

Well, 2013 was Debbie's first full year of retirement. Considering how busy she has been, it is remarkable that she ever had time to work.

There have been several projects around the house, that have been put off until one or both of us had time to pay attention to them. This included a new roof, a new patio in the back, and major landscaping in the back yard. We did part of the landscaping ourselves. But, finding the right people to take on these other jobs, and making sure that we got things done the way we wanted, takes a lot of time and energy. Things have shaped up nicely, though.

She has also started getting serious about her scrapbooking again. She has moved into the digital domain with her scrapbooks, using Photoshop to combine our snapshots in creative ways, and then printing the pages (at a print service) to produce a physical album. She has already completed an album for our great niece's first year, and an album for our cruise in the Spring. She has other projects already in the works.

Ah, yes, the cruise in the Spring. We spent a week aboard Disney's magnificent new ship, the Fantasy. It is almost 50% longer than their older ships, and is beautifully appointed. We enjoyed ports of call at a Mayan ruins in Costa Maya (Mexico), a fascinating city tour in the Grand Caymans, and a great time in Cozumel. In Cozumel, Nick and Chrissy went off on a different tour than us, and spent time at a tropical adventure park, that included driving jeeps and swimming through caves, and 14 zip lines over the rain forest.

Chrissy Allard and her mom, Darla, accompanied us on the cruise, and it was wonderful to share their first cruise experience with them. The Allards are old family friends.

On board the beautiful ship, we delighted in the incredible service, the amazing food, the nightclubs, the pools, the water slide that circumvents the ship, the live musical productions, the magicians (a live stage act that has their own showroom in Vegas), the hypnotist, the ventriloquist, and the view from our deck 6 verandah. We couldn't get enough.

So, Debbie and I are going back. In September of 2014, we are going to cruise through the Panama Canal on the Disney Wonder. This 14 day cruise will be our longest ever, and we are already getting caught up in the excitement of planning this amazing trip.

In October, we went back to Blizzcon. This is our fifth year at this conference, which is a massive celebration of the games of Blizzard Entertainment, including the horribly addictive World Of Warcraft (which we all 3 play). There were 26,000 attendees at this year's event, and they had major release announcements for WoW, Diablo, and two new games--Heroes of the Storm and Hearthstone. Blink 182 performed at the closing concert. It was quite a show!

Since the convention is held in Anaheim, Debbie and I went early, and came back late, making a nice California trip out of it. Nick met us out there, only staying for Blizzcon and a day at Disneyland. But, Debbie and I managed 3 days at Disney, a short trip to Knotts Berry Farm, and a really interesting bus tour of LA (Hollywood Walk of Fame, Venice Beach, Rodeo Drive). It was a fun and exciting trip.

Debbie and Joe have the chance to spend a lot more time together, which is a wonderful thing. It helps that Joe is still running his small consulting business (Four Point OH Consulting) as his full time "job". His flexible hours allow them to spend most days together. After the middle of the year, he was able to reduce his hours further. Next year is probably going to see some changes in his client list, with things continuing to be fairly relaxed in 2014.

It is remarkable how well and how much Omen and Chromaggus play together. They go at it for hours at a time. But, there are definitely times when the old man (Chro is six years old now) has had enough, and goes to hide somewhere that Omen can't reach. But, overall, he seems happy to have the company.

Nick is busy in his fourth year at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He continues to pursue a degree in Business Information Systems. The past few semesters have really been exciting, with much better grades, and interesting classes like programming, telecommunications, system requirements, statistics, and database design.

He is still working part time at Walgreens, though he is searching for an internship in his field.

Happy Holidays to all of you, and best wishes for 2014.

Debbie, Joe, Nick, Chromaggus, and Omen