

Laurie Wetterschneider
Lisa Peterson

Wanderlust

Three generations of Foothills family love to travel together

BY MARC DAVID PHOTO BY CARL SCHULTZ

Traveling is truly a family affair for this Foothills couple.

Laurie and Larry Wetterschneider travel to faraway places at least once a year — and oftentimes twice.

But the Wetterschniders rarely travel alone. Joining them on many of their trips are Laurie's parents, Linda and Stuart Nelson. Laurie's sister, Lisa Peterson; Lisa's husband, John; and their two sons, Matthew, 15, and Timothy, 12, go along as well.

So not every trip is a romantic getaway. But it is a true bonding experience for three generations of a family that enjoys visiting different locales and genuinely likes spending quality time together.

"The fact that we can be in small quarters together with the age differences and have the joy of being together is great," Laurie says. "Seeing things through the eyes of my sister's children makes it so special."

Laurie has learned how to combine just the right amount of business with these social getaways. And the business also is a family affair. Laurie and Lisa Designs includes both husbands in a business that creates jewelry. Laurie handles business in the West, while Lisa takes care of East Coast operations from her suburban New York home.

Laurie, a native New Yorker, fled the East Coast long ago. After receiving a bachelor's degree in fine arts from the University of Arizona, she opted to remain in the Tucson area. For the past 17 years, she and her husband have lived in the same Foothills residence that Larry designed.

Their travels have taken them to such destinations as Japan, France,

Italy and Bermuda.

One of Laurie's favorite trips was a cruise the group took that started in Sweden, took in parts of Russia where her great-grandparents were from, and then back around Sweden, where brother-in-law John's ancestors hail from.

"It was wonderful to visit them," Laurie says. "I also really enjoyed a trip we took where we stopped in Rome, Florence and Venice. In Japan, we stayed at a ryokan (old inn) and all dressed in kimonos."

Larry, who operated a brokerage firm before retiring, likes to kid that "if it's Tuesday, it must be Brussels. We're like our own mini tour group."

He acknowledges that while the trips always are nice, "It takes a lot to get eight people going in the same direction."

Larry remembers fondly the first large European family trip five years ago when France and Portugal were the stops.

"Paris was fun and Lisbon was relaxing on the ocean and playing golf," he says. "It was less chaotic (than previous trips) when it was more sightseeing and getting from spot to spot."

And it's Larry who always is ready and willing to try new and exotic foods. Sea snails, barnacles, horse meat and a rooster's comb are just some of the "delicacies" he has eaten.

While the trips can be adventurous, they also make a deep impression on the family that will be with them for years.

"The beauty and tranquility are special," Laurie said. "Most have been very spiritual trips." ■