

# Adams Family Newsletter

January 2007

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## **Dad**

The big news for January is we survived an arctic blast and a lightening strike to our computer.

At the first of the month I suffered what I originally thought was a strong dose of hay fever. There was record cedar in the air and a lot of people were suffering. I wasn't excited about it because it is a common allergy here, but I hadn't been bothered much, if at all, by cedar. By Friday I was feeling bad enough not to go to the temple for my shift. I went to bed early.



In the night we had a big thunderstorm. When I awoke the computer was completely dead. I discovered that the circuit breakers for the downstairs wall plugs had both tripped. When I reset the circuit breaker the computer turned on, but I got the Microsoft blue screen of death with a note that I had a corrupted file. My work computer was also dead in the water. The problem there turned out to be the encryption program that must be negotiated to log on was corrupted. By Sunday the weather was turning from wonderful to cold. The stake cancelled the evening stake priesthood meeting in anticipation of forecasted freezing rain. Monday was the Martin Luther King holiday, and a good day to stay home inside. The ice and snow flurries shut down the city Tuesday and Wednesday, so I didn't/couldn't go to work. Finally, after much help from Sam, I got my computer working, but it took over a week to do it.

I'm getting excited about our family reunion in July. That will be a great time for our family. I'm also looking forward to Julia's baptism and Becky's graduation from BYU in April. I feel very fortunate to have such wonderful children, spouses, and grandchildren. You all make me very proud and happy. Thank you for you good lives and righteous desires and actions.

Love,  
Dad

## **Mom**

Dearest Family,

I am so excited about our new Editor in Chief! Thank you, Samuel! I am so grateful to all of you for the contributions you have made to make this family monthly letter such a WONDERFUL tradition!!!! Hoorah!!!!

January. Great month! I was very much blessed to have two wonderful counselors and a terrific secretary, compassionate service leader, music director...hopefully two more teachers soon...and a pianist called to serve in the Relief Society. Our ward boundaries were changed on Jan. 7th and most of our RS board went to Parkwood Ward. Also, Mary Williams, one of my dear counselor friends from the beginning of my calling...THREE YEARS ago...had a relapse of her cancer and needed to be released. I am discovering that I am a much different leader now. I have learned a few things since I was first called. I still have much more to learn. When Bishop Trejo told me that the ward would be split in my monthly interview, I knew immediately ... within that 45 minute visit...the names of the sisters to be recommended for the presidency. I knew. There was spiritual wrestling and doubts following weeks on one sister, because of some of the trials that she is facing right now, but when I looked at FAITH not FEAR ... and put it to the Lord and then left it to the bishopric ... the calling was extended, she accepted. Although, she sent an email to me asking me to tell the bishop that she needed another week to think about it. I did not receive that email, because we went to the temple and that night our computer was struck by lightning ... and it was dead for a couple of weeks. So the bishop went ahead and called her on Sunday. She was out of town. I called her and thanked her for accepting the call. She was surprised that the call went through, but immediately moved forward in fully accepting the call and has done a beautiful job. She has the gifts to do this calling so very well. She is being sustained through her trials. Father is very mindful of each of us. He so wants to bless us...if we will only allow it! I sat with these beautiful sisters at our first meeting, joyful, tearful with gratitude ... excited to learn what Father knew about them that I would in time discover and then know why they were the ones to serve at this time. VERY exciting! Things are immediately happening that have not been happening for quite a long time. All of these sisters are new in the ward within the last year. So we have a lot of learning to do ... or names and areas, but they are so willing to learn and serve. That is what Father wants from us ... willing to serve and learn. That is what I want to do.

Marie Toler, a mother of one of our brothers in our ward was baptized the first week! She is in her 80s and been active in the Baptist church for years. She moved in with her son's family last spring and told us not to push her! She is a delight! She cannot hear too well, but she surely knows how to love and has a great sense of humor! I get to visit teach her!

Dottie McLean is still wrestling with a very nasty infection in her leg ... but blessed to still have her leg and life. She is frustrated to be homebound again ... missing church. I am reminded that new members need three things: a friend, a calling and nurtured by the

good word. I guess that Robert and I need to get over there for FHE and go through the Gospel Principles manual with her again.

