

Happy Holidays 2012

We've called Wellfleet home for about a year now, and feel remarkably settled, though no less distracted or busy. The great change here is that we have many and diverse opportunities for getting outside, on foot, in a canoe, or in our tiny sailboat. I even took a medal and Chip a trophy or two in several nearby road races. (The secret is to make sure you don't have too much competition in your narrowly defined category: walkers aged 60-69. Sometimes we had no competitors, and still got a medal. Here, all the many Baby Boomers are above average.)

Chip continues working on a couple of books, teaching and meeting online, and editing a journal. In the spring he'll teach a new course from his basement office, *Social Media and Global Change*, with presenters from all over the world. Work continues to take him to gatherings in interesting places, notably Vancouver for some teaching and a conference. With that we tacked on some time in Strathcona Provincial Park on Vancouver Island, where the views from our cabin were pretty spectacular, even in chilly April.



I don't feel very retired myself, with the Historical Society, the Library, and an aging-in-place organization called Nauset Neighbors consuming many hours. The most entertaining volunteer work arose last spring when I became a herring counter, part of a citizen science initiative to document the state of our river herring. This entailed visiting the Herring River at my designated time slot and counting the fish struggling upstream in that narrow river to spawn in one of our many ponds. I regret to report that my 10

minutes yielded exactly two sightings over two months, but I did reliably record the air and water temperature. And we saw more returning to the sea after spawning.

We've also developed a monthly seminar with a group of friends here, for serious conversation about big ideas over wine and cheese in our still unfurnished living room.

Emily returned from her research year in Germany in August, and has settled back into Minneapolis to complete her history dissertation by next summer. Then she'll have another year there, probably teaching and wrapping things up, while applying for jobs hither and yon.

Stephen spent five summer weeks in Russia gathering data for his own history studies, and presented at an interesting conference in England in the fall. We all met in Urbana in August to help Stephen move from one room to another in his 14-person co-op, and to collect Emily's furniture for her move back to the Twin Cities. Our house there is on the market and we hope to sell it this year, which is poignant for all of us after 17 many happy years there.

Having lugged furniture one more time, we parents felt we deserved a break in Canada, so we detoured to Georgian Bay to visit friends Brian and Gillian on their island, one of tens of thousands of islands in that part of Ontario. And then we spent five blessedly quiet and lovely days in Algonquin Park. Chip was disappointed that I opted for a cabin near a lodge, with meals provided, rather than a backcountry canoe trek. But our cabin did come with a red canoe, and we managed to spend one very challenging day paddling many miles against such a fierce wind that we feared we might have to camp without gear. Canoeing is the mode of exploration there, on ancient canoe routes, but the hiking is also pretty wonderful.

Many family members and friends managed to find us this year, even both our mothers at ages 91 and 95. We fully expect those who haven't yet taken a ferry from Boston or boarded a tiny Cape Air flight will learn how in the near future. We feel very lucky that, despite the distances, we've managed to keep close ties with scattered family and friends.

Wishing all of you good times in the coming year.



Stephen on spring break in Hawaii



Emily on her balcony in Berlin

August, the annual snapshot in Illinois corn, a tradition since 1990

The bow paddler in Algonquin Park

And the overall walking winner (not just in his age category) on July 4 in Wellfleet

