

Zurfluh Family Christmas Update 2025



A grateful pause in the middle of a year we'll never forget.

Dear friends and family,

Merry Christmas from the Zurfluhs! If we had to sum up 2025 in one sentence, it might be: big change, deep gratitude, and a surprising amount of luggage.

The biggest headline is one we don't take lightly: Jon is healthy and remains cancer-free. We've both felt the gift of ordinary days this year—walks, coffee, family time, and the quiet relief of good news.

This summer also marked the end of a chapter we will always treasure. Jon officially retired on June 30, finishing 42 years in education—from teacher to administrator, and finally Head of School at the American School of Warsaw (ASW). Warsaw was, in many ways, the ultimate professional chapter: nine years of growth,

accreditation work, a major construction project, and most importantly, relationships with students, colleagues, and families from all over the world.

We miss ASW more than we can say. To our ASW friends: thank you for the joy, the partnership, the laughter, the work, and the incredible community. We send our love across the miles, and we're cheering you on as you continue serving kids and building community with excellence and heart.



Some things never change: music, kids, and community.



A treasured finale with treasured leaders.



Emily and her students on the final day



Retirement sweeter with good friends and many memories.



Retirement has its ups and downs. (Mostly down.)

After retirement, we gave ourselves a gift: time. From June into July we took what we now lovingly call our retirement victory lap—a trip across Europe that turned into a moving 'Where's Waldo?' game of linkups with family and dear friends.

Erin and Carter joined us in Poland. Jon's sister Jan met us for time in Norway, Finland, and Poland. Jaisen and Natalie connected with us in Portugal along the Algarve Coast. And we had the special joy of meeting up with Jon's 50-plus-year friend Randy Olson and his wife Sandy in France for a romp through vineyards, scenic villages, museums, galleries, and food that was—honestly—unfairly good.

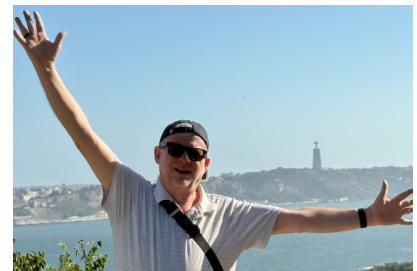
It was more than a vacation. It was a bridge between a demanding, meaningful professional life and whatever comes next.



Standing at the edge of Europe—celebrating a brand-new chapter.



Erin and Carter sharing our journey.



Yes, we were still smiling in Portugal.

Transit: the hidden chapter of every great trip.



*Travel is sooooo much better with
lifelong friends.*



*A quiet moment in a loud year at my tree that
lives on at ASW.*



Old friends, new roads.

We arrived back home in July and settled into life in University Place. Repatriation has been both sweet and strange—wonderful to be near family and familiar places, and also a reminder that much here is complicated (doctor networks, Medicare, and the fine print of everything). We're making progress, slowly, and learning to laugh as we go.

We bought a car soon after landing—Jon is now driving a RAV4 Hybrid and enjoying the practicality of it.

On the home front, we've been working on our Harstine property, but the house installation has been delayed by permits and extra work (the current hope is January, but it's been a moving target). It's coming—just not quickly. We're practicing patience and trying to remember that dreams are sometimes built in slow motion.

Emily has had her own adventure this fall. She accepted a temporary teaching position in Guangzhou, China, stepping into an urgent maternity leave need, and she's been teaching Grade 3. For now we're doing a lot of 'together' virtually—and we're hoping to end up in China together for Chinese New Year and the spring.

Our shipment arrived in August, which meant another round of sorting, settling, and rediscovering things we forgot we owned. (Yes, the motorcycle is here too—though the weather has made that reunion a slow one.)

And then, the biggest Zurfluh headline of fall: Rascal. He began limping, and within weeks we found ourselves facing a diagnosis of bone cancer. To relieve pain and slow progression, Rascal had his front right paw removed. He is now doing remarkably well—adjusting to life on three legs with more resilience than most humans manage on two. He also has a new carrier for walks, and the local coffee shops have been wonderfully supportive with pup cups and extra love. His scans are clear for now, and he's on preventative treatment.

In quieter moments, Jon has been writing, watching Warsaw from a distance, and getting increasingly involved (and joyful) at Mount Cross Lutheran.

Jaisen and Erin continue to do well, and we're proud of who they're becoming. Both have significant others—Natalie and Carter respectively—and we love seeing them build their futures with care and intention. Jaisen continues coaching soccer and recently completed his 'B' license, and Erin continues her work at Electric Coffee while developing her artistic portfolio and exploring graduate programs.

Wishing you a joyful Christmas and a hopeful start to 2026!!

With love,

Jon & Emily (and Jaisen, Erin, and Rascal)



Home looks good on all of us.



Rascal rides in style.



New wheels for the next chapter.



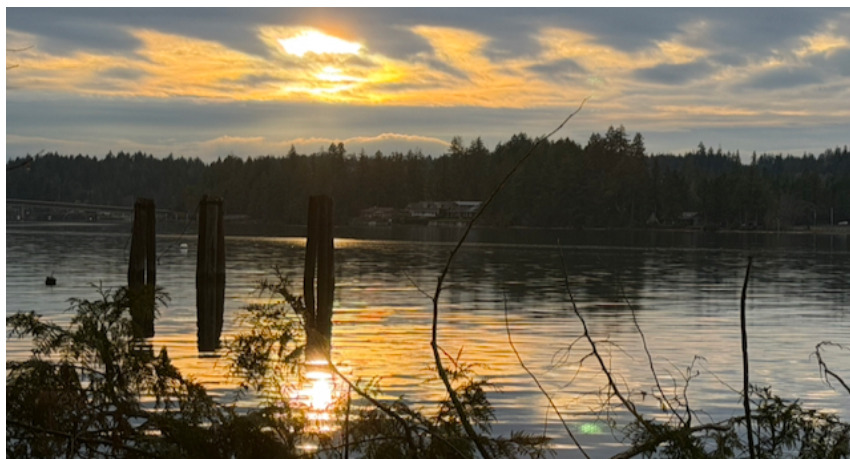
Recovery buddy duty.



Saying goodbye is never simple.



Grateful for retirement joy back home.



Harstine will be open for visitors sometime in 2026!