The missionaries and I ... and Robert and eventually Bro. Rich helped a sister move this month. It was stressful ... not enough help, delays in meeting, rain, cold, more stuff to move that things to move it ... not enough time, etc ... but because of faithful priesthood holders...your father and Bro. Rich (at the last minute) saved the day. Because of that compassionate service, Francis Rivera is making the decisions to become active and have her two children baptized. Because of the boundary changes...she has found herself finally in Austin Ward...thinking she was in Parkwood ward for two weeks....changing missionaries, etc. etc. It is wonderful to see people's lives change as they become active.

Robert took me to a wonderful musical concert in an amazing home that night after we moved that sister. VERY uplifting and inspirational! A string quartet and a mixed quartet performed for us...and the refreshments were classy! I am grateful for Robert to have bought this series and insist that we attend...we were only 5 minutes late, but it was all right.

The Cole family is becoming active in the ward. She was raised in the church. She became inactive in her teens. They have four beautiful little children. He wants to join the church...and their 8 yr old daughter. Her parents just visited on their way home from their mission in South America. It is exciting to be part of their happiness!

As you all know, my parent's home on 800 West in Provo was sold this month. My good brother, Tom was appointed executor of my parents will by my good father. Dave and Sid have been helping manage Mother's estate also. The home sold for \$180,000. My father's wish was to split the estate evenly between the six siblings. So I received a check in the mail for \$30,000! I was AMAZED! First of all, I did not expect anything. Secondly, I did nothing for this gift, except be the "baby sister in Texas" ... my brothers have done much to take care of my aging parents. Third of all ... how did my humble father ... a carpenter who in his early years would go hunting to have food for his little family through the winter ... who would work summers to pay off last winter's debts ... who barely made it through the eighth grade ... How did he ... after he is gone, take care of my sweet mother for all of those years and STILL have this give to give ME ... his daughter? AMAZING. SO .... to share part of that gift, I have chosen to pay 1/2 of all of each of your cost to attend Aspen Grove this summer. I want to use some of this inheritance to do art projects ... complete each of your Somersault Sets in bronze ... and pay for art supplies and projects that I have put off. I want to use this money to bless our families and to bring us all home to Heavenly Father. I want to use this money as seed money and build back that \$30,000 and maybe even more ... any ideas? WOW! What a month!

Robert and I still love going to the temple every Friday night. We love the sweet spirit and good friends that we serve with there. I personally have been blessed with a deeper love for my good husband. I feel his love for me also. We have become closer ... though our service and through our trials. Heavenly Father is mindful of each of us. He wants

us to be happy and come home to him. I want you all to be happy and come home, also ... be faithful, be valiant. Live the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Keep your covenants. Go to the temple. Keep the spirit in your homes. Turn off the TV more.

Much Love,  
Mother

### ***Jennifer and Family***

In January Julia began going to Muir full time.

She has enjoyed it so far, making lots of new friends, liking the bus and lunch room, but missing her old friends at the Montessori school. She's been sick a lot having strep throat twice and two colds in between.

Julia also began to take piano lessons from a really fun teacher who supplies a variety of books and has music bucks and a candy basket. Julia also got her ice skates so she'll begin her figure skating lessons in February.

Kurt has flown to Dallas (10-11th) and Denver (17-18th) for big carrier training conferences.

He loves the good restaurant eating but hates how it wears him out not getting good sleep and being in performing mode all day.



David's Taekwondo groups had a sledding party at the Eaglewood Golf Course and we had lots of fun. Anne Marie wasn't thrilled with the snow in the face as we raced down the long hills.

Anne Marie was supposed to have foot surgery on the 9th but we opted to try another round of serial casting instead. It was successful in large measure. The right foot no longer needs surgery and the left foot is much improved.

