



Merry Christmas!

Better Late Than Never?

Happy Holidays from Julie, Brian, Tony, and Brock. We hope this festive season again finds you in good health, grand spirits, and filled with anticipation for the year to come. Unfortunately we're running behind this year. Our editorial staff was down in Florida trying to understand how butterflies and dimples had anything to do with an election. The only thing they learned was that in 1555, the great French seer Nostradamus wrote: *"Come the millennium, month 12, in the home of greatest power, the village idiot will come forth to be acclaimed the leader."* We disagree on whether his initials are G.W.

Now...on with the news. We hope that despite our delay, you will enjoy our family tradition of pictures and stories from the past twelve months.

Snow and Cliffs

Each year we travel to the land of snow (that's most anywhere outside Texas) to frolic in the white stuff. This year we chose to visit Santa Fe, New Mexico, where the boys decided to attempt snowboarding. As you can see in the pictures, the two daredevils spent most of the day sprawled horizontal on the snow, bruised from ankle to (you know what), and quickly traded in their boards for skis for the remainder of the trip.



In addition to snow, Santa Fe offers many cultural activities, including cliff-house ruins of the Pueblo Indians at nearby Bandelier. As part of the two-mile walking tour, there is an optional path leading to some of the higher caves. Tony and Brian decided to take a breather and return to the main entrance. Julie and Brock took the extra journey and the camera. When Brian developed the pictures after the trip, he about had a heart attack upon seeing this picture. Yes, that is Brock climbing a hundred feet up the face of a rock cliff. Aaaaaaahhhhhhhh!



Did I Say That?

Of course, good judgment comes in all shapes and sizes. For example, Brian remembers saying *"No Tony, you can't play football, at least not until you're 10 years old."* That was 1997, and Brian figured that Tony would forget. Wrong. This year he asked and we let him play football. For those of you not familiar with Texas, understand that Texas raises boys to play football. (Really, that's it...no other purpose for them.) Tony's last opponent to block was nearly 6 feet and 160 pounds compared to Tony's 5 feet and 105 pounds. We even asked for the kid's birth certificate! Tony did a great job and his team made it to the regional Super Bowl championship.

Music to My Ears

This year Tony was required to take band, orchestra, or art. Tony chose to follow in his mother's footsteps by playing the violin. There was only one drawback. During an early practice session, Whiskers our 13-year old cat found he'd had enough. He nudged Tony first, then the violin, and finally bit Tony in a last ditch effort to save his hearing. It's taken some time, but Whiskers finally approves (or Tony is playing much better).



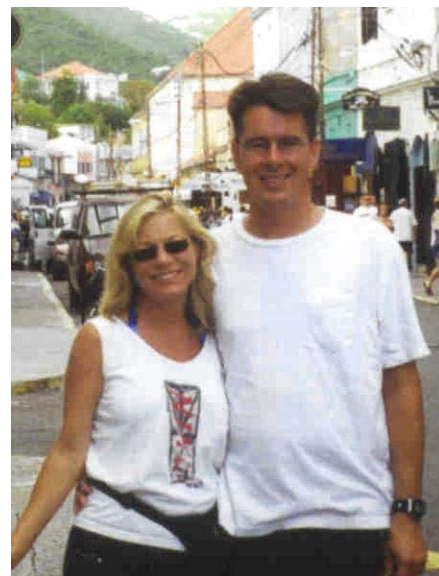
Escapades on Skates

Despite the unusual sub-freezing temperatures we've had during December, you still won't find much ice around Houston. So, when Brock asked to play hockey, we signed him up at the nearby roller hockey rink. He participated in an instructional league where they learned important skills like "body check" and "cross check." Next year they learn the fine art of "fisticuffs" and losing teeth. Seriously, the next league plays real games and Brock can't wait. He wants to play goalie.

And...

As for Julie and Brian, very little has changed this year. Julie has kept her title of "Domestic Goddess," and we are blessed that she can continue to screw up the kids herself versus letting somebody else do it. Brian is still with Compaq, and continues to manage a training group. He's been through two bosses and three reorganizations in the last year, and hopes that Compaq is finally on the right path back to profitability.

Sandwiched between the hectic first and second halves of the year, we had a chance to take a cruise with several friends. It was our first cruise vacation, and we enjoyed the trip very much.



Our address, phone number, and email have not changed. Our address is 15 Dusky Meadow Place, The Woodlands, Texas, 77381. The phone number is 281-292-0791. And our email address is duelm@flex.net. Of course, you probably could have found this on the Internet, along with our social security numbers, medical records, and criminal background. ☺

We hope that you will stay in touch. Have a great holiday season, and...

Happy New Year!