



# Happy Holidays 2023

FEBRUARY JANUARY



Angela can be found most Fridays skiing at Crystal Mountain with a group of moms who all skied together when our kids' K–8 school went there on Fridays.

If Bree finds a family member's phone unattended, she'll send a message like this one from Jan to Angela: *hello wife / it is i / your husband*. Because this is the sort of everyday message spouses send to each other.

We visit Boston for a family weekend, with Liya joining from New Haven and our friend Evrim from Providence. We spend a cold, clear day doing touristy things along the Freedom Trail. Bree purchases a black wool coat we all think looks snazzy; it is resolved that, when wearing the coat, Bree shall be referred to as "The Snazz". We go to Yale with Liya and have a nice dinner with her suitemates. Liya takes Bree out for evening of urban exploring around the Yale campus.

MARCH



Next we visit Evan at Stanford. Angela's mom, E-moon, comes too. Evan is majoring in History with eye towards immigration law. He spends time with an organization fielding phone calls from ICE immigration detainees needing help.

A furnace repairman asks how long we've had our furnace. "Oh, not very long! We got it, let's see... when Liya was born, so, um... 2003. Huh, it's 20 years old."

Bree attends three cosplay conventions this year. March: Emerald City Comic Con, where Bree and Angela dress as a teacher witch (Bree) and a student witch (Angela). April: Sakura Con, where she and Jan catch a concert by Evan's favorite music group, the Japanese fashion punk band Queen Bee. July: Anime Expo in Los Angeles, where Angela's brother Johnny and nephew Brian graciously accompany Bree and her friend Marina. Sample comment from Bree, overheard during cosplay prep: "I can't find my other ear."

APRIL



Liya returns for Spring break. The next day all the oranges in the fruit bowl have little faces on them. Coincidence? No. Liya and friend Koray join us for skiing.

Jan, Angela and Bree head to Aspen, Colorado, for a skiing vacation over Bree's Spring break. Warm weather creates mediocre conditions, until the final day brings snow and good conditions at Snowmass.

Liya participates in several dance groups at Yale, finishing each term by performing in an evening of dances from all the student groups.

For her school's *Beauty and the Beast*, Bree creates a full ballgown for Madame de la Grande Bouche, the lady-in-waiting who has been turned into a wardrobe. The dress features functional drawer pockets; these detach for the final act, when Madame and the other characters turn back into people. The costume is a hit.

Jan and Angela fly to Victoria, BC, to celebrate 25 years of marriage!

MAY



Jan and Chris make a week-long bike loop of the western Netherlands, including Haarlem, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Gouda, Rotterdam, and The Hague. The picturesque country is ideal for cycling. They eat great food at places from poffertjes pancake stands to Michelin-starred restaurants, and take in a range of sights: the Kinderdijk windmill museum, the sprawling Keukenhof tulip garden, and a once-in-a-lifetime show of Vermeer paintings at the Rijksmuseum. Chris has such a good time on the trip that, later in the year, he and his partner, Julie, move to Haarlem for an extended stay overseas.

Nintendo releases *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*, a game Jan, Liya, and Bree have looked forward to for six years. They have a great time playing together. In the game, they must cook virtual meals to provide the hero with energy and magical powers. One day Jan says, "We should take a break to cook something." Bree: "We have plenty of meals in our inventory." Jan: "No, not in the game. We need to cook dinner in the real world so we can eat."

A Spanish language unit on household chores requires Bree to photograph someone in our house doing chores. Bree chooses Mojo.

JUNE



Jan and Bree return to Toileak Point on the wild Olympic Coast for their first father/daughter backpacking trip in 2 years. It remains a gorgeous spot.

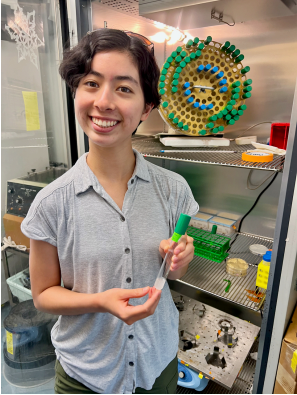
Jan and Angela attend a woodworking class, turning pieces of walnut wood on lathes to create handles. Jan's handle becomes part of a pizza cutter we will never use; Angela makes an ice cream scoop we use all summer.