We love you all,  
Jen

## ***John and Family***

*New Year's Day 2007*

Our original New Year's goal was to make it to Bandera, TX by sunrise to usher in the New Year. Bandera being an hour away, waking up just thirty minutes before sun-up and not getting the kids loaded and buckled until just ten minutes prior—were all factors in changing our destination to our usual New Year's Day perch at the San Antonio Temple—the highest elevation in north San Antonio. Kids were grumpy with bed-heads and the air was extremely chilly. We quickly took our pictures and piled back into the van. On the way to Bandera, we checked out some property in Pipe Creek. It was an out-of-the way piece of property on four acres. We met the neighbors across the street on 15 acres. They had just had a baby lamb born and brought it out to show us. Its mother was dying because she had only partially delivered the other lamb and five days had already passed. It was very sad. I asked the owner why he couldn't help deliver the calf and then try to manually clean her out. I later learned from a vet that there probably was little that could be done for the lamb. They also had a horse which John and the kids enjoyed feeding her an apple.

We brought Abby, our boxer, along for the ride and to help us in our first Geo-caching hunt. We arrived close to the destination and spent an hour looking for the site. One mistake was assuming that the city blocks ran true north-south-east-west and trying to head further north on a street that was not really going north. Another mistake we made was getting it set in our mind that an old trading post/museum was the site—or perhaps the Baptist church across the street--despite the clues given



and the actual coordinates John was reading. He was just sure the cache was behind the trading post. So we walked and walked and walked the neighborhood, and searched and searched and searched. We even walked by this quaint little white “Community of Christ” church a few blocks away in this small town but didn't think to check our coordinates there because of where our mind had set north and south to be in alignment with the layout of the streets. It turns out that this town's block streets were laid out diagonally compared to a true north-south-east-west grid. Once we realized our mistake, we finally made our way back to the cute little church. It wasn't long before we triumphantly found the cache.

*Of All The First Geo-Caching Possibilities...*

Inside the container was a one-page typed summary of the history of this little church established in the 1800's. It turns out that Lyman Wight, a Mormom apostle ordained by

Joseph Smith, apostatized when the saints left Nauvoo and headed west. Lyman Wight took a group south to Texas and established a community in Bandera, Texas. Of all the first geo-caching sites to go to! What are the odds that we would be reading about “Mormon” history, as the plaque described in front of the historic house across the street? The letter was careful to differentiate the Community of Christ as not really being “Mormon”.

It was really surreal to drive an hour to a new town in Texas, try out a new pastime done by many people all over the U.S. and end up reading a little history about our own church! Our next geo-caching site was close to the San Antonio Zoo at the Japanese Tea Gardens. It was a miracle John came upon it. The place was very fun to explore. The third hunt lead us to a park, into pokey bushes and it wasn't any fun and we gave up before finding the cache.



*Arien's Dad's 70th Birthday Party and the ROAD TRIP there and back!*

There were a hundred reasons not to drive to Colorado to attend the event a year long in planning. The big ones were: 1) Even though John accepted the new job at KCI in August on the condition that he could get a week off in January for the Iverson reunion/Ron's birthday celebration, and a week off in July for the Adams Family Reunion, his second new boss had not been the one to work the deal for him and wasn't happy about John leaving when they were short-staffed. Both paid leaves would come a month before he technically earned the time off. In joining KCI John gave up ten additional vacation



days to leave his old job in the rushed timeline they needed him there, effectively disabling him from utilizing his extra vacation days he had earned over several years. Although John was new to the company, he was on trial as a candidate to fill the vacant position his boss left when he got promoted up and out. This trip would take him out of the office during a very crucial testing

period. 2) The forebodings of yet a third snow storm with below freezing temperatures was forecasted to hit just prior to and during the weekend of the party on Jan. 13--on the heels of two previous snow storms that were the worst since 1982 (which Arien remembers getting two weeks off from school because of being snowed in). Just over the New Year holiday and then again the following week, Denver got inundated with so much snow it shut the city down. They were making national headline news for several weeks. No planes, no trucks, no commuting. We'd be crazy to pack up our family and drive the roads in those conditions. 3) Sage would have to miss four to five days of school, and 4) The auto shop notified us we couldn't take our van and oh, by the way, the repairs were in the range of a couple thousand dollars. And 5) Arien's mother kept calling to say, "Don't Come! I'll just cancel the party, postpone it until spring or have it without you!"

