

Merry Christmas, 2010

To our dear family members and friends,

We got some of the Christmas lights up but not the ones that require getting up on the roof; I don't climb on wet surfaces even with a belay. We had a grand time for the holidays last year along with college applications, SATs, and plans for high-school graduation.



Christmas morning in jammies

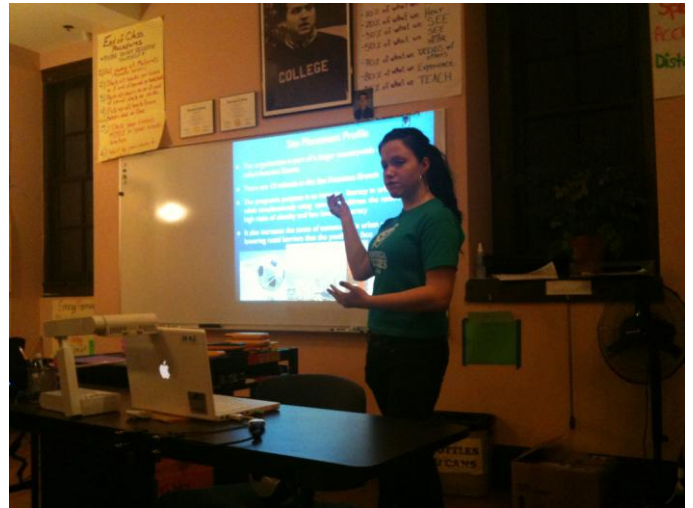
Just as the year was ending, our report on Indian saltworks in the Sierra made Dave Perlman's article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on the front page above the fold.



Read it at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2009/5225/>

Maurie's presentation was far more impressive; she did a student-intern project as part of her 12th-grade requirements working with kids in San Francisco in an after-school program that increases literacy as well as all-around citizenship. After the project, she presented her

results at the school.



Maurie's presentation

Deanna with friend and cousin collusion has had several cook-ins a couple of which took over the kitchen at this house. The kids and hubbies got to eat well (and clean up afterwards). Deanna's leftovers are better than most dinners. She's been doing on-call at work to address the tuition bills.

Deanna has been working on getting Michael to stay in shape throughout the year instead of just doing these "Ironman" gigs now and then and sitting around working at his Mac between events. Yet again, he peddled from Woodside to Pescadero and back (40 miles and a few thousand feet of climbing) when his friend George had his (81st) Over The Hill ride.



Michael (l) was among the youngest riders

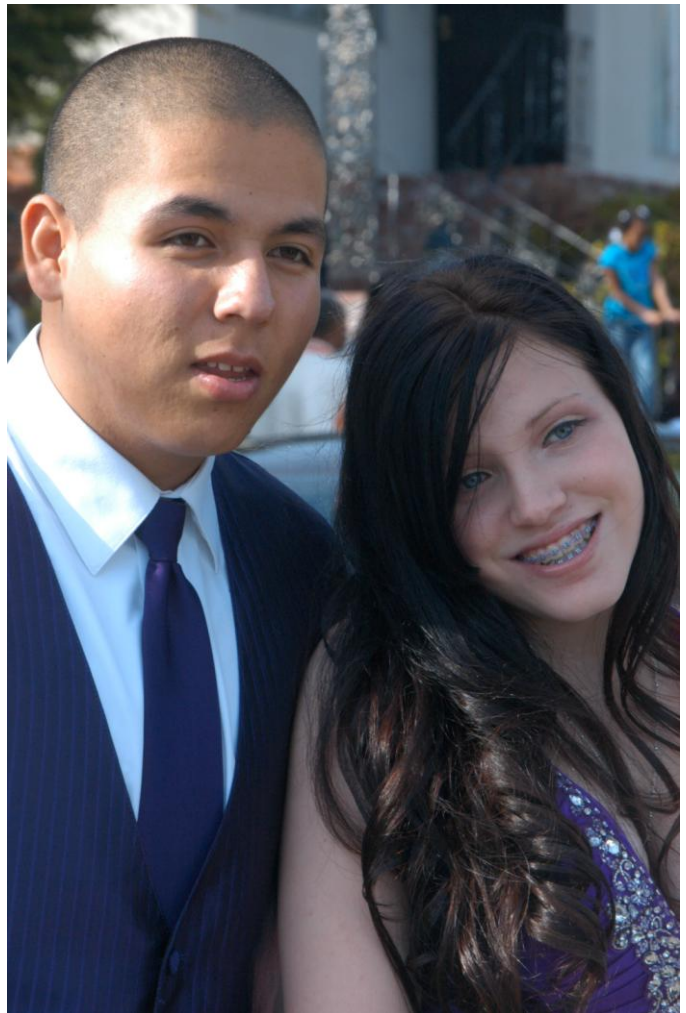
Well, I didn't get in shape very early in the year. In fact, I was on sick leave instead. So... have you ever heard this stuff about how getting blood tests for Prostate Specific Antigen is not good because it can give false positives? And further, that men Of A

