

Christmas 1990
Robert, Monika, Jeremiah, Joshua & Marilee Marks
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How are you? Great, we hope! We really do want to keep in touch with you even if you can't believe it because we only write once a year. This year has been full and exciting. For the whole month of March, we visited Paris and stayed in Nantes, France. . Bob was a Visiting Professor at the University of IRESTE. He taught classes and gave seminars while Bob's mother, Lenore, and the kids, and I explored the University, Nantes, and did home schooling. We rented a van for the month, and 4 days a week Bob took us exploring to Castles, Menhirs, the ocean, Museums, Cathedrals, etc. I loved learning about France. The University treated us to a River Boat Dinner Cruise on the Loire River. Since we had taken a few French lessons and the French had taken a lot of English lessons, we got along fine. However, we did have many humorous times as one night in Paris, we all got very rare hamburgers. After that experience, we decided to try McDonalds. Lenore ordered french fries and she received a strawberry milkshake. We enjoyed having Lenore with us. The boys were very inspired to play with their castle legos after seeing the real thing. Jeremiah (8), and Joshua (6), celebrated their birthdays by going to The Notre Dame Cathedral and going to the top of the Eiffel Tower. Marilee celebrated her #3 birthday by riding the bullet train from Paris to Nantes. This year the kids are asking to go to Disney World for their birthdays. They are big thinkers! Ming and Xue Zhen, a special Chinese couple, lived with us for eight months. They did a lovely job of taking care of our home while we were in France. We helped them to improve their English and they taught us about China and taught the children some Chinese. However, Marilee gets a little confused. One day we were out shopping, and she runs up to a Chinese couple and starts talking to them in French. They gave her the strangest look.

We were sorry to hear the sad news of my special Grandmother Charlotte Jewett passing away. Since we were in Europe, we were unable to come home to Farmersburg for the memorial service.

Most of my life revolves around the children and home schooling. Five families in our cul-de-sac are homeschooling so we are enjoying homeschooling recess. The children are involved in so many activities and sports. A few of these are: gymnastics, swimming, baseball, soccer, and all year Hockey. Jeremiah tried out and made the traveling B-Team. He loves it, but we keep wondering why we ever let him as the commitment is unbelievable. Just in the month of Dec., we have 6 out of town games including 4 days in Canada. Joshua loves Hockey too! They also go to weekly Homeschool ice skating lessons. Jeremiah's Soccer team made it to the championships this year. For the last two weeks we have tried Tae-kwan-doe. They like it, but I think we might be too busy to try one more activity. Jeremiah is still taking piano lessons. I am also home schooling Rachel Franklin for first grade. Joshua and Rachel enjoy many learning games.

This summer was wonderful as we spent every hot day around the pool and most everyday seemed like a party as so many friends came to swim. Marilee is learning to swim and Joshua became proficient enough to swim in the deep end with the big kids. The children gathered their savings together and purchased a very large trampoline. It is great exercise and you can see us jumping day and night. Joshua is the seatdrop king and has done 300 in a row without stopping. Jeremiah can already do backflips. I don't have an ulcer yet, but I may be working on one as I watch them and try to keep them safe. Another highlight of the year was our cul-de-sac party. Bob celebrated his 40th Birthday, and we played many games including swimming, trampoline, golf,

pickleball, bicycle riding for two, kick the can, water balloon toss, and water balloon baseball. We especially enjoyed Ron Huff's professional magic show. Seven families participated and we all had a barbecue and potluck dinner.

Another memorable event, was the two week visit of Bob's Mom and Dad, and her sister Justine and her husband Junior. They drove across the country in their fantastic motor home. Justine and Junior were so much fun as they took me and the kids camping the luxury way. The children were thrilled. Max, their dog, stole the hearts of our children so now we have a new pet cat, called Tokyo. Our yard is undergoing major reconstruction this year and next. Bob's family enjoyed seeing all the new rockery going in. The dump trucks and caterpillars provided great entertainment for the whole neighborhood. Unfortunately, fixing the stream took longer than expected so we were unable to seed the back yard for grass. However, that doesn't keep the kids from playing and building forts in the forest. Jeremiah was very proud that his Grandparents and Great Aunt and Uncle were able to watch him sing and perform in a baseball Christian Musical at Church.

Alderwood Community Church may be our new Church home. It is very hard to leave Shoreline Community Church as we have worshipped here as long as we have lived in Seattle. However, we feel it would be more convenient to find a Church closer to home. The Kids are still going to their Church club programs on Wed. night and Joshua and Jeremiah are singing in the big Christmas Production for 4 nights. Josh is happy he is old enough now. He was interviewed by a reporter last week who visited rehearsal.

Bob has been very busy this year. He completed his first book, Introduction to Shannon Sampling and Interpolation Theory and is busily working on his second, Advanced Topics on Shannon Sampling and Interpolation Theory. We celebrated his book coming hot off the press with a Japanese dinner. This was to prepare him for his trip to Japan. He really enjoyed Tokyo. The people had a pride in their work that he really appreciated. While he was there, we adopted an abandoned black and white kitty. Marilee plays baby with him and Jeremiah holds him and says "You're going to be a great climber when you grow up" and Joshua always want to sleep with him. The surprise is that Bob adores him too and many times I find the kitten snuggled up with Bob by the fireplace.

Next year will be full of travel. Bob's hosting a conference in Singapore and is giving a short course in Monaco. His work in IEEE will also take him to Italy.

Let it SNOW! Today we had 4 inches of snow and all of us are thrilled. Sledding is such a special treat in our cul-de-sac. The evergreen trees are loaded and it really does look like a magical white Christmas! We pray that God blesses your life and we wish you a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The Marks family
Bob, Monika (Connie),
Jeremiah, Joshua, Marilee
& Tokyo the Cat