



Reflections 2004

Christmas 2004



Special Events in 2004:

Karen C got a new job!

Megan graduated middle school and started high school.

House renovations done!

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Karen and Karen at the foot of Diamond Head volcano



Megan upon graduation from middle school

Happy holidays from our family to yours!

The end of 2004 finds our family healthy and happy. We had another wonderful year, although we did not travel quite as often due to other obligations and saving up vacation time and money for a whopper of a trip in December-January (more on that in a later section of the newsletter).

We hope that you all had a wonderful year and are enjoying the holidays. Best wishes for a happy new year, filled with love, peace and joy.

Namaste,
Karen D, Karen C, Megan, Chelsea, Buddy & Gabby

On the Home Front

Life in Pacific Grove is idyllic as always. We enjoy walks along the ocean, visits from friends, trips to the Monterey Bay Aquarium, an occasional round of golf on our local course (Pebble Beach is close by, but just too expensive!) and drives along the coast to Big Sur (with lunch at Nepenthe) and points along the way. Hiking at Point Lobos is another family and guest favorite. Alas, life has us all too busy to enjoy our surroundings as much as we'd like, but we try to get out as much as we can on weekends.

After more than 5 years of work, the renovation/restoration of our 1862 Victorian home in Pacific Grove is finally at an end (we hope!). This year, we completed the renovation of the garage, moving the front wall back to clear a bay-view window, installing a new garage door, removing the old ugly roof and replacing it with yet another

beautiful deck. A winding Victorian spiral staircase provides access to the deck from the back yard. We also replaced the old furnace, ran new heating ducts and finished the basement. Recessed lighting behind under-eave Victorian soffit covers provides nighttime security illumination all around the house and garage. That should just about do it, although (of course!) we are considering installing solar panels in 2005 to do our part in decreasing our reliance on oil from the Middle East.

In the coming months, we'll publish photos of our newly restored house in our Photo Album on our website at <http://www.k2zone.com/>

We were disappointed in the presidential election but are holding off on any plans to move out of the country just yet. We continue to hope for peace and the safe return of U.S. troops from Iraq.

Karen D's News



Inspecting pineapples in Oahu



Pacific Grove Golf Course



Whale Shark in the Galapagos



Enjoying Esalen



Megan's 9th Grade Photo

Karen D continues her M.A. studies in Linguistics at San Jose State University, where she has made many new friends among the international student community from Korea, China, Taiwan, Bulgaria, Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Armenia and Ireland. In addition, she teaches and tutors SJSU freshmen in a college literacy program for developing English writing skills.

When she is avoiding studying, Karen enjoys marathon movie days, cooking macrobiotic vegetarian cuisine and the occasional scuba diving trip. In preparation for December's dive in the Galapagos, she has been working on perfecting her underwater photography skills and splurged on a Sony dive light for her underwater camera. The Scuba

Karen C's News

The biggest news for Karen C this year was leaving Sun (after 10½ years) and joining eBay, Inc. Karen had a great run at Sun, but it was time to go. There were few interesting challenges remaining for her there, while there are challenges aplenty at eBay, where Karen is now Director of Application Architecture. In this role, she and her team are responsible for the software architecture of the largest ecommerce marketplace on the planet.

The only downside of the new job is the commute. Yes, Karen is making the daily drive from PG to San Jose (oh, about 700 miles per week). In order to help with gas mileage, she just bought a new Toyota Prius hybrid and is happy to report that she is

Megan's News

Megan has had some interesting adventures of her own, spending her last semester of eighth grade in home school to complete graduation requirements for middle school. She started high school at PGHS last fall and is studying Algebra, Anatomy, English, Geography, PE and Art. Her favorite subjects are Geography and

Show in Long Beach is a long-time favorite for checking out new gear, dive travel and underwater video, and this year's show was as good as ever.

One of the interesting sidelights this year was continuing her witch doctor studies in attending John McDougall's health seminar in Santa Rosa. It was interesting to see how much John's teachings are commensurate with macrobiotic principles. People seem very motivated to eat better for weight loss, and John's programs focus on that; as expected, though, his patients have relieved serious health conditions as well. This seems to be a very doable way for people to ease into healthier eating and living.



getting close to 50 miles per gallon!

In addition to being employed at eBay, Karen has also started a small home business on eBay, creating an online yard sale as well as buying items in bulk and reselling them on eBay for a small profit (eBay seller id = kcasella).

In other news, Karen decided to put her MBA studies on hold while she comes up to speed at eBay. She hasn't played quite as much golf as she might have liked this year but hopes to get back out on the links as soon as possible. When she has time, Karen continues to be an avid reader, finishing Stephen King's Dark Tower series and several other novels and non-fiction books.

learning about current events. Megan continues with her self-pursuit of the arts as she has started to put together a portfolio of her own unique fashion designs. She's also quite a poet but is too shy to share any of her poems in this newsletter. When she's not in school, Megan enjoys "hanging out" with her friends.

