



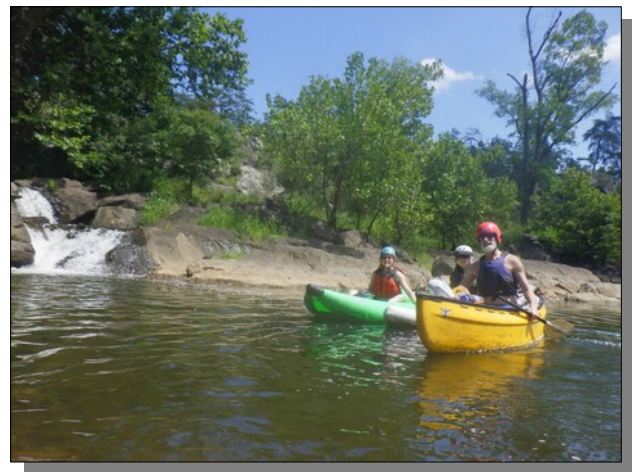
*The Great POD Squad Peep Joust of 2023*

First a quick update: we are fortunate to be able to say we and our immediate family have had a happy and healthy year. In the past year, however, we have lost some extended family and that is always hard, especially when, as in one case, unexpected and way too early.

Sarah continues to work for the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria, an organization which helps over 400 high school graduates a year continue their education beyond high school. Many of those are first generation college students; it is always gratifying to learn their stories.

David still enjoys his daily walk to the USPTO where he continues to manage the communication websites for the agency. He has been largely successful at staying away from procurement and being able to keep focused on the technical and team management parts of the job.

On the home front, this has been (at least for David) a geeky year. One of our basement servers lost a hard drive and a few months later its power supply. That triggered a wholesale replacement of both our servers. And we're now happy Ting Internet customers after several years with Comcast. (<https://kayakero.net/link157>)



*Pocket, Sarah and David on the Potomac*

Robert continues to enjoy the University of Washington and all that Seattle has to offer. He shifted his major to Geography and is a happier student. On the job front, he continues working with the Seattle Ultimate Frisbee teams, the Cascades and Tempest, as game day operations manager. This summer will likely be their final season in Memorial Stadium, so next year may be a whole new set of game day quirks to learn about.



*Robert, David and Sarah at a Mariners game*

Last April we enjoyed an excellent Christmas present: Sarah gave David tickets to see Graham Nash. We last saw him in March of 2020, just as the country was closing down for Covid; and the audience then joked about not knowing when live concerts would be back. That was, we hope, a perfect bookend to Covid. While the disease is still around, we seem to have good vaccine protection and medications to fight infections.

Tangentially related, we loved the spring gathering of the "POD Squad" – the group of folks Sarah worked with in the Medical Reserve Corps

during the pandemic to answer phones, trace contacts and distribute vaccines. POD, in this context, is Point of Distribution for those vaccines. Some of the POD Squad had not heard of Peep jousting, so last spring's gathering was a perfect time to introduce them to the idea. The kitchen was full of people laughing and staring at the microwave. (<https://kayakero.net/link149>)

Sarah connected the POD Squad with her current job by helping them understand all that SFA does. Alexandria City High School now has a POD Squad scholarship!



*Seattle's Japanese Garden*

Martin Sexton, another favorite musician we've been able to see at the Birchmere, came through in the spring with KT Tunstall – that was another fun concert. We're always delighted with the Birchmere and love to share it with friends (hint, hint).



*Loren, David and Steve recreate a similar photo from the 80s*

gave us a chance to stop in and say, "Hi," to Sarah's family Ian and Sophie and check out their new house in Brooklyn. Both were great, but short visits for excellent occasions. We look forward to a return and more time with Sophie and Ian.

Over last summer, Robert was working with the Ultimate teams, including a week long camp on Whidbey Island. That meant Sarah and David spent some time in Seattle visiting. That was a fun trip with fantastic weather. We didn't get as much time to visit with David and Lynn as we would have liked, but we did get to see their condo while work was being done on their house.

As the spring weather improved, we were able to get out on the river. We even brought Pocket (one of the POD Squad folks) with us to Angler's Inn. Last year, we introduced her to "storming the castle" (paddling across the Potomac to Fort Washington and charging up, or walking up, to check out the fort before padding back across).

While we didn't have Robert to join us, Sarah and David did go to a Mother's Day Nationals baseball game. Another fun outing that we always enjoy. (<https://kayakero.net/link150>)

Our travels this year are clearly bi-coastal, with good reason. We drove up to New York for Taylor's graduation last May and then again for Reese and Danni's wedding just last month. That second trip



*Christmas in Alexandria (cool Metro pillow)*



*Spring cherry blossoms on UW campus*

And Robert helped to make sure we had a lot of fun things to do in Seattle: Sarah and David took advantage of the weather to walk around Montlake to the Japanese Garden. We saw a UW football game; Michael Penix was more impressive in person than the couple of times we've watched him on TV. We caught a Mariners baseball game, and drove out to Deception Pass. At Robert's suggestion, we came back down Whidbey Island to check out Fort Casey, where his Ultimate camp had been earlier in the summer. (<https://kayakero.net/link151>)

Robert started his sophomore year at UW in the fall having already decided to stay over this summer as well. He's moved into a 12 month, on-campus apartment, settled in as a Geography student and found his place as part of the DnD club with a good friend group. So Sarah and David have even more reasons and opportunities to visit there.