Many times we would say to ourselves, "Great! We're off the hook on making that arduous road trip in the middle of winter. It would not be wise, prudent or safe to go--and completely understandable why we will not be there." Then John and Arien would look at each other and know the other had the same feeling: "Wrong answer. Wrong conclusion. Ron needs this to go forward (although the party was a surprise) and everyone needs to be there." Wednesday evening was the last time we decided we simply were not going to go. If we were going to drive, we needed to be on the road by



Wednesday 6pm and try to arrive by Thursday night. Weather reports indicated that the storm would make conditions unsafe starting Thursday evening. John was still at work on Wednesday at 8 p.m. Arien decided she would just go herself and fly. She literally had her itinerary set and was about to push the button on the computer screen to pay for her

ticket when she realized she needed to ask John whether he would drive her and the kids to Austin later that night so she could fly out of Austin and leave the kids with Mary, or have Mary drive down to San Antonio the next day and have Arien fly out of San Antonio. That phone call to John ended with the same conclusion once again: Everyone would be getting in the van the next morning and driving to Colorado—only we were now a day later and sure to see some of the storm. When Arien finally called her parents with the final word that they were coming, her parents were surprisingly at peace about it and Ron had a new idea about a route that no one had considered before, as many times as everyone had looked over the map and possible routes. It turns out that by taking that

route, we did not encounter any snow the entire trip to Colorado. By the time we got to Colorado, the temperatures were below freezing and there was snow from previous storms, but the roads were clear then entire way into their neighborhood!

Amazingly, Saturday, Jan. 13 was very cold (-4), but crystal clear and sunny with blue skies. Kurt, Delynn and the twins drove in from Kansas on Wednesday. All six of Ron's siblings flew in from Utah without any delays on Saturday morning and miraculously, all the family were present for the grand party. To our knowledge, it is the only party that has ever been held in Ron's honor as an adult. He was very touched and could not believe that every single one of his brothers and sisters had made the effort to come and that all of his children and grandchildren were there. It felt really great to be able to communicate to Dad, "Your life counts. Our lives have been blessed because of you. You were worth every effort and sacrifice it took to get here. You are loved." Kurt, Arien and all of Ron's siblings shared memories of their experiences with Ron. A friend translated for one of Ron's Korean buddies, Mr. Lee, who Ron has known for almost thirty years. Mr. Lee shared fishing and camping stories and times when Ron had come to help him in time of need. Shirley Jones shared her gratitude for the time dad landscaped her yard. Kurt created a DVD of pictures of Ron set to a special sailor's song that he sang to Kurt and Arien at bedtime growing up. Everyone left the restaurant around 7:30 p.m. and all of the Iverson's, except Johnny, were able to visit the house and visit until about 10:30 p.m. It had been a perfect day with no disappointments or setbacks, only sweet memories created.

The snow started falling Sunday morning and continued through most of the day. We had planned to return home through Kansas, which would have been the worst way to go. Looking back, we felt very much like we had taken part in a journey across a parted Red Sea, not only traveling TO Colorado, but little did we know at the time, in travelling BACK to Texas. So the ice that paralyzed Texas roads from Dallas to San Antonio hit on the same day we tried to return home. Arien's friend Anita had called her Sunday evening concerned but did not mention why, as she had assumed Arien had heard about Austin and San Antonio being shut down due to ice. Arien had no idea of the weather conditions in Texas but found out the next evening. Kurt and Delynn drove home on Sunday even though it was snowing. It turned out to be a very good thing because they arrived home just in time to get settled in before snow and ice made it impossible to travel the roads in Kansas on Monday and Tuesday. It was really odd how we chose the route back to Texas. We had talked about driving home west on I-70 and then in Kansas, heading south on I-35 all the way to San Antonio. We had reasoned the 4-lane highways would be better traveled, maintained and more clear. Leaving the neighborhood, Arien absent-mindedly took a right on Tower Road, heading back the way they had come, instead of taking a left to get to I-70. In that moment John and Arien thought, oh well, let's just head through Colorado Springs and backtrack the way we came. Had we chosen to go through Kansas, we would have gotten stuck, as Arien's brother, Kurt, was unable to go to work for the next two days because of the storms in Kansas. And we later learned in Amarillo that the I-35 corridor was becoming more impassable by the hour from Dallas all the way to San Antonio. The entire corridor was shut down by the next morning. We've never heard of that happening!

