

the PETERSEN *family*

2 0 0 7 C H R I S T M A S L E T T E R

Merry Christmas from Oakland, CA.

I have asked each member of the family for their “top” experiences of the year. Since one can’t really talk all that well, and one can’t remember what she did 10 minutes ago, I will try to fill in the gaps.

When I asked Guinn what she wanted me to say about her past year she honestly replied, “I don’t even know where I am. Meeghan and Jerry’s?” We don’t really know who Jerry is, but think this line may well describe her past year. Guinn turned 86 this year and celebrated in a hospital bed. In fact she spent a good chunk of the beginning of the year in the hospital. Strangely she is as healthy as can be. A few of her highlights from the past year include: attending a day program daily with people who really care well for her, making some great pieces for the annual art show to raise money for Alzheimer’s research, eating hotdogs and peanut butter and jelly, and being a clown for Justice’s birthday party and for Halloween.

Justice – no longer a baby – he’s a boy full of energy. Some of his favorite things and experiences this past year are: playing at the park – mostly swinging on his belly, and anything to do with water – the ocean, showers, baths, hoses, pools (he took swimming lessons twice this summer). He is still a great lover of his pacifier (or “pie” as he calls it). He has been known to pack a few in at a time. He loves music – he is working lately on trying to hold his microphone and play his guitar at the same time. We have enjoyed this season sitting around the Christmas tree at night with all the lights off and Justice playing his guitar while we sing Christmas carols. His favorite people right now are Lora Burnett (affectionately referred to as “Lolly”) and our 7 year old next door neighbor, Chanel. He was one of many spidermen this Halloween. He loves fire engines and trains and can’t wait to watch the trash truck each week. Although he is somewhat challenged with selective listening (as I hear most toddlers are), he is a great kid. He is kind, he is polite and if he wasn’t ours we would wish he were.

Darin continues to give his time to many great things. He gives much of his time to a group of people we get to be a part of that wants to see and use our money differently (Relational Tithe). He loves frequent trips to Napa Valley, Cuba, the Bahamas and Philadelphia. He enjoys spending Saturday mornings with Justice. He plays well with Guinn, dancing and joking with her. He says he enjoys me, and I believe him. We have a lot of fun together. On a recent date we saw the Nutcracker in San Francisco

My highlights of the past year are: watching Justice grow, reading books with him at bedtime, establishing a healthier lifestyle, taking a trip this summer to visit my friend Traci in Kansas City, and getting away to Vegas with just Darin and seeing Cirque de Soleil. I feel like I am constantly challenged in my ability to care well for and love my kids at these new seasons of their lives. I hope I get it right more times than I do not.

Again, this year, and the life of the Petersens, seems like it would be impossible or at least much harder or sadder without the help of many great friends. To all of you, we hope you know who you are and thank you, thank you, thank you.

Well, there we go -- another year, another letter. We hope it finds you well and that if our paths have not crossed in the past year that they will in 2008. Merry Christmas from our home to yours.