Certain Age should avoid bothering with them? Well I have one word for all that: "<beep>." I have been getting PSAs every year for about a decade and they have always been about zero. Then this Spring, it went to 6. A re-test showed 8. A biopsy showed cancer. After surgery, the pathology showed we had stopped even more spread. I had absolutely no indication there was any problem -- except the PSA. Get one, guys! So that left me convalescing around the house for a couple of months looking for trouble. Well, y'know that little Airstream trailer we bought a few years ago? The kitchen cushions left a lot to be desired. Have you ever made, much less sewn, piping? I hadn't. It is a lot of work but... it kept me off the streets and the trailer looks a lot better without the old Ozzie-And-Harriet styling. Deanna finished the flooring in the back of the trailer and repainted the iconic blue band around the outside.



New covers and zippers; old treadle machine

The real activities of the first part of the year were about getting Maurie out of high school. How much can there be to that? Oh... let me make a short list: Senior Prom, Senior Portrait (Photoshop the braces out), Yearbook, SATs, Subject Exams, ACTs, finals, signing ceremony, personal essay, college applications, road trips to visit campuses, graduation with the cap-and-gown ceremony, grand gathering of family flying in from the Midwest, and finally, the acceptance letter (I think she had about six to choose from); she picked Calif. State Univ. Northridge in the San Fernando Valley near Santa Monica. Maurie did her Senior year at Envision Academy of Arts and Technology. It is a small charter school which is good and not so good. They don't have the selection she would have liked but she solved a lot of that by taking Physics and Psych at the Community College a few blocks away. Envision boasts 80 percent of graduates getting into 4-year colleges and the other 20 percent going to community college. 100 percent college bound! Maurie was one of the two White students.



Cute couple at Prom Night



Graduation

Ah summer; time to relax. NOT! Pastor Craig had a plan to take the Church youth leadership to Rwanda. Mama was more than a little bit trepidatious about that. If she wasn't there to protect Her Baby, then what? Easy... come join us. Oh, well, uh, er... OK! So off they went, the greatest Mother-Daughter Act the world has ever known. Oakland to Washington to Rome to Addis Ababa to Kigali (Michael stayed home with the dog and

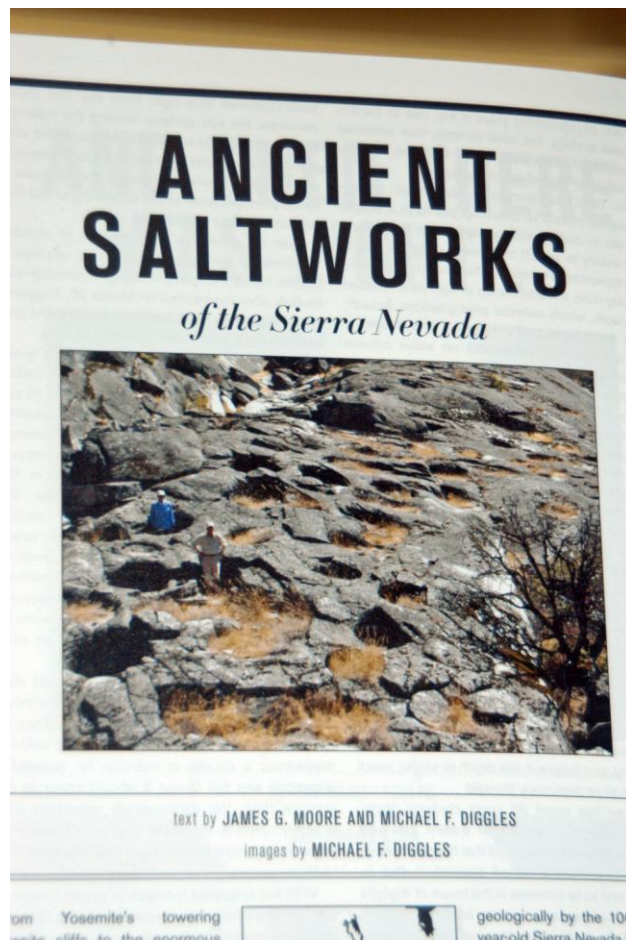
cats). They visited an orphanage, Deanna brought a bunch of stethoscopes for a health clinic, they painted, pushed squeegees, unpacked books, and learned how a country goes about recovering from genocide. They had a wonderful driver to take them all over the country including downtown Kigali which I hear is classified as an E-Ticket Ride. They got a bit of time off to see African animals but mostly danced, dined, worshiped, and befriended many wonderful people who in spite of their history, are some of the most open and giving on Earth.



