

# Brown's 2007 News

Volume 1, Issue 1

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## You Might be from Washington State if:

- You know the state flower (mildew).
- You feel overdressed wearing a suit.
- You do have one suit but it's 15 years old and only worn twice since you retired.
- You stand on a deserted corner in the rain waiting for the "walk" signal.
- You consider swimming an indoor sport.
- You can't wait for a day with "showers and sun breaks."
- You wear Birkenstock sandals with socks year-round.
- You often switch from "heat" to "A/C" in one day.
- You use a down comforter in the summer.
- You often go to the beach, but never go in the water.
- You design your kid's Halloween costume to fit under a raincoat
- You know the important seasons: Almost Winter, Still Raining (Spring), Road Construction (Summer), Deer & Elk Season (Fall)
- You know immediately that the view out Frasier's window was a fake,

## Elizabeth's Year in Review

Picking up where I left off last year, I was training in Arizona until mid-April. On the drive back I met my mom and a friend in Vegas for a weekend of birthday excitement! We saw La Rêve, a water and acrobatic extravaganza. We stayed at Mandalay Bay, beautiful rooms and pools, but too cold to swim. I reported to duty at the Corps of Engineers' office in Seattle on April 30, ready to begin my next phase of training. The work was slow to get moving but I'm really busy and long for the time where I spent most of the day surfing the Internet.

The highlight of my year was a ten-day trip to the wilderness lands of Utah, outside Canyonlands and Arches. It was a canyoneering trip which is traveling in canyons using a variety of techniques that may include scrambling,

climbing, jumping, abseiling, chimneying or off-width climbing, and/or rope work. In addition to that, we hiked, carried 50+ lb. packs, rappelled, swam

through potholes, tied our own harnesses, relied heavily on our wetsuits and helmets, and slept under the stars. I made it out alive, though traveling in the wilderness with 9 men was no easy task. I felt privy to all the locker room talk I missed as a woman.

Upon my return in October, I began to train my coworkers in the automation tools and the work from Arizona flooded back.



Liz appears over the rim!

Life was hectic enough, but I had already been hired on by REI kids' department for 16-20 hours per week. I couldn't lose my employee discount before I had a chance to use it – I had to at least wait until my Christmas shopping was done. And that brings me to Christmas, I haven't finished my shopping and I still have my discount. I like life with a little bit of busy!

## Mary's Year in Review

Well another year, another newsletter and still nothing amazing to write about. I just finished up my undergraduate education in June at the University of Washington. I received a double degree in psychology and economics, but have not put either

degree to work yet. After school I moved back down to Portland to live in my parent's floating home while looking for a job. My parents didn't want me living alone so they got me some protection, a 2lb kitten, which I so dutifully named Gus after the fat

mouse on Cinderella. Little did I know I was foretelling the future; he is now a 15lb, seven month old, overeating cat. But if you ask him, he will try to tell you that he is malnourished and underfed.

Eventually I found a job

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## 2007 Trip Report and Pictures

Looking back on our year, it is a bit of a shock to realize that we had only taken one cruise. However, it was a really nice one. Since we had enough of hot climates in 2006, we took Holland America's "Route of the Vikings" trip. This time we headed for northern waters on Holland America Lines' MS Maasdam. The 35-day, 9522 mile, cruise was called the "Route of the Vikings." However, we did not have to row and weren't allowed to rape or pillage – even a little bit. Our route took us from Boston to Boston via Newfoundland, Iceland, Greenland, Faroe Islands, Norway, England, Ireland, and France. The cruise could have been more aptly named "Route of the Unpronounceables" with stops in Djupivogur, Torshavn, Seydisfjordur, and (best of all) Qaqortoq. The hospitality was all we have come to expect from HAL with great service, food and accommodations. The weather was mostly delightful and cool. The ports were mostly small towns and offered chances for interesting excursions, such as boiling sulfur springs in Iceland, the L'Anse aux Meadows Viking settlement, and a Beatles tour in Liverpool. Of course, no tour would be complete for Mrs. Brown without plenty of opportunities for shopping. The days at sea were fun, too. We took home the unofficial (by my reckoning) trivia crown for the trip. In fact, by the end, they had run out of questions, so Adele was running some of the games. Adele took the time to paint 14 pictures and discover a new watercolor style for herself (which she describes as "whimsical") – you can check some of them out at her section of our website.

By September, we were suffering from travel deprivation, so we booked a 10-day bus tour through California. The tour went from San Francisco to Los Angeles with many interesting stops, such as Yosemite National Park and the Hearst Castle. Even though we spent many hours riding on the bus, it sure was nice having someone else do the driving.



