

Happy Holidays 2013

Dear family and friends,

This has been an interesting year for us, as you might expect from the greeting card photo. We went on many local outings and several trips, including a trip to the Society of Women Engineers national convention in Baltimore during the last week of October, where Chris received the Resnik Challenger medal on October 25. This is a national award recognizing engineering contributions to Space exploration. The photo is of Chris giving her speech at the awards banquet. Chris is the eleventh recipient since the award was established in 1986. Lou joined Chris at the event as did many of her Northrop Grumman colleagues.

The first trip started on Christmas day 2012 when we flew to Boston to spend the holiday week with Emily. We rented a car and visited, among various local sights, the mansions of Newport, Rhode Island, and Kennebunkport, Maine. It snowed just before New Year's Day, when we flew back to LA. We went skiing at Mammoth in January. In February, Chris had a business trip to Tucson, and Lou joined for the weekend. JoAnna drove from Phoenix, and we all visited Kartchner Caverns, a beautiful live cave about an hour southeast of Tucson. In March we went skiing again at Mammoth and then camping to Red Rock Canyon. The old Dodge Ram van made it off-roading all the way to Burro Schmidt's Tunnel – and back! In April, Andy came to visit after his trek up the Inca trail in Peru to Machu Picchu. His friend Suzuna joined us. It was good to see him, as this was the end of his ninth year living in Japan. We had our annual camping trip with Katy and grandkids Seanna and Kaiden to Morro Bay, where we kayaked and picnicked on the dunes. In June we flew to Romania with friends Tricia and Dennis where we explored the Transylvanian region. We witnessed a lightning storm from the ski lodge above Sinaia at 2000 meters elevation. We then joined Grand Circle Cruise Line for a tour of Eastern Europe via the Danube on the MS River Concerto. The tour started in Bucharest, and we boarded the ship after a tour of Constanta on the Black Sea. After going through the Danube-Black Sea canal, we stopped in Ruse, Bulgaria and then explored the towns of Veliko Tarnovo (the capital during the Bulgar era) and Arbanassi (a preserved museum town). After a stop in Vidin, Bulgaria, the ship went through the two Iron Gate locks. Going through the Danube Gorge was a wonderful experience. We also visited Belgrade and Novi Sad in Serbia, followed by Vukovar and Osijek in Croatia. In Kalocsa, Hungary we were treated to a fabulous horse and rider show. We spent three days in Budapest, which is a beautiful city and fun to explore. We then went by bus with a stop in Bratislava, Slovakia to Prague, Czech Republic, where we spent three days. Prague is a wonderful city to explore, with its castle, old town, and beautiful river front with many tour boats. We rented a car and drove, via Dresden, Germany, to Poznan, Poland. In Poznan, Chris located her mom's cousin, Regina Ziminska, and, with an interpreter couple in tow, had a very nice visit. Poznan also has a very pretty and colorful old town square with no cars allowed. We then went back through Liberec to Prague and then flew directly back to New York. In August we visited Ron and Marilyn at their island in Lake of the Woods, Canada; Andy and Suzuna joined us. Emily and her friend, Jay, came to visit on Halloween; we biked from Malibu to the Redondo Beach pier and visited the Space Shuttle Endeavour at the LA Science Museum. Other activities this year included volleyball at the beach and at the Northrop Grumman field. Chris still goes ocean fishing about once a month.

Chris and Lou hope you are having a happy holiday season and enjoy a healthy and prosperous new year.