We received crucial news about the bad weather in Texas from Robert and Mary just after we decided to stop in Amarillo for the night. Approaching Amarillo around 5 pm, we had debated whether we should press through Monday evening and continue on another three hours to arrive in Wichita Falls, a couple of hours from Fort Worth. Should we press forward or pull over around 6pm and stay the night in Amarillo. Baby James was sick and that helped us decide to call it an early evening. Amazingly, we then found out I-35 from Dallas-Ft. Worth all the way down to San Antonio would be engulfed in a storm. Had we pressed forward the extra three hours, our drive home would have been delayed even longer. We were just thankful to have made it as far as we did with clear roads.

From Amarillo, we were able to take an alternative southern route that was further west that took us through Lubbock and Abilene and avoided much of the bad weather and unsafe road conditions. We did hit one stretch of the highway just before Lubbock where it suddenly went from one lane open and the other lane covered with four inches of ice to an abrupt end to the one open lane and the entire road iced over. This was at mid-day and we took the long stretch of ice slow. That was the only questionably unsafe stretch. The rest of the way was clear until 6pm when it started getting dark and the snow was coming in. We thought it odd that we were seeing more snow falling from the sky in Texas than we had seen in Colorado. When we counted six jack-knifed trucks in the median or on the side of the road within a thirty minute period, we decided to stop in a little town called Brady, Tuesday night while the snow continued. All reports advised no traveling at that point.

While we lingered until about 11 a.m. in Brady, the urgency to get back home finally overtook us. While the state operator for road conditions would report that roads that we were already driving down were completely impassable, we decided maybe they were being overly cautious, a little out of touch with every single road condition and were perhaps just trying to get the state of Texas to take the day off. We were surprised at how clear the roads were and stayed in touch with mom and dad and Sam, who had the day off in San Antonio. From Fredericksburg, we decided to take Hwy 290 to Austin to see mom and dad and pick up Abby, who had stayed with Little Sister for almost a week. Mom had the tastiest, warmest soup waiting and we ate and chatted for about an hour before making the final stretch home on I-35, which news reports said were also impassable. The roads were fine. Hwy 1604 was even closed, which seemed silly when we arrived in town because the weather was warmer and the roads were fine and it was just raining lightly.

We arrived home around 6 pm on Wednesday, Jan. 17 and the house was freezing! We found out that the power had been out for the good part of the day and for much of the previous two days. Thankfully, the last power outage happened while we were dropping off the rental van and we personally never experienced the outage. Had we been at home, we would have been miserably cold with the temperatures down to 10 degrees and no heat!

Sage had been worried about the amount of make-up homework she would have. It turned out that her school had a holiday on Monday and had cancelled classes for Tuesday and Wednesday. So she only ended up missing two days of school instead of five! John ended up missing two and one half days of work as KCI was also closed due to the weather. It was such a miracle that the impact of John's absence was minimized due to the ice storms and yet we were able to travel and get home safely and in good time.

So in retrospect, we felt like God literally stayed the weather on Saturday, Jan 13, when all reports indicated it was going to be a dangerously miserable day to be in Denver—and made it possible for everyone who needed to be at Dad's party to be there. Even though John's boss's heart was not softened and work was pretty miserable for the following week, the fact that John's company was closed for two of the days he had to be gone was quite a personal miracle for us, cutting in half the days he actually missed from work.

Terri Kjar is Sage's new piano teacher and she and Mary know each other! She's really strong in music theory and challenges Sage. Sage still reminisces about all the reasons it was great to live in Austin, including having Grandma as her piano teacher! Upon our return to San Antonio, Sage had her first lesson on Saturday.

