

Happy Holidays to my dearest family and friends

2005

This is my first holiday letter even though I have thought about it for years. I like to make life simple, and with the busyness of it all, this is a great start for me. To make it even more practical I am emailing this. I hope you don't mind. Think of all the trees we are saving.

It has been a wonderful, fun filled adventuresome year. It all started in January (like most years). A few friends and Wayne and I traveled to the heart of Mexico to climb the 3rd highest peak in North America - Orizaba. It was a fun filled trip, to be attempted again. Our good weather days of acclimatization led up to a windstorm at base camp on summit day. No worries...we were not beat.



In between adventures, I have been working on my thesis. "A thorough evaluation of CA case law reveals that landowners of property containing antiquated subdivision maps cannot rely solely on the map to create legal parcels that can be conveyed in accordance with the Subdivision Map Act." Burpsie Boodle thinks it is boring, but she sure has been my lifeline to legalese. I even dedicated my thesis to her. And if anyone would like some reading material, my scholarly adventure will be completed in May.



Many small adventures were in the midst of my schoolwork. In April, Tim *finally* married Anita, and now I will be an aunt again to a little girl in May. The wedding was beautiful and the Norwegian traditions that were added to it, just made it even more special.

For my birthday, we went kayaking in Black Canyon. It is below the Hoover dam and we visited all the natural hot springs and showers...wow-what an incredible place to go!



At the end of the month, we backpacked down to Havasupai. Wayne had never been there, so off we went before he headed north to the Yukon. The travertine falls and the blue-green waters are a sight to see.



Then Wayne and Tori (the luckiest kitten in the world) ventured off to the Yukon to start a new career. It was soooo sad to have my buddy go, but he is living the great life. (I'm envious!!!) Check out his website www.thereandbackagain.ca We scouted out his trips such as the whales in Baja and the cave paintings. Kissing a baby whale that mom pushed up to the boat was magical. Visiting the cave paintings from the time of the ice age was mind-boggling.

Well, the Yukon always seemed like a dream to me. Then all of a sudden it became a reality. Since my best friend was there...I jumped on a plane. He needed help to scout out more trips...and I just know that I am the most qualified person to help him. We had the most wonderful time...almost died but we always seem to push our limits. After all, life is an adventure. The near mishap was a creek crossing of glacier melt water, but no worries, I'm writing this letter. The Yukon was incredible. We hit the trail at 1:00 in the afternoon, followed the river and sheep trails, walked into camp after 9:00 pm and the sun was still high in the sky. The most beautiful sight was when we woke up to snow-covered peaks. The





mysterious beauty of the tundra tugged at my senses. I tried to absorb it all... but Wow! (again) We were always on guard for bears and that just meant that a Yukon picnic must always include bear spray. Visit Wayne's site and let him show you all these spectacular places!



On my way back down south, I stopped in Washington to visit with Kelly, a past roommate, to kayak in the San Juan Islands. Orcas were supposed to be in town but they had other fish to fry. However, the water was like glass and the kayaking was superb.

In between the fun, I had to continue on fixing up the house. So, I decided windows and doors were the next step. That led to paint, carpet, and painting the outside. Now the downstairs is done except for the bathroom. I'm taking a break for a while but you can still come visit.



There were many other small adventures...bagging peaks in the Sierras, road biking, mountain biking, wine tasting, hiking...anything to fight the fluff! The biggest adventure of all...off to the heart of Mexico again. I'm still high. Acclimatization went very well...better than I ever imagined. Our first peak was Desierto de los Leones. I found a real vaquero spur on the way up and kept it for good luck. I received a lot of heck for it..."that is too heavy to carry" I showed them! We summited Iztaccíhuatl for Wayne's birthday (with my spur) . Our GPSs put us at 17150'. We hit the trail at 2:00 am on Thanksgiving day and summited Orizaba. So, I had a Gu and a Powerbar instead of turkey that day, but it was the best ever!. We didn't carry a GPS (but I carried my spur), however the mean of published elevations put us at ~18500'...my highest and coldest! It was the challenge of a lifetime for me. I went beyond my comfort zone, but being a Taurus and Polish I was determined to succeed. Now I am ready for my next challenging adventure



On to 2006, with more adventures in store. Each and every one of you has a special place in my heart and you have made my life a wonderful thing. My sincerest best wishes go out to you and here's to a special adventure between us.

Xoxoxoxxoxoxooxoxoox *Annie and Inky*

