



THIS IS JUST MORE OF THE SAME DRIVEL WE HAD TO WADE THROUGH LAST YEAR! DON'T THESE PEOPLE CARE ABOUT THE TREES THEY ARE KILLING?! OH, THE HUMANITY!!

The Witte Times

End of the Millennium® Edition¹



December 2000

Recounting Somewhere in DeWitt, Michigan

New pursuits – but the same ol' Seth

Seth has made the transition to big kid school, starting kindergarten this year at Lansing Christian.

Seth goes to school three days a week, and wishes he was full time. On his days off, he stays home with Nanny, Janice Nose, and Craticus, his little sister. He is loving Mrs. Panetta's class, and has made several new friends. His school work is very good so far.

This fall Seth started zone soccer and enjoyed the game. At this level, remembering

that the ball is a part of the game is a big accomplishment. I was



heartened to see his older brother gently coaching him. Seth also started singing in the church choir this year.

He mastered the art of riding a two-wheeler this summer with virtually no fanfare. One minute training wheels, next minute careening like a madman around the driveway, grinning insanely.

Seth lives for time on the computer. He isn't reading yet, but he seems to be able to play games that require reading

without difficulty. He navigates through windows as though he understands every bit of text. It must be frustrating for him, but he is tenacious. He has this Lego Loco program in which clicking the help icon brings up a talking figure who speaks Klingon or some such language, and is accompanied by English text. None of it helps Seth, but it doesn't slow him down, either.

He has also become quite the little artist. Recently he was drawing the view from an aircraft cockpit, complete with instruments, ejection seat controls, and digital readouts.

We couldn't be prouder of our Cha Chee No Guy.

Big strides for the Big A

This has been an amazing year for Allison. She has



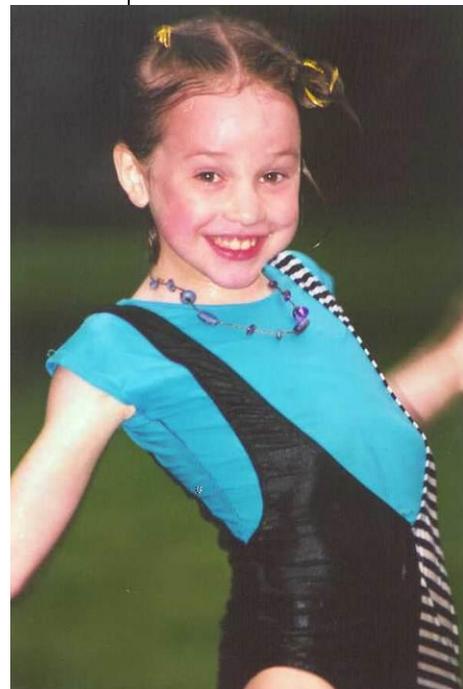
Daddy gets weird with the wide-angle lens

grown so much in second grade.

The big news is her dramatic improvement in reading. At Thanksgiving in Hudsonville she sat on her grandfather's lap and read like an adult. It is now common to see her, like Jacob, with her nose buried in a book. This is one of the best things that can happen to a child, in

my humble opinion.

Allie went to church music camp this summer and had a great time. We still hear the songs from camp around the



house. Even Caty is picking them up!

Allie is, as ever, the little artist. She absolutely loves to make projects, and is full of creative ideas.

Allie likes her second grade

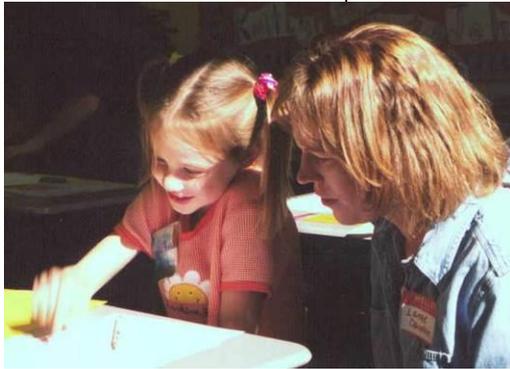
¹ That's right. I know that we had an end of the Millennium issue last Christmas, but that was the Millennium as determined by the popular vote. According to the Scientific College, *this* is the official end of the Millennium. Our lawyers will let you know which one you really wanted to be right next year.

teacher, Mrs. Carpenter, very much. She is turning in great work in class, and enjoys it when mom comes to be picture lady.

