

Dear Family and Friends,

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Joyous 2006, and pray that this letter finds you happy, healthy, and blessed by this special season! We have had another rather hectic year and find ourselves scrambling yet again to get our Christmas newsletter out well after Christmas. Here's a recap of our year...



Playing dress-up...literally!

In January we were delighted to learn that we were expecting our 4th (and last!) child, due in September. The realization that our house would soon be a bit cramped set us off on a search for a larger home. Little did we know then where this search would take us...

We made a couple of ski trips to the Sierra Nevadas, with David and Christy taking turns skiing



ing with Aramis in a backpack and steering Atticus with a tether. Emma began taking on blue runs without any assistance, and Atticus loved the thrill of skiing fast but refused to learn to turn or stop (hence the need for the tether). In March, after several months of house-hunting in and around Hollister, we listed our house for sale, then took off for Spring Break at Disneyland with Grandma Betty and Aunt Cathy.



April brought the sad news that David's mother Carol was ailing, and she passed away that month, just a little over a year after we lost David's father Clyde. Pregnant Christy and the kids traveled to Oklahoma to join David and Raye and honor Carol at a touching funeral service. We lost David's Uncle Don (Carol's brother) to cancer just a couple of weeks later. It has been a hard run of illnesses and losses, but we are heartened to know that Clyde and Carol have been reunited in Heaven, and that they are watching over their grandchildren in comfort and peace. In May our little Emma turned 6—she's growing up far too quickly, reading, playing soccer and softball, losing her baby teeth and turning into a little lady. Emma loves school and continues to astonish us with her thirst for knowledge and ability to grasp difficult concepts. Also in May, after missing this event for many years, we made our first trip to the Artichoke Festival in Castroville. We also decided, with a family of six, that an RV might be in our fu-



Yummy snow!

ture, so we rented an RV over Memorial Day weekend to see how the kids (and their parents!) would handle the experience. We took it to Clear Lake in Northern California where we enjoyed a fun-filled weekend of family togetherness and resolved that an RV will definitely be a good fit for us.



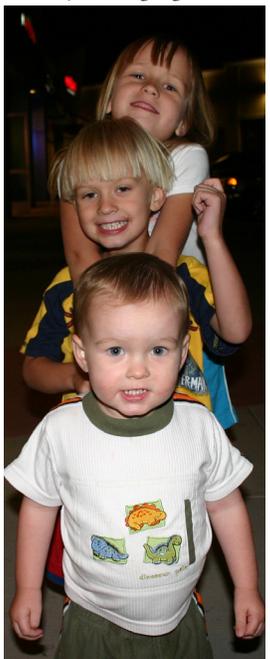
and broadened our home to include the around Salt Lake City made what would be trips to the Denver. The whole family joined in the fun during a whirlwind four-leg trip where we flew to Hermann, Missouri for the 2nd annual Pettijohn reunion, then to Salt Lake City for a few days of house hunting, and then to Denver for a couple more days of house hunting, than back home to CA. We fell in love with the foothill communities west of Denver

and decided to focus our house hunting efforts there.

In July we celebrated Atticus' 4th birthday—despite being a marvelous pirate, he has matured into quite the student in preschool this year, actively participating in arts and crafts and sitting quietly during circle times, and also began playing soccer, motivated by the promise of a trophy at the end of the season. His first soccer season provided much enjoyment for all spectators as he was quite entertaining to watch on the field. He capped his soccer debut by scoring a goal in his team's last game! He is a joy, marching to the beat of his own drummer, at times serious and reflective, at times funnier than anything. Our house sold and closed during July, prompting a scramble to find and move into a rental house as we had not yet located a suitable home in Colorado. This was not for trying, however, as Dave made several more trips to Colorado to look at houses. On one trip, Emma accompanied him since Christy was too far along in



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the pregnancy for travel. In all, we probably looked at over 70 houses in the Denver area before we found just the right house. We ended the month with our annual visit to the Gilroy Garlic Festival.

