

December 2004

Holiday Greetings!

We apologize for not getting any cards and letters sent last year. We should have two years of news stored up, but we're lucky if we can remember back to January of 2004, when our recreation consisted mostly of skiing and an occasional dip in the hot springs pool. We alternated skiing at Snowmass and our local ski area, Sunlight. This kept us in a continual state of culture shock, as we were shifting between the ultra modern high-speed lifts and friendly Aussie employees of Aspen Ski Company to the antique sloooooowwww 1950's lifts of Sunlight run by local ski-bum employees. We had lots of fun both places, and had good snow most of the winter.

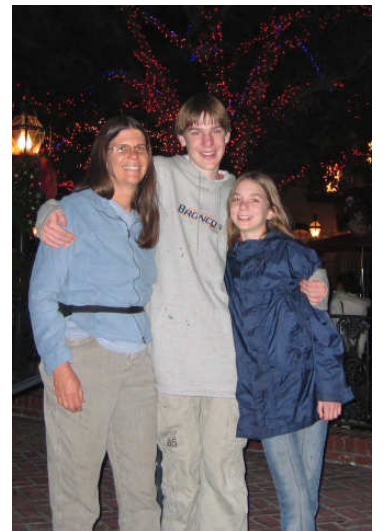
In March we packed our bags and left the piles of melting snow behind for some beach time in Grand Cayman. The snorkeling was great, the food was great, and we became quite accomplished in the art of doing nothing. We did take the obligatory boat trip to "Stingray City", to feed and pet the rays, and, yes, do more snorkeling. We are planning to check out the east coast of Mexico this coming spring, which will give Trina a chance to practice her extremely rusty Spanish.



In May we decided that Risa needed her own horse so that she could take lessons over the summer. It turned out that our neighbor's sister had a horse for sale that was perfect for Risa. His name is Beaugart (because the owners were watching Casablanca when he was born), and he is a cute little Arabian gelding with loads of personality. He already had dressage training, and Risa made amazing progress riding

him and taking lessons all summer. Trina also got a new horse, a four-year old she named *Zephyr*, who needs lots of training and is her new "project".

Before school was out in May, we enjoyed a family reunion of four generations of relatives from Trina's side of the family: Aunt Elaine, cousins Gary, Dennis, Debbie, and Pat, and their extended families. Some live in Colorado, and the rest came from Michigan, North Carolina, Washington, and even Germany! There were over 20 of us part of the time, and it was great to see everyone and meet the newer additions. Risa and Van had fun meeting so many cousins all at once. Van hiked with intrepid adventurer Pat Norris and other cousins to Hanging Lake during a frigid May snowstorm, and for some odd reason he thought it was great fun.



We cut hay on our property and our neighbor's property in late June. Bruce managed to keep the old Ford tractor running and we used our own antiquated equipment to do the baling. Van and a friend of his got to build their biceps stacking all of it. In July Van flew to New Mexico to stay with his friend Kyle. They get together every summer. Later, he spent a week at a jazz camp at UNC in Greeley. He had a great time and wants to go again next year, although he found that dorm food is not to his tastes!

Risa turned twelve in September, and is in seventh grade. She likes school and is particularly good in math. She plays the flute in band and spends much of her time talking to her friends non-stop on the phone. She thinks it is too cold to ride her horse now, but can't wait to go skiing.



Van is a sophomore, and likes his classes and teachers pretty well this year. He is in band and jazz band, and his new hobby is making movies. He turned fifteen in June, so he now has a driving permit and has just completed Driver's Ed. Bruce and Trina are already noticing an increase in gray hairs! Van passed Bruce in height in July!

Bruce got elected to the School Board in 2003, which keeps him quite busy. They passed a bond issue this fall, and will be building a new high school in Glenwood, and -sniff- tearing down most of the one Trina (and Van) went to.



We took a quick trip to Disneyland in early November, and finally managed to be there when *Pirates of the Caribbean* wasn't closed for refurbishing. It wasn't crowded, and it we enjoyed the California sunshine (with a little smog mixed in!).

So another year has passed, and things have come almost full circle. The days are short again, the ground is white, and the Christmas lights are on. We have a herd of about 80 elk that seem to be making our pasture their winter home. Some of the younger elk even walk up to the barn and eat the hay we put out for the horses. Oddly, the horses don't seem to mind sharing. I guess they have the Yuletide Spirit.

We wish you a Merry Christmas, and a happy and healthy 2005!

Bruce, Trina, Van, & Risa