

The Olsons  
December, 1994

Dear, Dear!



It was a year of disappointment... and excitement! Maybe not exactly "the best of times, the worst of times," but within the limited emotional range of our family's inscrutably Sino-Scandinavian heritage, it was "some year."

Karin and Ross had planned on teaching English in China over the summer, and even had most of their support in place, but it was not to be. This was mainly due to health problems (Among other things, Karin had another bone infection of the foot because of her diabetes) and our need to be closer-range parents for at least half of the kids. The trip is on hold indefinitely, but Karin has jumped, with both (now healed) feet, into a wide range of activities. At church she is on the Council and the Worship Commission and also involved with Stephen Ministry and the Drama program (for which she made and organized about a hundred Biblical costumes.) In her spare time she is a Discussion Leader for Bible Study Fellowship and hopes to do more with outreach to Chinese students at the University. Karin was especially saddened by the death of our 13 year old cat, Buster, who had been in failing health since his sister died last year.

The other half of the dynamic duo, the boy wonder with a bald spot, continues the family tradition of over-commitment. In addition to a heavy clinic schedule with Group Health, he teaches Junior Church, does occasional speaking on unhealthy influences in American culture, facilitates the Drama program at church, organizes meetings, helps the girls with homework, repairs the house, writes letters to every editor in the five-state area and still manages to find time to get into unrelated trouble. Just days before the drafting of this present epistle, he sat before the State Medical Board to answer charges of discussing religious matters in a medical setting. The complaint was made by an unidentified medical professional. The family was very pleased with the care, but the Board took the opportunity to look for evidence of medical mismanagement. They tried, but ended up dismissing the case. This is the second of these situations (for those of you afflicted by chronic *deja vu*) and the parting comments at the Board meeting indicated that despite two failures, they would probably continue to fish if anyone took the trouble to ask them.

Jeff, following in his father's footsteps, puts out millions of words per month at the computer. Well, OK, he's not exactly following, but he works for West Publishing getting State and Federal statutes onto CD-ROM. (If you have to ask, don't.) West is a venerable firm that has been collecting, coding and publishing laws and cases ever since, well, shortly after Jesus said, "Woe to you lawyers." Speaking of Jesus, Jeff is part of a core group planting a new church in the diverse Uptown district and helps lead the high school youth group at church, even taking valuable vacation time to drive them to Colorado last summer. (Unable to ditch them there due to tough environmental protection laws, he also drove them home.)

Susan is going to Normandale Junior College and living at home, with a new career plan to go into occupational therapy at St. Catherine's College in St. Paul. She worked most of the year making pretzels at nearby Mall of America. When a car accident and two tickets sent her auto insurance off the chart, (yes, Virginia, the insurance companies no longer discriminate only against young men), she sold the car and quit work to concentrate on her studies. She volunteers at Walker Methodist Residence and hopes to get some practical occupational therapy experience there. She is very active in the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship group on campus and serves as the social chairman.

Jason is working for a lawn service/snow removal company at the present and living in Golden Valley. He had a quarter left of Cabinet Making School but is currently reconsidering his career path. He also had to sell his car due to financial difficulties and is trying to pay off his debts. After about 5 cars and 10 jobs in the last two years, we are glad he has not been married yet. Despite the distance to our home church Jason has been coming every Sunday and is a good contributor to the discussion in the young adults class.



Stacy is a 10th grade math-o-phobic student at South High School who is getting an "A" in geometry, not to mention Chinese, and a few other subjects. She was on Summer Mission Team last summer at Camp Shamaineau, doing everything from washing dishes to junior counseling. She studies hard and still finds time for dance and music. She is currently in "The City Children's Nutcracker" and danced at "Music Minnesota" in July. A frequent soloist at our home church, she has also been selected to travel with the well known "Continental's" this summer, praising the Lord through music and dance. In addition to touring the USA, they will spend time in Holland, Germany and the Czech Republic, all for a total of three months. Stacy has a deep concern for her classmates and they often share their struggles and problems with her. She is not afraid to speak out on issues of importance, despite pressure to be politically correct. Most of all, she shares about the peace and love that only Jesus can give.

Part of the family will travel to Tucson over Christmas to visit our most southerly relations, Tim and Denise Falck. Ross and Karin went to an ethics conference in Illinois in the spring. Maybe all the miles add up to a trip to China and maybe we will get there again.

But for sure, we are planning a great trip up some day, maybe soon, when the One who first came to the bleating of sheep returns to a celestial trumpet blast and calls us home forever. Are you ready for that trip? Do you have a home in the eternal land? It is available for the asking. Just tell Jesus. He's not a baby anymore and He wants to be the Lord of your life.

Ross

Karin

Jeff

Susan

Jason

Stacy