

Howdy folks,

2000, the first year in the new millennium! Imagine that: we all witnessed history in the making... well you did... I on the other hand was comatose with the flu. What a way to start a New Century! I will say absolutely... that up to that point, the 1999 holidays were wonderful. Bridget was home from school. Christmas day with the family together again, was wonderfully quiet and relaxing. (It was after that the mega flu hit!)

After the Christmas decorations were *finally* packed away, life fell into a routine. Bridget 19, enrolled in a Bible College associated with Crossroads of Denver (a Calvary Chapel). The school was vastly different in structure and in purpose (to learn and study what scholars think about the Bible) than at Marietta (whose goal was to learn what the Bible says and apply it to your life). Though Bridget didn't always agree with the philosophy, she gained friends and knowledge that made her wiser and made her appreciate the semester at CCBC even more. Bridget also had her first *road conditions accident* last winter. Imagine it, slick roads, the temperature dropping, just enough snow to stop traction, a small incline, and an SUV there to stop her. Scared her and us silly. The engine was fine but the whole front-end was destroyed on the Volvo. Ouch!

Jenny-Rose now 21... (Is that scary or what?), has been a rock this year and a source of strength for her Dad and I. She still has dreams of a sewing business of her own... but is at the moment, having way too much fun creating our family web site (under the guidance of her Dad). She is also thinking of writing historic fictional short stories again, (perhaps creating a book somewhere in the future). The research and developing a plot around historical facts are a real delight for her. In the meantime she works for her Dad, still keeping his office efficient, especially when he is on travel. She also helps keep me sane and I depend on her almost as much as he does. Then of course there are those moments when she turns to me and says "I need a hug"...<sigh>...I do hugs! Truly, we are blessed to have each other.

I began working full time on my Home Management Curriculum in January. My goal to create a complete 4-5 year course hasn't changed, but the format has altered dramatically this year and I'm pleased with what I've accomplished so far. I had planned to have the first year of Baking, Cookin' and Kitchen Basics 1 and 2 ready for testing by January 2001 but, what I couldn't have known (when I stopped in April *to pack*, preparing *to move* in May) is ... I wouldn't be able to get back to it until 2001!

Oh yes... I did warn you last year! We moved on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May. *The White House West* is now located in Colorado Springs, Colorado. This is one of the most postcard perfect places we've ever lived. We decided on a smaller home for this location. We are in the foothills of the mountains surrounding Pikes Pike (a fourteener - that's 14,000 feet for you flatlanders). We have lots of mature pines, aspens, and canyons with deer, fox, coyotes, and colorful birds galore! The down side is, we are four adults, two offices and a tiny fabric store (☺) in that smaller home. Hey... The garage finally has one car in it. That was no small feat I'll have you know! I worked long and hard to get even one car in, considering the overflow. Our poor southern California 13 + year old Volvo will probably *croke from wind chill* or something equally cool, sitting in the driveway!

So...did'ja notice... no gory details about our move to the Springs? Well, just one? In past moves we fit in a 26' truck and a 9X12 trailer, then we fit in a 26' truck (hauling a car) and a 17' truck. In May, however we barely fit in two 26' trucks! ("Yippy coyote", I drove a 26' moving truck full of stuff, through Denver traffic ...and I lived to tell about it!) ... We packed the trucks on Friday and unpacked them on Saturday... got up for church on Sunday... died on Monday. I'm no martyr, but I am still struggling to get curtains finished and hung before Christmas. As many of you know... there were events shortly after we moved, that changed our lives dramatically.

The first week in June, Den's Dad had a full knee replacement, the last week in June his Mom was diagnosed with cancer. It was so advanced the Dr. never found a source: it was just...everywhere. Looking back, we suspect she was ill with cancer when Linda, Den's sister died of Leukemia on 1 Oct 1999.

Den and his two sisters adjusted their schedules to care for Mom White, as she wanted to die at home. For three months we all took turns doing what needed to be done, including 24/7 care of mom. Putting our lives on hold for so long... really took its toll on the families. Den's Mom (Elizabeth), accepted the Lord, three weeks before her death on 4 Oct 2000. Her graveside service was a sweet remembrance of God's grace and for those who listened... God's love abounded and the Holy Spirit was in the gentle breeze. For those who were tired and drained, emotionally and physically, the moments were precious and sweet.

