

Merry Christmas!

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. *Matthew 1:21*

We are approaching the holiday season again! The time between seems shorter every year. This year, we were spared the battering hurricanes but pray for the millions of people



along the gulf coast that took the brunt of some very bad storms. We pray that all of the people affected have a place and time to enjoy this Christmas season.

Timothy, Mia, Gayla and Bennie went through their first full winter in North Dakota and are well into the start of a second winter. Timothy has really grown up and I'm sure he's a handful. We didn't see as much of Bennie and his family now that he is in the northland. From talking with them, they all seem to be doing well and are enjoying the lifestyle of the upper Midwest and our families there.

Riley, Jordan, Casey, Jessy and Mark have had a very busy year. Mark has had more work than he would probably prefer. Jordan and Casey are very involved in the boy scouts. All three boys had a fun and exciting season of soccer. Along with all of their other activities, Jessy and Mark have found time to continue improvements on their home.

Anthony, April and Dwight have had a good year too. Anthony is another growing little guy! If he can talk you into playing football or basketball with him, he's a happy camper. He also often asks if he can go on grandpa's boat but we haven't gotten that together yet. Then, last month, April fell and broke her arm. She's still in a cast but able to do more all the time.

Joy and Dave will have a baby in February! So they will soon be a family of three. Joy is busy making space and getting ready. They are both really excited about the coming baby. Joy has changed jobs and works closer to home now, so we don't see nearly as much of her.

Nicole has announced her engagement! She is planning a wedding for next year to Mike Demeter on November 11. Time will go all too fast and the wedding date will be here. She has also changed jobs and is settling into daytime office work rather than the night hours managing a restaurant. She still lives up in Jacksonville.

James, Amber and Dan have just moved and are a little further away but still in town here. That's right – JAMES! He is our latest great grandchild and is just starting to crawl. Dan is nearing the end of schooling to be an X-ray technician and will be starting clinical work shortly. Amber now has two jobs, so they are one busy family!

Jan and I had a very eventful year! Early in the year, our niece Tara, came to visit us for two extended vacations. We had a great time with her while she was here. In between, we decided to tackle a major remodel on our house. We completely dismantled our bedroom, including taking the roof off, and rebuilt it. Dan was over several weekends helping with the demolition. Then, the weekend we were going to take the roof off and replace it, Dan, Dwight, Dave and Mark came over to help. We got the roof off and had the new one on and weather tight in 4 days! Since we



pretty much lived in the room all through, we had to do this part quickly. At one point while we were taking the old roof off, part of it actually fell into the room and landed on the bed! Without their help, it wouldn't have gotten done. Mark was over to help on the project frequently from start to finish. Dan also pitched in often between all of his work and school requirements. I can't thank them all enough for their help. The project was worth it – our bedroom is much larger and more comfortable now.

Part way through the work, Jan fell and broke her ankle. So she was in a cast and lame for most of the spring. She's all healed now but her foot still swells from time to time. She has been really busy with quilting classes and machine embroidery all year too.

Also earlier this year, I was honored by the American Concrete Institute for distinguished service as a Committee Chairman. The award ceremony was in New York City. Jessy, Mark, April and Dwight all came to New York with Jan and I for the ceremony and we did some sightseeing while we were there. We also took in a Broadway play during our stay. It was a fun trip and I was really honored by having so many of the kids there with me.

Next weekend, Jordan, Casey and I are going to Patriot's Point, NC on a Boy Scout camping trip. What's special about this trip is that we are going up and back by train and the camp is on board the USS Yorktown. The Yorktown is an aircraft carrier from World War Two that fought at the battle for Midway and throughout the war in the Pacific. We will also be going to tour Fort Sumter where the Civil War started. All three of us are looking forward to this trip.



Last count that makes twenty of us; altogether wishing your family the best of holiday seasons and a blessed 2006!

Happy Holidays!

Jan & Al