

King Family News for 2010

Art and Ronda King are wishing you the best of belated Christmas greetings!

We moved.

That's the big news from us last year. Moving away from our home, friends and church of many years has been hard. Bethani wrote a poem that captures the emotions well:

A Gathering of Sticks and Stones

By Bethani King

The driveway is the same.
The trees, the grass, the same.
The field, the barn, the windows,
still the same.

This house has raised ten children.
Welcomed six as newborns,
and watched as four grew up
and moved away.

From the outside,
this house has not changed
in 17 years,
and aged not a day
in the five months I've been away.

Inside, I am finally struck by the nothingness.
Empty, lifeless halls; barren and sterile walls.

The whole world is in muted shades
of cream and taupe and white.
Landmark-less, I turn quickly to the stairwell
and blink hard.
I will not cry today.
I sit down on the middle step,
and find relief in this angle and this view.
Everything I see here
is still the same.

I duck my head under the chandelier
As I walk to the center

of where our round dinner table
should be.

The refrigerator, double-wide,
is painfully white – completely clear of
report cards,
book lists,
senior pictures,
and wedding invitations
for the first time in its life.

Three large rings of crushed carpet
mark where our K. Kawai grand lived.
One smaller, oblong ring of carpet,
slightly dingy and forever-imprinted
where small feet pounded the pedal
every day for 17 years.

I round the corner and meet
my own bedroom door.
But I will not cry today,
so I return to the stairwell,
and sit on the middle step.
I close my eyes, and remember.

A Beethoven sonata is clunking from the piano,
consistently deprived of E flat.
Upstairs a violin plays selections
from Suzuki book two,
half-screech, half-beauty.
The Bosch is whirring and the oven timer beeping,
my mother is on the phone,
the big boys are blaring their rock'n'roll again,
upsetting the home-video actors across the hall.
From outside I hear a faint but rhythmic
thud, thud, thud.
Basketball on blacktop.

I close my eyes tighter and see visions
of small children at play in the front yard.
I am one of those small children.
It is summer, and we are filling the plastic pool, and
setting the sprinkler under the trampoline.
It is Christmas, and we are making
snow men and
snow angels.
It is spring, and we are weeding mother's endless
flowerbeds.

I would take the weeds back, if also offered
the snowmen and the sprinklers.

There it is again, the oh so familiar ache in my throat
and weight in my chest.
Someone told me once that heartache is a mental pain,
but he was wrong.

A house is a shelter, a gathering of sticks and stones.
But I sense a much greater loss than sticks
or stones.

We are so thankful for the wonderful new
friends we have made in Walla Walla. We are
making a new start here and look forward to
many good times in the years ahead.
We hope you had a Merry Christmas, and our
sincere wish is for you to have a wonderful
2011.

With Love from all of us:

**Art & Ronda, David & Elissa, Brenden,
Bethani, Sierra, Hannah (18), Ian (18),
Taylor (16), Caleb (14), Theron (13), Willa
(11), Rylee (6), Mossen (2), Cheyenne
(9months)**

Favorite Books of 2010

Art: The Rational Optimist by Ridley

David: Paradise General by Hnida

Elissa: The Big Fisherman by Douglas

Bethani: Granny Brand by Wilson, Great Tales
from English History by Lacey

Sierra: Paris Underground by Shiber

Hannah: Still Alice by Genova

Taylor: Deadline by Alcorn

Theron: TinTin - King Ottokar's Sceptre by
Herge

Willa: Calico Captive by Speare, Abby Series
by Walls

Mossen: What's Up, Duck? by Hills