On Sunday, Arien taught the Relief Society lesson on "Tragedy or Destiny?" Then on Monday, January 29, Mary watched Fielding and Enoch while Arien lobbied legislators regarding the value of having options in birthing and the invaluable service midwives provide in prenatal, delivery and post-partum care. They presented a map of all the counties in Texas which showed that 75% of Texas counties have no OB-Gyn's practicing in those counties, yet have midwifery services available. To eliminate midwives would restrict access to birthing care to many low-income women in the state of Texa--or women who value the option to birth naturally in a birthing center or at home and do not want to be subject to hospital regulations that may unnecessarily impose invasive medical procedures and protocols on informed and unwilling patients. Her lobbying buddy was Erin Osborne, a young single college student who has worked for women's issues in New York. Her boyfriend was good enough to travel with her from Dallas and tag-along for the day, although he has little knowledge or interest in the issue. The things we'll do for love!

### ***Matt and Family***

Abigail started the year with a much anticipated visit to gymnastics camp, where she even got to try rock climbing. School did not start up again until the 8th. On the 17th I took her in to get a second chicken pox vaccine (the medical community is finding that one chicken pox shot is not quite enough for some kids) and some other shot. She was a bit disappointed to get shots,



but was relatively brave and picked out a \$1 box of chocolates from the \$1 section at Target as compensation for her suffering. Then she was neurotic about her Band-Aid for the next week.

Abigail said many funny things this month. About mid-month she decided quite suddenly one day to use good manners. Her speech was full of pleases and thank yous, even no thank yous. I praised her big time, and we even called dad (who was away on a business trip) and grandparents to help her gloat in her good manners. When Matthew returned the next day I said to Abigail, “Do you want to surprise dad with all your good manners?” She thought for a moment. “No. Not today. I’ll surprise him tomorrow.”



Along the same vein, at one point in all my praising of her good manners I said, “Who is this new, polite little girl? What happened to the old one?” She promptly responded that she was the same girl! She had just decided to use good manners, that’s all!

On the 14th Abigail had her first-ever sleep over. She went over to her friend Sydney’s house and they had a great time reading books together and eating popcorn. She can hardly wait to do it again.



Somewhere toward the beginning of the month I followed up on Abigail’s continual assertion that school was boring. I asked her teacher if Abigail was bored, and she did not think so. Then she told me to ask Abigail for a specific example of when she was bored. Actually suspecting that Abigail did not know what “bored” meant,

I asked her if she was bored. “Yes.” I lengthily instructed her on the wonderful things there are to do and learn in life, and she was to tell her teacher the next time she was bored. She said, “Mom, what’s ‘bored?’” Aha! As I suspected! I explained that “bored” is when you can’t think of ANYthing to do. Then I asked her again if she was bored. “No.” She had never been bored, it had just been the vogue thing to say for the past 3 months!

We were looking at wedding pictures of an old friend's son, and I asked Abigail if the dresses the bride and bridesmaid were wearing were modest. She thought for a brief moment, "No," she said, and then with an edge in her voice, "but they sure are beautiful!"

Speaking of pictures, their emergence into reality has become something of an impassioned pastime for Abigail, who has filled our memory card with everything from blank white walls, to out-of-focus big toes, close-ups of the rooms in the doll house, and pages from magazines. She has also photographed Grandma Adams' somersault girls juxtaposed with photos of the three girls in our house, nearly obscene shots of toilet runs and diaper changes, and by chance, the occasional picture of a family member that actually turns out well.



I purchased some "uncovered" books at Costco that feature a particular organism, in this case a human, which is presented in 3-D in the center of the book, like a cadaver or actual dissection. As the pages are turned different layers are moved away and one can read about the particulars. We were reading about the digestive system and discussed that saliva was the real word for spit, stomach for tummy, and anus for "bum hole" or "hole that your poopy comes out." Abigail said, "Mom. That's so silly. Why aren't we using the real words for these things? From now on, we are using the real words for these things!" OK. I guess we'll see what happens...I'm not sure how well anus will go over in public...



Matthew had a big month of work-related trips. On Tuesday the 9th he called home from work in the morning and said that he had a client meeting in Chicago at 9:00 AM Wednesday morning. Needless to say, he ran home to pack and eat (not being much of a breakfast person) and went back to work where he was very promptly shuttled to the airport! It was made all the more adventurous by realizing that the last-minute ticket was booked for the wrong airport! Fortunately his traveling companion had also discovered that and made flight and hotel changes in a nick of time. He was supposed to get back late on Thursday the 11th but

managed to get an earlier flight home. That was good for him since he had to leave for an IDEO offsite Friday morning at 4:30 AM!

