

There was a sequel to the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* which was called *2010: The Year We Make Contact*. For us, it should have been called, *2010: The Year We Needed Contacts*. It's not just that our eyes are going bad, it seems like *this year has been a blur*, even if you hold it out at arm's length and squint. (If you can read this please tell your parents that the Lefton-Steinbart Holiday Letter is here).

- The girls are growing into young women so quickly, and it seems like they'll barely have time to experience the McClintock effect before they move out. Note: if you know what that is without consulting the Internet, you may stop reading this letter right now and start the next one.
- State budget cuts have expanded our job duties to the point where we have to multitask our multitasking, thereby achieving exponential efficiency.
- The world around us, filled with ever faster and more complex technology, 24/7 news cycles, and a general culture of the instant, makes it hard to find time to just do something old fashioned, like teach our pets Madison and Bo to *sit...* and then use their smart phones to update their Facebook status.

In response to this blurry, high speed year, we wanted to offer you something slower and more focused. But really, who has that kind of time? Instead, since 2010 went by so fast, we decided to write this letter in instantaneous mode. We all drank an extra large espresso and placed the letter on a wiki. Everyone on the Internet worked on it simultaneously and it was completely written in less than 1 minute. We can check the facts later, I'm sure it's fine. The result is

The 2010 Lefton-Steinbart Holiday Letter

Hannah started this year with harp lessons. Apparently, the halo and wings come separately. Thanks to the lever harp, she can now read bass clef, and she's already performed in several recitals. We're hoping one of the colleges to which she's applied has harp scholarships. As a senior, she's submitting applications to Duke, Williams College, Carnegie Mellon, U. of Chicago, UNC Chapel Hill and UGA. She's already been admitted to academically-strong-yet-surprisingly-affordable UGA, so that makes things a little easier going into the spring semester. She's interested in studying Chemistry and/or Law and/or International Studies. Statistically, that means she'll graduate college with a degree in something other than Chemistry and/or Law and/or International Studies. Her activities include being a lead defense attorney for the DHS Mock Trial team, a section leader for the saxophones in the band, President of Model UN and Model Arab League, and running cross country. In her 46 seconds of spare time every week, she eats an entire cow.

Monica is a high school freshman, and is now a serious Lacrosse player. Enid and Lew expect to learn all the rules of girl's Lacrosse by the time Monica graduates. At games we try to sit by other Lacrosse parents and cheer when they cheer. This works especially well when the parents have kids on the same team! Monica continues to play the flute, and this year she graduated to a new instrument. Up until now, she had been playing on Enid's old flute from Central High School Band. It's a fine flute, but when Monica played the new instrument, she realized how much those private lessons and hours of practice have paid off. Now the only thing not paid off is the flute! We're hoping one of the colleges to which Hannah's applied has scholarships for people with twin sisters, one of whom is a good flautist. Monica's other activities include church youth group, girl scouts, and occasional appearances with the teen comedy improv group D.U.C.K.

Natalie is also a high school freshman (it's a twin thing) with a highly developed sense of sarcasm. No, really?! She has joined a more serious soccer club and that means we've spent more weekends exploring rural Georgia.

She plays oboe in the in the band, but since oboes aren't part of marching band, she learned to play the mellophone this fall. This sounds like a stoned cellular device (dude, check out my mellow phone...) but it is in fact, a horn in the brass family. Natalie has picked up driving very quickly with her Learner's Permit. Monica got her permit a couple months later, so we now have two cars and five drivers. We're hoping one of the colleges to which Hannah's applied has scholarships for people who own a car with a highly compressed grab bar above the passenger window and a dent on the passenger floor where the brake pedal would be. Natalie's other activities include the DHS Mock Trial team, church youth group, and girl scouts.

The whole family took a trip to the Grand Canyon this summer, where we spent a couple wonderfully isolated days rafting the Colorado, sleeping under the stars, and hiking out from the bottom to the rim. We then drove around to hike on the North Rim and horseback through Bryce Canyon. We ended the trip meeting up with Lew's sisters Linda and Irene in Las Vegas where we took in some shows (Lion King and Cirque du Soleil-Beatles) visited Hoover Dam, and verified that all casino games do in fact, favor the house. There were other travels and visits throughout the year including visits to prospective colleges with Hannah, Band Camp for the girls, and a special Thanksgiving at our house with all three of Lew's sisters. After our Thanksgiving, we got a thank you note from the American Psychotherapy Association for providing their members with another year of record growth. When our family isn't moving around, we're staying at home, where we spend most of our time restraining the pets as the endless parade of teenagers passes in and out the front door. The general pattern is: Ding Dong! BARK BARK BARK! Grab the dog. Guest enters thinking all is well. MEOW!!!! Cat attacks guest's leg from out of nowhere. Give guest an apology and a band-aid for the bloody scratches. Ding Dong!

Enid had a nice getaway trip to Omaha this year, where she connected with all her siblings: Sylvia, Ellen, Stephanie, and Neal. They visited old friends and places, ate at familiar restaurants, and generally relived their childhood memories. The only difference was that this time around, Enid found that being the youngest isn't that bad after all. She continues to play monthly games of Bunco, with the ever-present hope that a regular dosage of wine, dice, and loud cowbells will somehow increase bone mass. She's still at Georgia Tech, teaching math, and staying busy with students and administrative duties related to the undergraduate program.

Lew is still at Georgia Tech, too. He taught out of his textbook again this fall, and he continues to work in IT, with an emphasis on obtaining and managing computing resources for the faculty and students. This year he was the PI of a successful 6 figure NSF equipment grant. All of those figures were to the left of the decimal point, too! Lew's travel this year included math comedy gigs (geeks can be a tough crowd, sometimes you literally have to prove you're funny) and improv comedy workshops. The workshops are part of a project he's developing with a colleague, which uses humor and improv to catalyze technical innovation and creativity. Enid threw Lew a nice 50th birthday celebration this fall, which was unusual for a 39 year old. And, he was recognized as a Decatur "hometown hero" for his volunteer work with kids. Unfortunately, this recognition doesn't actually include a superpower, which was disappointing.

If you're only in town for a few seconds, we'll fit you into our schedule. Our Google calendar only has one color left and it takes 10 minutes to load, but don't worry about that, come and visit! We promise to restrain Bo.

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May you and your loved ones year have a new year full of health and joy.

Happy Hanukkah!

Merry Christmas!

Happy New Year!