Den's Dad (George), has moved recently into an assisted care facility in Pueblo West (new and very comfy, with a great staff). We have had several offers on his house and property and if all goes well we will close before Christmas. Den may be on travel, but we girls will pop the cork on something bubbly anyway! Sorta putting an end to a tough year... a wee bit early. Jen and I figure Bridget will be sufficiently restored from her holiday in England by then to make the toast! <giggle!> Oh you didn't hear?

Bridget left the 1<sup>st</sup> week in September to go to the Calvary Chapel Bible College Extension Campus in... *get this...* York, England. She has had a "lovely time" even with all her papers and projects and plans to return next semester. It's a grand place, even in the rain, and we are envious of her return there.

Den has again been on the road much of this year. Still, when times were really rough this summer, his company and clients were more than generous... allowing him the time he needed to see to his parents' needs. Thank you doesn't seem to say enough... for the understanding and grace...especially at the most crucial time of the year for budget and procurements for 2001. God Bless you all for your help and prayer support!

In the midst of Mom's failing health last August, Marshmellow (our 10-year-old cat) disappeared. He has not returned. Our family was crushed... it still brings tears to my eyes to think of him. He was so much a part of our family and we miss him dearly.

As a family we decided to adopt another kitty to help fill that void and provide a lost or abandoned cat a home. The day before Bridget left for England, we chose a little two-year-old orange, Persian/Tabby. We renamed him "Jeeves" and the little Mugger has been a source of love and bittersweet joy ever since.

I say bittersweet because... our 12-year-old Minuet, or "Minnies", does *not* like him. Jeeves just thinks she's a plaything, but Minnies sees him as a threat (she has no claws to defend herself, and he plays too rough for her). Even after all our efforts to help them adjust, Minuet stays safely ensconced behind our bedroom door. It's her domain and she likes it that way, while Jeeves, our mighty midget, has run of the house. It's like having a toddler... he's into everything but oh-so-cute! He thinks the Christmas tree is his own private playground, he eats the catnip on the cat scratchier and any live plants not out of his reach are dessert! <sigh>

We are in a super church, Rocky Mountain Calvary Chapel and our pastor is a great teacher. Jenny-Rose and I are part of the women's bible study on David; Den attends the men's prayer breakfast on Saturdays and a men's bible study, as often as possible. As life gets more normal, we look forward to getting more active in the future!

Gosh, there is so much we have to be grateful for in this historic year 2000. Mom White is in heaven and Dad White is getting comfortable again after his entire life was turned upside down. We (as a family and individually) are stronger for our experiences this year. It has been a blessing. I couldn't always say that in the midst of everything... but I know I am not the same person, nor is my relationship with the living God the same. I'd call that a blessing! Maybe...the tough times made the good times more special and the calm moments, more serene.

Looking back, it seems that the Lord knew when we needed to escape or when it was time for a break. Opportunities would present themselves at the very time when I would reach a breaking point. Sometimes the family would pull me along as I dragged my feet, (cause I felt so completely overwhelmed) but it was always great once I got there! It was those precious moments with a gracious neighbor, or relaxation with friends that gave us the strength to face the next hurdle. Thanks Lord for your unfailing grace and faithfulness!

Den had a business trip planned to England in November. Just days before Jenny-Rose and Den were scheduled to leave, the door opened for me to go too. God's timing was perfect! We just couldn't have worked out so many details ourselves. Not only did I get a ticket, but also, we got the same flight, Jenny kept her window seat and we were able to sit together...now that just doesn't happen! In addition, CCBC in York offered the use of a flat that *they had just acquired* for next semester, for Jenny and Bridget to stay in for the week. That also gave us a place to stay, so we could visit York as well. Bridget was even able to meet our flight and we spent a day in London together as a family. It was so much fun, despite the rain... but killer after that 9-hour flight from the states. We parted company at the Waterloo train station to go south to Portsmouth. The girls stayed in London another day, then headed north to York with some of the students from CCBC.

Den and I arrived in Portsmouth Friday night, about 9:30pm London time, exhausted. After a l-o-n-g refreshing sleep, the following day was fair and sunny ...just made for walking...the smell of the sea and the sun drew us to the waterfront. Eventually we discovered the WWII D-day museum. Their displays described Portsmouth's role in the war but, it also has 34 exquisite panels of embroidery and appliqué (each 8ft x 3ft). It is so real you recognize General Eisenhower or Churchill and could read the names on the ships and aircraft...it was absolutely amazing! 272 ft in total length... they used a technique used in the Tudor times to transfer the designs. An enormous undertaking, it took twenty embroiderers and five apprentices at the Royal School of Needlework, 5 years to complete. Oh, please...where do I go to sign up?