He was up bonding with his co-workers and getting better nights sleep up at Tahoe and arrived home Sunday afternoon, just as we were getting home from church. This was the very Sunday that we had company to dinner and Susanna lost his new cell phone for him.



His final trip of the month began the following Sunday the 21st. He got picked up at noon and arrived in Minneapolis at 2:00 AM. He was back again Monday night! He is managing a project—his second one ever—and it is something of a big bite for him to chew and not particularly interesting to him, so he is going along by the skin of his teeth but gradually feeling more and more ownership of the whole thing.

Louisa actually started the year for us with a bang. Well, maybe bang is not the right



word. She started the year with a barf. A really big one. Then two days later, while we were on the way to pick Abigail up from gymnastics, I looked in my rearview mirror and Susanna was barfing all over herself (and carseat). After cleaning everything up at the gym, we were returning home when I looked in my rearview mirror again and caught Louisa barfing for round #2. Really, can you imagine a funnier scenario? They got me going and coming. I called Matt at work and urged him

speedily home. Two puking almost/barely 2-yr olds is a big project to manage.

Earlier on the morning of the dual-puking episode, I had taken Louisa down to San Jose to be evaluated by the early start program. Her verbal abilities are a bit lacking. They actually did a full developmental assessment and determined that her verbal skills were definitely behind, but only by about 28% (not the 33% required to qualify for services.) But she was right on target in other areas, and was ahead of the game socially/emotionally, which probably explains why she always seems older than she is

(until she opens her mouth, from which either unintelligible utterances or undistinguishable objects spill forth.)

On Sunday the 7th, at 5:30 in the evening, when we thought we were finally home-clear on the whole puking thing, we were just beginning to gather for dinner when Abigail hollered that Susanna was at it again. She puked all over herself, the kitchen table, the chair and the floor. In the moments it took me to figure out how to proceed I the whole situation, Louisa stripped down, threw her diaper on the table, and prepared for a show. I sent Susanna off to the bathtub with Matt and then began the tedious task of cleaning and sanitizing the area. As soon as I donned gloves and got to work, Louisa moved from her perch on the chair adjacent to the table, and began a rhythmic go-go dance in the middle of the kitchen table, just a couple of feet from where I was sweating over the puke. She managed to keep herself entertained there for quite some time.



In addition to exotic dancing, Louisa is quite interested in mothering. She is a baby-doll girl and is constantly rocking, singing, bathing, feeding, smacking, dragging and drowning the dolls lucky enough to call our family home.

On the final Sunday of the month I was sitting in choir and someone said something about having a bad morning. I said, “Yeah, that’s what I had. Louisa peed in my bedroom closet and while I was in the library before church started the girls took down every bread tray that had been placed on the sacrament table and tossed them around the choir seats. Then they dumped over two music stands filled with music and pulled out half a box of Kleenex.”

Louisa had her first trip to the dentist on the 30th. She was one of the very few 2-yr olds they’ve ever had who sat quietly and let

And in the middle of all of it, we implemented new family rules, chores and rewards, and here we are a few weeks in and they still seem to be working!

## **Emily and Family**

Hey Family!

The Voisin family rang in the new year with Kevin kissing Emily on the lips at midnight. The perfect beginning to 2007 in my book!

Last fall, Kevin went to the first football game of this season in the New Orleans Superdome – the first game after hurricane Katrina. He recounted that game as the day New Orleans reclaimed the

Superdome. The day the tragedies during the aftermath of Katrina were replaced with a victory – something much bigger than football. This month, Kevin attended the last game in the Superdome of the season – the Saints playoff game. They won, which was amazing. He got to go with his brother and two of his cousins. It was a very memorable night. They ate at Drago's oyster bar in the French Quarter and walked out the door to face a wig shop. The silly guys headed into the wig shop and each bought a super afro wig. They wore the wigs till and during the game. They we're pretty popular, entreating many photo requests and the like. They even got on TV!!

