

Happy New Year

from Judy and Jerry

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair

Charles Dickens: A Tale of Two Cities

It is our custom, at the end of the year, to send a letter with our family news from the past year. This is certainly not the same as seeing you and speaking with you face to face. We do hope that during 2018 we will see you and be able to talk in person. Please, if you plan on being in Philadelphia or nearby let us know and let's get together.

We seldom begin this letter with a quotation but as we think back over the last year we could think of no better way to express our thoughts. For us, as a family, it was the best of time; for our country, it was the worst of times. It was an "epoch of incredulity" and a "season of Darkness" as we watched in horror as America's reputation in the world was being destroyed; as evidence emerged that our electoral system was "hacked" by Russia and the Trump administration not only doesn't protect us but, most likely, was in collusion. It was "the age of wisdom" – as we were beginning to understand climate change – and "the age of foolishness" as science was being denied. We could go on and on but this one protester summed it up best.



But you know all of this and you don't need our rant, so let's stick to family news.

We are both well and enjoying retirement from teaching. We remain busy with family, travel, volunteer and creative activities. There never is enough time for all we would like to do.

The major celebration of the year was Jerry's 80th birthday which we celebrated in New York with our family and friends.

We had dinner on Friday night at Le Coucou with Dan and Melanie and Saturday night at Lure Fishbar with children and grandchildren all arranged by Dan. After dinner on Saturday, Judy and I saw Dear Evan Hansen. Dan and Melanie took us on a Gallery Tour on Friday and on Saturday afternoon we went to the new International Center for Photography. Sunday, Rebecca and Steve hosted a brunch at their apartment and a photographer recorded the event. It was a wonderful weekend.



Judy does not know what retirement means. She is kept busy serving community organizations. She is a very active member of the board of Women Against Abuse (WAA), the only organization in Philadelphia that maintains shelters and supportive housing for victims of domestic violence. At WAA she is a co-chair of the Nominations and Recruitment Committee and a member of the Program Committee.

She continues as vice chair of the (Philadelphia) Mayor's Executive Commission on Drugs and Alcohol which advises the Office of Addiction Services on issues related to addiction and recovery. The opioid epidemic has hit Philadelphia hard and the Opioid Task Force reports to the Mayor's Commission.

At Bryn Mawr, she remains on the Institutional Review Board which provides oversight for research projects involving human subjects. She is still using Rosetta Stone to learn Spanish and pursuing her long-time goal of learning to play the guitar.

Judy's passion has always been reading. Among the many books that she has read in the last year, she recommends:

- *Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and its Legacies* by Heather Ann Thompson
- *The Blood of Emmet Till* by Timothy Tyson
- *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead

We are co-chairs of the Philadelphia Committee of the Princeton Prize in Race Relations. The Princeton Prize recognizes young people who have made or are making efforts to improve racial harmony in their school or community. It is awarded in twenty-six venues throughout the country. We have spent much time this fall attempting to make more schools aware of the prize. We will learn in a month if this effort has been successful.

Jerry is still active with PASEF, the Penn Association of Senior and Emeritus Faculty. He has been Chair of the Program Committee for the past few years and is now transitioning out of that job. It has been fun planning the monthly lectures but it is time to give someone else a chance. This year, he has been co-chair and next year he will continue as a member of the Committee but not as chair.

Since retiring, he has "sat in" on a graduate seminar each semester. In the past, these seminars were in ethnomusicology, African Art, African History, and English. Last spring, he sat in on an undergraduate course: "Where My Girls At?": African American Women Performers in the 20th Century. (Bessie Smith to Beyoncé).

He has just completed a course on James Baldwin. There is a lot of reading in these courses and most of it gets done while on the elliptical trainer in the gym.

From March 10 – April 12, Jerry had a show in the Burrison Gallery of his photos of children from throughout the world. The only disappointment was that the reception for the show coincided with a blizzard. The photos are on line at <http://giporter.com/Children/> click on any photo for a slide show. Jerry continues as Chair of the Burrison Gallery Advisory Committee.

Over Memorial Day weekend we were had a real treat as Jake, Caroline and Lexi Madsen traveled to our area for the Delco soccer tournament. It was fun watching all their games.



Shortly thereafter we traveled to DC for the annual Math Olympiad Dinner held in the State Department. It is always a pleasure to meet these amazing young mathematicians and their families.



In September, we traveled with a group of Princeton classmates and their wives to Iceland for a week. It was a very well-planned trip. We traveled through much of Iceland and saw many, many waterfalls, a geyser, glacier and ice but the most lasting images were simply the stark countryside.



Over the past few years, we have had our travel slides scanned and Jerry has made slide shows posted on YouTube from the scans. An index to these shows is on-line at <http://giporter.com>. It is our goal, during 2018, to return to this task. Other activities in 2017 slowed this process.

The MAA-AMS-SIAM Gerald and Judith Porter Public Lecture will be given on January 13, 2018 at the Joint Math Meetings in the San Diego Convention Center at 3pm. The Lecturer is Moon Duchin of Tufts University. Her title is ***Political Geometry: Voting districts “compactness” and ideas about fairness***. We hope that you can attend but, in case you can't, you can read about her work at <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Meet-the-Math-Professor/239260>

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Enough about us! Here are the updates on our progeny.

Michael, Elaine and Henry are enjoying living in Upper Manhattan. Michael continues as the Executive Director of Informatics in the Bureau of Environmental Surveillance and Policy of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Elaine is the Librarian in the Lower School of the Trevor Day School in Manhattan. The move to Manhattan makes her commute to work much easier as well as providing her with company on the ride; namely, Henry who is now in third grade at the Trevor School.



