

## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Buffalo, 2008-2009

Dear Friends and Family:

I'm again writing this letter on New Year's Day, 2009, celebrating at home, with some fluffy snow and recovering a wonderful Christmas and the second annual Boxing Day party. We had a wonderful and quiet new years at home with Claire and Joseph. We ended this year with both kids struggling with medical issues; Claire appears to have some minor liver issues, and we hope that either a surgical or medical solution will become apparent soon in the new year, she's in some regular pain. But, despite those setbacks in December, it's been an exciting year. Family wise, once again, we had some wonderful family trips; in March to Corning New York for a long weekend, all loaded in our 2008 Prius, and a folding wheelchair for Claire.



In May, Joseph and Joe joined cousins Gary and Andy, and Uncle Ed for Joseph's first Fishing trip with the guys. It was a rousing success for Joseph, who enjoyed the great beauty of Rideau Lake, in eastern Ontario, and Gary's beautiful vacation home on the Lake. Joseph received a beautiful rod and reel from Uncle Ed for Christmas, and looks forward to renewing his fishing expertise, and boating in Grandpa Joe's old (but renewed) green boat on the lake. In July, we took a major family trip to Las Vegas, for, yes, a Star Trek Las Vegas convention. It was amazing, meeting a huge number of TV stars, and we have so many memories. For Claire, she renewed friendships with some of her friends; the three young male stars of Star Trek Enterprise (Dominic Keating, Anthony Montgomery and Connor

Trinneer (above) had lunch with Claire and Joe. Joseph met many stars, chatting with Walter Koenig (Chekhov), Leonard Nimoy, and a host of stars from ST Deep Space Nine and Enterprise. We also toured around Las Vegas, visiting the larger new casinos and enjoying the dry heat. The family was joined by Claire's aide, Melissa, who made the trip extra fun. In July and August, Joseph finished the final work and was awarded a black belt in Tae Kwon Do, capping six years of practice. He's also become an ace at rowing, joining the City Honors Crew Team. Claire continues her schooling at School 84 with a new curriculum emphasizing high school English, math and science. She really loves the academic work, and English and science are her favorite subjects. Both Claire and Joseph, for some reason, really like science, no pressure there!

In September, Carol and Joe celebrated 25 years of their marriage by renewing their vows. It goes by so quickly, seems just like yesterday we were moving to Buffalo for a life together,



welcoming both Claire and Joseph, and now we are learning the joys of teen life. We don't need any sarcasm....we got plenty! Sadly, this year we mourned the passing of Joe's Uncle Ted LaTour, of Milwaukee Wisconsin, followed soon after by Aunt Kay LaTour. For the celebration of Uncle Ted's life, Joe, his mom and brother Ed traveled to Milwaukee and were able to share time with Aunt Kay and cousins Jeannie and Ted

...and On Earth, Peace, Good Will Toward Men

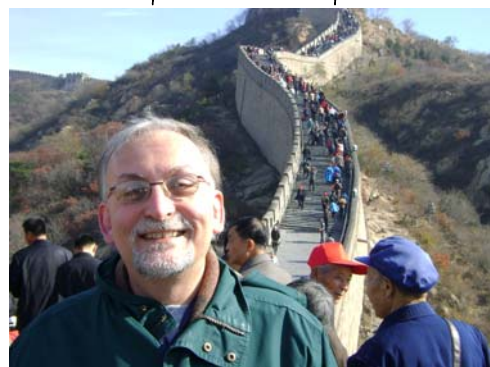
LaTour, whom we have not seen in many years. Uncle Ted and Aunt Kay provided many memories, their folk singing, and social justice commitment their whole lives. We remember them for these influences.

For Thanksgiving week, Grandma Anne arrived from Detroit and spent a wonderful week, with Claire, baking and drinking afternoon wine, sharing Thanksgiving dinner with friends and some students, and enjoying a warm week in Buffalo. Uncle Dave and Aunt Maria were on their way to join for the event, and



share several hundred of the family slides (thankfully converted to digital form!), but had to return to Edmonton to care for Caruso, who seems in good spirits as I write this. Joe, Grandma Anne and Joseph reviewed the entire slide show Thanksgiving nite, to honor both Uncle Daves' work. Here is one of the five Gardella kids, with Granpa LaTour. We were better looking than we remember! Professionally, Joe continued his work in research in surface chemistry, with

planning for the 2009 International Symposium on Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometry (SIMS 17 ([www.simsXVII.org](http://www.simsXVII.org)), which he will chair in Toronto, September. We hope to see as many of you there as can make it! A



major trip that took place for Joe was his first trip to China (Uncle Dave and Aunt Maria are there regularly!), a trip to Beijing and environs, for the SIMS China symposium, where he was a keynote speaker. There, Joe visited with former student Dr. Limin Sun, who has moved home to Beijing, to be closer to family. Joe visited many tourist spots; the Great Wall, Summer Palace, Ming tombs, Forbidden City, and the Olympic Village, and we

shared time with Professor Handong Liang and his wife, who will come to Buffalo in

2009, for a six month visit. (on the right of the group picture.). Professor Cha Liangzhen, was also a very gracious host, we were overwhelmed with

the kindness and wonderful time and look forward to more visits. This is the fourth year



in a row we visited Asia, Korea, Japan and China, and we love our experiences there. This coming year, besides Professor Liang, we will welcome Professor Won Ki Lee and his whole family for a year sabbatical from Busan, Korea. We expect several students to graduate, Tammy Milillo, Sarah Burns, Jen Appawu, David Wells and Robyn Goacher, if all goes well. This year, because of the financial problems, our valued colleague Dr. Rich Nowak lost his contract with UB, sadly

parting after nearly 17 years of collaboration. We all miss his good cheer around the lab and his work. We heard from many former students; both from Mike Clark and Paula Clark, who worked with us, Mike visiting, George Grobe returned to Rochester, leading research at Bausch, we all benefit! Tom Hook leads Wilson Greatbatch with the desire and work ethic that has marked his career, great to have him in WNY. We learned from Kent Zhuang of the birth of his handsome son, Cindy Burkhardt was promoted to Full Professor! Evan Bekos has two beautiful children, his son a spitting image of dad! Bob Johnson visited from Chicago. Lu Chen and Joe spent a flight from NYC together, and she's landed a permanent job in NY at Pall, corp. Christine Mahoney got married to Albert Fahey (also a UB grad!). Send us news, visit us anytime!

All our love..... Joe, Carol, Claire and Joseph