

## Christmas 2011 and New Year's 2012

Life is good thanks to wonderful family, friends, and 4 terrific caregivers Jamie, Joyce, Marcia and Natalie. I find looking back on this year is hard to do as I would much rather look forward. Cruising remains as one of my favorite activities. Marcia made my dream to take a maiden voyage possible going on the Allure of the Seas although we had no Hoyer sling (found when we went through security in Florida on our way home) and delayed home by 1 day due to weather. In February I went on the Serenade of the Seas from San Juan first with David's family and next with Peter's. Getting to San Juan was a nightmare as Marlene and I missed our connection – on President's Day weekend – by 2 minutes. We had to stay overnight in DC only to be back at Dulles at 6 AM to take the 8:10 AM plane, which we finally boarded about 11 only to sit on the tarmac an hour before disembarking to take another plane that arrived in San Juan at the time our cruise was scheduled to depart. My wheelchair had a broken leg rest and had to be taped on. Our luggage had made the flight we missed. RCCL held 2 ships for all to board. We were greeted by David's family who never book a day in advance like I do! In April Marlene and I took the Oasis of the Seas for a "restful" week before John and Maria arrived with Sophia and Austin. We went 3 days early to Fort Lauderdale to see the canals with my first grade boyfriend and go to Flamingo Gardens. We figured nothing could be worse than the February cruise but we were wrong. The hotel, which does not have accessible transportation, did not transport any of our luggage – including my battery charger and meds – that was brought to their lobby and was near my Hoyer lift that the hotel staff labeled. Somehow we managed to meet someone with a chair like mine who loaned me his charger during the day. I charged my chair days occasionally playing trivia in the Schooner Bar while connected to the charger. John's foursome brought our luggage when they joined us for an eventful week 2 when John prosed to Maria in Oasis' Central Park. I am still planning to cruise two back-to-back cruises in January and April with John's foursome. David and Peter's families cannot go but I'll have 2 of my caregivers and 5 year Ava. She and her mother, Jamie, have never cruised.

I keep busy as treasurer of the Kennebec Valley Organization and the camp association, and as a member of the church stewardship – the church you may have seen on TV with the candle watch for the missing 20 month old little girl. I try to keep 3 websites up-to-date, time permitting. The Wyman Community Garden uses some of my land for 12 gardens 16 by 16 feet and I host their 7 monthly potluck suppers.

The first weekend of May 4 of us went to Boston by train for 2 Red Sox games that Ken Nigro, knpwn as Mr. Baseball and Colby classmate, made possible. David's family was at both games and they, along with Peter and Emily, went to the Boston Aquarium with us. The next weekend Marcia and I took the bus from Augusta to Boston to meet her niece and great niece. We went to the Museum of Science and learned how to use the "accessible" subway as Boston really no accessible taxis.

My college roommate, Bev, and husband, visited during the annual camp association meeting. My cousin, Polly, made plans for ALL 4 cousins to visit September 21<sup>st</sup> but she was the one who could not come because her husband, Andy, broke his ankle on his second day in Alaska while on a bear watch. Thankfully he did take 700 pictures his first day. We had a wonderful visit talking about old times together in my sunroom and on the camp deck. Polly and I have managed to become friends on Facebook without the help of our grandchildren. Three days later my oldest niece, Diane, came for a weekend visit. As my boys do not want anything that I have, Diane and I spent a cloudy Saturday going through just a few boxes from the attic and found oh so much like the newspaper article describing my grandfather, who was a catcher, being hit in the eye losing sight in that eye at the age 18. Sunday was a beautiful day so we treated ourselves to oysters and lobster at Muscongus Bay.

Additions to my home include in May Lilah, a 7 week old black Great Dane. After 18 lessons at a local pet store, a wireless fence, a training tool and help from my caregivers and friends, she is trained and the love of my life. On Veterans' Day Jamie and I went to a parrot rescue and came home with Hawk but now Hector, a Red Amazon parrot.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from one who is truly blessed.

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### **ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS**

I had a delightful Thanksgiving at Jamie's aunt's house meeting many of her relatives, making new friends while enjoying a delicious meal.

On December 2 Peter and I celebrated 29 years of living having a wonderful dinner at Sedgley Place, <http://www.sedgleyplace.com/> We recalled many of those terrific times since December 2, 1982.

On December 14 returning from Colby's 42nd Festival of Lights service my van missed a deer but not second one. Although it was a sad moment, many people saved the meat free of charge to feed other appreciative people.