Maurie and some new friends; photo by Deanna

A couple of stories this year are expansions on earlier stories from last year. Jim Moore and I were invited to re-craft our paper on Indian saltworks for the popular press. In mid-summer, our new article was published in *The Explorers Journal* out of New York.

The other work that continues into this year is our tsunami research. We were busy acquiring and archiving historic seismograms so we could address tsunamigenic earthquakes. Willie, Steve, and I put out a symposium volume for a tsunami-source workshop <http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2010/1152/> and we had a grand banquet to which Willie treated Deanna; he figured he owed her for all the hubbie time he took from her. One of the highlights of the event was that Hiroo Kanamori (Caltech) presented his recent work on the 1960 and 2010 Chile earthquakes. Hiroo, you may recall, with Thomas Hanks at USGS, developed the moment-magnitude scale that replaced the Richter scale.



Our new paper from our fieldwork last year



Hiroo and Willie after our tsunami workshop

We are about to up the ante on our historic seismogram studies. We expect to receive funding from IASEPI to build a server where seismologists and geophysicists worldwide can share scans of analog seismograms; these we will curate and archive at IRIS (Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology) at the University of Washington. To do this, I got a static IP address at our house and will be putting in hardware. Deanna wouldn't let me buy the equipment until we actually saw the euros arrive from Italy; she was worried they would

go the way of the Irish and we'd be stuck with the bill. <http://www.openseismo.org/> will be the site.

Well gee; it had been five months since cancer surgery. Time to bag another peak. Makes four times on the summit of the Lower 48 since 1968.



Jon, Michael, Ally, and Rick under Mt. Whitney

In October Deanna and I went to the annual meeting of what used to be the Yosemite Association that is now the Yosemite Conservancy. The Wonder Wife came away from the raffle with a pair of CamelBaks and trekking poles. She needs to hook one of those near her wind-trainer; she puts about 6,000 miles a year on that bicycle.



Deanna ready for a workout

We got a little more fishin' in at Bass Lake; Jazz is the best helper dog but is unsure of that canoe stuff.



Jazz would rather have his puppy treats and his bed

This year was the twelfth year going to Yosemite with my sixty 11-year-olds. Yup, I've been doing this since before this crop was born. My first kids are finishing college now. It had snowed just before we got there but the snowline was at about 6,000 feet. Since the Valley rim is above that and the Valley floor is below that, it was perfect. We had a lovely dusting of white in the distance without having to walk in it. We hiked to the base of Nevada Fall one day and the base of upper Yosemite Falls the next (1,000' of climbing each). <http://www.diggles.com/yi/2010-11/> is a slideshow I did with Adobe Photoshop Lightroom. We also got recorded in the Merced River [stream-gauge webcam](#) (sorry; it's in Flash so you can't see it with your iPad).



Yosemite with sixth-graders

Have a wonderful and safe Christmas and New Year,
-Michael, Deanna, and Maurie
-Lilly, Luv Dove, Yo Yo, Lola, and Jazz

mike@diggles.com
deanna@diggles.com
maurie1992@gmail.com