

January 1, 2002

Happy New Year everyone,

I'm sure many are wondering about our photo this year. I know this looks bad. You're probably shaking your head and saying, "What happened to that handy list (six steps to the perfect family Christmas card) that you guys broadcast last year? Come now Jim; physician heal thyself." You must admit though that this new approach is effective and not nearly as time consuming. Here's the shorter list of steps this year:

1. Bury your kids.
2. Take the picture.

It's great. You don't have to fuss with combing hair or coordinating outfits. And thanks to uncle Dell®, there's no need to wait for *simultaneous* cooperation. Just paste those guys in one at a time. And besides, what boy can resist smiling when he's buried?

The photos, boys (one of each) and background (one very close-up shot of the sand that looks more like rocks than grains), were taken in April about 40 miles from here at a favorite sand dune. The huge dune is very steep in spots so there's lots of rolling and jumping over the edge.

Our boys (when not buried) had their usual high-spirited year. **Joseph** (13) had fun wrestling and can't wait to try it again. He inhales books with an intensity only found in his mother. Trumpeting is coming along nicely (with some encouragement from Mom and Dad). Joe's enjoyed a year of confirmation retreats (quite a step forward in process). At 5'8" he's taller than Laurie now and hasn't quite figured out how to hug her. **Carl** (8) was a chess monster bringing home three regional tournament trophies, including one for first place second grade. His

soccer team had a blast this year and went undefeated through the season; it's a great group of kids and parents, so it makes it fun for us too. You can only get a hint from our April photo, but of late, Carl's been very entertaining, prancing around and singing, "All I want for Christmas is my five front teeth." **David** (5) took the plunge into kindergarten and is enjoying his friends and teacher. He loves to swim and had fun jumping (our conservative estimate is one bazillion times) off the big dock at Grandpa Jack Sander's. We recently discovered he has learned, on his own, to play chess by watching his brothers. Pretty soon all "my three sons" will be beating their poor old Dad.

Our David continues his fight with linear scleroderma. His left leg and foot are scarred and smaller, but you would never know it by the way he tears around. Thank you for your continuing prayers.

Laurie's had another active year at our church, Richland Lutheran. She works on the public relations committee (we're anxious to see the new church directory when it comes out). She also volunteers in both David's and Carl's classes at Sacajawea. And at home, she's chief doctor and chef. We enjoy her grain milling and bread making (yummm....).

Once again, there is a ping-pong table in my life; I'm trying to get my boys and neighbors into it. I joined our church choir this fall and am enjoying the fellowship and music. You can still find me windsurfing at Roosevelt although it was kind of an off year in terms of coordinating health, time, and wind. I've kept my [Waconia](http://waconia.timetocode.org) web site going (waconia.timetocode.org, named after my favorite MN windsurfing lake); it serves weather data for the local windsurfers. The love affair with my digital camera continues, and I'm still having fun

swamping our relatives' in-boxes with photos.

For the brave, it's kind of like being in the Marines; you might want to consider getting on our family mailing list. If, after boot camp, you must yell uncle, I'll understand. Ten-minute downloads are not for everyone! Thank goodness I have a captive audience with our families. It's nice now that so many of us are better connected through e-mail.

We made it out on the road a few times with visits to Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Portland, Hood River and the Columbia River Gorge, and of course our old stomping ground Minnesota.

Thanks for your Christmas cards, your e-mail, 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.

