

THE CARROLL TIMES

Kevin & Martha Carroll

December 2008



The Baths at Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands

This is a variation of The ARTicle, a publication that Martha sends to the families of her students to keep them up to date on what's going on in her classroom. In the same way, this summarizes what has been going on in our lives over the past year. We hope you enjoy it. As our favorite t-shirt line says – Life is Good.

CELEBRATIONS

This was quite another year of celebrations! FIVE more friends got married – my cousin Mike and our friends Stacey, Bob, Vipul, and Ken. Bob's and Vipul's weddings were really neat. They were conducted according to Hindu tradition.

Other friends were adding to their families – our friends Jeff & Lindsey and Joe & Kelly had babies.

Another milestone was Martha's 30th birthday, which we celebrated with a wild & crazy retro roller skating party.



HOME

After another minor flood in the basement last winter/spring, I resolved that this would be the year I would correct that problem once and for all. Thus the major house project this year was three-fold: a major foundation repair, a subterranean drainage system, and a rain garden.

The foundation repair job required trenching the exterior of two walls, installing drain tile and a sump pump, straightening the existing block foundation, putting in some rebar, and connecting it to a new 8" poured foundation. Jack Boiman & Sons completed the job in a week, but you can bet that one set us back a few Benjamins. Thankfully we got our home improvement loan before the economic crisis hit.

The loan also covered the resolution of the *source* of the problem – the poor drainage situation that was putting tons of stress on the foundation. Delhi Flower & Garden helped resolve this problem with a few surface drains connected to a subterranean drainage system and directed at a dry well and rain garden.

We haven't had a sustained downpour yet, but we've remained dry through a few good

TRAVEL & LEISURE

Martha and I kicked off the year with a Ski Trip (Martha's 2nd time) to Perfect North in early March. Some friends were supposed to join us and we decided to go anyway when they cancelled. We both stayed safe and I even helped a city slicker get his minivan out of a ditch in the parking lot.

Later in March, we set out on our biggest trip of the year – a Spring Break Caribbean Cruise. This year we spent the week with our friends the Lloyds on the Crown Princess. Martha and I had a stateroom with a balcony that was about 6'x8'. It seemed huge compared to the smaller balcony we had last year on Holland America's Zuiderdam.

We flew into San Juan a day early and had dinner and took a stroll in Old San Juan. The next day we rented a car and we all went out to El Yunque Rain Forest. Since our cruise didn't embark until 11pm. The hiking was beautiful.

To see pictures from our hiking in El Yunque, be sure to visit our web site. There you will also find an entire sub-site with pictures and even video of our catamaran excursion, snorkeling excursions (including sea turtles, a lobster, an octopus, a shipwreck, and tons of

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Home (continued from page 1)

thunderstorms. We also made it through an extended power outage in September when the remnants of Ike tore through Cincinnati, leaving almost a million homes without power. Despite losing almost everything in our refrigerator by the third day, we were lucky to sustain only minor damage to the house. A few panels of siding came loose, but I was able to fix them myself.

We actually came away from the storm with a huge stack of firewood and an improvised tradition of oil lamp S'mores. We also finally sold the Camry. It was tough to let it go after nine years and 130K miles, but it went to someone who lost their car to storm-related damage.



Travel & Leisure (continued from page 1)

fish), and tours of Barbados, St. Lucia, Antigua, St. Thomas/St. John, and Tortola/Virgin Gorda.

In June, we flew to New York to visit friends & family. Our friends Jared & Kristy welcomed us to town with a

hike across the Brooklyn Bridge and dinner at the coolest little pizza place. They also rejoined us later in the trip for a Yankees game and a show (Passing Strange at the Belasco).

One of the other main reasons for the trip was to celebrate a couple of big-O birthdays. Martha's step-mom's cousin Christine celebrated her 40th this year and Martha celebrated her 30th. Together, they dragged me to many museums, including the MOMA, MET, Guggenheim, and the New Museum of Contemporary Art.

They also dragged me to what may have been my favorite part of the trip – Mary Poppins at the Amsterdam. UC grad Ashley Brown had a great voice and did a fantastic job starring in the title role.

In July, Martha and I journeyed north to Port Clinton to spend a long weekend with some of her friends from her Ohio Wesleyan days. Although we had intended to camp on one of the lake islands, we ended up parking our camper in front of David's parents' house. Nevertheless, the weekend was full of excitement.

The hub of all the excitement was the Port Clinton Yacht Club, where David's family has a membership and a small boat. We played water rugby at the club pool, got stranded in Lake Erie two days in a row due to boat trouble, and got kicked out of the Yacht Club on the last day for having our dogs in the car (there was a very clear NO DOGS sign). Still, we did have a great time.

