

## *Merry Christmas!*

December, 2000



The year 2000 has been a year of extremes for us. It began, of course, with Dale on standby, looking out for the Y2K Bug, which, as you know, turned out to be more virtual than it was reality. This less-than-exciting beginning was quickly followed by Sharon's shoulder surgery to remove a bone spur.

Matt finished high school, giving an outstanding performance as both Gad and The Baker in his school's production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat", as well as playing in two bands and singing with two choral groups. Graduation Day was an incredibly proud day for all of us as we turned another page in our lives.

The next day it was back to the hospital for Sharon to have her thyroid removed.

Then came a trip we will never forget! We traveled Down Under with the Irvine section of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Band for the first two and a half weeks of September! The first three days included sightseeing in Sydney, performances at Darling Harbor and the famous Opera House. It was the end of winter there, and we thought Sydney was cold until we got to Bandtown, aka Bathurst, 3 hours away on the other side of the Blue Mountains from Sydney. There the band rehearsed in cold, wind, and rain to get ready for the Opening Ceremony! The time spent in Bandtown was spent eating, practicing, and sleeping, with the emphasis on the second one! There were two dress rehearsals in Stadium Australia, which meant 6 hours on the busses each of those days! Both dress rehearsals were attended by 90,000 people - friends and families of the 14,800 performers (including us!) and volunteers working at the Games. The Opening Ceremonies had a live audience of 110,000 and it will be a night we will all remember as long as we live! This was a dream come true - a dream we didn't even know we had!

Another wonderful part of the trip - Sharon got to see friends she had not seen for 30 years. She had homestayed with Alan and Hazel Dodds on a church trip to Australia when she was 17, and had kept in touch. Seeing them again was a measure of God's love and a true blessing.

Back at home - Dale's leg is very nearly back to normal 17 months after breaking it. He is still at Kawasaki and continues to run sound for concerts at Shade Tree Stringed Instruments and The Living Tradition. He also arranged the entertainment and ran the sound for an Olympic Band fundraiser.

Sharon is at the same school for the second year, teaching children with severe disabilities ages 9-13. This is challenging, rewarding work. "God equips those whom he calls" and this continues to be what Sharon feels called to do. Recovery from both surgeries is 98% complete.

Matt plans to start college at Irvine Valley Community College next month. He now sings in the Chancel Choir at church with his parents and really enjoyed participating in the Christmas concert.

Dale & Sharon continue to perform special music at church on occasion, and sing regularly with the choir.

May your lives be a reflection of God's love in 2001!

Love from Dale, Sharon, and Matt

Check us out on the Internet at :  
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