

Dear Friends and Family

We have reached the end of another year, and what better time to connect with you all! You might have thought we forgot you with our 2011 newsletter – alas, we never sent one last year... Today it is furthermore the 8 year anniversary of our move to the USA, and a good day to share a bit of our lives here.



The year 2012 was full of final events (like having kids at school) and new events (like sending some off to college, and having some move back home). Also, after the recession tied us down quite drastically, and brought us back to a frugal life style, Pierre decided to 'hibernate' his company Brutesoft through the VC's period of skepticism, and he recently found a position at Cloudmark in San Francisco. Dieter is continuing his studies at UC San Diego, where he 'declared his major' (acc the American system) as Economics and Math. Niels continued into his third year of PhD, also passing his 'Quals' (qualification exams) for Computer Graphics at Stanford. Pierre-Henri graduated from Los Altos High, with a beautiful ceremony which emphasized to us that school days were (finally) over - and that we were in for a new experience: 3 college boys! Niels moved back home when Dieter moved to San Diego, and when realizing the exorbitant rent for a room close to campus was burning an unnecessary hole in his pocket.

After last year's 3000 mile motorbike tour through the northwestern states, Niels this year decided to take a cross country road trip with a friend moving from Princeton to San Francisco, visiting old and new friends along the way. He also found the time to reunite with his old Berkeley friends from 'EECS house' during a weeklong vacation in Puerto Vallarta MX, followed by Graphics conferences in Austin TX and Los Angeles. Of course he always finds time for his Madeline, weekends in San Francisco. Outside of the lecture room Dieter progressed with his Outback training at UCSD, and received certification in lead climbing, CPR and First Aid, and their 'challenge course' – the next step will be to become a wilderness guide, which will offer great opportunities for future summer jobs. He is still a keen surfer and rock climber – and finds the move from apartment to dormitory a good change, especially since meal plans are included in the dorm option! Pierre-Henri started his studies in Computer Science and Media/Web Design, with the possibility to



move into Game Design. He is now as tall as Niels, and still growing... Music has changed from classical instruments to guitar, keyboard and piano, with lots of singing and 'vuvuzela-like sounds' coming from our house when everyone is home. With the sounds of motorbike engines alternating with electronic music the neighbors have given up complaining and rather shut their windows!

Career-wise it was a busy year for me. I attended the annual Microscopy Meeting in Phoenix AZ, helped organize workshops on campus, and extended my expertise to more collaborators, electron

microscopes, students – and challenges. Highlights were our manuscript in Nature Cell Biology, and the recent invited paper in Imaging and Microscopy – and then of course every time a problem is solved or data get together in a manuscript. Stanford remains a fascinating place to work, and challenges that need to be met are both exhilarating and daunting. I often realize the only way to move to the top is to 'go in where angels fear to tread' – and be prepared at all times and for everything – which more or less summarizes my career path!



As Director of Alliances at Cloudmark, Pierre is now in the fortunate position that he often works from home. His travels are mostly domestic, but he hopes to visit Japan soon. The last few years were tough, and the ups and downs of his start-up company brought moments of great joy, but also despair. We are now properly initiated into Silicon Valley, and have passed the 'bubble' test... I firmly believe the gold rush is here simply continuing in a different shape.

June 2011 we also passed the American test, so to speak, and after six and a half years in the USA we received citizenship and the desired blue passport. It does indeed feel good no longer to be stamped 'alien' on our documentation!



We had fewer visitors, but the highlight was definitely the visit of my sister Josephine, with daughters Ange, Tania and Lianel for 2 weeks during summer. Unforgettable were the camping trip to Yosemite, and road-trips to Big Sur and surrounding beaches. We have not yet had time for a family ski trip - but hopefully before the end of the season. Pierre and I spent two great days with Henri and Nicolette Johnson at Heavenly, Tahoe, while Niels went snowboarding with friends, and Pierre-Henri had a ski trip to Idaho with 'his' Liz and family. Being an avid GoPro

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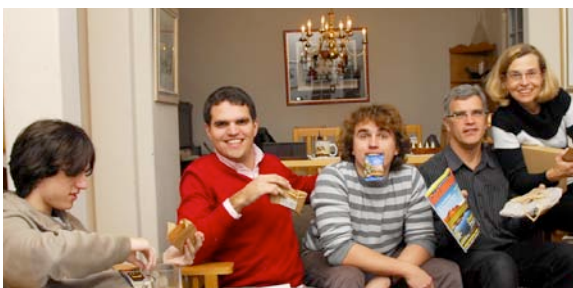
user, Niels shares some of their fun events on YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/user/njoubert>. I do realize how privileged we are to have the boys close by, and often with us at home. Bernard and Ria Prior again visited their daughter Liz and family in Marin County, and we went on a delightful wine tour with them to celebrate their wedding anniversary. We are always very happy to see our Stellenbosch friends during their visits to the Bay Area.



In January my dad's cardiologist indicated the urgent need for cardiac valve repair/replacement surgery. Niels and I went to Cape Town to be with them and help out with medical consultation and the possible recovery period after surgery. A minimally invasive aortic valve replacement procedure was eventually performed with cutting edge technology and expertise by the Vergelegen Cardiac Team, and we are very happy and thankful that Oupa Nellis is recovering well and daily feeling stronger - back to the gym, and on with his hobbies, ever supported by my mom who is as keen a gardener and health advocate as Dad. Ouma Gerda celebrated her 80th Birthday in October, and I flew down to join in the celebrations, and to spend a week with them in my hometown George. Next year we hope to get the entire family back there for a visit, and to reconnect with our roots. Unfortunately we could not meet with our Joubert relatives this year, and hope to get together in SA or London in the future.



Reflecting on the year 2012 made us realize that we were indeed blessed with health and happiness, and the most stressful times we faced during the recession are fading into history. However, we have become very aware of the disposable nature of the employee in the American workforce and the need to plan accordingly. We cannot believe that 8 years have passed since we moved to California, and though the longing for old friends and family is always there, we bridge the gap with emails, Skype calls and texting – and global networks that never sleep!



We wish you all a new year with abundant joy, peace, love and fulfillment. May the wind fill your sails throughout 2013!

Pierre, Lydia, Niels, Dieter, Pierre-Henri