

It's been a little over two years since our last New Year's letter. And since our website (www.funfolks.net) is *still* woefully outdated despite Randy's occasional efforts to fill in the ever-growing gaps, we decided to update you in writing rather than to leave you wondering what we've been up to! So we're still wage slaves, and both still practicing martial arts several times a week (Randy even teaches YMD at 7 AM once a week), but that's the regular stuff. We wanna tell you now about lots of the FUN things we've been up to. Unfortunately, we ran out of room. Really! So even though this letter is long, it's only a quick gloss on what we've been up to these past two years. Apologies in advance if anyone feels left out! 😊



Ready for New Year's '07



Ting in Honolulu



Nualolo Cliffs Trailhead



Day's end at Beaver Creek



Removing sutures



Ernie & Ting



T, R, Kouta & Tim



Melanie & Ting



Elizabeth and George



Ting and Lily (with bronze & silver)



Near Waimea Canyon



Dinner at Pres a Vie



Vito and Randy



Weema Wompas party



Jarid, Ting & Golden Egg



Joanne, Scott, Randy and a very low ceiling



Officer at ready



at Joe's luau party



Ben & Randy earn Bronze

We had a great time ringing in 2007 with three nights of revelry at Café du Nord with *New Orleans Radiators* and a bunch of friends. At the start of February, we flew to Hawaii for a short tour with the *Radiators* – four shows in four days on four islands, followed by four far more mellow days of leisure on Kauai after the circus moved on! February also saw Ting begin her four-month stint in the Oakland Citizen's Police Academy, learning what makes the cops tick. At the end of February, we visited Colorado for a week of snowsporting at Vail, Beaver Creek and Copper Mountain with our pal Harsha. *The Radiators* were back in the area for four shows in March, though we took one night off to go see *Yo-Yo Ma* in Berkeley.

Ting reprised her role as Master of Ceremonies at the 38th Annual UC Open Taekwondo Championship in early April. To celebrate tax day, we spent the weekend in Santa Cruz with our friends TC and Kaoru, seeing the *Ben Munisteri Dance Project* at UCSC, and then enjoying Barry and Susan Porter's House-Wrecking Party at their beach house in Aptos the next day, preceding their big renovation project. In May, Ting refereed at both the AAU TKD and Stanford TKD tournaments. In mid-May, Ting wrapped up her stint in the Oakland Citizen's Police Academy with a ride-along in a police car for 10 hours, where she witnessed first hand a police standoff with a car robbery suspect and numerous confrontations with parolees. The month ended with a great Stanford reunion party and luau at Joe Herzog and Brenda Machosky's place in Palo Alto, as they prepared for their impending move to Honolulu.

May 29 found us at SFO, where we jetted off to Korea for the biannual UCMAP trip. We spent the first week training at Yongin University, where we participated in the First World Yongmudo Championship (giving a well-received demonstration of our 16 Step-exercises before the assembled crowd, and with both Ting and Randy earning Bronze medals for sparring in their respective weight classes). The second week was a whirlwind, with short visits to Mokwon, Vision and Chosan Universities before flying back home.

At the end of July, we took a ten day vacation around New York City. For the first few days we stayed with Randy's Aunt Barbara and her family in Oradell, NJ. Highlights included the Museum of Natural History, Central Park, the Broadway show *Spamalot*, two free shows at Castle Clinton in Battery Park, *Jenna Mammìna* at the Living Room, and a truly amazing show by *They Might Be Giants* at the Bowery Ballroom with our friends Eric and Jill.

In September, Lance and Duc threw a great housewarming party at their new townhouse in Pleasanton. Sadly, the long drive from there to Cal means we don't see Duc at YMD practice so often. At month end, we attended the Charity Fall Music Festival at B.R. Cohn Winery where we enjoyed great BBQ while listening to *Canned Heat*, *Taj Mahal*, *Los Lobos* and others.

October kicked off with three days of the *Hardly Strictly Bluegrass* in Golden Gate Park. UCMAP hosted two big events that month with the 2nd International TKD Symposium and the 3rd Annual UC YMD Championship, with Ting as MC again for these events. We skipped out on the second day of the Symposium to attend Greg and Shannon's beach wedding near Monterey, followed by a terrific reception. Unfortunately, we had to leave just as *Broken English* was starting up to jet up to SF to see the *Radiators*. That weekend concluded with a fabulous outdoor pool party and BBQ with the *Radiators* in Mill Valley in the afternoon, followed by a multimedia spectacle (LASERS! Inflatable kangaroos!! 3-D sound!!!) produced by the *Australian Pink Floyd Show* in SF. Towards month-end, Ting began volunteering weekly for BUILD, mentoring disadvantaged East Oakland high school kids in entrepreneurial skills, an activity she kept up with through May 2008 when the school year ended.

In November, Mom and Pop Tse came out for another extended visit (staying through mid-January). Ting's brother, Scott announced his engagement to Josephine around Xmas. We closed the year with shows by *Jackie Greene* at GAMH and another run with the *Radiators* at Café du Nord.

In January, we jetted off to Florida for a fabulous weekend with Bruce and Debra to celebrate the Monkeyball with the *Radiators*, followed immediately by our second Caribbean cruise with the band, this time making stops in the Dominican Republic, the Virgin Islands and the Bahamas. The weather was perfect and the experience was great fun. We got back home just in time to celebrate Mardi Gras with *Phil Lesh and Friends*, first at the Fillmore, and then at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium. The month ended with Scott and Josephine's wedding at the Stanford Faculty Club – a most festive event on a very rainy day.

