

January 1, 1999

Hello all,

"Last summer I sent out something like a summer-Christmas letter. It's been over 100 degrees here for much of the last few weeks so it must be time to try this again. It's kind of fun to do it now (never seem to have much time in December)..."

Ok, that's as far as I got last summer. Now it's five months later and New Year's Day; it's time.

I'll tell you about the photos, starting in the upper left corner and going clockwise:

- David (2) on the lawnmower at Great-grandma Helen Wallen's farm near Prairie Farm, Wisconsin.
- Uncle Doug Sander with a good grip on Carl (5).
- Jim and David fishing off Grandpa Jack's dock on Mille Lacs lake in MN.
- David, Carl, and Jim warming up after a massive water battle in our backyard in Richland.
- Carl feeding the deer at Wallowa Lake in northeastern Oregon.
- David sitting on one of the slabs at the Stonehenge replica in Washington's Columbia River Gorge.
- Joseph (10), David, and Carl enjoying a snack on top of a mountain in the Blues of Oregon. Believe it or not, there is a natural spring up there! Oh, that water tasted good.
- David (bottom) with Carl and cousins Chelsea and Evan at Uncle Dave's house in MN.
- Joseph and Evan (cousin) resting after an intense baseball game in Uncle Dave's backyard.

Our boys are doing great. Joseph continues to like nearly everything related to Star Wars, chess, Nintendo, his favorite computer game Civilization II, and playing with friends at high speed. Carl had a bunch of firsts this year and started biking, swimming and pumping the swing in the backyard. David, our jabber-box, likes to read Green Eggs and Ham and Chicka Chicka Boom-Boom. He's always ready for a good game of "guys" (little plastic knights, sailors and cowboys you line up for him to knock over with a plastic cannon ball). Sometimes I'm glad I'm not a little plastic man.

Laurie continues to keep the kids thinking. The boys love her "field trips" to gravel pits and construction sites to watch "big trucks," and local orchards to pick cherries, peaches, grapes and apples.

This year was nice in that we made it out on the road quite a few times. We visited the Oregon coast in May, the Blue Mountains in September, and Hood River, OR for windsurfing a couple of times. Best of all we got back to MN for a special event.

We three Miller brothers and our families were in MN for Mom and Dad's 50th wedding anniversary. We had a nice family retreat at a resort near Annandale: all thirteen of us. Later, at the Mendota Heights party, we saw all my aunts, uncles, and cousins and got to celebrate Uncle Kenneth's 80th and last birthday.

We visited Carol and Grandpa Jack on Mille Lacs. The boys, Laurie and I had fun catching sunfish from Jack's channel dock. Somehow, Grandpa has trained the fish to come into one spot where they think it's safe to hang out. Towing in a piece of bog so

they would have some "shelter" seems to have done the trick. They line up (with an appetite) to get in there.

We visited Great-grandma Helen at her farm. I got some fireworks at a WI roadside place on the way out; needless to say, the boys had fun and tried very hard to consume all the fireworks. We have heard that MN Governor Jesse Ventura is thinking about legalizing fireworks again. We'll definitely be moving back if that happens ☺.

Thanks for your Christmas cards, your e-mails and your visits to WA; we really enjoy them! Take good care, and may you be blessed this new year.

Jim, with warm wishes from Laurie, Joseph, Carl, and David

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy..." Luke 2:10.