in a Biology lab and taught film editing and photoshopping at the Digital Arts lab. He also had season passes at both the Dartmouth Skiway and Killington. Rough semester. At left, he takes a break from the skiing to attend an Ultimate Frisbee tournament in Santa Barbara. Below right, with Uncle John in Charlotte, NC for a different tournament.



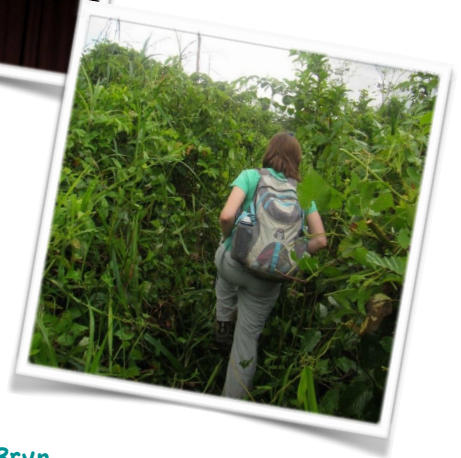
Ellen and Grace on a winter hike

Below: There has been a bone on the roof of our house for over a year. A rather large bone, the kind a dog might carry around. I don’t know how it got there, but no one seems inclined to climb onto the roof and get rid of it.

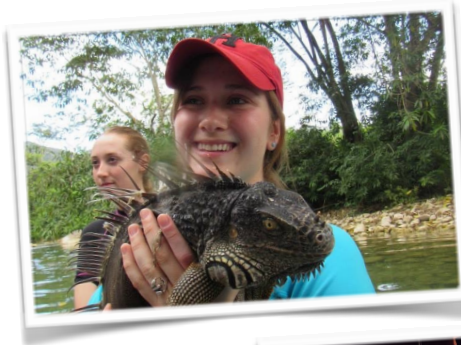




Grace in the musical "Edges" in February



Grace went to Belize in March on a Biology program. (I find myself wishing I were living as well as my children.) She made the cover of the Bryn Mawr College alumnae magazine (left), which is funny because she didn't go to Bryn Mawr. In Belize she studied the impact on the fish population of cutting down mangroves (anyone seeing a theme here with our two kids?).



Grace presenting her senior thesis, which she worked on for a year, called **Microbe-Metal-Mineral Interactions in a Stream Impacted by Unconventional Oil and Gas Removal** (or, as I think of it, **Bugs Eating Metal in Water Polluted by Fracking**).

"Mom, would you be able to Fed Ex something to me? Such as my passport?" Adult skills demonstrated: Resourcefulness, in convincing Mom to support a road trip to Canada. And Planning, in determining one full day in advance that a passport would be needed. In a weird small-world encounter, the four Princeton High School guys ran into two of their female high school buddies in a bar in Montreal (no photos of the 6 of them though).



In April Grace performed in her final college show (as Ilse in Spring Awakening). Dana, having a little trouble letting go of an era, went to four out of six performances, despite the fact that Spring Awakening is the darkest, saddest musical imaginable. As an aside, opening night was one of the first warm evenings of the spring, and I searched in vain for a particular comfy sundress to wear...only to see it onstage in tatters and covered with paint splatters (left). Cunning indeed, to raid mom's closet instead of her own.



MAY

We hosted Grace's friends and their families (and some of our own) at the Japanese Garden House in Fairmount Park the night before her graduation. It looks like the picture of calm, yet everything about this party demonstrates my lack of judgment. In what universe was it a good idea to add another activity to the mix, with graduation the next day, an overseas trip 3 days later and an emergency injunction at work? Finding a venue was close to impossible, as every college on the Main Line held graduation that weekend (Villanova, Haverford, and Bryn Mawr, for starters). The Japanese House was lovely, but it was way over my modest budget, and it required everyone to take off their shoes, which was weird (we had baskets of socks at the door as party favors). Anyone with a lick of sense would have abandoned the party plan at that point, but not me. I got the invitations out late, then I panicked because no one RSVP'd. Would we be wandering around in our socks alone? With just days to go, the responses started coming in, at which point I *really* panicked: 75 yes, 6 no - and I had told the caterer 40, tops. (That's another thing: this was the second catered party we hosted in a week. A sign that we are entertaining too much is that caterers recognize me. At a work function, a woman bounded up to me and said, "I know you! I catered your party at the Japanese House!" My New Year's Resolution should be ABSOLUTELY NO MORE PARTIES.)

It turned out well in the end - doesn't it always? The 75 people didn't all come at the same time - in fact, Grace was an hour late to her own party because she got stuck in traffic while the St. Joe's graduation procession slowly crossed Route 1. We even had leftover socks.

