

1990 Dartmouth Alumni Magazine Column Sept/Oct 2008

Submission: June 28, 2008

Author: Bill Levin '90

Hot, hazy and humid is how one would describe the weather around here these days. As we await the late afternoon thunderstorms, we enjoy all of the things that make a New England summer wonderfully unique – homemade ice cream, ocean swims, restful naps, bicycle jaunts with family, roadside fruit stands and lingering conversations about politics, sports and those pesky neighbors. Wherever life finds you in this season of life, may it be restful, reflective and restorative.

Here at the column news desk, we were quite excited when we recently received a “physically mailed” letter from Jennifer Gittes Taplin in Miami. Jennifer shares, “My husband David and I are raising our son, Trevor, now 5. Trevor is in preschool here in Miami, before he undertakes a combination of home-school, private tutoring and rural Ecuadorian public school next year. Trevor continues to thrill is with his enthusiasm, curiosity and happy character. He can be demanding at times, but I am thankful for him every minute of my existence.”

Jennifer continues, “My news is that I recently incorporated a non-profit organization, “Enriching Education in Rural Ecuador”. I also publish a corresponding website: www.enrichingeducationinruralecuador.com. I am fulfilling my dream of aiding human development in Ecuador, the country in which I was born and grew up, with a focus on children in rural areas. Please check out the website for ways in which the Class of 1990 can be more acquainted with and involved in our efforts! We hope to return to our home to Ecuador in July 2008 and partner with Dartmouth and its graduates in improving the education of rural Ecuadorian kids. Come join us in our efforts!”

Our “Class Tenor” Tor Blaisdell shares in a recent email, “I am unbelievably proud of my wife Gayla who just received her PhD in Voice and Opera from NYU's Steinhardt School and won outstanding dissertation of the year from an already rarefied field of over 80 dissertations. She will also be starting a new job as tenure track assistant professor of Voice and Opera at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, WA this fall. So After 13 years in NYC we are loading up a truck and moving out west this summer. I have been performing with opera companies across the US, Asia and Europe for the last 15 years and even spent two years in the Broadway cast of Phantom of the Opera. I will continue to travel and perform but now out of Seattle! We will of course be joined by our two incredibly gifted and stunningly beautiful children Tristan (11) and Lydia (4) (Let's be clear...Lydia is in charge of Daddy). Can't wait to catch up with any friends and alums in the Northwest!”

A few days ago, I received a copy of David Page's new travel book, “A Complete Guide to Yosemite & The Southern Sierra Nevada”. USA Today describes the book as “a crisp and critical approach for travelers who want to live like locals.” For those of you who are scheduling trips to the area, David's book is definitely a “must read”. For more information on the book and David, you can head to www.sierrasurvey.com.

Well, the thunder and rain have finally arrived. We hope you celebrate the 22nd anniversary of our Freshman Trips in grand style. It would be great to hear from you, if you get the chance.