

**Happy New Year!**

Please give me a moment while my heads stops spinning...Wow, what a roller coaster ride 2014 was!

For Bruce and Eileen the big highlight of the year was visiting the Couture family in Normandy, France, in early October. In 1993 Stéphane Couture was our very first au pair. His girlfriend (now wife), Bénédicte (Béné), was the au pair for a family in our neighborhood. We've kept in touch on and off all these years and had been planning a visit for several years. We spent the first 6 days sightseeing in Normandy and Paris with our very good friends and their two children and then spent two days on our own in Aix en Provence. We cannot wait to go back!



Us with the Couture Family

Literally the day after our return from France, one of Orbital's cargo supply

launches exploded after liftoff. We're sure you read about this since it made international news. The very next day Bruce managed to total the Chrysler, resulting in some bruised ribs and a big headache for Eileen.

Earlier in the year, we attended the wedding of the daughter of our best friends the Schumanns and later that week had dinner on the roof of AFPM's building in DC to watch the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks with some friends. Shortly thereafter the Silver Line Metro station opened (about 2.5 miles from our house), making Eileen's daily commute into DC a lot more tolerable. Around the same time we finally gave our 15-year-old deck a facelift and removed the dilapidated wheelchair ramp. In November we did a fun weekend and went to a Capitals game, stayed overnight in DC, then test drove a Tesla model S the next day. No, we did not buy one (yet!).

**Eileen**

Eileen is thriving in her new position at American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers (AFPM) association as their Manager of Regional Safety Networks. This job has her traveling some 20 times each year. Bruce occasionally joins her for a long weekend somewhere new or to meet up in Dallas to visit his sister and mom. In 2014 her destinations included New Orleans,



Eileen at the Alamo, San Antonio

Chicago, Seattle, Denver, Houston, San Antonio, and Columbus Ohio among others.

For Chanukah, Eileen got one of those newfangled Nespresso machines after being spoiled while in France. She also got some noise-cancelling headphones for those long flights and, ... oh yeah... a new 2015 Ford Fusion Hybrid (bye bye Prius and cramped road trips).

**Bruce**

Of course Bruce took his annual motorcycle trip through Ohio and Indiana. The stop in Connersville included attending his 40-year high school reunion. In the weekend between this and the Schumann wedding, his niece, Amber, got married but he sadly could not attend.

Bruce's employer, Orbital Sciences, had one successful and one failed ISS cargo launch, the latter of which was a big setback to the Antares rocket's otherwise flawless performance to date. About midyear Orbital announced a merger with one of its largest vendors, ATK. The merger will complete in the first quarter of this year and quadruple the size of the company. Bruce won an award for his contributions to the ISS resupply program.



Bruce saw stars a few times in 2015

Then there were the "incidents"... the totaled car mentioned earlier and a mishap that ripped a hole in the motorcycle's exhaust. Then while he was putting the wheels back on after having new tires mounted, the jack dropped the bike on his arm nearly breaking it. The bike was out of commission for a few weeks as a result. ☹

**David**

David changed employers and now works as a software engineer in DC for USAC (Universal Services Administration Company), very close to where Eileen works. The two of them meet for lunch on occasion and enjoy the food trucks in DC.

He met a very nice lady, Gloria, who came over for Thanksgiving and Chanukah dinners.

He's been looking for a condo or other property to buy as his current rental agreement is kind of shaky.

**Andrew**

Andrew is still working as a server at a local Ledo pizzeria and is considering a



David and Andrew with Eileen on Mother's Day

career as an electrician. He turned 21 in 2014, and for his birthday Eileen took him to NYC to see "Kinky Boots" on Broadway. While there, they visited her cousin, Andy Bergman, and went to Chinatown and to Little Italy for pizza tasting. We are sure it was an experience he'll never forget.

**Rachel**

Rachel is now 23 years old and living at the Albero House at St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children. She's got a private room which came complete with a smart TV. She seems to be much happier in this new environment, we assume because it is generally quieter and she gets more attention from the staff.



Some of Rachel's friends sent their love

Bruce and Eileen became Rachel's legal guardians in March, which involved a few meetings with lawyers and an appearance before a judge in Norfolk Circuit

Court. That would prove to be well-timed since in mid-September, Rachel became seriously ill and was hospitalized for almost three weeks. Either Eileen or Bruce (or both) were with her the entire time, trying to keep the doctors straight, the nurses attentive, and Rachel's spirits up. Due to some administrative errors, things got pretty bad for Rachel during her hospital stay, but she's a strong-willed lady and eventually pulled through just in time for Eileen and Bruce to keep their plans to visit France.

On a trip to Norfolk in November that was supposed to just be a visit to see Rachel, Bruce and Eileen were fortunate enough to be able to fill in as "aides" to help the staff take Rachel and other young adults living at Albero House to see the million-light display at Norfolk Botanical Gardens. The looks on the faces of those kids turned what would have been a quick visit into a wonderful holiday experience.

For Chanukah, Bruce gave Rachel her own tablet computer, interfaced it to her head switch, and mounted it to her wheelchair. The Albero House staff is working with Rachel to see what sorts of things she likes to make the tablet do, such as change the music she's listening to or make it louder or softer. The idea is to make Rachel aware she can make choices in her typical day, not just in a classroom. But it's kind



Rachel is ready to go see the lights at Norfolk Botanical Gardens

of cool just knowing she can watch whatever movie or listen to whatever music artist she wants to. So far she seems to be enjoying it.

**So, Until Next Year...**

We hope you all had a fulfilling year and are looking forward to an ever better one in 2015. This year we hope to finally take that trip to Napa Valley and tour some of the really good wineries there. And of course we've got some pretty interesting long weekends planned too, such as Dallas in January and Salt Lake City in February. Nothing against crazy years like 2014, but we sure hope there's a bit more smooth sailing this year.

Don't forget to visit our family website at <http://scherzinger.org> where you can read all our past newsletters and see more photos. The site is due a major upgrade this year, so the 2014 photos may take a while to get uploaded. But they'll get there eventually.



**Happy New Year!**  
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