In August, Martha and I flew down to Ocean Isle Beach, North Carolina



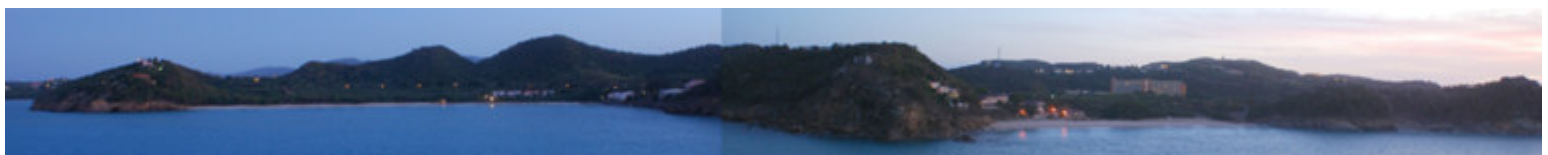
to spend the week with my family at The Winds resort. We shared a room with my brother and his fiancé since there were no 4-bedroom suites on the beach. It was totally worth it to be able to sit on the porch of our 3rd floor suite and watch the sunrise, sunset, the lightning storm, or even just the ocean.

With all the summer fun, our annual river trip was delayed until September. Martha wasn't feeling well and our friend Jonathan was the only one who joined me. Nevertheless, we had a great time catching up.

In October, we packed up the camper again and headed to Put-in-Bay on Lake Erie for a long weekend with the Lloyds and some of their college friends. It was an interesting mix of camping, wine tasting, camp fires, and Buckeye football (at the longest bar in the world).

We also traveled with the Lloyds later in October to Lexington, where we stayed with Tim & Sharon and went to Keeneland for a day at the

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Panoramic Antigua, Eastern Caribbean

Travel & Leisure (continued from page 2)

horse track.

Our last camper trip of 2008 was to Deer Creek State Park for Thanksgiving with my mom's family. Although it was bitter cold at night, the dogs and the space heaters kept us plenty warm.

We finished out the year with relaxing stays in Athens with my family, Columbus (IN) with the Percy family, and in Nashville (IN) with Martha's family.



RECREATION & FITNESS

Martha and I actually joined the Springdale Community Center and started working out last November. We were going two to three times a week until I started softball and then we fell out of the habit aside from the occasional visit to the pool. We're hoping to get back into it again this year and make it more of a permanent routine.

Perhaps the Wii Fit we got for Christmas this year will help get us

going. If you haven't tried one yet, they are a lot of fun. It can automatically track your progress against weight and BMI goals over time as you do Yoga, Balance Games, Strength Exercises, and Aerobics. When we got our Wii last January in a silent auction at Martha's school, it was our first game system since the original Nintendo. We love the simplicity and physicality of the games. It's not as good as the real thing, but it will be great for those rainy days.

Speaking of the real thing, softball is my primary choice for exercise six months out of the year and my teams had great seasons this year. Our team in the P&G Co-Rec league won the tournament at the end of the season for the first time in our eight year history. I pitched two straight games for the trophy and we finished 12-1 on the season.

In the next session, I played in a public co-rec league on a team with P&G employees. Despite a couple of losses during the regular season, we pulled together and won this league tournament too. This time I pitched *three* straight games in one night as we took the championship.

Our final session was also a public co-rec league. We did well in this session too, but finished in second place with no tournament play.

I did have a couple of mishaps this year. The first came during a batting practice when I took a line drive off the shin pitching to a friend. I guess my reaction time is starting to slow down a bit – not good for a pitcher. I also broke a finger on a head-first

slide into second base. I guess I'm getting too old for that kind of thing.

Martha also made it out of the house for a few Sundays over the summer. She played sand volleyball again and her team continues to get better and better.

MARTHA'S CAREER

In her *fourth* year at Montgomery Elementary, Martha is obviously feeling more comfortable. The kids continue to be a blessing and the backing of the parents gets more and more solid. She finally feels like she's able to enjoy teaching new and recycled lessons.

Martha also continues to be active in the Arts at Sycamore High School. The Improv Comedy Show she started had a successful 3rd season with January and May shows and a guest appearance at the middle school dance. Their shows were a big hit. She also taught a dance class leading up to the spring musical, *West Side Story*, which she choreographed. This allowed her to do more complex choreography with the students, especially the boys. They really enjoyed it.

For the summer, it was back to school at the Art Academy where Martha refined her plastic bag crocheting and produced many intriguing pieces. She even featured them at a couple of Art shows, including the Ohio Art Education Association Convention in November, and they sold like

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The Baths at Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands

Martha's Career (continued from page 3)

hotcakes. Her latest creation is the "Soap On-va-Lope", crocheted with yarn rather than plastic bags for obvious reasons.

Martha's last summer next year will be a little easier with one less class. She got an Art History class out of the way at Mount St. Joe. Now she has only 10 credit hours to go. She'll complete her Master of Arts degree in August 2009 and she'll "walk" in May 2010.



KEVIN'S CAREER

My role evolved this year from project manager to Subject Matter Expert on Customer Portal when we added a new project manager to our team. Instead of managing the projects and completing checklists, it is now my responsibility to *define* projects and solve major design challenges. It's a lot more fun.

After inheriting a late and poorly delivered major rewrite that delayed any major improvements for the past two and a half years, our newly augmented team was finally able to deliver some improvements to our web site. In fact, this year we

delivered two major revisions and four minor revisions that have delivered a major boost to the value of our site. We also kicked off projects for two more major revisions. They should keep me quite busy through 2009.

