

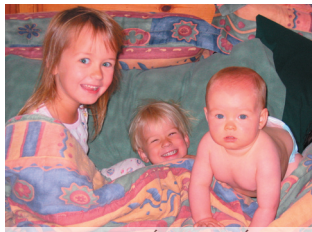
Merry Christmas and God's blessings to all our dear family and friends!



As 2004 comes to a close we have much for which to be thankful. We are blessed with a home filled with laughing, healthy children and lives full of activity, purpose, and love, but these years are flying by at an increasingly rapid rate, and when it comes to filling you in on what we've been up to we're not sure where to begin. Two of our favorite traditions from the holidays are reading the Christmas cards and letters we get so that we can catch up on what our friends have been up to this past year, and working together to create our own letter—it gives us

a chance to look through our photos and reflect on the changes in our lives over the past year.

**Winter 2004** – We have been traveling to the Sierra Nevada mountains each winter for the past couple years to sled and tube on the slopes. In January we broadened our horizons, teaching Emma and Atticus to ski. They both took to it very quickly, and this year we hope to make at least monthly visits to the snow. Last year baby Aramis was fairly portable in the backpack, we'll see how he tolerates being a papoose this year as an active toddler.



**Spring** – Christy's grandmother Oda Lee Pettijohn passed away in March and we traveled to Oklahoma for her funeral and to visit with family. In May we celebrated Emma's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday with a *Finding Nemo* party. Christy started a home-based business selling fun, fashionable, and affordable Cookie Lee® jewelry—she'd love to send you a catalog!



**Summer** – In June we traveled to Missouri to take part in the first-ever Pettijohn family reunion. A highlight of this trip was Emma catching her first fish. She named him Nemo, then insisted that he be cleaned, cooked, and eaten by the family. After freezing on a beach in July 2003 we had resolved to spend the next 4<sup>th</sup> of July inland, so this year we joined our friends the Fauls at their lakeside cabin in Oregon for the holiday weekend. It was tranquil and beautiful, and although we were only 20 minutes from the ocean we spent our warmest 4<sup>th</sup> of July in recent memory there. The kids experienced the thrill of riding in a motorboat and tubing for the first time, and they loved it! Fishing off the dock was also a treat for them as there were plenty of kid-sized perch biting. At night we sat around the dock and watched spectacular fireworks displays above the lake.



We celebrated Atticus' 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday at the local forestry department fire station, finishing up with a ride around the parking lot in the big red truck all lit up and sirens blaring! In August our family participated in Hollister's *Relay for Life* to raise money for cancer treatments and research—we set a goal of \$500, but through the generosity of so many of you whose lives have also been affected by this disease, we raised over \$1000. **Thank you!**



**Fall** – A new era began—our little Emma started Kindergarten, and Atticus started Preschool! Where has the time gone? The long-awaited OU football season began! We celebrated Aramis' 1<sup>st</sup> birthday at the county fair, and then bought him a brand-new Suburban—our road-trip vehicle. What a lucky baby! We had visits from Aunt Raye for Halloween, Papa Charles and Grandma Kay, and then Grandma Betty and Aunt Cathy who came out for Thanksgiving and to celebrate Betty's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.



**Winter 2005** – We made our first trip of the season to the Sierra mountains and were amazed at how quickly the kids picked up skiing again. By the second day Atticus had progressed from the tow rope on the bunny slope to a regular chair lift so he could ski a real green slope. Emma, meanwhile, started tackling blue slopes, albeit with



some assistance from Dad holding onto her via a ski harness "just in case" and yelling "turn! turn!" frequently. Like her brother, she much prefers to ski fast and straight. For the upcoming holidays, we look forward to a trip to Missouri where we'll celebrate Christmas, New Year's, Christy's Dad's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and the OU Sooners playing in their 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive National Championship Game!