We mark one year since Jan's mom, Lyn, developed amnesia after surgery. She has made modest improvements — if asked what she ate for lunch, she won't remember, but if reminded of the name of the restaurant, details of the meal may





JULY



come back to her. She still lives independently in her retirement home, but life without the ability to lay down new memories is difficult indeed.

Liya is majoring in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. She lands a summer internship at a University of Washington lab, lucking out with a good Primary Investigator (the person running the lab), a good mentor, good coworkers, and a good project (using yeast as a model organism to study evolution).

For Bree’s 16th birthday she receives a Prusa 3D printer kit. She and Jan spend two weeks assembling it, following the kit’s famous instructions: after each major step, the instructions dictate eating a specific number of the included gummy bears. Printing 3D objects in our home feels like magic.

Angela starts her 3<sup>rd</sup> year as pastor at Community Presbyterian Church of Buckley, a lovely congregation southeast of Seattle. She also joins Renewal Ministries Northwest as a Spiritual Director. God has been good indeed!



Jan’s summer adventure: a month-long hike across the main island of Japan from the Pacific Ocean to the Japan Sea. He crosses up and over Mt. Fuji, the Southern Alps, the Yatsugatake range, and the Northern Alps. Japanese trails are crazy steep, and he climbs well over 15,000 ft/5,000 m a week. Climate change bakes even the normally cool mountain prefectures; it’s over 90°F/32°C and humid every day. He cools off in 7–Elevens and Family Marts. He meets all kinds of people at mountain huts and in towns. He’s delighted his friends Hiroko, Mari and Sosuke, and Miho and Atsushi, can meet or join him for parts of the trip.

Jan returns to Tokyo to meet Angela and Bree for a two-week family trip; Liya joins for the second week. After years when Japan was closed due to COVID, it’s nice to reunite with friends like the Shinoharas and the Yamamuras. We have wonderful stays at hot springs in Hakone and Atami. A typhoon disrupts travel, but we still manage a visit to the new Ghibli Park near Nagoya, an exhibition of art aquariums, and a character goods shopping mall under Tokyo Station.



Bree starts 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Evan and Liya begin junior years at Stanford and Yale. Liya, now 20, shares a room with her friend Jordan in a suite of 6 friends. Liya starts a fall research project on “cheating” in viruses: strains that evolve to stop producing vital proteins, relying on neighboring viruses to do that instead.

When Angela’s parents and relations Endry and Victor come to town, we all meet up at the Mercer Island home of her cousin Ty and his family. Angela also helps her cousin Lesley find a place to live on Bainbridge Island across the Sound.

Evan returns home from a summer internship in Mexico City. The airline loses the bag containing all of Evan’s clothes — but successfully delivers his other bag, which contains three socks and a giant green dinosaur plushie.

Bree passes her driving test! Soon: “Are you going to be using your car today?”

Jan presents his current work on creating better tools for making websites to an enthusiastic audience of Seattle designers and programmers. He really enjoys working on his own from home, but sharing the work publicly is fun.

During AP World History, Bree surreptitiously plays the New York Times Mini Crossword. She completes a puzzle — accidentally triggering a very loud playing of the app’s jaunty celebratory jingle. Outside the classroom, she organizes a new school club called Tea Club. A large number of students show up to chat over tea.

We enjoy visits from Angela’s brother Johnny and Jan’s sister Skye and family.

Angela and Jan fly to Stanford for Angela’s 30th reunion. The weekend coincides with Evan’s 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday, and Liya flies in to join us for the celebration.

Angela visits elderly congregants who can’t make it to church, bringing a small communion kit with tiny plastic cups and things for the sacrament. The carbon fiber case with a carabiner has the look of tactical military gear for communion commandos who leap out of planes to administer wafers and grape juice.

Bree and the rest of her school’s costuming crew work madly to costume the gigantic cast of 24 actors for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. When the costuming lead is out for two weeks, Bree steps up as the acting team lead.

Bree and Jan make a quick trip to the East Coast to see Liya and some family friends we haven’t seen in ages: Owen and Nicole Snyder, Bondi and Jane Kolozsvary, and Ute and Roy Tellini.

Jan’s siblings join for a Thanksgiving in Seattle. We have a beautiful week of clear weather and pleasant walks in Seward Park and our neighborhood. On the last night, we go out to celebrate Lyn’s 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Wishing you a peaceful 2024!

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER



OCTOBER



NOVEMBER



DECEMBER