Still, I have continued to make philanthropy a priority. This year I took over the Marketing Committee for the YWCPS – P&G's philanthropic group for new hires (0-10 years). I left the Volunteer Committee in the hands of my top committee member from last year and volunteer hours have doubled under her leadership. I like to think my example last year and the work of my Marketing Committee this year have had something to do with that, but the truth is she's just an amazing leader in her own right.

What I *have* started is a major overhaul of our organization equity. My committee first developed a guide that defines what we want to stand for and we are piecing together elements such as color themes, photo guidelines, email and newsletter templates, and even a new logo. It's very exciting and I'll continue the work in 2009. My goal this year is to practice maintaining committee member engagement throughout the entire year. I ended the year with barely four committee members after starting the year with ten.

I might have an easier time if I apply some of the concepts that I continue

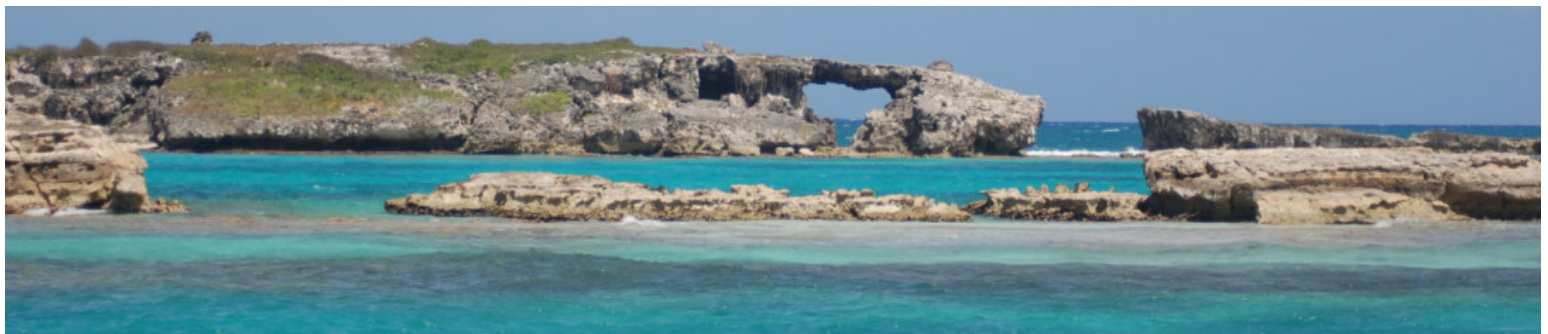


to teach in my quarterly one-day course called Situational Self Leadership. We teach employees how to get the direction and support they need to be successful. In May, the role took me on a short business trip to St. Louis where I trained a class at one of our plants.

Work took me on two additional excursions this year. In August, I attended a four day off-site training at a state park in Indiana and in December I got to fly to Toronto with my manager to meet with my Canadian clients, whom I represent as part of my North American Subject Matter Expert role.

We hope you enjoyed this update and that we hear from you soon if we haven't lately. As always, you can find us on Facebook and at...

<http://www.KevinAndMartha.com>



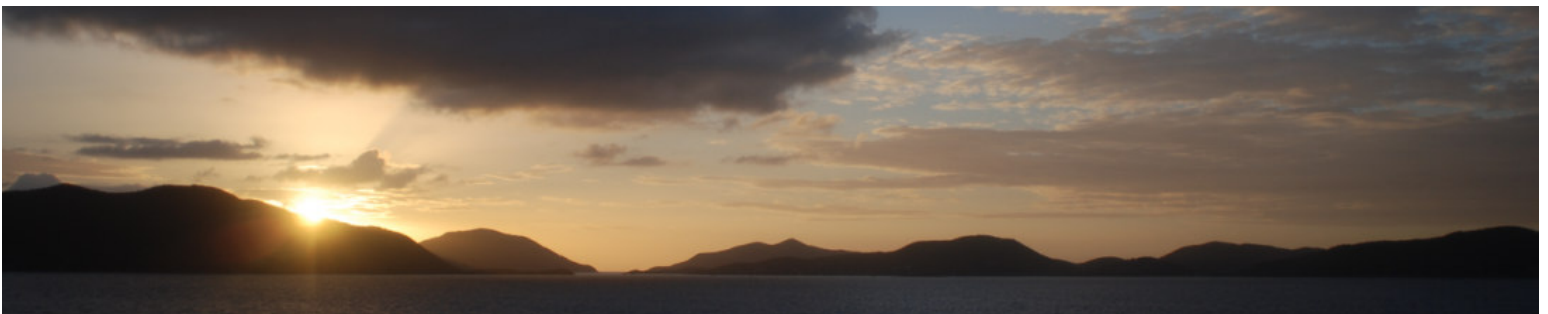
Hell's Gate Island, Antigua, Eastern Caribbean



Caribbean Princess at port in Tortola, British Virgin Islands



360° San Juan, Puerto Rico



Caribbean Sunset – Tortola, British Virgin Islands