



December 18, 2008

The fire is burning in the fireplace, the lights are twinkling on the tree, a snow storm is blowing in from the west, and Alan and Tyler are playing World of Warcraft on their laptops. (Didn't want you to think we had gone completely Norman Rockwell!)

Either time really does go faster as we get older or we are cramming even more in to each hour than we used to. It's been a busy and wonderful year for the Pickett/Teets clan.

Mary: A major focus for my life this year has been co-chairing the Missions Ministry at our church. It's lots of administrative work, but it's well worth it for the deep satisfaction of seeing what our 27 task forces do to reach out to those Jesus called "the least of these," helping them locally, across the United States, and around the world. You can read about this ministry on our church website at www.fumcbirmingham.org/mission. I have been blessed to get to work with this amazing group of people this year.

Rich and I also did a lot of traveling this year: New York City to visit Rich's brother Walt while he was on sabbatical (with Alan and Tyler), Pittsburgh for CMU's spring carnival with its buggy races and booths (small creative buildings), a week in Boulder, the Muskoka Lakes region north of Toronto to celebrate my aunt's birthday, a trip to the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Labor Day weekend in California to meet Tyler's family, a week in Spain, and a long weekend for a Pickett family reunion. I also spent a long weekend in Indianapolis with my sisters and their granddaughters, a second trip to Stratford, and a week in northern Wisconsin with my sisters and some high school friends.

Rich: I have had a ringside seat for the turmoil in the auto industry. Unfortunately, a number of my friends have lost their jobs as Delphi downsizes to try to deal with the current financial mess. My job has been somewhat interesting as I have been working on a task force to help Delphi decide how to grow our products for hybrid vehicles. I also got to go to a number of interesting conferences. However, lots of the long range projects seem out of touch with the reality of a rapidly shrinking Delphi. Recently I helped put together Delphi's bid to borrow money from the government. We are trying to tap into a \$25B federal fund to expand our products for high fuel economy ... not something I ever expected to do during my days in the research labs.

Last spring I helped put on a seminar on biofuels at our church. I enjoyed doing a lot of reading to get ready for my presentation. I think biofuels are worth pursuing, but we need more research and we need to be careful about the unintended consequences (such as cutting down rainforests to grow palm trees for biodiesel).

Alan: I finished my masters in mechanical engineering at Carnegie Mellon this month. I'll be continuing to do research on computer aided design for Prof. Shimada through May. Tyler will graduate in May and is applying to grad school right now, so we don't yet know where we will be in the fall. Wherever it is, I'll be looking for a job there.

You'll find photos of some of our activities in the following pages and lots more photos on our family website at www.petesticket.com.

We are off tomorrow for Christmas in Boulder, then Alan and Tyler head to California to celebrate Chanukah with Tyler's family.

We want to wish you all a joyous holiday season and a wonderful New Year!

Mary, Rich, and Alan



Allies win the first CMU Blitz Build trophy!



With the Gang of 8



In Stratford

With Kate



Missions Ministry



With Walt in New York City



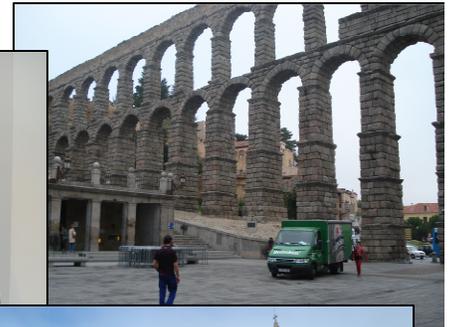
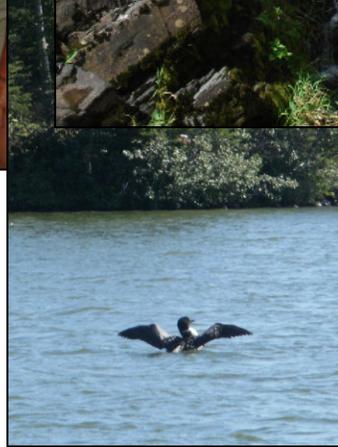
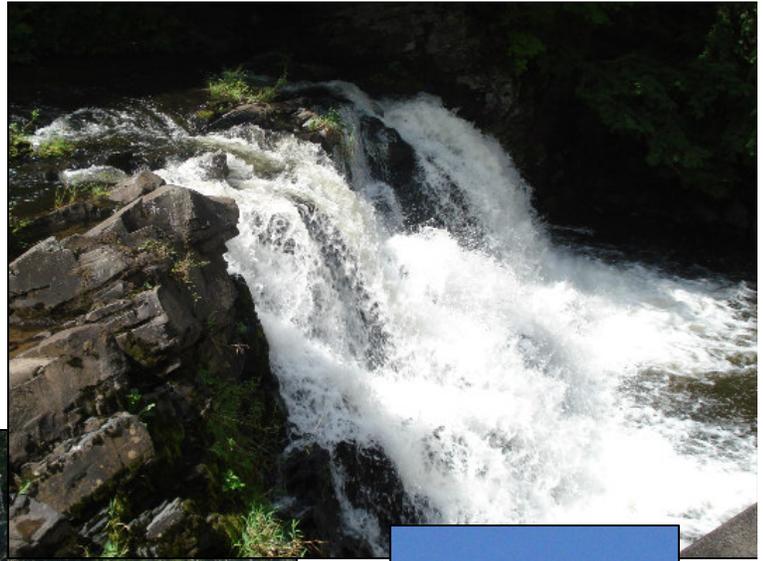
In California with Tyler's family



Pickett family reunion



Sister Week at Jane's cottage

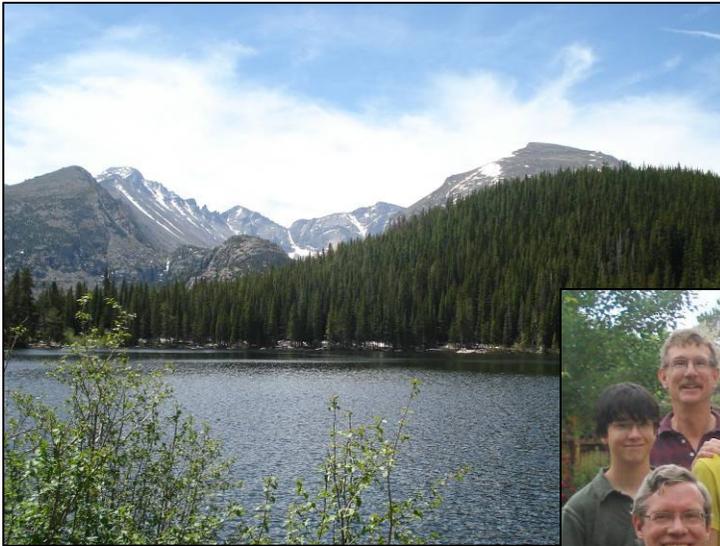


Spain: Madrid, Toledo, Segovia





My sisters and their granddaughters



In Boulder with the Teets clan



Comair station closing party

Helping Aunt Helen celebrate her big birthday



We sure *wish* the Packers were #1

