

Dear family and friends,

Your humble servant again puts pen to paper to prepare a record of our year for your amusement, our dear friends and family. What?! Is this the year your chronicler will complete the task in the proper year? Will one miracle foretell of many more? That, he says, is not likely in this universe, for only in this year have the stars aligned to get this epistle on its way on time, with tales of happenings, trips, new beginnings, old ends, and things unheard of in your philosophy. The odds of even more news and pictures at the family websites are slim, but here they are: joe.jaquette.net, dan.jaquette.net, and stratton.jaquette.net -- all part of the whole of jaquette.net. So here we go, in order of significance, which, you will note, puts Stratton last.

Daniel, as you may recall, was without Ellen through the end of last year, but ever transforming the world for his convenience, he had arranged to complete his Masters at the School of Library and Information Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison, with on-line courses. Thus, in January he enlisted his brother to help drive all his earthly possessions from Madison to Philadelphia so that he could live with Ellen while completing his final semester. He and Joseph packed up a U-Haul van in Madison and drove long days with all his gear (plus his cat, Larry) lickety-split, arriving a day before conservatively planned: the weather cooperated. Thus, through the Spring, Ellen worked at the University of Pennsylvania Law Library and Daniel hit the books, also completing his Project Assistantship for the English Department back in Madison. This all accomplished, Daniel summoned the whole family to attend his graduation, and all appeared, including Ellen and her parents, but not Rachel, who was stuck with an event for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. His department put on a very nice departmental graduation for the 60-some-odd Masters plus a couple Doctorates and such. Each graduate had 1 minute to talk about their experience or whatever seemed appropriate, and thus Daniel had his 60 seconds of glory, enlivened by his practice in Improvisation. There then was the grand luncheon for the families; a grand time was had by all. Thence Daniel and Ellen took a week off in Madison and in Eau Claire, where her parents live. [This included Ellen's induction into the Wisconsin Bar!] Then, of course, Daniel sought the perfect job, regardless of much unemployment. Unlike many of his peers, he had a couple of interesting interviews (one being Swarthmore Friends Historical Library) and was given a start date of June 1 at the Linguistic Data Consortium, which operates out of University of Pennsylvania. Unfortunately they could not get H R. to get the offer letter out that fast, but, indeed, he did get his offer letter June 6. (That was an interesting day, as Stratton had appeared for a short visit at their Spruce Street apartment and it marked exactly his 45th anniversary of graduation from Swarthmore.) Your chronicler now presents, in this little interlude, the momentous event which places Daniel first among the family members this year: Daniel and Ellen got engaged while in Wisconsin in May, but they did not tell anyone until after June 6. Much excitement! Even more excitement will be had June 16, 2012 in Spring Green, Wisconsin. Aside: Daniel worked a deal to get a long weekend off to attend a gaming convention in Seattle in August. From there we have the long interlude of working stiffs getting by on pittances with no vacation and Daniel on "probation" for 120 days; however, with these meager pittances secured, Ellen and Daniel moved to a much grander, 2-bedroom corner abode several blocks away at 4th and Fitzwater. They were off to Eau Claire for the year-end holidays since University of Pennsylvania shuts down and sends all their employees away with pay!



Joseph, Daniel, & Ellen - UW graduation



Ellen & Daniel with Franklin & Larry - Philadelphia

Joseph – you do recall – was living in his house in Portland, Oregon, while Rachel was living in Cincinnati, Ohio, as the year began. Does this sound familiar? Joseph was working for Integra Telecommunications and trying to sell the house; Rachel was living with her parents and working in development at Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Despite trips to spend time with each other, it was already getting old as the year began, but the housing market for starter homes in Portland was dead – side effect of the new home buyer’s credit in the prior year. But it got better! At least a buyer finally appeared in early March with an FHA approved loan, and Joseph’s house fit the bill. (With only 3+% down, FHA required a clean bill of mechanical health for the house, and Joseph & Rachel had replaced refrigerator, stove, hot water heater, and furnace within the past couple of years.) So with the Portland house entering escrow, Joseph and Rachel bought a larger nice house in Cincinnati (a.k.a. Mariemont) with both to close the end of March. What to do about Joseph’s job, you ask? The stars aligned, or at least his boss had a terrible accident, losing a leg, so in the lurch, Joseph’s old boss approved Joseph keeping his job (systems analyst/project manager) while working out of the corner executive office of Integra Ohio, a brand new subsidiary located in their house (it did not last, however, as Integra dissolved his private company; he still works for Integra but travels every couple of months to Portland for a week). So to return the favor, Daniel flew out to Portland and helped Joseph drive his Honda Accord and cat Corgan from Portland to Cincinnati in late Winter, succeeding just as well on that trip as they earlier had on Daniel’s Madison to Philadelphia run! Thus together they both drove across the country this year. Hence from April, Joseph, Rachel, Bela [dog], and Mr. Corgan [cat] took on a new house in time to discover its warts in the spring floods, etc. But the money you don’t have can fix all that, and they end the year happily together, both working to pay the bills, and enjoying Cincinnati. (You will recall Joseph went to Madison for a graduation and also to Seattle for the Penny Arcade Expo: those activities ran in the family this year.) They squeezed in a long weekend on Little Deer Isle, Maine, with Stratton in August, wherein Stratton ran them ragged while the Maine weather cooperated 100% – not so the weather on their return flights. Joseph & Rachel ended the year with Christmas together in their own home. An exhausting year!



