

1993 Holiday Greetings from the Helgrens

December 26th, 1993

Purposely waiting until the start of the Christmas Season, we re-cap the 1993 year which seems already too quickly gone.....

All we remember of early 1993 is snow. Snow, snow and more snow. I distinctly remember the frigid temperatures (reflected in Debbie's voice when she would inform me over the phone that it had snowed *again*, soon after I left town....).

Certainly travel has been very much a part of the "blessings" of 1993 (some "mixed"). I broke new travel records in 1993, racking up some 115,000 Delta base miles. Although that earns me "Royal Medallion" flying status and a free Crown Room membership, I am disappointed that Delta has not yet named a plane after me... With 850,000 total miles (some 500,000 available to cash in on free tickets and such), it looks likely that I will become a Million Miler next year. Maybe the "christening" will follow...? Travel took me from Florida to Alaska (new state for me), Massachusetts to Arizona. It is business enterprise #2 that causes me to travel so much (a partnership called SR Roberts, Software Services Group). The *other* software business I operate (Real Estate Contact, Prospect and Listing Management software) travels me less, but has generated some wonderful "atta -boys" as my software took **New Product of the Year** accolades at the National Assoc. of Realtors Trade Show in Miami this last November. That should boost sales in 1994!

Not all the travel was business. The purchase of a new Toyota Van preceded a three week vacation in August which began in Boise, wound down to Placerville, CA to visit my sister Holly (and family), and zigzagged up to Oregon (camping along the coast, wonderful!). We straggled back into Salt Lake long enough to re-pack and launch ourselves out to Centennial Wyoming for a three day fete with the Hein family Reunion (Debbie's clan). The month of August was essentially spent in the van. And, although that may not sound attractive to you "land lubbers", its certainly heaven compared to the cabin of a Boeing 727! Travel also took me to Illinois to be with Mom and family when we lost Grampa Rakow to declining health in March. We lost a great friend and family patriarch and it once again reminded us how important family is.

Jonas (will be 7 in March!) is into academics and sports. Now a 1st grader at Redeemer Lutheran School, he absolutely amazes us with his reading skills and artistic talent. For balance he continues his soccer activities and has begun on the scouting trail in the Tiger Cub ranks. Jonas has a love of learning, of constant "hard work" (that kid will wear me out yet!) and has a creative bent that reveals itself in art (and Legos). Joy, joy, joy at this blessing called Jonas.

Sam was in Seventh Heaven during the Oregon trip. Sam has a true gift and sensitivity for Gods creation through Gods creatures and spent hours wading tide pools and picking up goodness-knows-what on the beach. Although I lack a sense of smell, Debbie's keen olfactory senses kept us from bringing back long-since-dead sea creatures that are best left where found. Sam excitement is growing

at the possibility of kindergarten next year (although its too soon to tell if he will be ready). His learning gift is in learning about nature, and I am sure he will become the next great naturalist. Peace on Earth (especially animals and nature) is Sam's wish this year.

Debbie continues her work as a Physical Therapist 10-15 hours a week (income insurance!) and has added a morning of Physical Therapy at the homeless clinic to her schedule of activities. Debbie provides the bulk of the parenting for Jonas and Sam (since I travel so much), manages our expenses (without which we would have no van!), stays very active at Zion Lutheran Church. Debbie is a wonderful blessing and companion.

As mundane as our activities sound, the very possibility of reciting them to you is a gift of God's abundance and love. We have been constantly blessed and we are thankful for it. We celebrate the joy of God's gift of his son Jesus during this Christmas Season (Dec 25th - Jan. 6th) and hope that you find true Joy and Peace in God throughout the year.