Two of us wives struck out one brisk morning and took the Hydrofoil to The Isle of Wight to see a village of thatched houses. Today they are quaint shops, B&Bs and private homes (how English!). We took the train along the coast and it was easy to see why it is a popular vacation summer resort (though it was a bit chilly in November!).

The best part of the trip to Portsmouth was our tour of the HMS Victory. This is the Flagship of Admiral Nelson in the Battle of Trafalgar (1804). The ship is huge, holding 800 men, and four decks of guns. Wow! Time didn't allow for tours of the Mary Rose, a ship of Henry the Eighth's Navy sunk and recovered or the HMS Warrior, built in 1860 of cast iron... perhaps another time.

We left Portsmouth early Friday afternoon on an express to London and Kings Cross station to take the train to York. It's a long story... but in the end, we rented a car. Don't ask... I died 10,000 deaths those first few hours, driving on the wrong side of the road, London rush hour, construction, two hundred miles and oh yes ...we got lost, (the round-a-bouts are so well marked :->), Den tried to take out some hedgerows :->... just don't even go there! Some six hours later, nearly 1:00am, we arrived in York. ...

Our last two days in England were spent with Bridget and Jenny-Rose in York. This town just oozes history...from the Roman walls, Middle Age ruins, fortresses, narrow streets of timbered houses, through the Reformation and the Blitz of WWII. Today it is a thriving college town, port on 3 rivers and mega historic tourist area surrounded by the Northern Dales.

The girls gave us a guided tour of York. The first and the best was the York Minster (church). **HISTORY NOTE:** In the 16<sup>th</sup> century Henry VIII destroyed most of the cathedrals and abbeys. He wished to void all evidence of the Roman Catholic Church and reap its many riches and spoils...but he spared the York Minster. He needed a headquarters for his protestant

church in the North. None rival it north of the Alps, and only Westminster Abby has more influence and power than York Minster.

Jenny-Rose says, "It is a 14<sup>th</sup> century cathedral, the largest and one of the few remaining in England. The walk from our flat was a straight shot down a great old street of cobblestones, lined with shops and restaurants. You can see the Minster tower over the rooftops of the shops for most of the trip until suddenly ...the road opens up and before you, and there in all its glory, is the church of St. Peter. It is an enormous structure with walls of stained glass as big as tennis courts, hundreds of flying buttresses, countless gothic arches, and incredible gothic detailing and art."

There was a Sunday service in progress when we arrived but we were able to walk into a small part of the church (and the book shop). I agree with the girls, "just to walk inside was magical". There was no sun to shine through the stain glass windows, but looking up was a surprise and a delight to the eyes. We later returned after tea. Even then some of it the building was roped off ... because the organ and choir were practicing. Still it was delightful to listen to the acoustics of the children's voices everywhere at once, accompanied by the biggest pipe organ imaginable.

This incredible and awesome building... inspired and spared destruction by God's grace... wonderfully fashioned by man...compelled my spirit to praise and worship the Lord. It was a powerful experience!

(Bridget had the opportunity to hear Handel's *Messiah* performed at the York Minster. Talk about jealous!!)

These are but highlights of a very busy 10 days of international travel. The details of our return home are less than perfect, canceled flights; long delays... suffice it to say we arrived home (slowly dragging our luggage behind us) 24 hours after awaking (London time).

I still say there is no place like home for this family of tired, rustic western colonials... even without a President! By the time you read this, hopefully this political farce will be settled... 'o course that's what we thought when we left on November 10<sup>th</sup>! No, no, f-o-r-g-e-t—it! I'm not even going there!

And what have we to say to the inevitable question... will you move again in 2001? It depends of course on Den's Dad ...and whatever the Lord guides us to do! As of this moment we have no plans to move anytime soon, but you've heard that before, right? You also have to know by now, that we trust the Lord's plan for our lives and He hasn't led us astray. Trust me, when we know something... you'll get a Christmas letter from us... telling yet another *moving* tale! Enough... I'm getting motion sickness just writing this!

It's fair to say that all of us miss you so, and wish you were here to celebrate Christ's birthday with us... to laugh... to share the memories of this past year. (There is so much, time and space won't allow me to tell). There hasn't been the opportunity to make a lot of new friends this move...but those of you... family and friends, sharing our moments of laughter, panic and despair... those who were there in the back round, that have supported us in prayer and encouraging words, we hope and pray you find the season of Christ's' birth, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the millennium full of Gods love... prosperity ... a new president, finally ...and our very best wishes,

Dennis, DJ, Jenny-Rose & Bridget