Allie's friend next door, Courtney

Han-neman, moved away to Arizona earlier this year. We miss the Han-nemans, but the family that moved in, the Gordons, has three girls. Needless to say, Allie does not want for playmates on the homefront.

Allie has also shown a much more mature side this year helping around the house with chores and cleaning. She has a sparkle in her eye, and a sweet, helping spirit that we can only admire as it continues to unfold.



Allie and Aunt Lanae at school on Grandparent's Day

arm. I still pick him up and fling him about a bit, but now I make sure our health insurance is current, first.

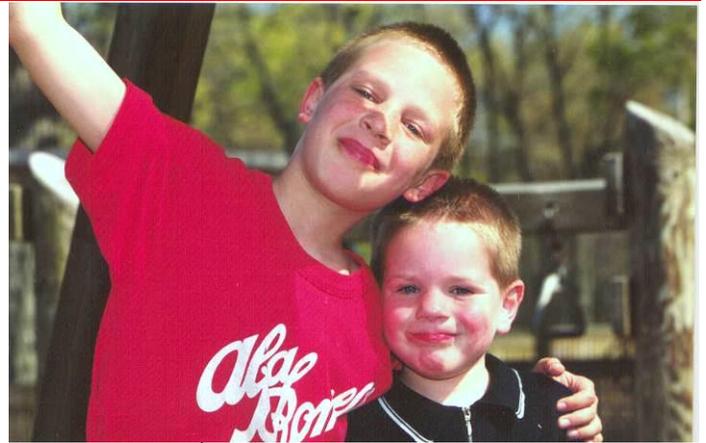
Jake is now a fourth (!) grader. He is seriously into soccer, drawing, reading, reading and more reading. He has become more interested in clothing in the last year, and is one stylin' dude.

This is one high voltage kid. At one of his soccer games, my mother-in-law was commenting about the little flourishes and leaps he adds to his soccer play. She seemed to think that he should use that energy in the game, but then said it was necessary to add a little extra to the game to burn off the extra juice that percolates up through him.

She is probably right.

Jake has been enjoying a series of Abbot and Costello tapes. It is good to see "Who's on First" being safely passed on to the next generation. Better he listen to that than CNN.

Fourth grade work is more challenging for Jake, but he seems up to it. He also seems to have settled into the school routine quite well. Recently his class was asked to write down what they were thankful for. Jake wrote that he was thankful he had such a great teacher. This boy clearly has a bright political future



ahead of him. Of course, I think more highly of him than that, and hope that he would set his sights higher.

Maybe parking attendant...or rocket scientist.

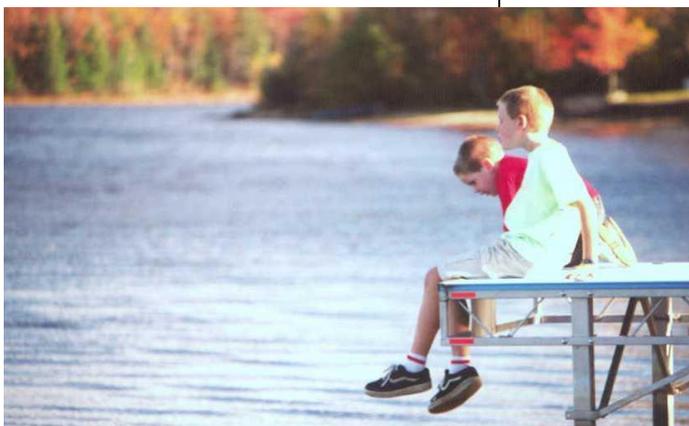
Our Favorite Three-Year Old

I am so charmed by this little girl. It is nice to have at least one child I can still fling around the living room without having to wear a back brace.



Main Man Jakester

I am at a bit of a loss here. As I seem to recall, childhood is about waiting forever to grow up and be a big kid. Jacob seems to have changed those rules. Only yesterday I could hold him in one



Dockboyz.

Caty spends two or three days a week as an only child at home with Nanny. She is picking up her alphabet and counting nicely, and likes to work puzzles, draw, and play dress up.

Our little girl plays with Seth well on the days that he is home from school. She is quite adept at using the computer, too. She likes to make projects at church and home. I think she takes after her sister. In January, she will start preschool for two afternoons a week, and frankly I think she is ready for the distraction.

Caty is probably the best eater of our pack. She is not very picky about what she eats, but she doesn't burn all that much fuel, either.