This year I have the goal of running a 5K by the time Elle turns 1. That's it for my news this month ;). Well, I'm also working on getting the kitchen clean and the laundry done in a timely manner. All in good time.

HunterEve has continued to bring home all As on her report card. We are so proud of all



her hard work. She's a great reader and we have LOVED reading Charlotte's Web together at night. I remember when dad would read us Storm Testament. I used to love that.

Michael continues to love his sisters like crazy. He's a wonderful helper and loves to help me clean the bathrooms, sweep the floors and vacuum. I love it! I feel like I am sewing seeds of greatness! Or maybe just cultivating a little



slave - either way I've found joy in my work.

Elle tasted baby food for the first time this month. In hopes to restart her sleeping all night, we offered her rice cereal on her 4-month birthday. She wasn't too keen on the idea, so we've decided to wait on that and continue crossing our fingers for a full 6 consecutive hours of sleep. And, let us not forget to mention Elle's new teeth that just came in (refer to pic).

A replica of the Niña came to the boat dock near Motivatit this month. We went on a tour of the tiny ship and were very grateful to live in a comfortable and comparably spacious home. It was pretty amazing reading about the voyages that took place on that tiny ship.

We sure love all of you! Our Aspen Grove reunion is quickly approaching! I'm so excited! Thanks for that momma. Happy New Year to all of you wonderful people!

LoveEm

### **Sam**

Well it looks like I have the editor's hat this year. Honestly I was trying to put off for as long as possible, but with graduate school done, there were no more valid excuses and I knew that it was finally up to me to do my duty. Aside from all of that, I am actually looking forward to putting together all of your letters this year. It will be a chance to really read through them much more than in years past and be in greater contact with everyone. That is really the main blessing of the family letter anyway.

The story of my life this month is not really a very complicated one; now that I am done with school, I am just working on some basic goals: regular exercise, attend all of the church activities as much as I can, and try to lead a more balanced social life. For exercise, I basically try to work out everyday of the week except for Sunday: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday is running and weight lifting, Tuesday and Thursday are cycling, and Saturdays are for soccer. By this method, I will workout at least three times a week. It has been nice being able to go to all of the church activities. I have especially enjoyed going to institute. And for my social life, I have been keeping myself busy spending time with friends doing the things you don't have time to do when you have a million projects to do. I have also had a girlfriend for the past month or so. I have been spending a lot of my free time with her. I will keep you updated on that front when there is more to tell.

At work, I was reminded that our contract ends in August. There is a good chance that we could get a six month extension, but almost certainly my company will lose the contract when it is rebid since we will be more expensive than any new comer. This is not as bad as it might seem. My position is not going away; just a new company might be filling it, and generally the new company will rehire the old people. Hopefully I would be able to maintain my salary and benefits should that occur. This, in my opinion, is really a non-issue since I now have a masters degree, and this is a good time to look for another job anyway. I just have a rough time frame now to do it.

Love,  
Sam

**Becky**

January began well and ended well. My students came back from Christmas break ready for structure and learning. They were very mellow, and were like little sponges. It's too cold outside and they'd much rather stay in the classroom than go out to play. I've been told that January and February are prime months to teach. The kids know the class rules, your expectations and the weather outside help them stay focused. It's been great and I have really enjoyed my job. I love my profession and am so blessed to be the teacher of such amazing children. I love them SO much!

Thankfully, my life has not been unbalanced with all work and no play. As for my social life, I still have one. I go to FHE faithfully and Ward Prayer, and love my ward! There are such amazing men and women in my ward and I have loved getting to know them. They are true friends.

At work, my faculty started the month by having "The Biggest Loser" contest where those who wanted would put money in the pot and for 6 weeks try to lose the highest percentage of their weight. At the beginning of the month we weighed in. I wasn't planning on participating, but on the day of the weigh in, my roommate Candy and I started a cleanse and I was curious as to how much I weighed at the beginning of the cleanse. I was curious to know how much weight I would lose. I wasn't too interested in doing the contest. We'll see how it turns out. As of the end of the month, I have lost about 20 lbs! Exciting! I feel like a new person!

I love you all and hope and pray for you and your families!

Love,  
Becky

*Joseph*

