

Marler Christmas Newsletter



Time flies when you are having fun and we have had a blast this year. Picking up where we left off last year, Kristy hosted a Cookie Swap



Party with her girlfriends in the neighborhood. The 23 1/2 dozen cookies were donated to military members living in the barracks—a simple treat for the holidays. Kristy received an early Christmas present when her new Volvo XC90 arrived earlier than expected. The dealership pulled some strings to get its production moved ahead of the original build date and of course it had a big red bow on it! The Volvo arrived just in time for our trip to the German Alps. We rode sleds in Garmish, rode a train to the Munich's Christmas Market and discovered the beautiful city of Fussen. We ended 2013 with a New Year's Eve party at a neighbor's (Cyndie & Paul) house. The fireworks were the perfect ending to the year.



January weather was very mild this year. We had no snow at all. Towards the end of the month Jeff went to Las Vegas for a 3-weeks RED FLAG exercise. This time, instead of flying, he would be working behind a desk performing his duties as the Rescue Center Director. However the work schedule (14-16 hours/day) didn't allow for too much off time. Jeff did manage to squeeze in a few visits to our favorite restaurant (Outback Steakhouse) and our family friends, the Wolframs. He was even able to attend a couple of Katie's (Braden's best friend) Arbor View High School basketball games.

RED FLAG finished in mid February so Jeff flew to Oklahoma to stay with his youngest brother (Randy) and his family. While in Norman, he caught up on sleep, visited with his Mom, looked around the OU campus, attended his niece's soccer game and did a bit of shopping. After a few days, Jeff flew back to Vegas and caught his military flight back to Germany.



friends. Kristy and some of her girlfriends took an USO trip to Munich. While there she visited Dachau and was touched by the sights and memorials.



In April, Kristy's parents arrived for a 3-week visit. We all flew to Rome and spent six days seeing the sights and eating a lot of pizza



and pasta. Jeff took a guided tour through the Vatican, while Kristy and family toured it on their own. Kristy and her Mom (Mary) went to Mass in the Basilica after admiring it in all its glory. The Coliseum was an amazing stop on the trip. It is incredible to see so many buildings and ruins that have survived thousands of years.

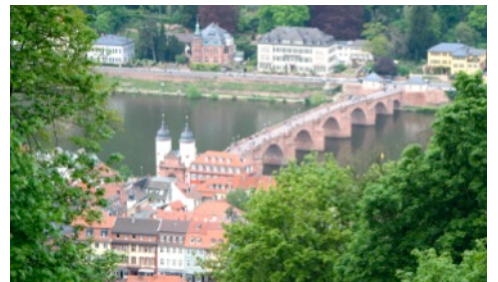


In March, sweet Keegan turned 15 years old. We had a small family party to celebrate. In honor of

Kristy's Northern Irish heritage, we hosted a St. Patrick's Day party and had a great time with our

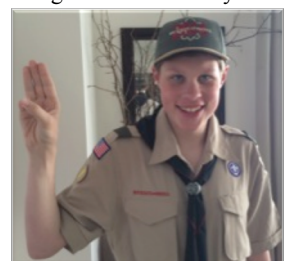


Once we returned to Germany, Kristy and Mary went to Paris to celebrate their birthdays. They saw all of the famous sights and visited the top of the Eiffel tower. It was a special Mother/Daughter adventure they won't soon forget. Once the ladies returned, Kristy's Dad (Jim) and Jeff took off on a USO tour to World War I & II battlefields. They were given a history lesson by the American Battlefield Monument curator for the Henri-Chapelle American Military Cemetery near Liege, Belgium, where a few of HBO's mini-series Band Of Brothers (Easy Company, 1st 506 Parachute Infantry Regiment) are interred. Once Jim and Jeff returned, the entire family spent a day in



Heidelberg seeing the castle remnants and another day took a Rhine River cruise. After Kristy's parents return home to Colorado, Keegan had her annual MRI. It showed that she is still cancer free and her ventricles are functioning perfectly without the use of a shunt. We are thankful for God's continued blessing; allowing us to see her grow into a feisty and loving young lady. Every day is a gift and we are reminded of that often.

In May, Braden joined a Boy Scout troop on Ramstein Airbase.



Braden and Jeff picked a large troop with boys Braden's age and began working on many of the Tenderfoot rank requirements like tying knots. Their troop meets every Tuesday night, so that has turned into Father/Son evening. Both fellas look so handsome in their uniforms.

In June, the FIFA World Cup soccer tournaments were in full swing. The entire country of Germany was very supportive of their soccer team and it was quite a rowdy and exciting time. Braden and Keegan were excited about starting their summer school break.

