

Lefton/Steinbart Household Named EPA Superfund Site in 1996

Dear Friends and Family,

Holiday Letter 1: (Short version. For those who are too busy eating holiday goodies to read the entire page.)

We're all fine. Happy Holidays.

Holiday Letter 2: (Full version. For those who are already overstuffed and need an excuse to stop eating.)

This was our first full year as a family of five, and it's been challenging and exciting. Our twins Natalie and Monica have grown from two tiny infants who only cry, sleep and eat, into two very different toddlers who can now cry, sleep, eat, and completely empty a cupboard in 23.6 seconds. Monica is a little smaller and has more hair than Natalie. They are both excruciatingly cute. Neither walks yet, but they understand a few basic words like "teddy", "ball", "vector", etc. We think that the twins are beginning to develop their own private language, but eventually they'll outgrow it and start programming in Fortran or Java. Hannah is a happy and bright three year old who can go through a mood swing faster than a Louisiana politician launders video poker kickbacks. She loves videos and scary stories. All three girls attend the UNO Children's Center, a pre-school/day care center on campus. Hannah plays really well with her baby sisters. Why just last week she scored a tricky three point shot off the backboard with Monica! As one of Enid's cousins said at the Jones (Enid's mother's side) family reunion last August: "Going from two kids to three is tough on parents. It's like going from a man-to-man defense to a zone." The good news of course is that we're all healthy and happy.

Another addition to our family happened just two days ago, so most of you may not even know about it. We now have a pet. Our neighbor moved and left us his five and a half foot boa constrictor named Squeezy. Squeezy lives in a fake wooden tree (no cage!) and roams freely about our house. We were going to keep him but then last night, Lew found Squeezy in Natalie's crib giving her a goodnight hug that was so tight we had to call a paramedic. So long, serpent.

OK, so that last paragraph was completely made up. Pure imagination. It's just buried here in our holiday letter to see who really reads these things. You may have noticed some spiffy font changes in this letter. We have resisted the clip art, but yes, it's true, we typed this letter on our first home computer which we bought early this year. It's a nice system which we use primarily for work related stuff. We even have an Internet website for our family, check out <http://www.do.you.really.think.we.have.time.to.build.web.pages?>

We both still enjoy our jobs teaching and doing research in mathematics at the University of New Orleans. Sometimes the administrative service is frustrating, but we get lots of practice shuffling paper and maneuvering in a bone-headed bureaucracy: skills for the 90's. This spring we will both be on sabbatical from our teaching duties. We'll be in New Mexico for about two months where we will work with some of the mathematicians at UNM, Sandia Labs, and Los Alamos Labs. More good work news: Enid's research grant was funded for the next three years so she'll have summer salary and travel support. She went to Hong Kong for a week this summer for a conference, and Lew's sisters Charna and Linda came to New Orleans help hold down the fort (and the occasional squirming baby). Other trips this year included a visit (via van) to the Steinbart grandparents in Omaha, and a trip (via the worst plane ride of our lives) to a Lefton family reunion in Albuquerque.

More stuff filling our days: Lew is still performing stand up and improv, but he has cut back on gigs because he has far less free time these days. Enid enjoys her monthly Mother of Twins club meetings. Hannah is starting to get together with other kids from her class. Natalie has a blast with noisy toys. Monica sometimes likes to just lie down and suck her two middle fingers.

We hope you had a good 1996, and we wish you a great 1997.

Merry Christmas!

Happy Chanukah!

Happy New Year!