

Hello to All,

This has been a busy year for us, which is why we have written three letters to everyone during that time. The summer here in D.C. was very hot and humid. Gisleide missed it since she was in Europe. I took a trip to Coos Bay, Oregon in August to visit with my sister, niece and parents. We all had a good time. I had not been there for about twelve years. I went fishing one early morning with my dad. The ocean was very rough, so it was a little unsettling for me, but we caught lots of fish despite that. My parents and I stayed at the house of "The Woods", who are family friends. They have a house with a large plot of land. It was very enjoyable there. I got up early one morning and took these two photographs there.



I bought myself a bicycle, which I have ridden around town quite a bit. Since I don't have a car, and I need to exercise I have been riding my bike. I also use it a lot for getting to where I want to take photos. I took these photos around town.



Fireworks on the Mall



Part of the FDR Memorial



U.S. Capital



Hand of "The Awakening"

At the end of our last letter, Gisleide was in Berlin, Germany. From there she went to Dusseldorf, then Cologne, Frankfurt, Heidelberg and Munich. Then she went to the Netherlands, specifically Amsterdam and Utrecht. She went down to Brussels for a little while before flying to Sweden. From Sweden she had planned to go to Prague, but at that time there was a serious flood happening there. Needless to say, she skipped Prague and flew to Athens, Greece. Her zig-zag travels across northern Europe are shown below.



She spent a long time in Greece going through the islands. The map below shows where she went. She had a marvelous time there. Then she went to Turkey. I flew to Istanbul, Turkey at the beginning of October and spent ten days with her. We had a great time, in which we spent a few days in Istanbul, and then traveled down the Aegean coast to Ephesus. I headed back to Istanbul and then home, while Gisleide continued on to the Mediterranean coast. From there she flew to Morocco via a stopover in the Dubai, United Arab Emirates. From Morocco she flew to London and then to home. She was gone for about five months.



Gisleide will describe her adventures in more detail sometime in the future, but you can see some of her photos online at <http://www.jm.net/~gis/5months/>. Until then, here is a description of my short ten day trip. My impressions of Turkey are those of a person who saw it for the first time, so much of my comments are about how it is different than other places I have seen and how it made me feel. The first thing I saw was cats everywhere. All their streets are filled with cats, but not wild ones. It is weird, because they seem to be feral, but they are quite tame. They are quite friendly and always searching for a handout. They seem to be in good physical shape, also. This was not just an aberration of Istanbul, but it was the same every where we went. Istanbul did not impress me as much as I had imagined it would. The Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque are quite impressive from a distance, but up close they are quite rough. They are not intricate at all. They are massive, but not refined. There is tons of history in Istanbul, but the modern city is hectic and crazy. I was happy when we headed out of town. The bus system in Turkey is marvelous. We were able to travel around quickly, reliably and cheaply. We chose to visit some other sites of antiquity, so we first headed to Assos, which is not far from the Galipolli battle site and what is left of Troy. We decided not to visit Troy since it exists more in name than in anything else. There was not too much at Assos either, but it was quite beautiful. On our way there we stopped in a nice little seaside town called Kuçukkuyu, which is pronounced ku-chuk-ku-yu. It was very nice and peaceful. We just missed the summer season, so it was very peaceful. The town hosts lots of Turkish tourists

then. Next we headed to Ayvalek, which we liked very much. From there we headed to Selçuk, which is right next to the ancient town of Ephesus. We visited the ruins there, which are pretty worn down due to multiple earthquakes and much time and neglect. It was still inspiring to walk the streets where Alexander had walked, and St. John and the Virgin Mary had lived and died. The one real lasting impression I have of Turkey, though, is the people. They have to be the nicest people on Earth. They are very friendly, but on top of that they are sincere. Everywhere we went we were met by their eager and happy faces, and it truly made the trip unforgettable. Since arriving home I have been quite sensitive to events in the news about Turkey. I have followed their desires to join the European Union, their recent national elections and their participation with us in the preparations for war with Iraq. You can say I have a soft spot for Turkish things now.



Hagia Sophia, Istanbul



Alex in front of the Topkapi Palace, Cats on a fishing boat in Kuçukkuyu Istanbul



Gisleide in front of Trajan's Fountain, Ephesus



The Library of Celsus, Ephesus



Gisleide on Curetes Street, Ephesus

Gisleide is back in Brazil now, after a very short couple of weeks at home. She is finishing up her dental implants. She has braces on right now to move some of her teeth over to make room for the new teeth, and she is in pain from it. It is a very aggressive plan to move them. This will take a while to complete, and the braces need to be adjusted periodically. I might go visit her during Carnival. That is something I would like to see. I submitted some of my photos to a few photo magazines earlier this year. One was selected and published in the November issue of American Photo magazine. It was the 'Rio Fuseri at night, Venice' photo that was in the first letter we sent out this year. Well, that is about all from us. Hope you are doing well, and to hear from you soon.

Hugs and Kisses,
Gisleide and Alex