

The 2022 Cheng family Newsletter

Happy holidays from our family to yours!

This year we started traveling again. The big trip was a three-week tour in September of Scotland with the OAT group (15, including our good SL friends Phil and Sharon) -- after a very enjoyable five-day stay in Amsterdam. We just love Scotland: its scenery, people, and culture.



We spent a beautiful day in Robert Burns' country – in his short life, the National Poet produced numerous poems & songs. Well-known all over the world are “Auld Lang Syne,” “Tam O'Shanter,” etc.

This picture was taken on the bridge over River Doon, “Brigadoon” (immortalized by Burns in the poem O'Shanter) is the name of the street next to my sister's house in Bethesda MD. After all these years, thanks to Victor, I finally made the connection.



Waiting for the ferry at the Isle of Iona in the Inner Hebrides



Glencoe, the Scottish Highlands

One advantage of traveling with a group is that there are always people offering to take pictures of the two of us: the top one was at Iona, the birthplace of Celtic Christianity and the burial ground of Macbeth & other Scottish kings; the left was at Glencoe, famous for its other-worldly scenery and the battles between the Highland clansmen MacDonalds and Campbells. Both places can be easily reached from the town of Oban (where we stayed for a few days) -- calling itself, not unjustifiably, the seafood capital of Scotland!

We liked the Scottish cities too: having been to Edinburg previously, we were delighted by our discovery of Glasgow and Aberdeen (the latter has clearly made wise use of their more recent North Sea oil wealth).

Grandkids This year's big news is the safe arrival on May 20th of Owen Delmar Cheng, the firstborn of Chris and Bri. He has stayed healthy and strong. Now all our three children have kids of their own, and it gives us great pleasure to see that they are all such good parents. The family get-togethers are now very boisterous affairs. We are also glad that Maylin and Jace are attending regular school (Trinity Lutheran, 3rd & 1st grades, respectively) and doing well.



Owen, Maylin, Elliot, and Jace
Thanksgiving at Chris & Bri house

Ta-Pei definitely feels his age; now, his first business every day is doing exercise -- first thing in the morning, accompanied by Leslie, he walks a mile and a half up & down the hilly trails in the Arboretum forest in Portland Washington Park. This is followed by two days per week of an hour of weight training with a coach, for the remaining days of the week, he tries to go to "swim" (just water-jog). He is no longer active in research but tries to keep up with the big news in particle physics and cosmology. He did give a colloquium, *Einstein & Quantum Mechanics*, at PSU in May, which turned out to be very relevant for students to understand the significance of this year's Nobel Prize announced in October.

Leslie keeps an early schedule -- almost every morning, she is up by 3 AM. For three hours, she exercises for the mind and the body: NYT crossword puzzle, Spelling Bee, and Wordle, followed by Yoga and weights before going for a solid hour of swimming at 5 AM when the gym first opens! She plans and cooks all the meals, cleans the condo, and for at least two days every week, she takes care of Owen for 5 hours. This is just a much-shortened list. No wonder, Ta-Pei says she is a wonder woman!

Portland

We have been here as long-term residents for almost two years now; still very fond of the place: the easygoing people, the good medical facilities & public transportation, the high quality of food, easy access to nature, and so many choices of good destinations for the day trips, etc. Also, it just so happens that there is a good gym right next door to our condo bldg. At our stage of life, this is very important -- it's like having an easy commute when working. Of course, these days, the city has its problems: the homelessness (& the mental illness) crisis, the ever-rising crime rate, and the apparent helplessness of the people in charge. But Ta-Pei is hopeful, especially after the recent election, that a sensible solution will be found and carried out in the next few years.

Best wishes for a happy New Year

from **Ta-Pei and Leslie**