

2000 Christmas Letter

Greetings to our friends! Newsworthy events from our family can be found here:

New Years We trek to a rented house at Sun River, Oregon for our new year's celebration and skiing. Art wakes up the five oldest children at 11:30PM and takes them out by the river to welcome the New Millennium. The Hour turns with sparkling snow and brilliant stars.

Feb Art joins his brother Ray skiing on Mt. Bailey in southern Oregon. One morning Theron slips out of the house and disappears. 45 minutes of frantic searching later Theron and the dog are found exploring the woods.

March Brenden's leg lengthening brace comes off. It was a long haul, but very successful and his formerly short leg is 3 inches longer. After 7 years of promises, Art finally puts up a zip line. With 380 feet of steel cable, it stretches down the hill behind our house. Riding the zip line brings many hours of fun.

April Ronda and Art each attend their 25-year high-school class reunions. Art takes Bethani with him to Montana to celebrate his Mother's 80th birthday. Bethani brings home honors at a piano competition.

May Ever since Brenden came home 12 years ago, Art has been promising him a trip back to his birthplace. Brenden and Art spend two weeks in Pusan, South Korea. We explore the city on foot, in the subway, on buses and by taxi. We trust to the goodwill of the restaurant waiters. We hike to mountain Buddhist temples. We read books together. A better father-son trip could not be imagined.

June Tears accompany Elissa's final concert in the Ring of Fire bell choir and her graduation from TVJA. She gets a summer job at a nearby ice cream shop. Taylor turns 6 and fills his summer with non-stop little-boy fun.

July Caleb pushes his finger through a small hole in a cast-aluminum step on the playground slide. The finger won't come out. Dad is summoned home from work to take boy and slide step to the emergency room.

August The family spends a wonderful week at a beach house at Tierra Del Mar on the Oregon coast.

Sep Elissa leaves home to attend 11th grade at Milo Academy in southern Oregon. We miss her muchly. Ronda launches homeschool with Brenden, Bethani, Sierra and Hannah. Sierra eagerly responds to high expectations from her new piano teacher. Hannah and Sierra shoot baskets every day, rain or shine.

Oct Willa learns to walk and discovers new vistas for mischief. Hannah turns a sparkling 8 years old.

Nov On Thanksgiving morning in a rainstorm, Art treks his four boys to the zoo.

Dec Bethani performs in many concerts as part of the Ring of Fire bell choir. The tree goes up and Christmas music traditions are renewed. We look forward to a visit from Grandpa Frank and Grandma Lauretta.

Wrap Up A Christmas-time house-full of joyful noise reminds us of just how blessed we are. We thank God for so many good gifts to us this year. Our sincere wishes for the best of Christmas joy to you!

Art, Ronda, Elissa (17), Brenden (13), Bethani (13), Sierra (10), Hannah (8), Taylor (6), Caleb (4), Theron (3) and Willa (1) all join in to wish you a very Merry Christmas!

Favorite Books of 2000

Read-aloud with the children: *Sheep in a Jeep* by Shaw, *Huck Finn* by Twain, *Moonfleet* by Falkner

Art: *The Future and Its Enemies* by Postrel, *Aubrey-Maturin* series by O'Brian, *Utopias Elsewhere* by Daniels

Ronda: *Good Families Don't Just Happen* by Musco, *Sowing Seeds in Danny*, *Second Chance and Purple Springs* by McClung

Elissa: *Taliesin* by Lawhead, *Sweetness to the Soul* by Kirkpatrick, *The Spy Wore Red* (series) by Aline

Brenden: *Henry Reed, Inc* by Robertson

Bethani: *Patriot Games* by Clancy, *Alicia*, *My Story* by Jurman

Sierra: *Incident at Hawk Hill* by Eckert, *The Wheel on the School* by DeJong

Hannah: *Home from Afar* by Little