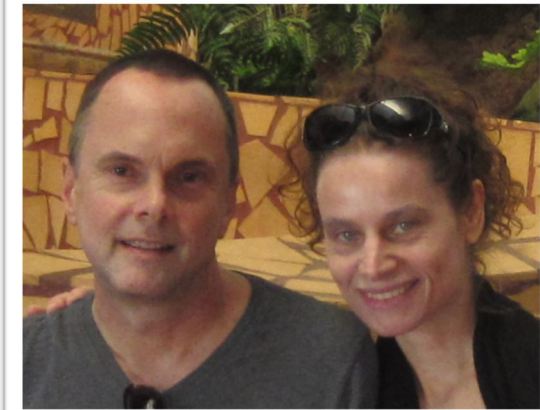


To our Friends and Family,

Friday, 30 December 2011

Happy New Year! Mirjam and I wish to express our warmest regards to everyone.

We are still in our California "Patio-Home" in Irvine, and have just extended the lease for another year. I recently found out that they are going to keep the pool heated through the winter so I'm really happy that I can continue what has become my favored exercise routine, which is swimming laps. Mirjam is more than content with her elliptical machine, using it most days of the week. Living here in the shadow of Irvine's Great Park still suits us well. I'm only minutes from my "day job" at Shimano where I am employed as a credit analyst.



We did manage to leave the comforts of our home for a while though this year, on a grand vacation to Australia for 24 days. We took a direct flight to Melbourne, adding another hour and a half, to an already lengthy flight. By starting and



ending our stay in Victoria, we were able to enjoy a magnificent time with Carol and her cute 2-year old, Caleb. As well as her 18-year old son Asher and mother Shirley. And we were the first to see Carol's new flat which she was in the process of moving into, after waiting two years for it to be constructed. In her usual fashion, Carol spoiled us with lots of her time and several local adventures.

Our next stop was Alice Springs where we would pick up our 4WD and then drive 2500 km over 12 days. Taking the Stuart, Barkly and Flinders Highways - also known as the Overlander's Way - we drove at a leisurely pace, from the Northern Territory, all the way to Townsville on the Queensland Coast, where we stayed for 5 days.



In Townsville we took a day trip to Magnetic Island, and most importantly, spent some quality time with

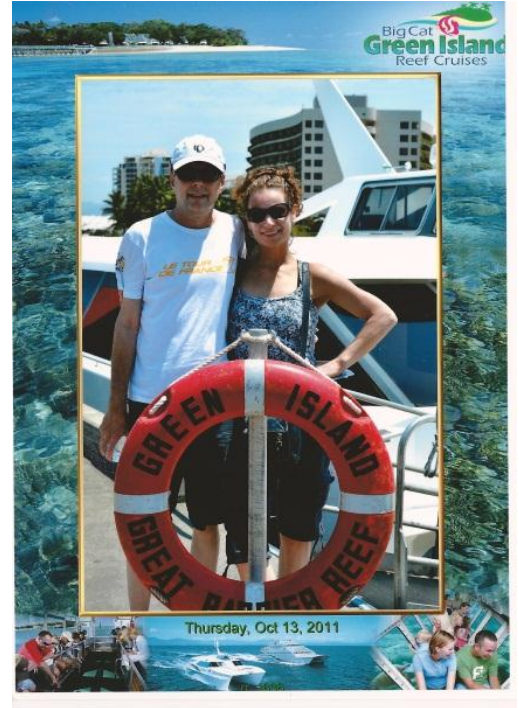


Anthea and James and their two lovely daughters Athena (2 $\frac{3}{4}$) and Leila (1 $\frac{1}{2}$). Coincidentally, James and

Anthea were also literally in the middle of moving to a lovely new leased home. That everyone would take time out of their hectic schedules to make us feel welcome is truly recognized and cherished.

Then it was off to Cairns where we finally got to see Green Island, which is a true paradise on the Barrier Reef. Our vacation ended back in Melbourne, where we could spend those last days again with Carol and the family. Mirjam and I noticed a distinct difference in the Australia of today as compared to previous trips. The economy is the envy of much of the world right now, unemployment is low and wages are good. And with that, it seemed that most everything has increased in price. Though, this did not seem to be a concern to the Australians we spoke to. Good on them!

The end of our vacation was bittersweet as it was good to get back home and drive on the right hand side again! Though after being away for so long, it can be a bit intimidating going back to the office. Fortunately, I was met with open arms back at Shimano. It was a nice feeling, especially in this economy. There have been a lot of changes in my role, and I have been chosen as the lead analyst to work with the analysts at our newly acquired Pear Izumi office, in Boulder, CO., to bring them into the Shimano fold. I'm excited beyond words by this opportunity. I've also completed the coursework for my NACM certification this year and passed the exam on November 7, earning my professional designation. This was a personal milestone that could not have come at a better time.



So with that, Mirjam and I would like to say, that we hope you have enjoyed reading another yearly update of ours. It has been nice to receive many kind comments over the years, and even some that were not so kind from a very grumpy friend. We have found that it has been a fun way to encapsulate the year for ourselves, while at the same time, try and show some special appreciation for certain friends and family. Now these little updates have run their course, as this newsletter will be the last. Thanks again for indulging us and allowing us to share. It has been fun.

So as the year comes to an end, and we look forward to another, we hope that 2012 brings you peace and wellbeing. Have a good one! ☺



David and Mirjam First

