



## Race Point Snapshots

by Katie O'Sullivan

The year we bought a house on Cape Cod, many new family traditions were born, two of which involve the National Seashore.

The first new "tradition" is an annual outing to Race Point beach with Uncle Charlie, my husband's best friend who lives and works in Provincetown. We load up the minivan and head to the very tip of the National Seashore, where we spend the day on the outer reaches of the beach fishing, playing, watching seals and barbecuing.

Charlie is co-owner of P-town Pedicab, those bicycle-drawn cabs you see riding up and down Provincetown's Commercial Street during the summer months. He's usually too busy at work to schedule any of his weekend time until early – or sometimes late – fall.

This works out fine, since there's less traffic on Route 6 and way fewer crowds along the beach. It does mean we need to pack sweatshirts and blankets along with our fishing gear, but September and October are still beautiful on the outer beaches.

So when it came time to plan my mother-in-law's big 70th birthday celebration, we knew September was a perfect time to be on the outer beaches. We decided to surprise her with a Provincetown Dune Tour and Clambake.

The extended family piled into three of Art's Dune Tour SUVs and headed out along Race Point. Not only did we all have a marvelous time, but we also took some beautiful family photos in the golden light of sunset.

The second tradition we started was taking our annual Christmas card picture on one of Cape Cod's picturesque shorelines. As anyone with kids knows, getting a picture with everyone smiling at the same time can be a slow and painful process, something akin to root canal.

You would think getting a beach photo would be easy, but that's not always the case. Think sand in the eye, big brother pinching a bare foot, splinters... you name it, it has happened.



O'Sullivan Family Portrait, Race Point 2005

The great photos from 2005's dune tour got me thinking... and I decided that our two family traditions should be melded together. In 2006, the taking of the "Christmas photo" became an official part of our annual Race Point excursion.

Since we started our newest tradition, we have less whining and more smiling all the way through the photo shoot. Spending an entire day and most of the evening fishing and relaxing eliminates the "stress" of getting the picture "right."

When the smiles are real, everything is easier.