A week later, Ting enjoyed the Deadheads for Obama benefit gig at the Warfield; Randy skipped it since he was busy skiing at Heavenly that day. Since Mom and Pop Tse had come back out for the wedding, we were able to celebrate Chinese New Year's in proper familial fashion with a big feast at their favorite place in Oakland. At the end of February, we jetted to Colorado for a week of snowsporting with Harsha. This time around we visited Beaver Creek, Vail, Copper Mountain, Arapahoe Basin and Breckenridge.

In March, Ting MC'd at the 39th UC Open Taekwondo Championships (and again at the 4th Yongmudo Championship in October). She also got certified as an official AAU TKD Referee, and served thusly at the AAU California State TKD Championships, Choi's All American TKD Tournament, and the Stanford TKD Spring Open.

At the start of May, we bought a new condo in downtown Oakland within walking distance from Chinatown, so that Ting's parents could move out from Boston. Mid-May saw us attending *Phil Lesh's* monumental run of five shows at the Warfield. Wow, what a treat! Lots of surprises and special guests, with the final night running from until almost 3:30 AM!



Dancing at the reception



Tea with Pumpkin & Ger



Randy signals 'START!'



At the Ben & Jerry's Factory



Enjoying the Badlands



Ting & Kathy



Hoover Dam Dynamos



Dan & Randy at Los Lobos



Perry takes a hit!

In June, Ting began preparing for her 2nd-degree black-belt exam in Yongmudo, which included counter-throw forms and weapon defense with a short umbrella. Hundreds of hours of workout went into the preparation for the fateful exam day in early December. As you might guess, such dedication paid off in spades, and her performance drew lots of oohs and aahs from the spectators.

In mid-July we flew back to Boston to help Ting's folks pack to move out here, then S-L-O-W-L-Y drove their somewhat balky 1993 Ford Escort across the country (Ting's parents flew to CA). We visited with Randy's Grandma Barbara on Cape Cod, before heading out across up through Vermont to upstate New York. Transmission troubles threw us off schedule nearly immediately, giving us a couple of days to explore the beautiful Finger Lakes region. Then it was on to Niagara Falls, then up through Ontario and around Lake Huron, returning back to the US via the Sault Ste Marie bridge from whence we headed south along Lake Michigan to Green Bay, WI. We stopped at Forevertron in Wisconsin, which featured some amazing metal sculptures made from junkyard scraps. Given that our top speed was limited by the transmission issues to some 60 mph or so, we did our best to stick to minor highways instead of the interstates, and while this undoubtedly lengthened our trip, it also provided for a much better chance to see the beautiful country we live in.

In South Dakota, we stopped at Devil's Gulch, where Jesse James made his great escape, then on to the Corn Palace in Mitchell (you can't miss it if you're on I-70 – the advertising begins hundreds of miles away). We were up early the next day to hike the Badlands, but after moving on to the White River Valley Overlook after lunch, the Escort quit on us again. AAA to the rescue! We got a tow all the way to Rapid City (about 100 miles), arriving at a repair shop about 4 PM. Our driver had called ahead regarding the likely problem (failed starter motor), so the shop was expecting us and miracle of miracles, they had us out of there in under an hour! Another early morning saw us heading out to the Black Hills for a brief stop at Mount Rushmore and a terrific hike amongst the Needles – awesome spires of granite protruding from the hills like, uh, needles! And then the sub-60mph dash home really began. Yellowstone? Not enough time! WY to UT to NV to CA in a three day blur, punctuated by impromptu stops (mandated by the ailing transmission) and roadside attractions (Independence Rock, along WYO 220; Gilgal Garden in Salt Lake City).

August saw us settle back into the usual routine: work, martial arts, play, repeat. Scott and Josephine were blessed with a son, Ryan, on the 13th, while Ting pursued her creative muse this month via classes in soap, face cream and lotion-making. At the end of the month we took a quick trip to Las Vegas with Mom and Pop Tse. While they enjoyed the casino spectacles; we enjoyed Viva Rad Vegas, a set of shows by the *Radiators*. Another highlight of the trip was our tour of Hoover Dam and hiking in Valley of Fire State Park.

Aside from political thrills, the remainder of 2008 was relatively sedate. With Ting training extra hard for her 2nd-degree black-belt test, there wasn't enough time leftover for any more exciting vacations. Nonetheless, we still found ways to sneak in extra fun here and there. Hardly Strictly Bluegrass was a fun weekend in Golden Gate Park, and Ting managed to get invited to a semi-private rehearsal by *Phil Lesh* at Sweetwater. Both of us officiated at the 4th Annual UC YMD Tournament in October. Randy continued to see music of many kinds, from avant-jazz (*Myra Melford* et al) to ancient Norwegian chant (*Trío Mediavel*, on Randy's BD) to Mexican folk-rock (*Los Cenzontles*). It's tough trying to keep up with all the interesting events going on around here, but we do our best!

December kept us busy with family gatherings; and with more relatives close by, the events were that much more festive! Some of the best shows of the year also happened this month, including an incredible *Los Lobos* show at the Fillmore. Our New Year's run started with two *Radiators* shows, followed by two nights with *Phil Lesh and Friends* to ring in the New Year

We are still living high in the beautiful Oakland Hills. If you are in the area, give us a call at 510-339-8966 so we can get together! Don't forget to put your HEART AND SOUL into everything you do and NEVER FORGET TO HAVE FUN! 😊 Gung Hay Fat Choy!



Debra, Ting & Bruce



Norwegian Dawn



Donya and Rose



Randy & Grandma Barbara



Caught by the Arachnid!



Randy at Devil's Gulch



Ting 'n' Zeke



Ting & Laura



Enjoying HSBS



Bonnie, Ting & Michelle

With Lots of Love,