In August, Dave made one last trip Denver (his fifth in two months!) to take a final look at our top choices and to get plenty of video and photos for Christy to examine. Despite Christy only having seen it via pictures, we entered into contract on a house in Morrison, Colorado and began making plans



Eragon Diego Pond

to move there sometime after Puddle #4 arrived.

Our son Eragon Diego Pond was born on his due date of September 12. Eragon, namesake of the Christopher Paolini hero, is easily the most content and peaceful baby that we have had. He often wears an expression of perplexed concern (who can blame him with all that is going on around him?), but as he grows older he alternates this



So that's what was in mommy's tummy!

with bursts of bright smiles and cooing. He is adored by one and all. We celebrated Aramis' 2nd birthday at the end of September—he is such a delightful toddler, alternating being completely cherubic and earning his nickname “the brute squad.” He is uncannily articulate, able to repeat almost anything with or without understanding. He is completely into Dora and knows as much Spanish as Emma or Atticus as a result. In 2004 we bought a Suburban on Aramis' birthday, in 2005 we closed on our Colorado house on his birthday—what could this kid possibly get next year?

October was a blur of packing and preparing for a newborn. We had the gracious aid of family and friends who came to see the new baby, help pack, and entertain the older kids while we busied ourselves with the move. Aunt Raye came for Halloween and we managed to squeeze



in trick-or-treating with the kids dressed as Captain Hook, Peter Pan and Tinkerbell. Christy and Eragon were conscripted as pirates to be Hook's “mates.” Unfortunately, the weekend before



Off to Neverland!



our move Emma contracted a serious food-borne illness which required hospitalization. Emma proved to be an amazing, brave little trooper during a late-night trip to the emergency room where she was subjected to all sorts of tests and



The brute squad

CT scans that no 6-year old should have to endure. Emma handled the ordeal much better than her father did despite her condition. The next morning Emma experienced her first trip in an ambulance as she was transferred to Good Samaritan Hospital in San Jose as a precaution. We



had quite a scare for 48 hours waiting for the tests results, but we are happy to report that she recovered very quickly and completely.

On November 12 we pulled out of Hollister in a caravan of Dave driving a



large U-Haul truck pulling a trailer, Christy driving the four kids in the Suburban, also pulling a trailer, and Dave's sister Raye driving our van and two kitties, pulling yet another trailer. It was an adventure, but despite being held up in the mountains by a snowstorm and getting several vehicles stuck in our new driveway, which was beautifully but treacherously covered with snow, we did make it safely to our new home, and we're settling in nicely. We've had a great deal of help from family who have come to visit and help unpack, and we are enthralled with our new surroundings.

Our house sits on just over 2 lovely acres in the foothills of the Rockies, and we often see a small herd of deer and several foxes traipsing around our yard. The kids love the new house, and Emma and Atticus are having fun at their new schools.

Dave continues to work for Adobe and pursue his Master's degree from the comfort of his home office, and Christy is getting involved with the PTA



cooling off at summer swim lessons



and plans to either find or start a new Bible study group in the coming year. We miss our dear friends back in California, but look forward to getting to visit them when Dave needs to go to San Jose for work, and we also anticipate getting to see more of our family and old friends in Oklahoma and Missouri since we are so much closer now. We ended 2005 and began 2006 back in the Bay Area



Don't be fooled — this driveway eats cars when icy

where Emma was honored to be the flower girl in a family friend's wedding. Emma looked lovely in her cranberry dress, and earned high praise from the entire wedding party as a perfectly poised flower girl. The kids could not get enough of dancing at the reception, and many wedding guests found Eragon irresistible.



Our Colorado dream home

If you are ever in the Denver area, please let us know, we would love



to have you visit!!! Please note the new address, phone number and email addresses—we so enjoy hearing from all of you! We pray God's bountiful blessings for you and yours in the New Year!



## The Pond Family

*Eragon, Aranis, Atticus, Emma, Christy, and David  
(and our kitties Chisolm and Gizmo)*



Monterey Bay beach play

The Pond Family • Christmas 2005