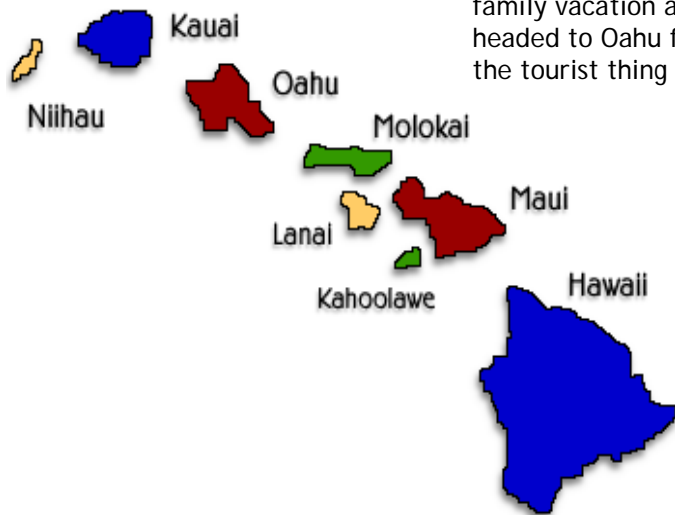
Travel News



*Karen D below Saba
(Mike Ford, photographer)*



"The Vision" in the Channel Islands



Last year's newsletter read like a travelogue; this year we have fewer trips on which to report.

In January, Karen D joined the Northern California Rainbow Divers for a dive trip to Saba (an island very close to St. Maarten in the Eastern Caribbean). She had a great time and brought back a ton of pictures. Later that same month, she visited Phyllis in New Orleans and her Mom and Dad in Mississippi. She returned to New Orleans in June and again in July.

In March, while Phyllis was here for a visit, the four of us spent a beautiful, long weekend at the Esalen Institute in spectacular Big Sur. Karen D and Phyllis enjoyed their seminar with Peter Kingsley, while Karen C and Megan enjoyed hiking in the Esalen woods. It was cool and misty that weekend and absolutely perfect for relaxing.

In April, Karen D enjoyed a 3-day scuba adventure aboard the Vision, touring the Channel Islands of Southern California. The spring weather was perfect and the water clear but much chillier than she remembered from her earlier years of diving the Channel Islands. This inspired her, finally, to relent on her "real divers dive wet" attitude and mark the end of a 24-year era (ork! has she really been diving that long?) by getting a Whites Catalyst drysuit.

In June, we were finally able to take a family vacation and the three of us headed to Oahu for a week. We did the tourist thing in Honolulu, staying

at Waikiki beach, taking an island tour, visiting Pearl Harbor, going to a luau, etc. I have to admit that I didn't enjoy Oahu as much as Maui or the Big Island, but it was fun and beautiful just the same.

We spent the remainder of the summer venturing off on weekend trips to Santa Rosa, Catalina Island, Las Vegas, San Francisco and Long Beach. Owing to school and Karen C's new job, we cancelled our November beach vacation in Playa del Carmen, opting instead to continue planning for our big end-of-year trip to the South Pole.

In December, Karen D and other Rainbow Divers spent an incredible women's week aboard the Aggressor scuba yacht in the Galapagos Islands, topped off with five more days exploring Quito and the Ecuadorian rainforest. Afterward (she's there now!), she'll meet up with Karen C for a week in colorful Buenos Aires, then hop over to Ushuaia, Chile, to board an expedition ship for a 10-day adventure in Antarctica. January being the middle of summer in the Southern Hemisphere, Antarctica will be relatively warm just at or below freezing (instead of 30-80 degrees below zero!). We will be taking day trips from the ship on zodiacs to the ice shelf, where we will hike, kayak and visit with some of the most uniquely interesting animals on the planet. The trip promises "breathtaking scenery and incredible wildlife...an ever-changing panorama of tabular icebergs, snowcapped mountains, bustling penguin rookeries, and a variety of other wildlife, including whales, seals and seabirds."

This promises to be a fantastic opportunity of a lifetime!



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2005 Preview

This coming year promises to be another great one! Karen D expects to graduate in May with her M.A. in TESOL. Megan will finish her first year of high school. Who knows, perhaps Karen C will even take up her MBA studies, golf, and scuba again!

Karen and Karen will be completing their trip to Argentina, Chile and Antarctica in January. We'll be sure to bring back lots of photos and movies (Karen C has a new video camera). We'll all be making our annual pilgrimage to Las Vegas in February, where Karen C will worship at the craps tables and Karen D and Megan will sojourn through the malls. In April, Karen D will set out for the Socorro Islands with the Dive Dogs for yet another spectacular scuba week. Over Thanksgiving, Karen and Karen will be going with Steve Webster to Fiji for a 10-day live-aboard scuba diving trip.

Keep an eye on our Calendar of Events on our new website for late-breaking news and photos of our adventures.



*"Be the change you want
to see in the world."
-- Mahatma Gandhi*

For more news, photos, etc.

Please visit our new website at <http://www.k2zone.com/> Here we will be publishing news updates, our photo album and a calendar of past and upcoming events with links to news and photos. It's still a work in progress, so we'll send an email update when there's more to see!

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:
<http://www.k2zone.com/>