

Happy New Year ... Y'all!

2017 was a year of both loss and promise.

The year started on a somber and sad note. Eileen's stepfather, Alex "Pop Pop" Kaczetow (92), and Bruce's mother, Nancie Waldren (86), passed away within three weeks of each other. Alex was honored with a military funeral and buried with Eileen's mother, who died in 2011. Nancie was cremated and her ashes spread months later at sea by her children per her wishes.

As it seems to play out, both events brought family together. Bruce and Eileen traveled to Florida for Alex's funeral. A visit to Florida months prior to Alex passing had been planned, and that also happened literally two weeks later. We made the best of our time with Eileen's family despite the situation.

In contrast, Nancie did not want a funeral. Instead, she willed that her ashes be scattered in the Gulf of Mexico off the Florida coast (she specified geographic coordinates). So Bruce and Eileen traveled to Pensacola to meet his sister Linda, niece Jessica, brother Keith and his wife Cheryl, and their long "lost" cousin Bobby Blakeman.



We all pose as Bobby takes our picture following our Moms' memorial service

Bobby's mother, Bruce's aunt Sue, had passed away several years prior, and Bobby thought she'd appreciate having her ashes alongside Nancie's. So we chartered a fishing boat and we made an event of it. Our Moms would have been proud.



Family time in Florida

Eileen

Eileen attended her 40-year high school reunion in NY this year and reconnected with many old friends. She's



Eileen at Rio Grande Gorge, NM

been keeping in touch with several of them since the last reunion. She continues to advance professionally at AFPM and this year was promoted to Senior Manager of Regional Safety Networks. Although she spends nearly half her life traveling, she still seems to enjoy doing it. This year she revisited many of the same locations as prior years, though Bruce got to see a few new ones by joining her for more mini-vaca weekends, including Seattle. Eileen's goal to visit all 50 states is now nearly complete!

Bruce

In May, Bruce went to the ER complaining of chest pains after a very active weekend. Long story short, he ended up in the cath lab receiving a stent to open his "widow maker" artery, which had become 95% blocked. He's now able to run up three flights of stairs without getting winded.



Eileen & Bruce at the Capital Wheel

Bruce finally transferred from Software back to Systems Engineering at Orbital ATK, a move he had been planning for years. In late summer Orbital ATK announced that it would be acquired by Northrup Grumman. Orbital Sciences Corporation, a company of around 5000 employees, had merged with ATK less than two years prior, and Bruce now finds himself becoming a contributor to the fourth largest space and defense conglomerate in the country. It remains to be seen if and how Bruce will be affected by this.

Gary visited Bruce in Virginia and they went to Kings Dominion, a sister park to Kings Island in Cincinnati. A full day of riding coasters pretty much did them both in. Bruce suffered pretty severe whiplash and later had to get chiropractic therapy. This getting old is really getting old.

David

David has been with Google almost a year now and loves it. He met his current lady, Brie, early in the year and she seems to be a fun, open-minded, down-to-earth gal. We hope the best for them as their relationship blossoms and continue to be amazed at how well David is thriving.



David and Brie at Mount Fuji, Japan

In December, David and Brie vacationed in Japan, a country David has been curious about for years.

Rachel

Thank goodness it was another quiet year for Rachel. She's doing quite well, actually, at Albero House. The staff loves her taste for fine cuisine and taking her out shopping and dining. They enjoy that she eats "normal" food but has a discerning palette, so they get to take her to places she really likes. The food there has gotten better over the past year, so she eats more of it. But when she won't they give her meals we bring her, of course Eileen's gourmet cooking which she typically inhales.



Rachel Learns about violin

In summer, Eileen organized a string quartet led by David's middle school orchestra teacher performed for the residents of Albero House. Needless to say, Rachel's interest was piqued as it surely reminded her of when David used to play for her. ♥

She's been participating in "cooking classes", where she mainly enjoys the aroma and sampling whatever is being prepared. We're sure it reminds her of when she "helped" Eileen in the kitchen at home.

Andrew

After returning to college to study electrical engineering, Andrew has again decided college is not for him. He now believes his future is in manufacturing skilled labor, where there's presently a severe shortage in the country. So yet another path must be cleared.



New York Pizza with Eileen, Andrew, Andy, and Billie

Andrew joined Eileen and Bruce on a visit to her cousin, Andy, and Billie in NYC December. As usual, we sampled some of the best pizza in the U.S.A.

Miscellaneous

In June, Eileen and Bruce vacationed in Colorado and New Mexico to scope it out as a potential retirement area. We both love CO and neither of us had been to NM before, so we went. We took in a concert at Red Rocks, toured the Garden of the Gods, experienced Taos and Santa Fe, and got to visit Eileen's friend Firth in Fort Collins. Colorado may not be the most affordable state, but it's got

mountains and it's dry with tolerable winters, so it's on our list.

Seattle and the Pacific Northwest were very nice, but far too expensive to consider as a retirement area.

Another trip where Bruce joined Eileen for a long weekend was San Antonio, a Texas favorite of ours. While there we visited Fredericksburg and sampled some of the area wines. Nice try, Texas, but we are biased and prefer VA and CA wines.

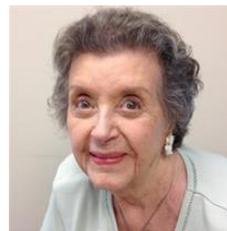
In December, Bruce and Andrew participated in *Wreaths Across America* at Arlington National Cemetery. It felt



Wreaths laid by Bruce and Andrew at Arlington National Cemetery

good honoring our fallen veterans and we hope to make doing it a family tradition.

In Memoriam



Bruce's Mom, Nancie Waldren



Classic Alex – He loved banana splits

Don't forget to visit our family website at <http://scherzinger.org> where you can read all our past newsletters and see more photos.



Bruce and Eileen in Golden, CO

Happy New Year!

The Scherzingers

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Bruce, Eileen, David, Andrew, & Rachel