

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2008

What a roller coaster ride this year has been. Many changes, many opportunities, I am always surprised when I look back over the year at all the growth, chances for gratitude, and the humility that life has a way of dealing you.

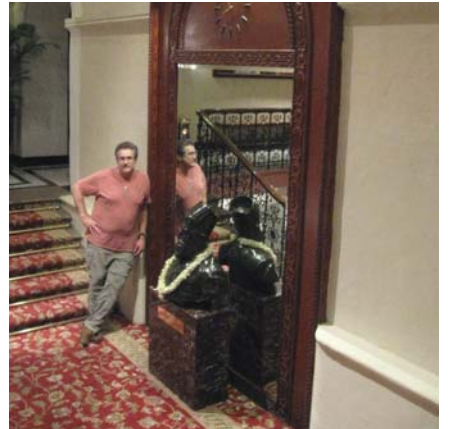
Of all of us, I think Eric has experienced the most changes, he turned 18 this year, becoming legal, voting for the first time in the Presidential primary (on his actual birthday), got his "real" driver's license, went to the prom, actually graduated high school, claims he had the best summer of his life (which is more than I need to know), and started at County College of Morris after finding his true calling, Musical Theatre. Senior year he was cast as Lefou, Gaston's sidekick in the HS production of *Beauty and the Beast*. I've never seen him enjoy himself so much.



So he started at CCM this fall, with classes in dance, piano, music theory, choir, a couple basic Math and English courses, and was cast as one of the male leads, Woof, in the fall production of *Hair*. Eric wore his father's torn, patched jeans and medallions from 1968, even used the headband Kevin's mother needlepointed for him back in the late 60's. I think Kevin had as much fun as Eric.

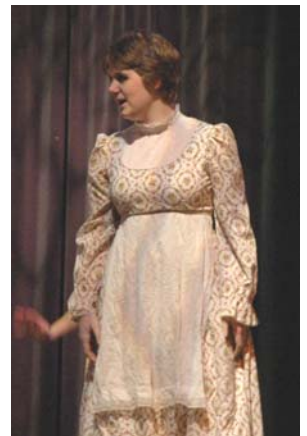
This is exam week, as I write, though in musical theatre, there are final performances, not exams. I helped him rehearse an Italian aria (he speaks Italian?) and was stunned at his range and vocal power, and the best line of all, was when he ran into my studio announcing that he just downloaded on iTunes, a version of it by some guy named Luciano Pavarotti and he was really amazing. I almost wet myself! Eric is overjoyed that the mountain is open for skiing already, he is a ski instructor at Hidden Valley, and only had one broken nose so far, four days before the spring musical production (just a couple of weeks after his Dad broke a knuckle on a scout ski trip!), but it hasn't affected his voice thank goodness. Stage makeup is a wonderful thing.

Kevin had probably the most stressful year, he was basically never home, skidding in for the occasional weekend, and then flying out again, with not much time to accomplish anything at home. He started out in the spring hopping to Dublin, Ireland a few times for a relatively small project. The client re-signed for a larger project that started the end of June, and had him going back and forth to Dublin 'till November. Then the first week of November, Kevin flew to Mumbai, India, returning four days before the terrorist attacks in late November. He had a number of photos in his camera of him standing in the Taj Hotel under the dome, and on the promenade outside the Oberoi. Having him home safe was the best Christmas present any of us could want. He will have to return in January, many of the contracts his company has signed, will take him back to India next year.



Kevin was re-elected to the local school board, is still on the planning board, and was appointed to the school board for Boonton School District as the representative from our town since we send our kids out of district for HS. As a member of the School Board, Kevin took great pride in presenting Eric with his diploma.

Brianna is adjusting to HS, she is involved, and creative, and keeps us on our toes. She plays volleyball, and had five different ensemble roles in *Beauty and the Beast*, (meaning five different costumes from mom, this one shown here belonged to her grandmother) and made many of the props out of duct tape. She has taken over as "webmistress" for the handweaving guild she joined, and is learning how to weave. How convenient, I have a studio full of looms. She wrote her first article, on weaving shoelaces, you can read it in the fall issue of Weavezine, it is



an online weaving publication; www.weavezine.com, visit the archives and look for Fall 08. Bri started working at the local kennel, where we boarded our dogs for years, and I will say, no matter what the weather, and how dirty she gets, she has never once complained about any aspect of kennel work, an amazing thing for a 16 year old!! She got her driver's permit on her 16th birthday, in November, and mom gets a few more grey hairs sitting in the passenger seat. She continues to take trombone lessons as well, performing in her spring brass recital.



And of course that leaves me. This was a terrific year, many fabulous opportunities, I was interviewed for an online podcast, www.weavecast.com, episode 26, and I was asked to participate in a runway challenge for the national weaver's conference in Tampa in June. Three teams of two each were chosen nationally to create an ensemble for the Fashion Show, we were give dyed yarn, in Floridian colors, and given a year to complete the project. It was an unbelievable opportunity, and I have never been so proud of anything when I saw my handwoven coat and dress come down the runway at the Conference. I've been trying to work on a body of artwork, still handwoven, but rectangular for the wall, instead of garments. I've managed to get accepted to a number of gallery shows this year, and in June, at the members show for the Center for the Visual Arts of NJ, I took a best in show for my piece titled 'Survivor'. Got some nice ink in the Newark Star Ledger for it as well. You can see the piece on my website, www.weaversew.com, go to Artwork.

I actually picked up a new hobby. Something that has nothing to do with weaving or sewing, I started playing the recorder, and with some lessons, and a lot of practicing, am now playing soprano, alto, tenor and bass recorders, and have a couple friends who get together whenever we can and play Baroque and Renaissance duets or trios. I adore it!



And in August, I was fortunate enough to be asked to teach in Hawaii, Kevin flew with me for a **30th Wedding Anniversary celebration** and vacation before I had to teach. We spent a week in Honolulu, and took a quick one day flight over to the big island to look at the destruction from the volcanic activity. It was a magical week for us, since Kevin had to return to Ireland almost as soon as he landed back into NJ.

Sadly the economic down turn has hit the arts, and a number of my workshops were cancelled. Still I managed to fly 29,000 miles on Continental this year (not close to Kevin's 100,000), but I now have a huge stretch of no work, which is every artist's dream come true, (except for the no money part) of unlimited time in the studio to create. It is hard to know where to start...



Our wish for all of you for 2009, is financial stability, a roof over your head, and enough friendship and good health to get you through the next year. It will be a year of simplicity, gratitude, and low budget entertainment. Fortunately we have a son who is a musical theatre major...

Love to all of you,
Kevin, Daryl, Eric, and Brianna