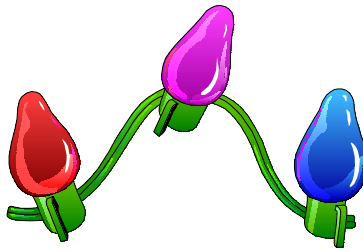


# Mike & Jane's Annual Report



December 25, 1997

*“Rudolph the Reindeer  
Make all the kids cheer  
Reason that his nose shine  
Santa give him moonshine”*  
— The Sonics

Same Bat-time, same Bat-channel. Seems that it was approximately some time last week we were having a go at producing a less-than-stupefyingly-dull recap of how our lives had fluttered along in the past year. And already 1997 has slid on by, and we are cudgeling our brains in an attempt to make this year's letter look significantly different than last year's. Perhaps a different font would do the trick. However, enough stalling. . .

Probably the greatest thing about the past year is that Dave's been enjoying much better health (as we've found ways to better control his asthma). Any day now we expect to be able to release him from his special biosuit. . . No, really, he is doing very well, and that means we are all enjoying life more. The only trouble was related to his overall increased mobility; meaning he promptly fell off the ladder to the backyard fort in May and broke his arm. Fortunately the advantages of a bright red cast soon became apparent to the Big Guy, who did his darnedest to annihilate the kitchen table with his new-found weapon. It, and him, survived, though it was touch and go for a while.

In his despondency over losing his favorite noisemaker, David turned to a new and insidious hobby: Trains. Big ones. Small

ones. Old ones. New ones. Red fish, blue fish, old fish, new fish. . . Sorry. But mostly the blue and red and green trains seen in episodes of Thomas the Tank Engine. The fascination this series holds for young ones defies description. Dave would rather watch “Top-ey” than eat. He's still a man of few words, but is a pretty interesting and affectionate little guy.

On the first-born front, four-year-old Maggie evidently spends much of her time increasing her vocabulary (she informed her Poppa the other day that “Our Christmas tree is huge and magnificent!” ... and we thought it was just average). The weird thing is that she pronounces everything beautifully, though her comprehension is suspect. We suppose she is fairly normal, meaning half the time she is Adorable and Sweet, and the other half leaves us wondering what alien from Roswell has inhabited her brain. She loves Science and Barbie dolls, which makes for some interesting experiments around the house. It is hard to believe that we will have a kindergartener in the house next year.

The funny thing is that Mommy- and Daddy-dom is definitely the nicest part of life these days. Most of the time.

Mike continues to practice law and dabble in rugby, and would frankly prefer to practice rugby and dabble in law. Things have been heating up somewhat to where it becomes harder and harder to find the time to get out to rugby practice; things just seem to get busier and busier progressively.

Jane spent some time thinking about changing companies, but decided to stay with her current employer. She is still writing and handling video, multi-media and Internet projects at Interstate Batteries (for those of you online: <http://www.interstatebatteries.com>).

The only major excursion for the whole crowd during the year was a trip to Wisconsin in July for a nice visit with Jane's side of the family. We were rather gun shy after suffering through The Trip from Hades last Christmas, which featured being stuck for hours with a (cranky) three- and (really, really cranky) one-year old in Chicago's O'Hare Airport. In any event, the summer trip went okay, leading us to abandon sanity entirely and consider the possibility of driving up there next summer. We're already stocking up on the tranquilizers.

Apart from the Summer run, it took a solid ten months for Mike to cash in on his Christmas present from last year, that being an overnight stay at a bed-and-breakfast in Gladewater, "The Antique Capitol of East Texas." They were not kidding: Gladewater's downtown consists of one long strip of nothing but antique stores, all of which shut down at 5:00 p.m. for the night, leaving multiple options for the evening's entertainment consisting of the local Dairy Queen and Piggly Wiggly. Unfortunately, we are somewhat less than committed enthusiastic shoppers when it comes to antique stores, spending most of our time wondering if anyone in the United States actually threw anything away before around 1945. Especially glassware, which as we recall was of limited use for the War Effort.

Maggie and Jane flew up to Wisconsin for Thanksgiving, leaving Mike and Dave to batch it and do the male bonding Chuck-

Norris-Movie-Pizza-and-Beer-and-Belching-Contest kind of thing. It was still too soon after the Packers win over the Cowboys for Mike to even think about going. Maybe he'll be ready this summer... For those of you who didn't see us, sorry we didn't call. With the size of the Kesler family, it makes it hard to get out much when we are there. As we said above, we are thinking about driving (yes - with the three and four year old) up there this summer. Sure to be a highlight in next year's Christmas letter.

Anyway, as per usual we are hoping to be able to stay in a bit closer touch with our friends and family this coming year, and particularly encourage those of you online to drop us a note at either Jane's online address of [Janek@ibsa.com](mailto:Janek@ibsa.com), or Mike's online address of [Mkoenecke@dfwmm.net](mailto:Mkoenecke@dfwmm.net). May you have a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

Mike & Jane