

# Mike & Jane's Annual Report

## December, 2019

Finishing up the news from 2018, here is Jane sporting the animated Santa hat, earned by thoroughly thumping Mike in the final of our family fantasy football league. And then there was Christmas Eve, when we went with Dave, Mike's sister Betsy, and a friend of hers to a *Die Hard* "quote-along" showing at Alamo Drafthouse, including cap guns to shoot, lighters to light, and Twinkies to eat. Greatest Christmas movie ever! Christmas Day was pretty standard, winding up with a poker game on the patio lasting until New Year's Eve (or so it seemed). With Maggie, Michael, and Dave in town, we went for a tour of Dallas Cowboys headquarters ("The Star"), where the newest of their five Super Bowl trophies was earned by players wearing leather helmets.



The Champ [\[video\]](#)



At The Star in Frisco with ancient trophies

Or at least that's how it feels around here. On New Year's Eve, we had our "Wineaux Group" over for the second straight year, only this time we capitalized on our new-found expertise and sabred open the champagne bottles the Texas way: with a Bowie knife.

You all might remember how, back in 2014, Mike got to go to Israel with his friend Paul for an experimental ALS treatment. Sadly, the treatment ultimately did not help, and, after some difficult years for him and his family, Paul passed on in January. Mike and Paul met back in 1977, in their freshman year at Haverford College, and were best friends ever since. We will always miss him, and will continue to treasure our friendship with his wife Lisa and their children Brad and Amanda.



Mike, Mike's Mom, and Paul at 1981 Haverford Graduation



The Wax Meister

Later in January, Mike's sister Betsy called about a fluffy mutt of uncertain origin at her *Take Me Home Pet Rescue*. Shortly thereafter he came home with us, and Mike promptly named him "Bonden," who was Jack Aubrey's cox'n and right-hand man in *Master and Commander*. By all rights, though, he should be called "Spaz." As you can see from the photo at right, he is pretty depressing to have around, but we manage. Actually, he really is a nut. The slightest move towards the back door galvanizes him into action, as he dramatically sprints out and races around the back yard at high speed, then streaks back inside the house with the look of Usain Bolt crossing the finish line. We still see the occasional squirrel around, but they are all looking rather haunted and have developed nervous tics. The rabbits have long since departed for more accommodating surroundings.



"Spaz," or maybe "Nutbar."

In late March we got to cross off another item on our bucket list by attending the national *Drosophila* conference, conveniently held here in Dallas. We have, of course, always found fruit flies especially fascinating, as long as they stay out of our kitchen. Coincidentally enough, Maggie happened to be giving a talk there, too. Which, as per usual, was totally incomprehensible, though we are fairly sure that it had something to do with biology.



The most riveting talk about fruit fly embryos EVER



Vittorio on right - the "pair a' illegals" on left

Our Easter treat this year was heading out to Nashville to connect with Dave, from where we drove up to Kentucky to visit Jane's cousin Suzanne and her husband John (who were wonderful hosts!), and also tour some distilleries.

Come June, Mike resurrected his "Luigi Vittorio" character for the umpteenth time in Bar None ("Bruno and Nunzio are my pair a' illegals." "Paralegals?" "Yeah, that too."). That same weekend Jane surprised him by secretly bringing in Dave for Father's Day, which wound up with one game of three-way cribbage on the patio involving Mike's brother in law Cary that took until... 4:30 a.m. to finish.

And then, all of a sudden, we discovered that it was exactly *thirty years* after July 1, 1989, that being our wedding day. So we figured that we should probably do something halfway interesting. Jane's brother Joe and husband Rony agreed, and talked us into joining them on a cruise. So we spent a few days in Stockholm, touring various attractions like the Vasa Museum and the original Ice Bar, then eventually sailed out into the Baltic Sea.



At the Ice Bar [\[video here\]](#) in Stockholm...

This was the first cruise ever for us, and was quite memorable. Tour guides Ludmila and Irina squired our tour bus around St. Petersburg, where all the palaces were interesting, but eventually all the baroque and rococo ornamentation turned into kind of a gilt trip. *[rimshot]* Our taxi driver in Helsinki was very proud of how Finland is the "happiest place in the world" – and then he started talking about all the mental illness, domestic abuse, and



...and the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg

suicides. Um... Tallin, Estonia and Visby, Gotland were charming towns with a lot of medieval ruins to explore. On top of that, we brought back an enormous number of Royal Caribbean keychains and zipper pulls, earned in the nightly trivia contests. Fifty years from now whoever owns our house will still be running into these things stuck in odd locations. Along with Dave's endless supply of guitar picks, which we still keep finding in the weirdest places.



Michael & Maggie in Princeton

In September we got to run out to New Jersey to spend some time with Maggie and Michael. In between their workouts (they were getting ready for a Tough Mudder challenge), it was really fun to meet and play board games with some of their friends, and realizing during *Times Up* that we are *really* getting old, since we associated "Moe Howard" with the Three Stooges (*who?*) instead of The Simpsons.

In October Michael and Maggie completed a Tough Mudder with some friends, which we found really impressive as it required approximately the level of physical fitness needed to join the Marines. And they have already signed up for another in 2020.



The Little Bear of Little Rock

For Thanksgiving we drove out to Little Rock, Arkansas, for a few days with Dave, Mike's sister Betsy and her husband Cary, and our niece Erin. Mike got to see the Bush Library here in Dallas the week before (which was interesting, particularly the "Nuclear Forces" and "Misunderestimating the President" exhibits), so visiting the Clinton Library a week later was quite topical. The tour guides were quite friendly, and showed us where Bill plans to be buried eventually, right next to the impressive Socks the Cat Mausoleum.

General news: Jane moved over to start an organization that supports Catholic schools and students in the area, and continues to work towards her coaching certification. Maggie recently submitted her first of three papers for publication en route to her Ph.D. Michael is moving into some new opportunities at Protiviti, and Dave is now a Digital and Social Media Marketing Analyst at Tractor Supply. (By the way: we weren't there, but Dave got to play guitar with a band in Nashville, and the [video](#) is really, really fun.) We feel especially blessed with friends and family this holiday season. We hope all is well with you all, and wish you all a happy, healthy, and fulfilling Christmas, and here's to our upcoming 20/20: a Year of Vision!

Mike &



& Jane