It makes me a little sad to see that Caty is growing up so fast, but she is turning into a lovely young lady.

Joy and I had a lovely trip to Seattle. She had a conference in town, and after the conference was finished, we went on a trip to Mount Rainier and the Olympic Mountains. We visited her old church in Monroe as well as a client of mine, and generally had a fabulous visit.

Every year that we are married I fall more in love with this remarkable woman.



Okay. If you insist.

The most important things in my life are my wife and kids.

I would tell you about work, but there is that pesky attorney-client privilege.

The hobby of acquiring camera gear has continued to

obsess me. I actually took two good pictures this year, up one from last year. Joy has even admitted that I occasionally get a good one. It is remembering to take that annoying lens cap off that makes it so hard.

I am excited about one business development. I am buying a building into which I will be moving my law practice. The building has four residential apartments, so I am going to be a landlord. I am thrilled that I will not be paying rent any more. Not so thrilling is the prospect of moving all this garbage. One way or another, It Will Be Done.

The Best Decision I Ever Made

Every year of marriage to Joy makes me sure that my life has been made immeasurably better thanks to her being in it.

So, Norm, Why Don't You Talk About Yourself for Awhile?



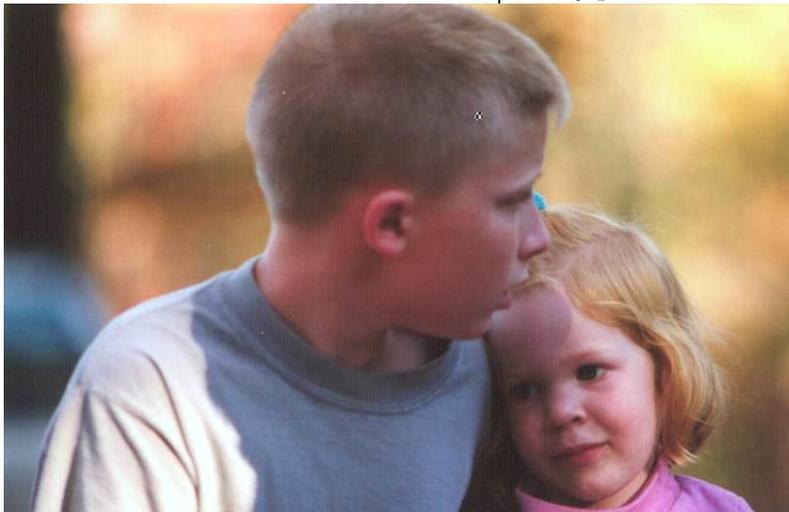
Other News of Our Loyal Subjects

Now, for the double bonus speed round:



Joy's father left his position as interim pastor at Nordeloos CRC after a mere six years and is now doing the same job in Holland. We wish he could hold a steady job. My mother-in-law continues to be picked on by me, unfairly of course. Being of Canadian extract, she is quite pleased that no matter how the Presidential election turns out, she won't get stuck with the job.

Joy's brother Kevin and his wife Marie send us e-mail jokes now and then. Kevin, you have an ... interesting sense of humor. Keith's crib is looking quite shiny with a new kitchen, living room and so on. We made a trip to visit Gay Ellen at her house and had a great time hangin.' Gunzai is a photo buff like me, so she must be pretty cool. Leanne and Chris seem to have settled into married life nicely and the heating and cooling



biz seems to be workin' o.k. for Chris. Lanae thinks she is Allison's grandma (she's not). She, John and their adorable girls are doing fine.

On a very sad note, last May my Uncle Walt was hit and killed by a car



while walking along the road. Uncle Walt was a great guy and we miss him terribly. Uncle Walt, you left too soon.

My parents took a cruise down the Panama Canal and added a room to their house for a hot tub. Oo la la.

Sister Cate bought a house in Jenison (near Grand Rapids) that she and her boyfriend Dennis are rehabbing.

They call it The House of Pain because, well, it needs a little help.

My brother Rich moved back to Tennessee to be with Sharon, Baylee and Dextron II (okay, his name is Dexter, but then, how many kids do you know that you can nickname after transmission fluid?). We miss Rich here but he is where he belongs.

We have new friends in the neighborhood, the Riders, who have four kids the same genders and about six months younger than ours. Needless to say, we see a lot of the Riders.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our family and friends!

—The Wittes

Anyone not happy with their coverage in this newsletter should direct their complaints to the following address:

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Complaints cheerfully ignored.