

Merry Christmas to all,

As you may recall from our April/May saga... we've relocated, (that's a mild understatement!) to Superior CO. in March 1999. There really is not much to be "superior" about actually - we even have to *share* a zip code with Louisville (CO). Think of it, we *now* have two gas stations, a Costco, a super Safeway, Subway, a sports bar and a video store to open soon! What more could we possibly want?

I believe I also told'ya we rented this wonderful house in *faith*, (mostly because of the spacious office and the four bedrooms), to be closer to Den's parents (whose health has not improved) and a possible job change in Boulder. Well, Den, a systems engineer with BCI, still telecommutes out of Dahlgren (VA) he is traveling more than we would like, but otherwise is doing very well.

Our girls are now graduated from high school. I think it's been the hardest move so far from them. All their plans to graduate with friends and family couldn't happen and that was a disappointment. Their college plans were also drastically altered because we had to reestablish residency. Both girls love the mountains and all that Colorado offers, but it's not home for them. Their hearts, friends and dreams are still in San Diego. I know given the right opportunity, they would move back to California in a heartbeat. Jenny has talked about her struggle with the temptation to just move back to go to school there. However we all know... *this* is where we are suppose to be right now...(Philippians 4:11-13)

Jenny-Rose made the decision to take this year off, to work and figure out what she wanted to do with her life before spending time (and her Dad's money :->) on "just going to college". She is moving in the direction of becoming a professional seamstress. Most people think she's crazy (me included) but if God is guiding her footsteps she'll be in for one heck of a ride. She's talking of starting her own business someday and is looking for places she can gain the skills, resources and experience she'll need to make it a success. That she's relying heavily on Jesus to guide her through this stage in her life is an understatement 'cause the pressure to conform and be a student like everyone else is tough. We'll see what happens in the future.

Bridget took a huge step of faith this summer and enrolled at Calvary Chapel Bible College in Murrieta (CA). Though she has been plagued with homesickness, she has done very well this semester. (We just couldn't be prouder!) She's even stepped into the world of theater, as part of the drama troupe, performing in churches, juvenile halls and youth groups all over the state of California. It makes writing semester papers, doing homework and studying for finals a challenge but she's pressing through as only our Bridget could with courage, by the grace of God and lot's of prayer! :->

This time of separation has been a challenge for the girls. Jenny has said to me, "Bridget is truly my best friend and my kindred spirit. It makes me teary-eyed to think about it." As the Mom here, I know from talking with each of the girls that the loneliness has in many ways brought them closer together but is also preparing them for future separations. It's been tough and we can't wait until Christmas break when Bridget will be home again and the family is together again!

As for me, DJ, I am now officially out of a job (after 10 years, no more home-school Mom!) <sigh> Truly this has been a year of change and adjustment for us all. I am still working on the Home Management curriculum, though I'll be the first to admit *life* keeps gettin' in the way, and it's frustrating how little progress I seem to make. I constantly have to remind myself this is really the Lord's project and it's only my passion. I only need to be diligent, obedient and be **patient**. Ugh, so easy to say and so *very* hard to do. In May, after recovering from the move in March, the four of us left for a dream family vacation in "The Alps" of the Rocky Mountains. We stayed in Durango (CO) for five days. We took one day to ride the Durango-Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad (four hours up and four hours back with a short hour in Silverton to eat and shop). What a day! We've *never* seen such beauty and heights - mountains that reached 14,000 feet. Amazing! We also took a day to visit the national park at the Mesa Verde cliff dwellings. It's an amazing place, especially if your health permits you to climb down the sides of cliffs and climb out on a ladder of 30 feet, or more. (I don't remember exactly, I don't count well with my eyes closed).

On the way home we drove though some of those "Alps", stopping to visit every town museum we could find along the way to learn as much as we could about the area's history. John Wayne and western movie buffs eat your heart out! - It turns out, a good number of those

productions were filmed “in them there mountains” (especially John Wayne flicks as he loved that area). We now look at the introductions of *Sons of Katie Elder*, *True Grit*, and even *Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid* and say “Hey, been there, seen that!”

Although we moved to Colorado to help Den’s parents, supporting his family really hit home in July, when Den’s oldest sister, Linda, was diagnosed with acute Leukemia (the most fatal type) and then passed away suddenly on Oct 1st. This was the first death in Den’s immediate family and was particularly difficult for Mom and Dad White. Was it a “coincidence” we just happened to be in Colorado? We think not! Many of “y’all” prayed us though those moments, but God had gone before us implementing His perfect plan (like Den taking an earlier flight home from Houston on a “whim”). We were there I think to help take some of the burden off Linda’s family, and to try to be a calming influence... We recognize that prayer and God’s ability to love those around us (even when we feel powerless to do so) was evident at the memorial service. God’s fingerprints are everywhere!