At the beginning of July, Braden and Jeff went to Kandersteg, Switzerland for a 7-day International Boy Scout camping trip. Braden



completed his Railroad merit badge requirements as well as other Boy Scout classes. It rained almost everyday and their 2-man tent eventually flooded. Luckily a friend allowed them to sleep in his extra tent until the end of the week. While there, Jeff took Braden on a 5 hour (round trip) train ride to one of the highest mountain peaks in Switzerland/Europe: the Jungfrauoch. Even



in July there was snow up there. Luckily we were dressed for the cold.

Braden and Jeff returned in time for Braden's 17th birthday. He is growing up so fast! At the end of July it was time for our annual visit to Disneyland Paris. We stayed in the Disney Sequoia Lodge hotel that resembled a Yellowstone lodge. The kids loved to meet the



Disney characters and rode their favorite rides as many times as possible. Because we went later than we usually do that was the first time we were at Disneyland for our wedding anniversary. Jeff arranged for the Hotel to deliver 26 long stem roses to the room to thank Kristy for the last 26 years. It was a great family trip!



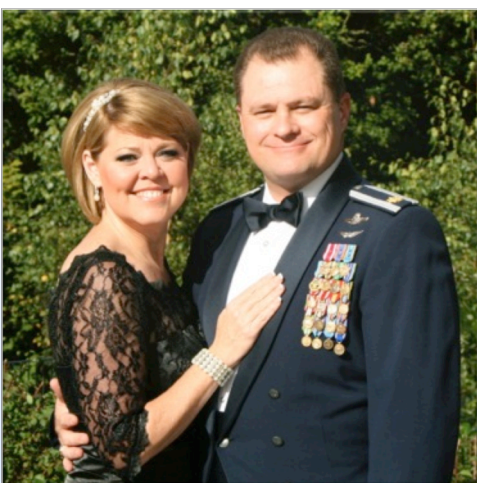
In late August, Kristy got to celebrate one of her favorite days of the entire year-the first day of school. Braden and Keegan were looking forward to returning to Ramstein High School, their class, teachers, staff and routines. On the weekends we continued to travel around Europe with our next stop in Belgium. We stayed in an apartment in Brussels and toured the city from the top of a double decker bus on the first day. On the second day we drove to Brugge; which is very much what you would expect when you think old, European town with it's beautiful architecture. You can see we were wearing our



OU colors proudly. On the way home we drove by Bastogne to show Kristy the battlefield featured in the Band of Brothers show. So interesting to see where history was made.



In September, we went to the Bad Dürkheim Wine Festival and saw a HUGE wine barrel. Of course the kids only cared about the carnival rides, but those were fun too. Jeff's boss moved to Hawaii and Jeff moved up to be the



Personnel Recovery Coordination Cell Director. The workload increased but it is nice to be in charge. Later that month we attended the Air Force Ball. The theme was "Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall". The base actually has a section of the Wall near the Officer's Club that made the event more special. We attended with some dear friends, Andrew and Jennifer Feutz, who were high school students in Berlin when the Wall came down. Once again, so cool to be able to relive history with someone who was there!

October was a busy month. Kristy went to a Pumpkin Festival in Litcherhof, with the Bob and Angie Lala and the Feutz family where she tried pumpkin soup (kurbis suppe) for the first time. It's now her favorite soup. Jeff was recognized as the Field Grade Officer of the

Quarter at the Air Operations Center and Third Air Force (next higher headquarters) level. After hearing Jeff explain how pretty the scenery was at Boy Scout Camp, Kristy decided that our next vacation would be Switzerland.



We stayed at a hotel next to the Interlaken lake rode multiple trains to the top of the Jungfrauoch and visited many villages on the way up to and back down from the top of Europe. While at the top we actually went outside. The winds whipped at 45 MPH and the temperature was in the single digits. Needless to say we weren't outside very long.



BRRRRRRR!!! Another highlight was the gondala ride in Grindelwald. The view was clear and breathtaking. At the end of the month Kristy threw Jeff a 48th Birthday and Halloween party. She outdid herself and the party was a big success, like it always is. We dressed as a 1980's Rocker and his Groupie. After going



through a whole can of hairspray, I think we nailed it.

November has been fairly busy. Kristy has been making holiday decorations, wreaths, gift bags, party decorations, etc. It looks like Santa's workshop in her craft room. When not crafting, Kristy still enjoys zumba, time with her girlfriends and special Girl's Night Out events.

Thanksgiving will be quiet this year. It's the calm before the storm. The house will be transformed into a Christmas wonderland, we'll attend a few holiday gatherings, host our annual cookie swap party and look forward to Santa's arrival. We hope your holidays will be filled with love and friendship as well!

We feel blessed for our family and friends and pray that 2015 is good to us all. GOD Bless you, Merry Christmas (Frohe Weihnachten) and Happy New Year (Glückliches Neues Jahr).

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Go to www.JKBKMarler.com to see every Christmas Newsletter we've written since 1991.