



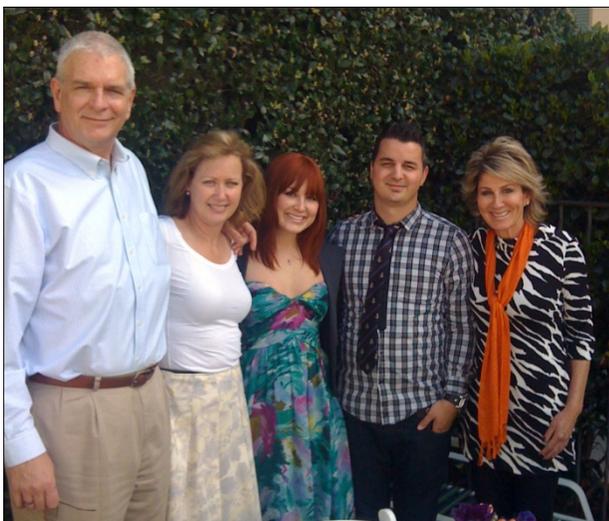
Greetings!

You know it's been a slow year when the lead story is getting my condo unit painted! Still, it was a big event. Water had poured into the place several times since I came here in 2005 - the last deluge being in February of this year. The condo association finally repaired the roof above me, so it was safe to do the internal repairs and paint. The contractor came to look in May and said "no problem." I cleared out vast amounts of stuff (like all those 3-ring notebooks, dividers, and report covers that used to be so essential and hadn't been touched in years) and waited... He finally returned in October, but they did a fine job, and the place looks great today.

I'm now in my third year as a consultant with Accenture – indeed I am the first at my (admittedly modest) level to be certified as a User Experience Architect - woo hoo! After finishing up at Accenture Software (Insurance software) in New Jersey, my assignments took me to our headquarters in Chicago – what a great place for an architecture nut to be in the summer, not to mention seeing Helen & Marv several times. Then I had 12 weeks at the ever beloved Goldman Sachs, where at least the 35<sup>th</sup> floor offered great views of the NYC harbor. The year ended with a short usability project at Educational Testing Service in Princeton. During the year, I also taught 3 virtual courses on Axure (design software) and one “live” course on user experience fundamentals at Accenture’s training center. All in all, work continues to be varied and enjoyable.

Another plus of the Chicago gig is that I was able to take a long weekend for a brief sibling reunion – Dot was in the country, so we all headed up to David & Susan's place on Lake Michigan for a lazy routine of eating, swimming, and more eating. (In photo at left, note my siblings’ agonizing thoughts about whether to have another corn on the cob.)

Not many other travels aside from work. A conference took me to Savannah in February for a few days – a delightful city. I made two enjoyable visits with friends Loren & Marcia in Boston – including a dappled day in Rockport worthy of Monet (below).



February also took me to Los Angeles for the engagement party for Sanford, 27, and the delightful Courtney. Wendy invited me to join her in hosting the event – that had a strangely déjà vu quality, but a good time was had by all.



Sanford & Courtney have since moved to Phoenix, where he is finishing his degree at Arizona State, while Courtney, now graduated, is working at the clothing firm Anthropologie. They seem to love it there!

Emma, 23, is now working for her father in Portland, Oregon, gaining wide experience and learning all the ropes of the fashion business. After staying with his family for a couple months, she recently moved into her own apartment. It was also great to have her visit me several times this year, in February, April, June, and October - though sadly, on that last visit she reclaimed Geraldine (aka Chaplin), the bicoastal stray cat she adopted in Santa Monica and left with me last year.

Colin, 28, and his lovely fiancée Lauren are still living on the top floor of my condo. Colin had a rough year, mainly around medical issues, his insurance expiring, and then getting hooked on heavy pain relievers. This whole episode was scary and difficult in more ways than one, but he managed to kick the habit and is now doing well. He has been working steadily for six months. Delivering pizza is hardly enough to live on, but he has stuck with it and even roped Lauren into working days at the restaurant as well. We hope he'll be able to move to something more substantial next year.

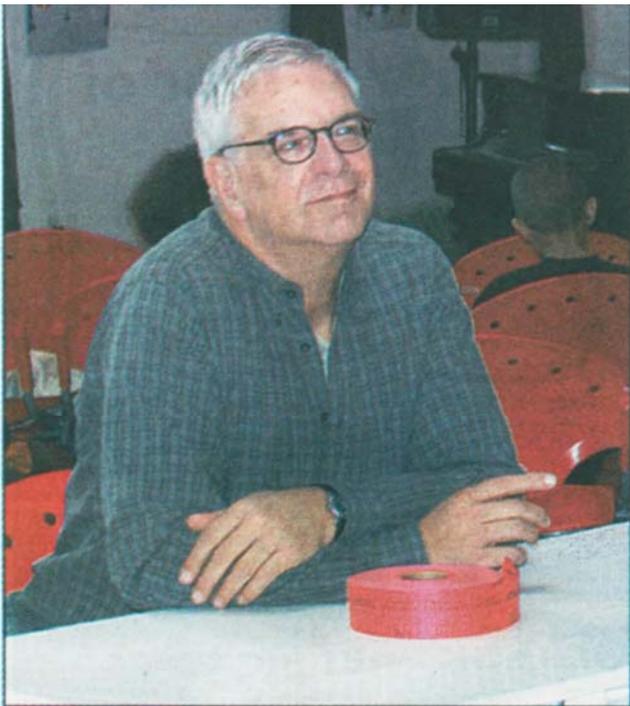
Late in the year, I took leave of my senses and agreed to let Colin adopt a rescue dog. He has been pining for a dog since our beloved Livia died five years ago, and this 3-month-old puppy was bound for nothing good if he couldn't find a home right away. Colin believes that taking care of a pet will provoke a blossoming sense of responsibility that will lead to good things in other areas of life – a consummation devoutly to be wished! The dog's name is still in flux - the night we loaded up on supplies (including a name tag!), his name was Vigo. The next morning, it was Isaac, shortened by afternoon to Zach. Yesterday it was Max. I believe it has changed again, but the latest has slipped my mind.

I'm still on the boards of two local nonprofits: the Historical Society and Safe Harbors of the Hudson, whose project to restore an old theatre led to my moment of local fame (see news photo left). I still do the occasional website – one for a local law firm, and another for a real-estate project. In free time I see a lot of movies and go to many jazz and chamber music concerts, which abound in the Hudson Valley.

Part of my cleanup was to give away many books I would never read again; now I'm a regular at the local library – how sensible I've become in my old age (in some areas)!

All best wishes for the season!

Jim



Jim Hoekema stopped by Saturday's "Bells on Broadway" fundraiser for the Ritz Theater to "check things out" and quickly found himself reined in to sell tickets for the event.