

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2005-2006

Dear Friends and Family:

It's Christmas day here in Buffalo, after a very cold November and December, the snow is melting! We've spent a warm and happy family holiday season, which for us includes Claire's Airplane Day (Dec 10), Joseph's Birthday (December 17th), Christmas and New Years. Enough cake for four families, and if you count our November in Pittsburgh, Washington and for Thanksgiving, it's been a continuous celebration for 6 weeks! This year, we'll just give a short update on our family events and travels, and ask you to enjoy a few photos of the year. Each of us has enjoyed something special this year.

Carol has continued her efforts to decorate the house anew, after four years of construction. She's taken such care to design and garden in front, and to decorate for everyday and for special occasions. She also arranged two amazing short vacations, to Burlington Vermont and surrounding areas, during March, and to Cooperstown NY in October, more on that below. Carol is closing in on her black belt in Tae Kwon Do, within the year, she keeps working on that.

Joseph continued at Buffalo's City Honors school from 5th to 6th grade, enjoying his classes in literature, math, science, French, and playing baseball and basketball besides his own efforts toward a black belt in Tae Kwon Do (which may come in 2006). Claire took a year off from summer camp, but Joseph enjoyed a week at a camp in New York, with wonderful cabins. As a Yankees fan, he got a tremendous present from his godfather, Nick Lomako, who hosted a Tigers/Yankees game in Detroit over July 4th Weekend, and Joseph got to see his heroes live! Our trip to Cooperstown in October was also a baseball event at the Hall of Fame, meeting an author of a book on Tourette's Syndrome. Joseph's growing knowledge of baseball made the trip exciting. Besides our family love of Star Wars and Harry Potter, Joseph's become a fan of Lord of the Rings and Narnia. It's not just the movies, but he also loves reading the books. Along with the classics, he's reading two different spy series, one by Anthony Horowitz, a British writer.

Claire, ever her dad's girl, continues at School 84 in Buffalo moved from Mrs. Cordero's classroom to Ms. Wilkin's class this summer. She is working so very hard with her Dynavox assistive communication device, writing stories and letters to her friends and relatives. Claire is pretty sophisticated, enough so that a trip to Pittsburgh in November included a visit to the Dynavox headquarters on South Side. Claire met with programmers who worked with her on different techniques with her new Dynavox 4. Claire had some major events this year, perhaps the biggest was a summer event at the Darien Lake concert theatre, when Claire and Dad enjoyed the Backstreet Boys' Never Gone tour. Wow, it was everything we hoped for, with Brian (B-Rok) Littrell, her favorite BSB, coming over to wave to all of us in the front wheelchair section. Claire has begun redecorating her room in BSB pictures, posters and paraphernalia!

As a family, besides our trips to Vermont and Cooperstown, we had a second visit to Toronto for the Canadian Sci Fi exhibition, to see Star Trek friends, this year, visiting Linda Park of Enterprise (who remembered Claire), and a family visit with Marina Sirtis, of Next Generation. Joseph met an actor/sound



editor from Star Wars too.

Joe finished six years as associate dean, and is trying to start a sabbatical this year, to write up some of his community work. There were two wonderful research trips to Korea and England. In April, Joe spent a week touring Korea, from Busan to Incheon and Seoul, visiting our friends Dr. Yangsun Kim, Dr. YeonHee Lee in Seoul, Professors Changsik Ha and Won Ki Lee and Dr. E.D. Jeong in Busan. Lectures at four universities



and the Korean Chemical Society were sandwiched around a beautiful tour of this beautiful homeland for Joseph and Claire. All of this was a good preparation for a visit in 2006 with the whole family.

Another wonderful trip involved a visit to England for a scientific conference, and a chance for Joe's mom to travel to visit her mother's home town, Oldbury, near Birmingham. The picture below shows our visit to the street where the Asbury family home was in Oldbury, Freeth street. We stayed in beautiful Manchester, enjoying the town and a dinner at the town hall, and the conference scientific colleagues were great fun to share

our family history.

Finally, a great honor for Joe was the award of the National Science Foundation Presidential Award for Excellence in Mentorship in Science, Engineering and Mathematics. Joe was one of 10 awardees from across the US, invited to Washington with the whole family in November for a White House ceremony. We were able to share this with Sandy McClelland, Carol's sister on the trip. Joe met with Senator Hillary Clinton and Representative Brian Higgins, and the award was given by the President's science advisor and the head of NSF. We all shared our joy at a reception in the Executive Office Building, and visited with Gary and Andy Cameron, Joe's cousins.



We end this year hoping to see all of our friends this coming new year in Buffalo or across the US. We hope you will consider stopping by our home. Keep sharing your joys and news with us via email and any other means!

Our love and best wishes to you for the holidays and the new year!

Love:

Joe, Carol, Claire and Joseph