Rachel, stonecutter, Stratton, & Joseph - Stonington

Joseph & Rachel (with Mercantile?) - Eggemoggin Reach

Stratton complains about two aspects of his past year: (1) a classmate from each of Punahou, Swarthmore, and Stanford had a wife die most unfairly this past year (does this portend aging?), and (2) he seemed forced to travel too often, preferring to stay home and avoid the anxiety of preparation and organization for trips. He went to Honolulu in February, where he visited friends, went to Punahou Carnival, and did a lot of work for his mother, working to get all sorts of affairs in order now that she is a widow. The whole family attended the command performance of Daniel’s graduation in Madison, Wisconsin, in mid-May (Masters degree; see details above). Then in June he attended his 45th reunion at Swarthmore College, including B&B and side trips with his close friends, notably to fine dinner in West Chester and the Brandywine River Museum to see the Wyeth family paintings and homestead.

(A second trip for a special exhibit of Wyeth paintings at the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland, Maine, was in August.) That June trip also included a night with Daniel & Ellen in their apartment in Philadelphia with some local exploring. (He survived a day in a small apartment with two cats, Larry & Franklin.) Late July saw him in Southern California for Pacific Yearly Meeting followed in August by his month-long trip to Restawhile on Little Deer Isle, Maine, including the usual Open Tennis and Bridge at the Island Country Club and the visit of Joseph & Rachel. Finally he revisited Honolulu in November, a trip timed for the one-year anniversary of his father's death, running into his nephew and fiancée who had sailed in from Mexico. That was just too much travel. In May he gave up his 1982 Peugeot: a great car but just worn out. In late Fall he helped neighbors with removal of 3 dead trees, doing all the debris cleanup in return for a healthy share of the wood, then splitting and stacking that as the firewood: it helps heat him & the house. Other things remain much the same: reading technical textbooks [finished *Mathematical Proofs* and now on *Microeconomics*.] at what is now called Learning Ally (formerly Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic, a.k.a. Recording for the Blind), playing host for Bus Barn Stage Company productions' opening weeks in Los Altos, serving on the Board and Planning Committee for the Quaker corporation which operates Friends House (CCRC retirement facility) in Santa Rosa, being mid-week worship clerk for Palo Alto Friends Meeting along with still being its Clerk of Finance Committee, and serving on Holding Corporation and the Discipline Committee for Pacific Yearly Meeting. (He hosted the latter's meeting at his house in early November.) After 20+ years and with help of Friends in Los Angeles and San Francisco, he completed a project to get copies of PYM minutes 1969 to present to analyze; Swarthmore Friends Historical Library benefited too. The only real change is that he was quite unexpectedly released from service on the FASE Board in June. With no family coming 'home' for Christmas, he put on the festival by himself. Sailor, his Sheltie now 12 1/2 years old, has had many more health problems this year but still enjoys roughly 2 miles walking every day as we 'walk' errands in town; Sailor is now older than he is! When the year ends on December 31, Stratton's age will be the third irregular prime, so says a friend of his – go puzzle that one out.



Out on a limb - Tantalus hike

Maine beach: Stratton with camera is swimming au naturel

Stratton & Sailor - Christmas



Stratton's wood splitting - 4/5 done

Daniel, Joseph, & Stratton - Good-bye Peugeot



Stratton, Christopher, & Margaret - Punchbowl niche



Eric, Jack, Carolyn, Cathy, Ross - at Swarthmore B&B

Stratton's mother Margaret has been doing reasonably well in the year since John died, but with limited vision and no longer driving a car, some things are harder to do. Margie remains in their apartment in Honolulu at Arcadia, which is a CCRC. She has enjoyed several visits by sons and family members this year and has been glad when someone has a car to run errands with her or take her to visit the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl. There is not much new at her unauthorized website, jaquette.net/John&Margie/.

Older brother Dave and his wife Anette continue to take long summers at their house in Maine with the rest of the year mostly in Southern California. Notable are trips to see their grand daughter Hazel in Juneau, Alaska. Younger brother Peter and Andrea are still at their home in Summit, New Jersey, suffered two unpleasant week-long blackouts, with Peter still working at PIRA Energy Group.

We all look *forward* to 2012. We wish you all well, with abundant joy, until we meet again; we miss all those of you we haven't seen in the past year – and thus we instructed our chronicler write this letter to carry our love from afar. May you be blessed in 2012 with a full measure of kindness for all our fellow travelers on this Earth.

*** By Epiphany you can get/see this letter in color, with a few more pictures and in larger format via stratton.jaquette.net or trying [jaquette.net/download/Xmas 2011.pdf](http://jaquette.net/download/Xmas%202011.pdf). ***

How did this year's letter get longer than last year's!?
(But it makes space for notes on the back!)

Merry Christmas! and Happy New Year!
Mele Kalikimaka! ame Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

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