

Christmas 2001

Dear Friends and Loved Ones,

This year, more than ever, we want to focus on family and friends. We have been fortunate that we have been able to travel to see family throughout the country and also to have people visit us. Shortly after Christmas last year, we all flew from Florida to California to celebrate Andy's mother's 90th birthday. Every member of the family—all 4 generations—spent a wonderful day together in Davis with cousins getting acquainted and finding how much they have in common with one another. Our group (8) stayed with my folks in Novato wall-to-wall and Uncle Mike brought a limo to take us to his workplace, the Viansa Winery in Sonoma for a day of sampling and chatting. We left California with just a few extra bottles of wine!

March brought a violent reaction to chemotherapy that left me very sick for a month and ruined our spring break plans. Instead, Andy and I stayed home while Joey went to Ann Arbor and attended classes with Julie, deciding that "stats sucks." He was excited, however, when it snowed on his last day there and he could scrape together enough snow to make a snowman.

By summer, we were ready to hit the road. The three of us drove to New Orleans and spent several days in the French Quarter, sampling the local cuisine and visiting shops. We went to the aquarium and took a boat up the river to the zoo. Hot, but a great place to visit. Then we traveled on to Houston where Rebecca lives and spent the 4th of July with her, saw her school, apartment, etc.

Later in July, Joey and I flew to Honolulu and stayed with Margaret and Brian for a couple of weeks. We did the touristy things and got to see Margaret race with her paddling club, a sport that is growing along our west coast as well. We also flew to the Big Island and stayed at a bed and breakfast outside Volcano Park. Isn't it nice to have a geologist along who can explain everything? We walked out to a black sand beach and also swam in a pool that is warmed by underground freshwater that flows over the lava and then is refreshed by the high tide so that the pool is both warm and salty.

September brought another miserable attempt at chemotherapy. We've given up on that now and simply treat the pain. No long term prognosis, folks.

Joey is in 7th grade now which is one of the two middle school years here. He is not a scholar and his high grades are in P.E. and his electives. He got a calico kitten in April whom he named Friskers. Friskers is a very tolerant cat and spends her days with me—sleeping--and wakes just before Joey gets home from school, pacing in the front window and meowing. Laser at 15 is quite elderly and not up to an energetic 12 year old. Joey likes to hang with his friends, and they are either skateboarding, playing football (scary), going to the beach, or playing video games. This is a great area for a kid who likes to be outdoors.

Lydia is in her junior year at Univ. of Alabama-Birmingham, still majoring in theater. She is planning an honors project which begins in the spring and will be a video about the production of a play, "RUR." She was in several plays this past year and spent a month in Orvieto, Italy as stage manager for a chamber music group. She lived in a medieval convent in a medieval town on a (medieval?) hilltop. This fall, in addition to classes and performances, she is teaching body movement to pre-schoolers including a special ed. group and 2 classes of little ones with cerebral palsy.

Rebecca is in her 2nd year of grad school at MD Anderson Cancer Center - Univ. of Texas. She just had her master's thesis proposal approved and will start on that in the spring semester. Her thesis will then lead directly into her Ph.D. dissertation topic. She moved into a one bedroom apartment in November with her kitten, Max. She continues practicing archery and playing with the Doctor's Orchestra of Houston. I am hoping to attend their February concert which will be a fundraiser for the Literacy Project and feature Barbara Bush as the narrator of one piece.

Margaret is still in Honolulu, working on her master's thesis which is where she was last year at this time. Long story. Later, she thinks she would like to work for a while, but she would love to stay in Honolulu with Brian who still has a couple of years to go on his dissertation. She has paddled in some very long races between islands, around islands, out through the surf and in again. I am in awe of the stamina and strength required in this traditional Hawaiian sport. Brian and Margaret live on the 22nd floor with a fantastic view of hills and Diamondhead. The wind, however, can slam doors and crash pictures if too many windows are left open.

Julie finishes all of her required undergraduate courses this semester, but will take another semester in order to graduate in the spring. She is applying to several schools for graduate work in anthropology, but she and Marcus are hoping that they can stay in Ann Arbor in their house with their 2 cats, Sophie and Ophelia. They are finding that a lot of their friends who left Michigan after high school or college are returning and it would be a shame to leave just now. Marcus continues working at the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University and they both sang in a choir this year which Julie took for course credit and Marcus attended to strengthen the weaker male vocal section.

I am still a Guardian Ad Litem although it is very draining. Fortunately, I have the same case I had last year, 2 teenagers, so that the initial early stage of getting to know the case and the people is over. Andy is still at Northrop-Grumman, but is on a (brief?) medical leave while he tries to deal with his constant fatigue that one doctor says may be chronic fatigue syndrome. It helps me to have him home when I feel so bad.

They all start arriving home for Christmas soon and we are looking forward to being together again.

Adrienne Adair Milman
440 Watson Dr.
Indianapolis FL 32903
321-953-6424
E-Mail Adrienne @ CFL.RRC.Com