



Well, the fabled “Year Two Thousand” is drawing to a close—*without* foretold doom and catastrophe. As we quietly approach the *true* dawn of the new Millennium, may we be among the first to greet you in it.

Rereading last year’s letter calls to mind where we were then, and that many of the things written about are still pertinent. Herein an updated Y2K litany:

- ◆ Elise (age 10) is enjoying school again with her fifth grade class at yet another school — the intermediate (soon-to-become middle) school. Elise broke a finger this fall, and her first question was, “Will I be able to play piano?”—the piano is still her most enjoyable avenue of expression.
- ◆ Anna (age 8) also changed schools this year, but took a full three months to adjust. She likes her own pace, and true friends.
- ◆ Both girls continue singing in the musical dramas at church.

- ◆ Rick and Judy tentatively tested the waters of marriage counseling, and found much work is still ahead. So “dates” together include monthly book club discussions. We enjoy our group.
- ◆ Live theater has been a big enjoyment this year. We go with the girls and as a couple, and Elise takes classes and sprinkles in a few auditions.
- ◆ We *finally* camped at Jay Cook St. Park, near Duluth, MN (a favorite park of Rick’s mom, and of Judy’s from childhood), a beautiful setting in a rocky gorge;
- ◆ A camping trip in the St. Croix Valley, MN resulted in Lyme disease for both Anna & Judy (detected and treated early so no long term consequences);

Rick’s family reunion at Copper Harbor, MI, was a highlight. It was especially fun for Rick to experience as an adult the attraction his Grandma and Grandpa Swanson had for the place for so many years. The wild flowers were spectacular; it’s a beautiful area.

After being hounded by recruiters for so long, Rick finally took a new job, as webmaster for Net Perceptions. He has continued excitement for the work, with added challenges working for a publicly traded company (whose stock is down!).

Clearly THE highlight of our year was the two-week family trip to the garden aisle of Kauai, Hawaii. We rendezvoused after a very long and challenging flight for a wonderful trip with 2/3 of Rick’s family. The girls fell in love with the ocean, waves, snorkeling, and wild chickens. (Crowing at dawn is a myth! They were at it all night! There was no love lost on chickens from Rick and Judy.) It was beautiful and relaxing — each of us has since sighed wistfully, longing to return — experiencing the therapy of wind and waves, and the lush mountain scenery.

That brings us to Christmas: It’s the same story as every year, but it never grows old. Because of Jesus, there is hope; the final victory is won. We share our love with you and prayers for a truly blessed Christmas.