

# JANICEK HOLIDAYS

CHRISTMAS 2009



## Merry Christmas from Josh, Elise & Maly!

Happy Holidays, everyone! Hope you've had a wonderful year thus far and that this newsletter finds you full of glee as you flex those six pack abs you told me you were going to have after that resolution you made just 12 short months ago! As you can see above, I have my six pack abs all snuggled warm inside a padded incubator until they're ready for action!

You might have also noticed in the photo above that one of us is not sporting our natural hair color. Yes, I decided to go with a festive silver tinsel highlights on my temples this season. Elise's "natural color" is ever-changing so I've long since decided to stop keeping track. And that blonde girl -- well, we don't know who

she belongs to, but thought she might complete the family photo, so we borrowed her from a family in the park.

If there's one thing that's visually obvious, it's that we are getting older. And by we, I mean Elise. When I look back at photos from previous Christmas newsletters I can clearly see how full of life we once were. Now I see the life in our daughter's eyes that we've collectively bequeathed. For Elise and me, well, we're temporarily feigning vibrancy thanks to oatmeal and sedatives.

So enough about us, what about YOU?!? Oh, yeah, right, this is a newsletter about us. The newsletter that I decided I would write every year around this time;

and how I dread this time of year because it means I have to try and remember everything that's happened in the past 12 months and then summarize it here. Well, between you and me, I'm getting old too and I just can't remember that far back anymore. I can, however, remember an exchange from just last night:

"Daddy, can we play dollhouse?"

"No. It's way past your bedtime. And plus, I have to work on the Christmas newsletter tonight."

"Oh, well I have a solution."

"Oh, really? What's that?"

"Play with dollhouse."

How can you argue with that? And who the hell taught her about having a solution? She's only 3.5-years-old. She's not sup-

posed to know the context of a "solution." It seems like just 2 years ago when Maly was walking around aimlessly, flailing her hands about and running into walls. After we got her back from rehab, it seems like time has really flown by and I've found myself taking the time to stop and revel in the fact that I can have a full-blown conversation with my daughter. In fact, a couple of weeks ago she asked me, in her most serious and inquisitive tone, "Daddy, is "Obama" Spanish for "presents?" Where do kids come up with this stuff? Everyone knows that "Obama" is Spanish for "extra guacamole."

You know, if you reference the coffee table book of Janicek Christmas Newsletters of Yore that I'm sure you created, you'll read that in years past the highlights of our family encompassed things like the cats and the possibility of perhaps one day having a child. The cats are still around here somewhere. Annie still hasn't warmed up to Maly in almost 4 years. Riley, bless his heart, takes it like any other neutered mammal stripped of all his pride and masculinity and is subjected to being Maly's play date most of the time. Sometimes he'll come limping out of her room dawning a tiara and I can often just see it in his eyes, as if he almost had the verbal capacity to say, "Dude, can you please get me a beer?"

Speaking of dependents, it's again with a heavy heart that we have to report that we endured two miscarriages this year. I'll spare you the details, but it's been rough on the whole family as we were thinking Maly would have a sibling relatively close in age. This year Elise has spent countless hours in the obstetrician's office and online trying to learn all she can about miscarriages, ovums, orvilles, ovals, origami and the like. I've also done my share of online research of



the female reproductive system. For research purposes, you know. I'm not making light of this misfortune as Elise and I have always known that we have to deal with the hand we're dealt and we're very fortunate to have each other, and our happy and healthy little Maly.

We're hoping for better luck in 2010 in the baby department. In the meantime, we're still so blessed to have each other and Maly. Maly has grown into a full-blown little person. This year has brought about many milestones. I'd venture to say the most important was potty training. She still wears a pull-up at night for those long hauls, but hey, don't we all? Who's with me on that one? Anyone? Maly's also been attending her Parent's Morning Out ("school") on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and more recently she's been taking dance classes on Wednesdays. She has already proven that she's going to turn out to be a perfectly normal teenager as whenever I ask her what she did in school or in dance class, she invariably responds with, "I don't know."

A lot has been going this year. One of my personal highlights was in September when we received the news that the man who received my peripheral blood stems cells last year survived his bout with Myleodysplastic Syndrome. Hearing that he got a new lease on life kind of did the same for me. It personally afforded me the opportunity to slow down, take inventory and reevaluate what's really important in my life.

This year we also did a bit of traveling. Earlier this year I spent some time in San Francisco and L.A. for work. Then in June we made our second trip to Cabo San Lucas with my sister, Terri and her husband, Craig and their boys, Grant and Adam. This time we had the Zombie Eater in tow and she had a blast spending time with her cousins in Mexico, eating bowls full of Obama.

In August we flew out to San Diego for my sister, Lisa and her husband, Ron's wedding. They got married on our Dad's birthday. Needless to say it was special day for the whole family and we're blessed to have been a part of it.

This year we're really excited that we're going to be celebrating Christmas at our house in Austin. This will be the



first time that Elise and I will be hosting Christmas at home since we've been together. Steve, Joanne and Grandma T. will be riding the dogsled down from frozen Des Moines and my mom will be driving up from Cat Spring. We're going to have a house full the week of Christmas and we're totally looking forward to having family with us during the holidays (and free babysitting to boot!).

We hope you have an opportunity to spend time with those you care about this holiday season. If you don't, you're more than welcome to come over to our place to indulge in the notion of wearing flip-flops outside on a mild Christmas morning in Austin.

So here's to you and yours. May this holiday season bring you warmth, happiness and the chance to slow down and indulge in those you love.

Extra guacamole,

Josh, Elise & Maly