



# Happy Holidays 2011!

*It's time for our annual look back at a year of family stories...*

JANUARY



We celebrate New Year's in Portland, OR, which has a great science museum and a cool kids' art studio. We stop by Lewis and Clark State Park, but it's too cold. Unlike Lewis and Clark, we can get back into a warm car and drive away.

Anya, by nature, dislikes changes. When Jan replaces our original 2001 Prius, Liya and Bree are excited. Anya misses the old car for the rest of the year.

Our little spotted cat, Nutmeg, turns 14 years old. She looks as young as ever.

Jan enjoys another business trip to Japan with Robbie to meet with Cozi's Asian business partners, a Japanese family who are wonderful hosts.

Angela turns 40!

Sabriya dances in her Chinese school's Chinese New Year program. Studying there Saturday mornings, she's learned more Mandarin than her sisters. On the weekends, Anya starts rock climbing classes. She's been a natural climber since before she could walk, and is quickly scrambling high up the bouldering wall.

During mid-winter break we go skiing in Whistler, BC, where an Arctic freeze has even locals admitting it's cold. Angela's still on the mend from surgery to repair a knee ligament, so she sits things out in the village's warm coffeehouses. Bree is decidedly unhappy about her first days of ski school, but by day three is having a good time. Anya and Liya bundle up in balaclavas and zoom along with Jan.

FEBRUARY



Anya and Liya sing in the school's annual spring concert. Their classes are now appearing a little towards the middle of the Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade program.

Anya paints a beautiful watercolor of orca whales. A small group of tiny fish swims in the center. The caption reads: "Watch out, little fishes, doom is near."

Liya's proving to be quite a writer, and keeps stretching herself. Her 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher observes that if the class discusses an interesting technique from a book they're all reading, a week or so later Liya will try out that technique herself.

When Anya tells a joke that gets a laugh, she'll always ask: "Why is that funny?"

Spring break trip to Disneyland. Anya and Liya learn to love the rollercoasters. Anya: "At first I thought it was scary, and then afterwards I realized it was fun." Bree makes Angela wait in line for 1 1/2 hours so they can meet Rapunzel (and buy a Rapunzel costume that she wears often afterwards). The girls stay up late every night to watch fireworks over the park.

APRIL, MARCH



For Mother's Day, the girls take Angela to high tea.

Angela disassembles and donates our crib, which has served as a bed for stuffed animals since Bree moved out of it last year. No more babies in the house!

The girls enjoy the BBC's "Planet Earth" series. One segment shows a New Guinean bird-of-paradise doing a mating dance. Jan asks the girls what sort of display a *human* male might perform to attract a mate. Liya's immediate answer: "Now a guy just says something like, 'I invented the iPhone!'"

Jan attends his 25<sup>th</sup> Choate reunion. He has fun sitting in on some classes, sees some old friends for the first time since 1986, and squeezes in a visit to stepmother Marlee in Old Lyme.

Liya bikes with Jan along Seattle's Burke-Gilman trail for Bike to School day.



JUNE



Cozi sets a Guinness record for the longest row of rubber duckies to show that Cozi helps "get your ducks in a row". Our family sets down some of the 17,782 rubber duckies, a line a mile long. The girls take a "few" home as bath toys.

Jan finishes production on "The Bead Tree", a movie project he began last year with Anya, Liya, and their friend Kaila, after a carpool discussion about movies led to the idea of making a movie. Filming last year was easy compared to the weeks of editing and post-production, including separate audio tracks for dialog, sound F/X, and piano music played by Anya. Enjoy! <http://bit.ly/rrd3aU>

Liya dances with her ballet class at their end-of-year recital.

The girls start a summer of camps: art camp, soccer, rock climbing, church camp. Angela takes the girls to scorching Sacramento to visit cousins George, Julie, Jaden, and Carson, then to her brother Johnny's family in Los Angeles. At Anya and Liya's first three-night sleep-away camp, they learn a lot of silly songs.



JULY



Sabriya turns 4! This year's party theme: strawberries. And unbreakable piñatas. Bree's a perpetually joyful four year-old. Her expanding vocabulary sometimes outstrips her diction, but even if adults have trouble understanding her, she'll patiently explain a thought in multiple ways until the adult finally gets it.

