

December 2023

*Merry
Christmas!*

To All Our Family & Friends:

2023 took us "from sea to shining sea". With a little recovery and rehab in between. It was also a banner snow year, best skiing in northern California in years! We capitalized with over 30 ski-days, between Tahoe, Colorado and Utah. We helped our friend Walter Wilson celebrate a milestone birthday, by riding the Olympic bobsled run just outside Park City, Utah. 50 thrill-packed seconds!



As ski season ended and tennis season heated up, matches came to an abrupt halt. Trying a little too hard to get to a dropshot, Pete tore his left hamstring right off the bone! Nice to know he can still move fast enough to tear anything! Luckily, he had an MRI appointment the very next day and surgery 10 days later. Some improvised crutches (to carry essentials, like wine and beer) and he was back on the court 4 months after surgery. Just another bump in the road!



June saw another Chen Family (& spouses) Reunion, this time in Carmel Valley.



Fortunately, we were both healthy enough to take another 2-week trip to Kauai. Our 3rd trip, we have now circumnavigated the island. This time we kayaked the 17 mile Napali Coast and Pete became a 'surfer-dude!' Zilan has video proof that you can teach an old dog new tricks.



In September, we got super adventurous and drove cross country, 7,110.5 miles over 24 days from Sacramento to Troy NY and back for Pete's 50th RPI Reunion. Fortunately, the weather cooperated, GPS worked to perfection, and Zilan scouted out dog parks, pet-friendly restaurants and the most convenient gas she could find! We were able to connect with friends Peter Baker and "The Bols" from Elmira, cousins Ralph (& RoseAnn), and Gerard, numerous RPI buddies (including the new Prez), my NYS Energy Office Mentor Rose Dill, hiking buds Kent Nous and Peter Bakal, even 3 classmates from St. Joseph's elementary school in Ronkonkoma (Christine Langsdorf, Dee Brohan and Andy Hawson).



We capped off the trip with 6 great days at Pat, Ryan and Steve's on Long Island, where Cali got to play and swim with her cousin Bella in the Atlantic Ocean, the Great South Bay, Lake Ronkonkoma and Pat and Steve's pool! Then stops in Denver to see Joe/Martha & Molly and finally a tour of Monument Valley, Arizona and a day hike in Zion National Park.



So 2023 took us to the Napali Coast, about as far west as you can go in the US of A, to the Atlantic Ocean. From "sea to shining sea"! We hope you all had a safe, healthy and successful year as well! Our Ukrainian friends are still working hard and surviving, though we don't see them as often. Have a very Merry Christmas, a safe New Year's, enjoy the holidays and welcome 2024!! And let's all pray for peace in 2024.