Torshavn, Norway Fishing Harbor



Sometimes our ship dominated the town



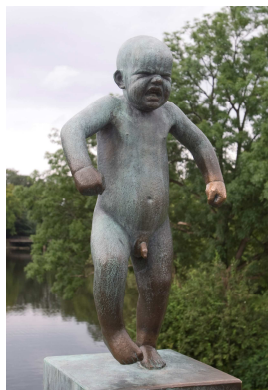
Adele attacks the sale rack



Hello from Stavanger!



Color in Qaqortoq



"But I don't want to be circumcised!"  
Oslo, Norway



A Bistro in Honfleur, France



Hanging out in Liverpool



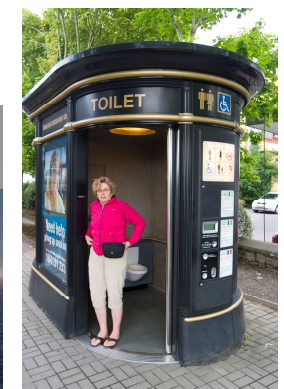
Adele & Friend—Delft



Viking House, L'Anse aux Meadows



Prince Christian Sound, Greenland



Always the first Stop!



Some bridge in California—I forget which one.



Some valley in California—I forget which one.

## Gus's Year in Review

Well, I can't believe it – they forgot to ask me for my story! And who is more important than a kitty? And I am the newest member of the family. So, let's get to it. My name is Gus-Gus and I belong to Mary Brown. Boy did I pick the right owner. Mary loves me more than I ever thought I would be loved. I don't want another sibling or a boyfriend for Mary because then I would have to share her attention and I wouldn't be good at that. Just give me food and a warm lap and I will purr up a storm. When Mary picked me at the Humane Society in July, I was a scrawny little guy and kind of sickly. However, with lots of TLC I am now a healthy (my Grandfather says I am fat!) and happy kitty. Next summer, Mary promises to let me go outside and play with the neighbor kitties as long as I promise not to fall into the water.

## Scrabble Box Scores December 26, 2007

Player	Won	Pct.	Average	Highest
Adele	244.5	48.5%	334.21	491
Bill	259.5	51.5%	339.33	514

## Adele's Year in Review

It has been another good year for the Browns. Both girls have now completed their undergraduate degrees and are gainfully employed; in fact they are both working two jobs at the present time. I say that they have one

real job and the other one is for fun. I am sure the girls will elaborate more in their articles regarding the double employment.

When we are not traveling I spend many hours each day painting water-

colors. I paint most anything nowa-days.

Thanks to William, we have a web site that shows my paintings to the world. I hope you enjoy looking at them as much as I love doing them.

## Mary's Year (cont'd)

*(Continued from page 1)*

at McMenamins, a local Portland restaurant chain, where I met some of my first Portland friends. Although McMenamins was fun, it wasn't a career, and as a result I found 9 to 5 job at HealthNet of Oregon, an insurance

company. Soon after I started working at HealthNet, I went to Hawaii with mom, which I don't recommend doing if you are just starting a new job, but the trip was planned before I knew about the job. Hawaii was wonderful, very relaxing and I came back with a nice tan. I am currently work-

ing at both McMenamins on the weekends and as an underwriter at HealthNet on the weekdays. It may seem like tough schedule, but I am handling it well. I am also trying to study for my GREs and I am looking into graduate schools.

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**The Browns  
solemnly prepare  
to greet the  
New Year.**



## Bill's Year in Review

Have you noticed how fast the years have been going lately? It seems like only a week or so ago I was working on our 2006 newsletter. I'll have to check the battery in my calendar!

Check out our web site (note the **new** address – [www.brownransomfamily.org](http://www.brownransomfamily.org)). It isn't a fancy site, but there's a lot of family stuff. I had to change web host and address during the year due to major difficulties

with the old host. I will be adding more pages, but I had a major computer meltdown in the middle of the year. I lost both my hard drives and my backup system failed. Since I keep all my financial records on the computer, I was in quite a mess. I am pretty much back to normal now, but a family photos I had spent weeks scanning are completely unrecoverable. . I guess re-scanning will be a project for 2008. Now that I think about, 2007 was an extremely

bad year for computers. I also had to build Adele a new one – fortunately for me **she** didn't lose any information.

We didn't spend as much time as we would have liked at the floating home this year. We spent the early part of the summer on a cruise to Iceland, etc. Since then, it has been occupied by Mary and her live-in companion (his name is Gus and he's a large, perpetually hungry, cat!).

**We're On the Web!**

**[www.brownransomfamily.org](http://www.brownransomfamily.org)**