

January 20, 2009

Dear friends and family,

We are apparently continuing a tradition, writing our holiday letter later and later each time around. December 29, 2008 was our 25th wedding anniversary. We're having a party in late January, rather than competing with our guests' other holiday plans. Our own holiday consisted of a family trip to Egypt. We greeted the new year at a tacky buffet in an Aswan hotel full of cruise passengers in Aswan, Egypt. As do-it-yourself "3-star" tourists, we skipped the cruises and dealt instead with a series of guides, cab drivers, and itinerant merchants. We rediscovered our ability to set priorities and make decisions together, and returned home with no illnesses, accidents, or late airplanes, and only a few overpriced souvenirs. Looking back over 25 years of marriage, our experiences have mirrored the turmoil around us. At five years we were trading options until one bad day erased our gains with a loss three times as large. At ten years we enjoyed the fickle pleasures of an adjustable mortgage. Now at the quarter-century mark, we contemplate the Egyptian path to Eternal Life, which, as museum exhibits illustrate, is not for the faint of heart or unsteady of hand.

Bob is fortunate to be working for Wells Fargo, which has so far withstood the turmoil in the US financial industry. This spring, he returned to Wuhan, China, this time to teach as well as to present a paper. Mary joined him afterwards for a vacation in Hong Kong and Guilin. Bob finds that studying Mandarin is indeed a "Long March", but continues to find it satisfying. He made a detour into Egyptian Conversational Arabic for our trip, learning, at least, to say "No thank you".

Mary continues to represent federal employees in whistleblowing, discrimination and harassment cases. It is year 14 of *Adams et al v. Norton* (the U.S.G.S. RIF case); the Ninth Circuit affirmed the win for two of her clients. A petition for review to the U.S. Supreme Court will be posted her website as soon as it is filed. *AFGE v Dept of Homeland Security* settled, as did *Dumaguit v. US Postal Service*. Mary was again listed as a Northern California *Superlawyer* in Plaintiff-side employment law. She was elected as the Board of Governor's representative for the AAJ Section Leaders Council this past July. She was delighted that the rest of the country finally discovered that enforcement of federal regulations matters. Mary is pleased by her ability to navigate with her family in a strange and potentially hostile environment and reports that the worst thing that happened in Egypt was that the weather was a little cooler than planned.

Nora is halfway through her third year at University of Arizona and in her first apartment. She continues her dual major in Deaf Studies and Sociology. She is interested in helping and understanding children with developmental disabilities. Nora is now a seasoned and observant traveler who was starting to figure out Arabic writing based on its similarities to Hebrew.

We went to Michigan to celebrate Mary's mother's 80<sup>th</sup>; it was wonderful to be part of a Dryovage reunion, with all six siblings together for the first time in years. Instead of a summer reunion some of Bob's family shared a long weekend in Key West, Florida in December. We are glad that there is a ceasefire in Gaza. Please let us know what you are up to.

With love,

Mary, Bob, and Nora  
309 Montcalm St.  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 550-1019

Bob, [bahir@pacbell.net](mailto:bahir@pacbell.net)  
Mary, [mdryovage@igc.org](mailto:mdryovage@igc.org), [www.mdryovage.com](http://www.mdryovage.com)  
Nora, [noracarasi@aol.com](mailto:noracarasi@aol.com)

31 December 2008: at the Aswan High Dam monument, which celebrates Nasser, Khrushchev, and 20<sup>th</sup> century modernity