Living in the other Washington – DC – also has its benefits: David's cousins Sally and Alex brought young Bille Mae up when they had a wedding to go to in DC. Sarah and David were thrilled to babysit and have another young one in the house – it's been about 18 years since Robert was that age (fun visiting with Sally and Alex too, of course). (<https://kayakero.net/link152>)



*Ancient lakes hike in central Washington*

One loss of extended family was Buddy Herrmann, Hank's dad. He was active in his whole 105 year long life and packed a lot into those years. David's brothers Loren and Steve and Helen (who all worked with Hank as raft guides back in the day – as did David) were able to come up in October to help celebrate Buddy's life and we really enjoyed hosting them and catching up with the the Herrmann clan. (<https://kayakero.net/link153>)

Robert came back to Alexandria for Thanksgiving. We had a great time hanging out, cooking, eating and playing games. We joined Lynn and David's family and continued the tradition of a family trip to see the Capitals play hockey (hockey has become a more frequent feature of our lives) with David Z. and crew. (<https://kayakero.net/link154>)



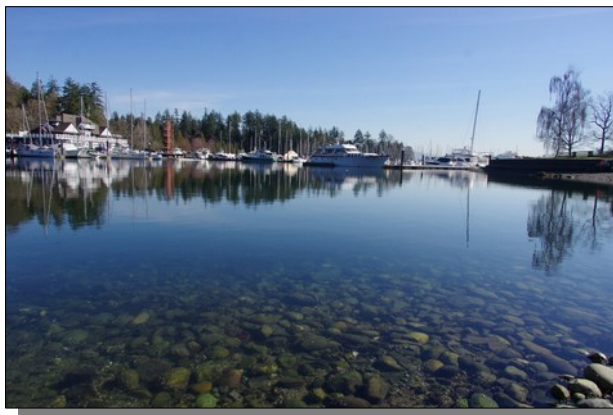
*David and Sarah on the train to Vancouver*

We enticed Robert to come back for Christmas as well. That was a long enough trip that he had time to catch up with some Alexandria friends. We all enjoyed the New Year's Eve party at the Fowler's, with the early ball drop for the younger kids. And then walking up the Masonic Memorial steps to watch Alexandria's very nice fireworks launched from the river front.

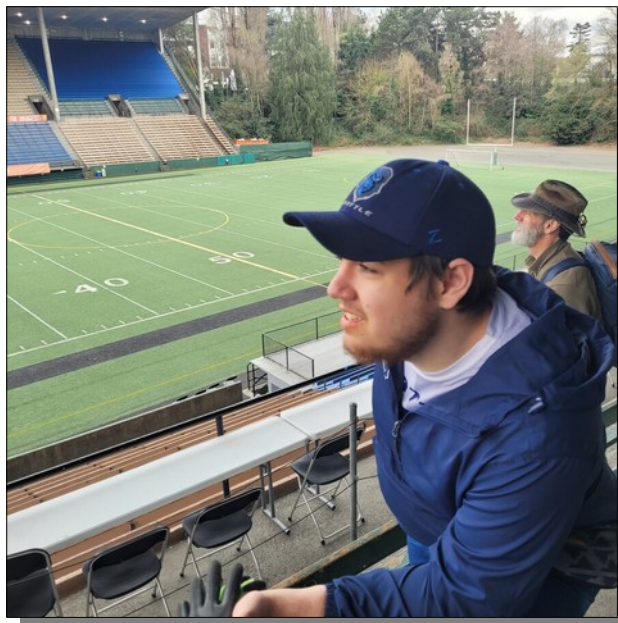
(<https://kayakero.net/link155>)

We lost two more members of the extended family this spring, David's aunt Julie and cousin Renee. That has made for a very hard time for his aunt Betty. And it serves as a good reminder to enjoy all that life sends your way while you can.

With Robert coming back to Alexandria twice in the last year, it's only fair that Sarah and David headed back to Seattle for Robert's spring break. The weather was much better than expected and we



*Marina in Vancouver*



*Robert and David at Memorial Stadium*

Walla Walla, a part of the state we've not been to before (pretty much the opposite of the Olympic Peninsula we visited on our trip dropping Robert off at UW). (<https://kayakero.net/link156>)

We're always happy to see folks in person; please do stop by if you're in the neighborhood. And we have space and would be delighted if you'd like to stay the night.

And of course, you can keep up with us online: David: <https://kayakero.net/link74>, Sarah: <https://kayakero.net/link76> and Robert: <https://kayakero.net/link126>.

barely saw any rain. Unfortunately, the one day it did rain was when Robert was getting Memorial Stadium ready for the Tempest home opener (the rain stopped before the game started). It was a good match and David had fun taking some pictures of it. Sarah saw the opening huck and then joined David Z. and Lynn at a birthday party for Willas, a longtime friend of the family.

Sarah and David enjoyed lots of Pacific Northwest treats on that trip as well. We saw some more hockey, including the Washington Capitals vs. the Seattle Kraken. David Z. and King took us hiking in central Washington. We all three took an international train trip up to Vancouver. And we borrowed a car for a trip to the wine country of



*Sarah, Robert and David at the Kraken v. Caps game (Thanks David Z. and Lynn)*