

Seasons Greetings from the Deans! Once again, another holiday season has snuck up on us and we'll be lucky to get these cards out in time for Christmas 2001. To Devin's dismay Cheryl has once again decided to do major house renovations in December. Last year she painted the Living room, Dining room, Kitchen, Family room, and guest room. This year they're replacing the carpet in the Living room and Dining room with ceramic tile, and replacing the carpet in the guest room, and Jeremy's and Bryan's rooms with Pergo wood flooring. It seems like the projects will never end!

Bryan (2 in March '02) continues to amaze us. We felt very fortunate that Jeremy was an easygoing 1 year old, and, well, we just figured there was no way our second child would be as easy. If anything, Bryan has been easier than his big brother. He has an estimated vocabulary of about 50 words (not counting animal sounds) which makes communicating needs a bit easier. He's got most of the basic ones down, such as "more", "please", "thank-you", "chip", "cookie", and "doughnut". Bryan even knows a little sign language; of course he waited until he could say the word before he signed it. Bryan hasn't developed a sense of danger yet, which led to problems earlier this year. He tended to climb up onto high things and fall onto hard things headfirst. There was a period where he seemed to have a perpetual bruise on his forehead. We were able to channel his "danger deficiency" recently by taking him ice skating (with a helmet). To our amazement, Bryan actually liked ice-skating (Jeremy hated it at the same age, reminding us he was a true Floridian, not one of those Canadian transplants) and was able to skate (well, walk) unassisted on single blade skates.

Jeremy (5 in 'February '02) has been into nearly everything this past year. He managed to take ice-skating lessons, dance lessons, played soccer, and is now taking piano lessons. He is doing very well in his Montessori pre-school; now that he's one of the "big kids" he gets to help the younger kids with their work, which he really likes. He is doing Kindergarten level work in most subjects, but has a special interest in math and geography. He thinks it would be great to take a trip to Antarctica, but he's having a little trouble understanding just how cold it is there (a handicap of being a Floridian). We have an option to keep him at the Montessori school for Kindergarten, but Jeremy wants to go "to the big school and ride the bus with Lyndsey". Since the public elementary "big school" is quite good, we don't have any hesitation sending him there for school. He dropped the dance lessons after learning that it was going to be more ballet and tap, not "Backstreet Boys" dancing. He's picked up piano, and does pretty well for a 4 year old. He enjoyed his first season of soccer, managing to score a couple goals while avoiding the bigger kids in the "swarm" that typifies soccer at this age.

Lyndsey (10 last month) continues many of the same activities. She plays soccer and takes dance lessons. She is also taking piano lessons, and is an excellent piano player (for someone with only 4 months of lessons). She continues to work hard in school and brings home good grades. Devin's Mom is now a part of our household. She retired from her job in New York and has come to Florida to spend time with her grandkids. She'll be spending the next couple months with us while she looks for a place of her own.

This summer we managed our first family vacation in the car with all three kids. 3400 miles of fun packed I-95 excitement from Melbourne to Portland, Maine. Traveling with three kids in the car wasn't as bad as we had feared. Frequent stops along the way and a car powered VCR were a big help. We had a great time, even with a couple trips to hospitals for some unknown virus Bryan found along the way. We're looking forward to a similar trip next year.

Cheryl and Devin simply try to keep the chaos down at an acceptable level. Devin still evaluates computer models for the Air Force. He made it to a couple conferences this year and was able to catch up with old friends. He's been able to shave a couple strokes off his golf handicap, but has sadly discovered it's much easier these days to buy beer than it is to make it. He helped coach Jeremy's soccer team this fall, and the experience, although very enjoyable, reminded him of herding cats. Cheryl still works at the same place but she can't keep up with all of the name changes that have taken place this past year so just assume she works for GE and leave it at that. She has survived the cancellation of the Alaska Railroad project she was working on and four rounds of layoffs; she's hoping that there won't be any additional layoffs, but you never know.

Cheryl's health is starting to improve. She had a hysterectomy and bladder reconstruction (all thanks to creating two very large babies) in September; which resulted in complications and a second surgery in October. Now everything seems to be in working order once again and she even seems to have a bit more energy. She is still being monitored for Lupus and/or Rheumatoid Arthritis but nothing new has developed. The doctors say it could be years before one of them progresses to the point where they can actually make a diagnosis, so until then Cheryl is following a new diet for Lupus patients and it seems to make her feel better when she actually follows it correctly.

Have a safe and happy holiday!

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