Angela continues discussions with a nearby church, Mount Baker Park Presbyterian, to become a part-time associate pastor there. The church starts the formal process by officially opening up the position Angela's hoping to fill.

We camp as a family of five for the first time, at Cougar Rock on Mt. Rainier. The older girls have fun sharpening sticks so they can toast marshmallows.

Jan thinks the girls are old enough for us to take them to Europe and not lose our minds. First stop: Amsterdam. (The girls call it, "Hamsterdam", after Jan tries to convince them the city was founded by cute little rodents.) We stay in a cozy canal-side home that's tall but incredibly narrow – the spiral staircases inside are practically ladders. We rent a *bakfiets* bike with a wheelbarrow-sized compartment for carrying ~~large~~ children, and explore winding streets and canals. The girls find Vermeer and Rembrandt less impressive than a pancake restaurant that gives Sabriya a stuffed animal.

AUGUST



We spend five days in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris. The girls tote sketchbooks with which they sketch in the museums. Angela lets the girls stay up late so we can go up the Eiffel Tower at night. As usual, food trumps art: their favorite thing in the city is a sublime gelato restaurant around the corner.



We head to a small town in the Champsaur Valley for a series of outdoor Alps activities that are adrenalin-inducing but kid-safe: tree climbing, sliding down a river canyon, exploring a deep cave, and inching along a cliff. Anya and Liya hum through it all. Sabriya conquers the challenge of a French-speaking daycare. The girls' favorite is a high ropes obstacle course above a forest floor. Bree cautiously works her way through, and builds the confidence to do a long zipwire.



Back at home, Liya celebrates her 8<sup>th</sup> birthday with a backyard campout sleepover. Liya's friends bed down in the tent, but come trooping back in later.

SEPTEMBER



Jan steps back from work at Cozi (!). Business is better than ever, but after 6+ years he's ready for something new. Jan and Robbie work out a transition plan: he hands things off to the other Cozi execs, but remains a board observer and product team adviser. Jan's focusing on an independent software project, and will see where that leads. He also spends more time with the girls after school.



The new school year begins: Bree moves up to Pre-K, Liya starts 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and Anya starts 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Anya's now in her school's 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> grade division, which entails middle school-style class changes during the day. (She adapts surprisingly quickly.) Liya gets the same 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher Anya loved last year.

Jan gets together with his brother Chris for a weekend in Phoenix. It's so hot, they can see rain falling – and evaporating before it hits the ground. Two weeks later, Angela makes her own trip to Tucson for a weekend with her friend Sarah.

OCTOBER



Jan goes to a conference in Boston to present a talk on his software project.

Anya turns 10. (We've been parents for ten years!) Anya hosts a sleepover party, and the highlight is a long game of Flashlight Tag at our neighborhood park. They have so much fun, they play Flashlight Tag again the next, er, morning.

We travel down to Salem, OR, to visit Jan's sister Skye and her husband Jared. (Bree: "Who's Aunt Skye married to?" Angela: "Uncle Jared." Bree: "WHAT?!?") They've recently moved from the East Coast, and it's wonderful to have them within driving distance. We do a number of things around Salem, notably a corn maze on the outskirts of town which we escape from only with difficulty.

To celebrate Lyn's birthday, Jan and Chris take their mom down to Napa, CA.

Angela's parents visit during her oral exams before the Seattle Presbytery, the last hurdle to becoming a pastor. Angela answers questions from the floor, then is excused while the attending pastors discuss her. She passes with flying colors!

We celebrate Thanksgiving at home, enjoying a visit from Jan's family and our friends Aarati, Parag, and Simon. We even get a spot of nice fall weather.

NOVEMBER



Jan turns 44. (Puzzle: What do our ages—even the cat's!—now have in common?)

DECEMBER



Angela's ordination ceremony is just around the corner, on December 17<sup>th</sup>. By the time you receive this, she'll be a fully ordained associate pastor! She'll begin work at Mount Baker Park just after the new year.