

Christmas 2006 -



This has been an eventful year for the Lancaster family, one of loss and gain, one of pain, and one of joy, full of opportunities for new adventures. A true reflection of life, this year has been a particularly special one.

After her second fall in December of 2005, Kevin's mother Margaret was forced to agree to what she never wanted to live to see happen, a permanent move to a nursing home. We tried to make it more palatable by moving her to a facility close to us, literally right around the corner, the kids could ride over on their bikes. The end of January I picked Margaret up from a Rehab in Connecticut, and bought her home to New Jersey to live. It was sad, but we were hopeful

frequent visits would cheer her. One of us visited her almost every day. Bri and I would play games, and listen to stories about her childhood. We did our best to make her comfortable.

Two weeks after the move, Kevin was offered a consulting job through his company for a "six week" stint in Hyderabad India, integrating software for a communications company. It was an incredible experience, a true picture of a culture half a world away, a tremendous opportunity and very trying. He left in February for the "six week" job, and returned from his last trip the last week of June almost 5 months later. He came home about every six weeks, for too short a time, it was next to impossible to play catch up with all that he had missed and that needed his attention. The kids and I did our best to keep things moving along in his absence. And his mother really worried and missed him, which made her transition even more difficult. Her doctor was from India, a lovely woman, who did her best to comfort Margaret and somehow make it not seem so far away.

Kevin took some incredible photos, and managed to avoid any gastrointestinal situations. He actually gained weight from the "all you can eat" Vegetarian Buffets. In April he got to attend a Sikh wedding in Delhi, on our wedding anniversary, one of his coworkers was getting married and invited the group to the wedding.



I traveled much of the spring, my mom was able to come stay with the kids, when I had to be away and Kevin was still in India. I logged another 25,000 miles, keeping my Elite status on Continental for another year. I taught at the National Weaver's conference 'Convergence' in Grand Rapids Michigan in June, and I continue to write for Handwoven Magazine.



The summer was a whirlwind, Brianna, who finished 7th grade in June, spent all of July at a Girl Scout camp. Eric, who just finished his sophomore year in High School, spent a week in Maine on a mission trip with the youth from the church. He met many teens from Toronto, and had a wonderful time, telling us that Maine was the most beautiful state he has been to yet. The end of July, Kevin and Eric took a 125 mile bike trek through Cape Cod with the boy scouts, they went on a whale watch, went clamming in Wellfleet, worked on a lobster boat – pulled up 100 traps, and rode all over the Cape by bicycle. At the end of the trip there was a "Lobster and Clam Feast", Eric was in heaven.



While they were doing that, I was teaching a five day workshop at Peters Valley, Brianna came with me and was quite an addition to my class, especially when she surprised everyone and wove new shoelaces for her hiking boots.

Brianna and I watched every episode of Project Runway on Bravo network we could find, both became addicted to it, and Bri is now into designing and making her own clothing. It is fun to work with her in the studio, even though it is crowded and she makes a mess! I'm still trying to convince her how wonderful it is to weave her own fabric to sew.

Eric took over most of the cooking in the house. He is really good in the kitchen, cooks by instinct, and has really taken some of the pressure off of me, allowing me to spend more time in the studio.

We knew this would probably be our last summer to take a real family vacation, with Eric driving next year and hopefully gainfully employed. So we decided to head to England in August. Using our frequent flyer miles, and staying with my dear friend Annika and her family in London, we took the kids on a two week tour of London and surrounding areas of interest. We saw the Roman Baths in Bath, Windsor Castle, Stonehenge, Leeds Castle, and took in a Shakespeare play at the reconstructed Globe Theater, A Comedy of Errors. It was a once in a lifetime experience, we all had a wonderful time, probably walked 350 miles, and Kevin took so many photos I still haven't seen them all!



In July, Margaret celebrated her 99th birthday. I helped by sending a letter to everyone in her address book encouraging them to send cards, notes, and emails. Some sent flowers, and we gave her a laptop. She really wasn't able to see well enough to use it, but it comforted her to just have it there remembering she once used it as a lifeline. I know she cherished all the notes and cards, reading them over and over. By September Margaret was beginning to fail, her sight was so poor, glasses no longer helped. She couldn't hear, and her joints were so painful, many days she didn't get out of bed. They were very kind at the nursing home, but Margaret was so unhappy, she stopped eating, and began to slip away. I signed the paperwork for Hospice towards the end of September. The nurses were attentive, but she was really in the

last stages of her life. Margaret died on Halloween, Kevin and I were with her, the hospice nurses were dressed as bumble bees, it was very surreal watching them hover over her body. Somehow it was a fitting tribute to a life well lived, full up until the end. I miss her terribly. I edited an article I had written a few years ago about our special relationship, for a lace journal, and posted it on my website as a memorial to her. www.weaversew.com



*Margaret Lancaster
1907-2006*

Thanksgiving weekend saw another milestone. My mother, at 75, reconnected with her high school sweetheart, and they were married at the Carmelite Monastery in Towson, Maryland, on November 25th. It was a poignant, memorable, fairytale weekend, my mother-in-law is gone from my life, but I now have a new dad, wonderful man, and five new siblings, scattered around the US, but the youngest one lives only a half hour from me and I adore her. There are now eight children in the combined families, I am still the eldest at 51, the youngest is 41. There are 16 grandchildren, many the ages of my children, so there are a ton of new cousins. Email and instant messaging and cell phones will keep them all in close contact.



*Mrs. and Mrs. Bernie Anderson
November 25, 2006*

The year has been an emotional roller coaster, it was time for Margaret to let go, her loss is significant, but I know she is in a far better place. Towards the end, she told me her mother would come visit her regularly. I know she is with her mother and sisters now, and with her former lace teacher who died just three weeks before her. They are decorating heaven with fine white linen lace. And we have the gift of a huge new family, lots of new personalities, opportunities to get together, lots of emails flying back and forth. In this year of global uncertainty, may you all find comfort in the small things life has to offer, may you be surrounded by those you love, and who love you, and may the peace and light of the season grant you serenity and good health for the coming year.

The Lancaster Family, Daryl, Kevin, Brianna, and Eric.