

...Greetings from the White House in San Diego!...

From Dennis:

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas from the White House! Since practically no one has our address, I thought I'd get this out early! We left Portsmouth, RI on August 12th, arriving in San Diego August 26th. The trip was fun (even though we drove two vehicles - mine the red VW Fox, and DJ in the overloaded black Minivan with two (yes, count 'em 2) white cartop carriers. We named the van "Willie" because it looked like an upside-down beached killer whale! I think we only saw about 50% of the people we wanted to see along the way, but such is always the case, I guess. The Lord provided us a house in La Mesa (sorry, no room for the story!), a suburb just east of San Diego, about 20 minutes commute to the ship piers. The only thing is, I may never commute to those piers! The ship that I was so urgently sent to (we were scheduled to go to San Francisco, and the Navy changed my mind approximately two weeks before we left Rhode Island!) is now going to be decommissioned before I report aboard! My current tasking is to continue to go to the schools I was originally assigned, and I will get new orders sometime in the first part of November (slight problem - most of the schools on my orders have also been canceled...hmmm... do you think God is trying to tell me something?). So we don't know if we will stay in the San Diego area for 30 months (my original orders), 24 months (the "new" rotation period), 18 months (the "old" short rotation period) or 2 months (if I'm assigned to a ship somewhere other than San Diego)! But other than that, we are pretty well settled in (Ha Ha)!

We have settled into a church - it is Calvary Chapel of La Mesa - only 1.9 miles from home, and about 6 minutes! Compared to the 45 minute commute in Rhode Island, we don't know what to do with all that time on Sunday morning (confession - we have been late to church twice already!). DJ has started to practice with the Worship Team, and will begin singing in a couple of weeks, Bridget is trying to break into the Jr. High crowd (so far it has been a challenge), and Jenny isn't sure whether she wants to be with the "kids" or the adults (she is a mature 14 now). I've started to work with a convalescent home than is even closer to our house than church, doing their Protestant service on Sunday afternoon with a couple of other folks. This is something I've wanted to do for a long time, and I really enjoy it! Write soon, and God Bless!

From Bridget:

Merry Christmas everyone! It sure has been a long year. But I guess moving takes a lot out of you. And boy do I LOVE moving - like I have nothing better to do. The move to Rhode Island was fine because it was only a one day trip. I don't know what it was about Rhode Island, but it seems I was in and out of hospitals and Emergency rooms the whole time I was there, and when it wasn't serious enough to go out, "Doctor Dad" patched me up (it must be the climate!). Well, if it is the climate, I should be in perfect health while we are here in sunny San Diego (if we are here long enough to notice!) That's all for now, I miss you all. God Bless!

From Jenny-Rose:

Hello! There are only 2 things my family forgot to mention, so I guess I will. One of our friends in San Diego (Lisa Harrell) is a displayer for Home Interiors and sometimes when she goes on her shows she will take Bridget or I as a helper. It is lots of fun and we are learning how to decorate a house (as well as make money!).

When we were in R.I. the home schoolers had what they called 'showcase'. Where the kids could show special projects or what they had learned during the month. We wanted to teach people 'what we knew' about fashion. The more research we did the more we learned just how much we didn't know. It is almost 8 months later and we are still learning. I chose the dates 1794-1814 (The Napoleonic or Empire Era). Mom made dresses for my Barbie dolls (which she said were harder than real dresses) and one for me too. It's beautiful! God Bless and see you later!

From DJ:

Many thanks for your love and continued prayer support. This year has been very interesting and exciting - and its not even over yet! Personally, I feel I could do with slightly less excitement, but I know too, that God is in complete control. I've at least learned not to argue with Him (At least not very often!)

We like our new home, in a quiet cul-de-sac. It has three bedrooms, two baths (thank you Lord!), a galley kitchen (with room for a small table on one end) and a garage (yea, storage!). We spend most of our our time, however, in the family room (w/ fireplace, opens onto the deck). This is where we live; school, eat, play, relax and entertain. When the noise level is bothersome - I can escape to the (Formal) Living room, close the doors and have peace. It's great!

Despite the disruption of this past year's moving around, we've had perhaps the best, most productive year in school so far! As we've moved, we've had a tremendous opportunity to visit many historical places (Dennis calls them "hysterical places" just because we girls get a little excited about the past). There just didn't seem to be enough warm weather, money or time to see all that there was to see while in New England. The most amazing thing of all has got to be the 20 or more "summer cottages" built along the coastline of Newport. Occupied two to three months a year at most, they were the members of America's nouveau riche in the late 1800's.

This year also promises its challenges as I homeschool the girls. Our curriculum will be:

- ✎ Grammar (ugh!)
- ✎ World History w/ fashion project
- ✎ Creative Writing
- ✎ Bible - Moses and the Law, with Firm Foundations (A New Tribes Missions Study)
- ✎ Intro. to Chemistry, Biology and Physics
- ✎ Greek and Latin Vocabulary
- ✎ Two Research Projects
- ✎ Two public speaking/memorization projects
- ✎ Economics/Justice
- ✎ Home Economics (including cooking skills, sewing, child care and decorating)
- ✎ All this intertwined with about 80-90 books (non-fiction, fiction and biographies)

Brother, that list looks scary, even to me! It really isn't as awful as it seems. The books the girls are reading (I have to stay two or three books ahead of them) enrich

their textbook studies. It makes people, places and events so much more real and exciting. Bible and Economics/Justice are designed to tie into the Egyptian, Greek and Roman Studies. We plan to link Biology with trips to the San Diego Zoo and to Sea World if we can get behind the scenes (provided we stay here in San Diego!). Vocabulary in Greek and Latin is a two or three year course that links nicely with this year's history, and will enhance the girls' writing skills and prepare the way for a foreign language next year... Pretty exciting! As always, I'm right in there learning along with the girls. It's fun to share all those history and science facts with a Christian perspective in Home fellowship and Bible study. Folks mention something about Bible scholar, but I just tell them I'm teaching 8th and 9th grade!

The fashion project we began in Rhode Island was a presentation to other homeschoolers. The girls each presented a project in a different time period on women and children's fashion in American History. From their research, timelines and our combined sewing of authentic historic costumes (from underpinnings to dresses), we discovered a real desire to learn more about cloth, how it was made, and how events in history change clothing style, material and color. I plan to continue this year with an emphasis on historic world fashions. I hope to incorporate Greek and Roman Dress, Middle Ages or Renaissance and one other period (pre-1900's).

I confess that my heart's desire, the Lord providing, is to share the wealth of information we've seen throughout Virginia and New England with homeschool families wherever we go. I have a burden to show pre-teen and teen girls who have no clear or strong examples how to be, and why it is important to be a wife, a mother and a maidservant of God. I hope that I can share what I know to be truth. I am starting with Jenny-Rose and Bridget and I pray that I may succeed and God will finish the work he has begun in me (and our girls) for His Glory!

And that, dear friends and family, is all she wrote from The White House in La Mesa (for now!)
God Bless you everyone!