We enjoyed several visits from Mike, Elaine and Henry this year. Together we saw a Harlem Globetrotter game at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia and had an interesting walk on the Haverford College Campus where we searched for various varieties of trees.

Henry recently celebrated his ninth birthday. He has many friends in his class. He is a passionate reader, enjoys learning math, at which he is very good, and has recently begun playing the piano. I expect that in a short time he will be ready for Lincoln Center.

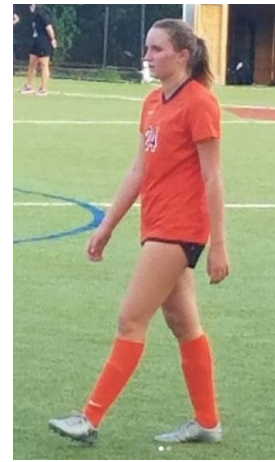
Henry, Mike, and Elaine enjoyed a summer vacation camping at Assateague.

Rebecca, Steve, Caroline, Lexi, and Jake continue to live a very busy life. Rebecca is the Chief Consumer Officer at UnitedHealthcare and Steve is now Managing Director of the Institutional Trading Group at Janney Montgomery Scott.

In November, Rebecca received a Silver Stevie award at a banquet in Manhattan. The Stevie Award honors women in business

Female Executive of the Year – Consumer Services
SILVER STEVIE WINNER: UnitedHealthcare, : Rebecca Madsen, Chief Consumer Officer





Lexi has transitioned to high school and not missed a beat. She started on the Fieldston Varsity soccer team and enjoyed getting to know the Upper Class kids. She is loving her classes, especially math, which makes me and her mom happy. The teacher says she has regular Eureka moments in the middle of class. She started in a new soccer club called NJ Crush and while it is a lot of commuting, the team plays at a really high level and she is enjoying the challenge. She continues to love camp, her friends and life in general.

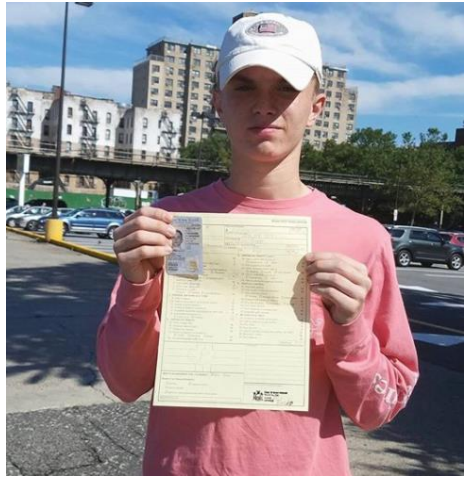


In June, Caroline graduated from Fieldston Lower School. (see photos above). She is now in middle school and, as always, has tons of energy for everything she does. Other than not getting a top locker, the transition has been really positive. She is excited about math and her French class where the teacher sings songs as a teaching method so Caroline can be found singing about fruit in French in the shower. Soccer takes up a lot of her free time and she is playing basketball this winter. But her real passion is making slime which she sold through her business and got all over the house.



In August Rebecca and Caroline had a great trip to Paris.

Jake is in his senior year which is always fun (not) with college applications. He was captain of the Fieldston soccer team which was a nice end to his soccer 14-year career. He wanted to try something new so is playing hockey this winter, even though we didn't know he could skate, and having a blast. This past summer he went to the Wharton Sports Business Academy and won the business plan competition. While this made us proud, the more exciting thing is that we got to spend more time with him. The other high point of the summer was when he got his driver's license.



This has been an exciting year for **Dan, Melanie, Joshua and Miles**.

Dan left WME a year ago to devote full time to his sports media app, **Overtime**.

Overtime uses short form video to tell a national story about the most elite athletes in the country who are a year or two from turning pro.

In the beginning of the year Dan raised venture capital and at the end of the year he raised more to keep growing his team, based in Brooklyn. He has backers such as former NBA Commissioner David Stern and superstar Kevin Durant and reaches over 100 million people each month. Last summer Miles interned at Overtime with Dan.

Last summer Dan, Melanie and Miles traveled in Italy and Greece while Joshua and his friends went on their own European excursion.



This fall Dan has tried the family business. He is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Public Service of NYU's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service where he is teaching **Fundamentals of Social Entrepreneurship** to 47 undergraduates.



It has also been an exciting year for Joshua. Last June he graduated from St. Ann's



After spending the summer traveling in Eastern and Southern Europe, Joshua started Princeton where he is writing for the Nassau Weekly and taking philosophy, literature and writing courses at Princeton. He's also on the power lifting team and enjoying his first semester. He has three roommates and is in Mathey college.



Miles is a junior at Berkeley Carroll and enjoying his engineering class where he built and demolished a bridge and his design class where he conceived a bag from scratch. . Miles is on the math team and head of the finance club and is the resident crypto-currency guru who advises the family's bitcoin strategy.

The whole family is headed to Mexico over the break except for Josie and Bandit who will be visiting us.

We are fortunate to have good health, wonderful children and grandchildren, and good friends. We live active and, we hope, useful lives. We wish you all a year of health and happiness. We are not sure who the author of the following is but we continue to use it.

Life is short and we have not enough time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So be swift to love. Make haste to be kind. And may love, peace, hope, and justice be with you always.

Judy and Jerry



Most of the photos are Jerry's but others are from Melanie and Rebecca (copied from Facebook and Instagram) a few others are from the web.