
Grossman/Swart Chronicle

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FAMILY / TRAVEL / BUSINESS / INTERVIEWS / SELF-ABSORBED MUSINGS

Dear Gentle Reader,
The eagle has landed. Gently.

18 months ago we sold our home in London and excitedly went on the road to see where it would lead.

12 months ago we wrote our Holiday Chronicle from our peripatetic life in the Winnebago while all our worldly possessions were ensconced in a storage facility in Framingham, Massachusetts.

9 months ago we were winding up our time as modern day travelers a-wandering through this world of wonder and woe, home schooling in public libraries, boon-docking the Big Pig at Wal* Marts, frequenting laundromats and national parks, monuments and historic sites from Joshua Tree to Haleakala to Little Rock Arkansas.

In March of 2010 we put the Big Pig out to pasture (literally, on a friend's farm), enrolled the kids in the closest public school and found jobs.

And here is it December 2010 and we are home -- our new, 1887, Victorian home. We have rooms. We have doors. We have public sewers. We buy jumbo packs of toilet paper and paper towels. We make plans, have parties, and invite people over. We are digging-in to our new community and digging it in a way we hadn't appreciated before.

We are stable (well, physically anyway...) But, once a traveler, always a traveler.

Note: www.familyadventureyear.com is still up and running if you need a big catch up on where we were.

Lessons learned:

- You can put your life in a box (or a storage facility in Framingham, MA) and take it out again with no residual mess and a whole mess of adventure stories that will last a lifetime;
- It's not about having guts to do new things, it's about having trust that friends, family and your community will catch you when you land;
- Just because you stay in one place doesn't mean you are boring;
- Children will rise up if you raise the bar;
- You really only need 2 pairs of shoes.

And as the end of 2010 is drawing neigh, we are so thankful for you, our friends and family, who have supported us along the way and are helping us to adjust back to the US and stability.



We wish for you good health, strong teeth, something exciting to look forward to, and something that makes you laugh every day – even if it is just yourself.

Come visit! The guest room is up and running! Much love,

Wendy, Evan, Josh, and Simon

Updates - Wendy

People in Boston know me as a working woman. And guess what? I am working. How do my fellow parents do this? I had no idea how spoiled I was for all those years in the UK. And, I am only working part time. The good news is I have had some great gigs. I spent an exciting 3 months with the Loeb Fellows Program at Harvard's Graduate School of Design coordinating their 40th Anniversary/Reunion and now I am working part time with a Cambridge, MA-based family foundation looking



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at the issues around community engagement and non-profits. I still have room on my dance card if anyone has some leads! I flip flop between dressing up for meetings and dressing down to play “mom” for our funny, brilliant, and, have I mentioned good looking?, growing boys. Motherhood; never a dull moment. Josh at 13 years old is 3 inches taller than I am and loves nothing better than a 2 hour chat on human nature, nihilism and how we NEED an Xbox. Simon at 9 is still shorter than me and loves nothing better than a trip to our local ice cream shop, playing Star Wars legos, acting with the Watertown Children’s Theatre and reading his Greek Mythology. Hopes for 2011: sing in a choir, a week-long adventure on a bicycle, guitar lessons.

Evan

After spending six years in England and traveling around the US for a year, I’ve enjoyed settling down and gaining new perspectives. I started at Watertown-based athenahealth in May as Vice President, Product Strategy, helping to guide the direction of the company’s



Electronic Medical Record solution, so job-wise I’m either still doing the same thing I’ve done for the past 20 years (working for a fast-growing technology-based company) or have now switched careers / industries (product management / healthcare).

It has been great moving back to the Boston-area and re-connecting with many old friends and colleagues, and I’ve really enjoyed Brookline (after living on the ‘other’ side of the Charles River for 15 years, it’s fun to learn a new area). As I go running along the same paths that I first jogged on over 25 years ago, it sometimes seems like I’ve stayed in one place all this time (and at the pace I now run, I do have to push myself to keep moving).

Now that I have a job with less crazy travel demands, I’m enjoying a little more “me” time. I ride my bike the 4 miles to and from work most days, work out at the health club next to the office, and am currently getting ready for ski season – I’ve even started a company ski team that will be competing on Tuesday nights starting in Jan.

And, some of the eco- and cash-friendly habits I picked up as an unemployed and homeless head of household have even started to stick -- I’ve been eBaying less and Freecycleing more and borrowing from the wonderful Brookline library instead of Kindling.

The Grossman/Swart Chronicle

Josh, 13

2010 has been a year of transitions for me - from the RV to the apartment to the new house. From a bed above the drivers seat to having my own bedroom. From getting up at 10 in the morning to getting up at 6:45 so I can get to school. A lot has gone on in the past year and most of it was really fun.

Some highlights include: finding my spiritual homeland in Las Vegas; having a blast in Hawaii boogie boarding, going to the Polynesian Cultural Center and seeing the sunrise above Haleakala; playing a lead role in *Kiss Me Kate* at my new school; and making new friends in Brookline. In 2011 I hope to explore acting and math, and develop my leadership skills. Merry 2011 and happy consumerism for this Christmas season.



Josh as Bill Calhoun in the Pierce school 7&8th Grade Kiss Me Kate

Simon, 9

Hi this is Simon writing here for the Swart Grossman Holiday Chronicle. This year has been a very busy year and confusing too. We started the year in Santa Monica but then in a year we went coast to coast.

Some of the highlights were turning 9, going to Hawaii, being in a play where I actually had a speaking role. and going to a new school. And this year I have slept in three different houses: 1) The RV; 2) An apartment building; and, 3) the house I am in now. This year has been one of my favorites but it is sad to remember London and I miss all my friends. But I am starting to settle in here in Brookline. It is a good city and I have a good house with a good family and I know this going to be an awesome first Christmas here in Brookline. Over, and out.



Simon as the Dormouse in Watertown Children Theater’s Alice in Wonderland