In August my folks came for two-lazy-weeks and to see our little corner of Colorado. I think they were impressed with our piece of The Rock(ies). :-> We then spent 2-crazy-weeks shopping, getting Bridget ready for school and our trip to California to get her settled. I don’t know what we were thinking. **Settled** was not how I would describe that 17 hours, in the seat (twenty hours with stops), 3-days in San Diego visiting friends; all the while, trying to find “the elusive lap-top” for “Pookie” to take to school! All I can say is THANK YOU LORD for friends that welcomed us, prayed with us and put up with our “moments”! Our only sanity was found in the fellowship of those precious people. Our reward was a bittersweet “bye” to Bridget!

We broke-up our long and lonely drive home with a night-day layover in the desert oasis, Las Vegas. We stayed at **The Luxor**, which is a replica of a pharaoh’s tomb. The rooms actually form the walls of the pyramid. I have ta’ say it was a very interesting place. There were 4 pools surrounded with palm trees, columns, and granite statues... I had to pinch myself *ever’now’n’ten* to know what was real and what was not. Certainly the 100+ temperatures were real enough, instant sunstroke at 10 o’clock in the mornin’, thank you very much! There was included in our room package, a free tour of the to-scale reproduction of King Tut’s Tumb. Pretty heady stuff!

In September, Ted Statnick, a friend from Virginia visited us. We had a grand time renewing the old friendships, singing praise and worship songs and drawing closer as we shared the things nearest our hearts. Ted planned to do some serious hiking in the Rocky National Park while he was here. Now... I have to say personally... hiking, camping in the wilderness and sweat, hold no interest for me, ...especially at 12,000- 14,000 feet. However, before Ted left, Den and I both kinda wished we were in the shape to go and see the sights he did...but I’ll get over it; Jenny say’s it never entered her mind! And Den? Well, just the price of outfitting **two** of us will keep his feet in the foothills for a while yet!

As I’m writing this holiday letter, I have to agree with Jenny-Rose, the highlight of our year has been our trip to **London**. Den went on business - Jenny and I went on a weeklong, whirlwind, sightseeing tour!

I wish I could describe accurately to you, how it felt to be going to England, to travel the first time overseas, to see some of those places and things that the girls and I have studied in school. Okay, so I admit it, our first list of places we just had to see (in London alone) was longer than **3 weeks** would allow! After an intense study of every travel book in town, Jenny-Rose and I selected two guide books, pared our list to the bare bones, packed our rain-repellent coats, umbrellas, and left Denver International Airport on October 31st for English soil.

Our hotel was in a great location and the drive from the airport (we took a shuttle) took us through some of the prettiest parts of town all in the peak of autumn splendor. We stayed at the Stakis Hotel, Hyde Park on Bayswater in Kensington. (Oh don’t cha’ just love those names?). It’s right across the street from Hyde and Kensington Park and only about 3 blocks from Kensington Place (where Princess Diana lived). We were less than a half a block from the underground (or “tube”) station, which was great! The room was nothing spectacular, but adequate (the curtains were thick like a quilt; it made me wonder just how cold and damp does it get!). Our two windows over looked the backs of two other buildings, (not Hyde park as we’d hoped), but when the clock turned a new hour we could hear Big Ben’s chimes. How “cool” was that! ?

In our 7 day adventure we saw the Sherlock Holmes museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum, took a sight-seeing bus tour (around London proper and Westminster), Westminster

Abby, Fortnum & Mason, the British Museum, the Tower of London and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. Oh, and I can't forget fish n' chips in a pub or two!

What a year! As for the future of "The Western White House" there will be more decisions to make about schools and jobs for the girls. We may move again in the spring or summer, this time closer to Den's folks, somewhere in the northern Colorado Springs area. At the moment it's a *l-o-n-g* 2+ hour trip each way though 2 cities of traffic. (Colorado Springs and Denver). I can't say I'll miss the 100+-mph winds off the foothills, but we will miss the friends we've made in the neighborhood, the gorgeous view of the mountains, baseball games, and the usually mild climate (so far that is!). Around here it blows, snows and then disappears, while other places get literally dumped on. In January and February I'm told, the humidity such as it is, nearly disappears, except in the case of a snowstorm. Should be an interesting winter.

After these past two years, we dare not speculate what is in God's plan for the future. All we really know is that anything is possible with the Lord! None of us feel exactly home here, but we don't have much of a chance to put down roots, to get involved in church, meet folks or even be involved in a Bible study. Between Den's travel schedule, (which has been very heavy this year) and spending time with the Den's family (it's nice to get to know them more than just faces every 2 or 3 years when we've moved), it's been tough on our own family's energy, and spiritual reserves. The one thing we have learned though is, we can trust Him, in every circumstance. God always seems to be there to strengthen and restore all of us, (even in the driest of times.) If that were not absolute truth, I would be writing this Christmas greeting from the nearest *loony bin*. Yes that is correct, I would be crazy by now (and no smart-allelic remarks from the gallery!)

So with lots of our love, prayers & fondest wishes for a *V-e-r-y* Merry Christmas and a quiet, uneventful Y2K...May God bless us every one!