



Merry Christmas 2000,

This year we will be celebrating our 15th holiday season in warm weather and sunshine. I believe that for me Christmas is no longer about the cold temperatures and snowfall. But even now, I do miss the beauty of the snow *but not* cold wet feet.

If I were asked to characterize this last year for our family in one word it would have to be transition. I've decided that is normal with older children. Every hour, day, month, year brings new experiences, many I feel to young to experience. We've considered replacing the front door with a revolving one. Kids move out, move home, and move out, again. U-haul should consider giving volume discounts.

Some changes are joyously welcomed. Tim had an outstanding year in boarding school and moved home this summer, and continues to attend St. Paul's as a day student. He received many awards last year, including most improved sophomore student. I am truly amazed at how much he managed to accomplish in one year. My friends are quick to remind me that 30 people were available to help that transition - dorm staff, teachers with small classes, a staff of psychologists, community meetings and a headmaster who truly has a heart for the young men entrusted to his care.

Julie moved out this summer shortly after Tim moved home, I don't think this was a "cause and effect" relationship, but I could be wrong. She lives in Phoenix and is planning to move to New Jersey in January. She has left college for now and is currently working as a production assistant for a small media production company. I'm very disappointed she isn't finishing college but she does need to figure out what she wants to do, in addition to traveling.

Hugh continues to work urgent care and enjoys more time off than when he worked in family practice. He runs a couple of miles 4 to 5 days a week, and continues to improve his well-being. Every year he seems to have more time off, I think he is working about 6 days in December. That should give him time to do some of the Christmas preparations - don't you think.

We took a couple of trips to Hawaii this year, in February and October. I love the islands - the sunshine, warm weather, balmy breezes and perfumed air. I love the ocean especially snorkeling. Next year, we are going back to France and Hugh is planning on taking Tim, and possibly Julie, to Barcelona. I can't image being away from my business for 3 weeks so I'm planning on coming home after France. We may fit in a trip back to Hawaii.

I moved my business out of the house in late July after finding the perfect office space. We are now an office of four people. I recently hired two part-time people, an office manager and a seasoned accountant. Carol joined the firm in February as a staff accountant and continues to work fulltime. I very much enjoy having my own business, especially as it is growing. I like the management of the practice as much as the tax work. This next year should be the most exciting year yet.

We are looking forward to the holiday season. I think this is the earliest I've done my Christmas cards in years. I already have the tree up and decorated. And, I'm spending my free time decorating the house and making Christmas presents. Hugh's family will be joining us for Christmas and that will add to the festiveness of the season.

My prayer for you, dear friends, is a blessed holiday season. May the magic of this time of new birth, renew your heart and life today and throughout the coming New Year.

Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year,