



December 2009

Wow, another year has gone by and it's time to look back on where we have been and write the annual Christmas newsletter.

In January, we had a couple of get-togethers with our friends. We went to the Dufresne house to watch Marilyn's Steelers defeat my Chargers in the playoffs and once again get my head buffed by her terrible towel. We also had Melanie and Martial Haprov over to watch the Royal Rumble. The end of January also marked my 20<sup>th</sup> year as a minister.

February brought with it a visit from Renee's parents, the Reznys. The week before, Renee celebrated her birthday and was pleased that it snowed that day. We took the Reznys to see the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Grauman's Chinese Theater, the Route 66 museums, the Mojave River Valley Museum, Calico Ghost Town and shared our 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary over dinner before they returned to Texas.

Due to the snow over the winter, we had a bumper crop of California Poppies with the first bloom in March and they lasted well into late May. In April, we traveled to Las Vegas and toured the show floor of the NAB(National Association of Broadcasters) Convention. We saw some pretty cool 3D and sat in on some early scenes of the movie Up from Pixar.

Jesse received an early birthday present at the end of April. We secured a 1954 Ford F100 for his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was very pleased with it and is still in the process of completing his driver's ed. My brother Chris also stopped in during May. He had driven down from Oregon to attend Microsoft Tech Ed in LA and stayed for a few days afterward. It was good to see him again.

In June, we got a visit from a swarm of bees hanging on our chain link fence. Thankfully, they moved on after a couple of days. Another guest paid a return visit in June, the blue haired boy. Jesse bleached and dyed his hair blue again, but did not cut it into a Mohawk. This time he chose to spike it.

Jesse left for summer camp at the end of June and I watched my contract at work expire. I was unemployed July 1<sup>st</sup> and received a call later that day asking me to return to work. A new company had been awarded the contract, but the delay had resulted in all of my co-workers taking other jobs or losing their position. I alone remained out of an office of five. Over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, Renee and I went to Pirate's Dinner Adventure in Buena Park and enjoyed ourselves.

Also in July, I attended the ESRI User Conference in San Diego giving me a chance to hang out with Janet Russell, my former co-worker, for the week. When I returned home, Jesse and I participated in the Worldwide Photowalk with some other hearty souls as we toured downtown Barstow in 100 degree heat. A few days later, we were

off to San Diego to attend Comic-Con International. My best friend, Jim Ritch, allowed us to stay at his place while he was out to sea and we rode the trolley back and forth to the Gas Lamp/Convention Center. Jesse dressed up as a Space Marine from the Dawn of War game and we attended all 4 days of CCI. He was even interviewed by IFC News while waiting in line. We saw panels for Burn Notice, Psych, Chuck, Heroes, Dr. Who and Star Wars; Fate of the Jedi authors. It is quite a spectacle to attend and something every nerd/geek/comic buff should do at least once. We were exhausted by the time we returned home.

We went to a concert at the Glasshouse in August and saw the Huntour. The concert lineup included: Great Commission, Hands, Focused, Living Sacrifice and headliner Demon Hunter. It was a small crowd so we really enjoyed it. We also got to hang out with James and Meghan Mattern of Open Grave Records/Divine Metal Distro.

We spent Labor Day in Yuma, AZ with Janet Russell and visiting my Aunt Loretta and Uncle Ed. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, we received the sad news that my father had passed away while at home in Lakeland, FL. A few days later, we were on the plane to spend a week with my mom. My brother Chris arrived a few days later and we worked around to house to help mom and comfort her. The next few weeks were a bit of a blur with a trip to Las Vegas for Photoshop World. Jesse had won a scholarship to attend. We left and I had my 25 year high school reunion the first weekend of October. On the following weekend, I met my brother Chris in Columbus, OH as we traveled to West Virginia for dad's memorial service. The Marines presented mom with a flag in a touching ceremony as Taps played and a rifle salute took place outside the church.

In November, James Mattern invited us to attend a CD release party in Fresno, CA. We drove up and enjoyed some live music and BBQ. The next weekend, we drove to LA to see Stryper play at Club Nokia. It was a great concert and they still rocked after 25 years. Mom flew out from Florida to spend Thanksgiving with us. She flew home the first weekend of December.

Whew! It always amazes me what we pack into a year and doing this newsletter helps me remember where we have been. It was a year filled with joy, sorrow, laughter and tears. I pray that your year has been filled with happiness. We hope to hear from each of you and maybe see you in the coming year. Have a blessed Christmas and New Year. Catch us on Facebook, Twitter, Instant Messenger or any way you like.

Merry Christmas,  
Doug, Renee and Jesse Zeliff

22880 Wren Street • Apple Valley • California • 92308  
[dzelff.geo@yahoo.com](mailto:dzelff.geo@yahoo.com)  
[www.zeliff.net](http://www.zeliff.net)