**Boomer Sooner!**



**Emma** has the self-assurance and stubbornness of a teenager, yet still loves to cuddle and read books and play games like a child of 5. She has an engineer's mind—she frequently announces that she is going to make a craft, amasses the needed materials, then proceeds



to complete the project exactly as planned—but her current career plan is to become a farmer. Last year she learned the rudiments of soccer in a mixed under 6 league. This year she became a star on a girls-only team, enjoying both the practices and the games this time around, and we all looked forward to our Saturday



outings to the soccer field. She is flourishing in school—loving learning to read, and soaking up math and science concepts like a sponge. She is growing up so fast, but she continues to be our loving and beautiful angel.





Proud preschooler

Atticus is delighted to finally be attending the preschool where he's seen big sister go these past two years. He particularly enjoys the play-dough and snack time. His least favorite part seems to be "circle time"—we are working with him on sitting and listening to the teacher



rather than wrestling with his classmates. He loves pretending he's a firefighter, a superhero (Spiderman, Batman, and Mr. Incredible are favorites), you name it! He also still loves to cuddle and be "held like a baby,"



yet he is obsessed with becoming an "old teenager" having convinced himself that old teenagers must get to do whatever they want to do. He can't wait to grow up and learn to snowboard—Emma wants to learn to surf—they are a couple of true California kids! Atticus is a charming, articulate, hysterical child, and you just can't help but smile around him, even when he's making mischief.



Aramis is our one-year-old daredevil—he climbs to frightening heights (to Mom's terror, he has fearlessly undertaken multiple solo ascents up the ladder to Emma's loft bed), loves to dunk his face in the water while bathing, and his favorite game is climbing up the back of the couch and nose-diving onto the cushions. The only thing which seems to give him more satisfaction than these daring escapades is successfully doing them despite Mom and Dad's desperate attempts to



intervene—squealing with delight as he frantically evades our grasp to get in just one more ladder rung or couch dive. Lately he has starting communicating with sign language, and he loves admonishing his older siblings with a stern "No!" whenever they get in any kind of trouble, or just to remind them he's in charge. Aramis is a sweet, happy baby who loves to laugh and has a smile that lights up everyone around him. When Emma was a toddler and we were discussing giving



Ok, push me down the hill!

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Dave's Email: [pond@computer.org](mailto:pond@computer.org)

her a sibling, David remarked, "I don't know if we can stand that much cuteness!" We're pretty much overrun by cuteness here!



Superbaby, Belle, & Batboy

David continues to be busy with both work and school. He is in the same software development position at Adobe, but working on a new and challenging project which is shifting his expertise toward cryptography and related digital security technology. Adobe continues to do well, having had one of its best years ever in terms of growth, revenue, and profits. He is slightly



Dynamic duo (trio?)

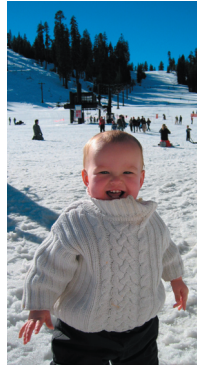
over halfway through his electrical engineering master's program at Stanford and finds the whole experience rewarding but quite challenging.



Outside of family activities, his main recreation continues to be weekend racquetball, playing "cut-throat" (three-way) racquetball with his two playing partners.



Christy keeps busy being involved with both kids' schools, Bible study, and church activities. This year



she helped implement a new Family Night program at church by co-team, which involved and serving meals to people each Wednesday experience! She helped

ordinating the kitchen planning, preparing approximately 100 night—a real learning raise money for the nursery at church by helping to craft and sell hand-made Christmas cards, including the one that came with this letter (the Nursery Committee is taking orders for next year 😊). Although she enjoys selling jewelry and finds her volunteer activities rewarding, Christy's favorite role is Mommy, and she considers herself blessed beyond reason to have such a healthy and adorable family.



This season is a time of joy and thanksgiving, but it also reminds us of the loss of David's father Clyde to cancer last year during this time. We appreciate so much the outpouring of sympathy and support we received and we'd like to report that David's mother Carol is doing well. We send this greeting with our love and prayers that you and yours will all have a blessed and healthy 2005!



Picking strawberries in Swiss, Missouri

# The Pond Family

Aramis, Atticus, Emma, Christy, and David  
(and Chisolm and Gizmo, too!)



At the Pettijohn family reunion

<http://pondfamily.net>