



December 2017

## FROM HOLLY AND MATT

We hope this annual letter finds you healthy and happy. Here's the news from our part of the world . . .

## THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME [DEPOT]

Much of this year was consumed with our home remodel. After a number of disappointing encounters with contractors, Holly finally found one who would return phone calls and provide a bid. Once the contract was signed, she spent months choosing paint colors and made interminable trips to Home Depot, with hundreds of hours online looking at wallpaper and fixtures. Why are there so many choices when they're all basically grey or beige?

In the whole scheme of remodels, this one went pretty smoothly. We were out of the house for two months and moved back in just before Thanksgiving. We've been enjoying nesting. The flow in our kitchen is much improved and we love how fresh and new everything looks. And no grey or beige!

The work is about 97% complete but we have no idea how long it will take to finish since the cabinet company has sent the wrong doors three times! Still, all this was a welcome distraction from politics.

## KEEPING BUSY

Matt turned 65 this month. He describes this stage as "cutting back but not cutting back." He is still happy to be doing his work on the ACL2 theorem proving software and doesn't plan to retire anytime soon.

Besides riding herd on the remodel, Holly continued to write and turned one of her pieces into a twenty-minute monologue for a theater competition in February. Her performance made it into the second round (thanks to packing the audience with her friends).

## TRAVELS

In our annual quest to avoid the Texas heat, we spent June in Palo Alto, CA where Matt again had a blast working with colleagues at Kestrel while Holly happily made bad art and wrote bad poetry. We binge-watched *Game of*

*Thrones*. But the joke was on us – it got up to 101 degrees one weekend and the AC in our apartment went out. Sheesh. Then we flew to Olympia WA for two weeks where we spent time with Matt’s cousins Bob and Linda, his step-brother, Brian, and Holly’s friend, Freida. In August we traveled to Cambridge, England for three weeks, where sadly Matt’s colleague, Mike Gordon, lingered in intensive care after a heart attack and died during our visit. Mike will be much missed. While there, we were able to visit our friends Anuj and Lissy and their daughters and got an unexpected treat when our landlords, Kate and Roger, invited us to visit their home in the gorgeous countryside in Lincolnshire. We also enjoyed a trip that our friends Rob and Judith organized to Greenwich.



Straddling the Prime Meridian  
in Greenwich

In October we visited Matt’s step-sister Candice and her husband Richard in their new home in Greenville, South Carolina. We were a couple of weeks early for leaf peeping but enjoyed seeing them in their new digs. The town was charming.

### ETC.

At 65, Matt says he doesn’t feel old but is noticing that everyone around him is younger. We both notice that we are out of step with the culture (for example, we never recognize the guests on *Saturday Night Live* anymore). Plus, we are always at least one step behind current technology. Matt just replaced his seven-year-old cell phone after Holly replaced hers so she could listen to podcasts. Forget about talking to her first thing in the morning . . . she starts each weekday with the New York Times podcast while she makes her first cup of coffee.

This has been a good year health-wise, with no new ailments to report. We continue to enjoy reading, taking walks, and our new hobby this year – yelling at the TV news.

WISHING YOU A HOPEFUL,  
PEACEFUL NEW YEAR!