



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

This year was fulfilling. We marked a full decade as a family in July, when Kim and Charles celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary. In the spring we explored the Eastern Shore and collected fossilized shark teeth. During the summer we traveled to Massachusetts, visiting Kim's side of the family and discovering the history of Plymouth and the natural beauty of Cape Cod. More recently, we took in NYC on Thanksgiving. We watched the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on 57th Street in Manhattan, picnicked in Central Park, and saw the Rockettes in their famed Radio City Christmas Spectacular. As per the usual, this year we still rooted for our O's, reveled in reading and listening to good literature, and enjoyed camping, hiking, and biking/scootering expeditions.

Charles is growing ever closer to completing his PhD. This year he had two publications accepted, even travelling to Japan to present one of them. Charles continues to work for Lockheed Martin, and is rounding out his 10th year with the company. Kim has stayed busy doing things with the family. She helps frequently with cub and girl scouts and has performed a few improvements around the house.

Thomas, 9, is a man of many trades: he enjoys sports of all kinds, chess, reading, piano, building models, and riding his bike. Thomas finished his first book of Suzuki piano this year and performed a solo concert for some of his family and close friends. He's a great big brother and son.

Lizzy, 7, has found a few new loves since last Christmas. Her grandparents have a new dog, Mater, and Liz gets a kick out of training him. Right now she and Thomas are training him to use his sense of smell. Liz has also started gymnastics, and can now do a backbend and cartwheel! She is a great helper at home and keeps smiles on the faces of her friends.

Kate, 5, continues with her concrete and pragmatic approach to life. Indeed, she has started tap and ballet and loves them, but she declares her love in numbers. If she loves something a lot, she loves it "one hundred". Less so, maybe only "seventeen". Kate writes like crazy and is a dedicated worker. We love her approach.

Jen, 2 ½, is probably the most physical person in our family. She rides her scooter on miles-long treks, flies on her pedal-less bike, and tackles her siblings with abandon. She is finally talking and has an amazing mop of hair, which she calls her "big hair". Jen brings a lot of vitality to us all.

As we close another year, we thank you for your friendship and love. Having our friends and family in our lives brings us so much happiness. We also express our gratitude to He who gives all, even our Heavenly Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ. Happy Holidays!



Charles, Kimberly, Thomas, Elizabeth, Katherine, and Jennifer Smutz

Baltimore, Maryland 2015