

# MARLER CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NUMBER 8

DECEMBER 1998

Well you can finally start breathing again as another edition of the Marler Newsletter has made it to your door. Your subscription is still good for another year so lets begin.

No German greeting for you this year as we are back in the good ol' U.S. of A. Two days before New Years we returned to the states and headed straight for Taco Bell. (Not really. We ate there the next day.) After flying across 8 time zones, changing planes in Atlanta, wrestling two huge dog kennels, and carrying enough baby paraphernalia to start our own day care, we finally arrived at our new assignment. (which had been our last stateside assignment): Fort Rucker, Alabama.



**Santa's newest elf: Five month old Braden sitting on Santa's lap in Germany.**

After assessing the housing situation on post, we began looking at houses off post on New Years Day. Prior to moving we had done a lot of research on available homes. With maps in hand we drove street by street, looking for a place to call "HOME."

Originally Jeff did not have to sign into his new unit until the end of January, but friends told us that there was only a few Blackhawk Instructor Pilot slots left and if we waited too long Jeff might be flying a different helicopter. So Jeff signed in three weeks early, assuring himself a Blackhawk slot. Since his school would not begin until early February, Jeff's unit told him to get his housing squared away before worrying about showing up to work. We ended up needing almost a month before that happened.

After looking at the outside of over 70 houses and the insides of about 30, we began the bidding process for a home in mid-January. Almost a week later the deal fell through due to the owner's GREED, and we were back to square one. After first trying to salvage the deal and then deciding it must not have meant to be, we were pretty emotionally beaten. At the end

of the day though, we loaded back into our rental car to cruise the neighborhoods again, finally finding another house with possibilities.

Returning to our hotel room, Jeff called the owner and went to see the house armed with a video camera (Kristy stayed at the hotel w/ Braden). After seeing that it was what we were looking for, Jeff made an offer in the kitchen, before even returning to the hotel; contingent on Kristy liking what she saw on video. The deal was made three days later, but the owner could not move until the end of the month, so we had to stay in the hotel until the end of January. After a week in Germany and now three weeks in Alabama in a single hotel room with three people, two dogs and all our luggage, it could not have happened soon enough.

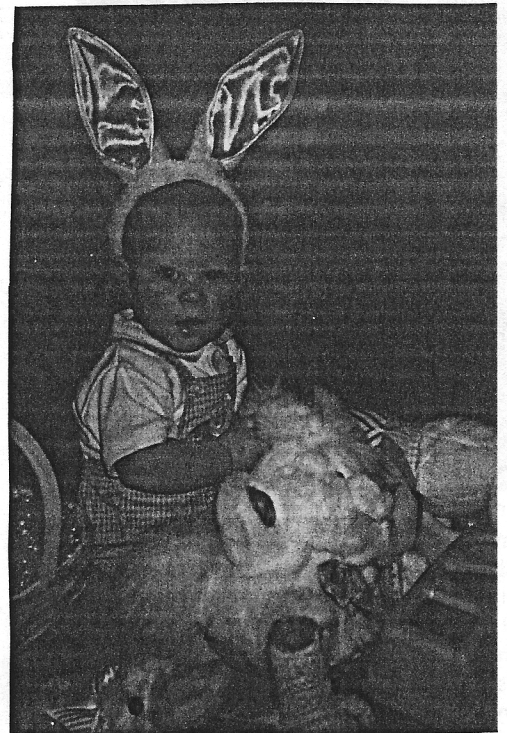
We bought a two year old, 1,700 sq. ft., red brick house with a fireplace place, 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, large kitchen and dining room, two car garage and a large front and backyard in a very nice neighborhood. After living in a small, third floor, 2 bedroom /1 bath apartment for the last 3 years, we loved our new found space and decided we had to get more furniture to fill it up. Once we moved in Kristy quickly picked paint colors for the house and Jeff began painting before the household goods arrived. Once the furniture did arrive we saw that there was both damage to our bedroom furniture and water damage to our Compact Discs and movie videos. One of the horrors of moving.

But of all the landmarks of January, Braden's 6 month birthday, on 14 January, was the highlight. The little linebacker was up to 19 pounds and had 5 teeth. It was from this point that daily discoveries filled his baby calendar. It was really exciting to watch him develop.

February was a much less eventful, but no less interesting month. Just before Jeff began the Instructor Pilot course we headed to New Orleans to pick up our car from it's trip across the ocean. We were very thankful it returned in excellent condition. Once Jeff's course began we barely saw much of him. It required a lot of undisturbed studying. Other than that, we battled many Tornado watches and torrential rainfall. I can't count the times we were alerted to our master bath with all our supplies waiting for the all clear sign on the portable radio. It was intense and frightening!

In March, Jeff was still busy with school. Our highlight that month was celebrating St. Patty's Day with Braden as we watched him learn to creep and sit all by himself.

MERRY  CHRISTMAS

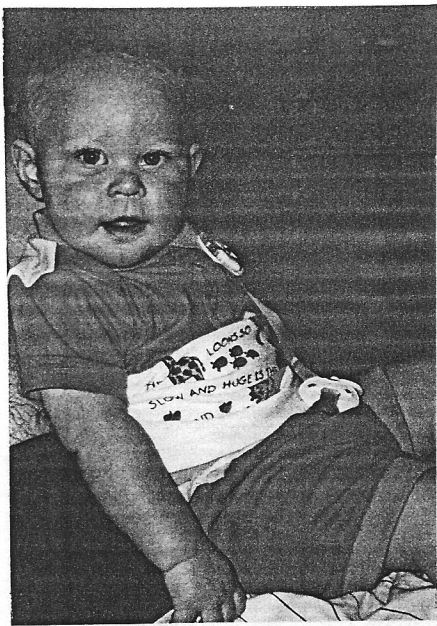


April brought Braden's first Easter. He made out big time. The Grandparents must have had words with the Easter Bunny as our house was filled with baskets and gifts. Braden looked adorable in his Bunny ears. Kristy celebrated her 32nd birthday and Jeff graduated from his Instructor Pilot course. We finally have our Daddy back!

The month of May brought Grandma Marler and Doug for a short visit. Braden had fun reacquainting himself with his Grandma. May also brought Kristy's 1st Mother's Day. We went out for dinner and marveled at all the 1st time Moms dining with their babies. Something we were sure we were oblivious to before Braden came along. We also spent quite a few days installing a 6ft wooden fence around our backyard. It was very hard work but worth the savings by doing it ourselves. Now the dogs could finally run free after years of leashes and apartment living.

In June we decided to trade Jeff's Jeep Cherokee we bought in February, for a Ford Escort. Jeff didn't need the extra room and the Escort gets better gas mileage. Jeff also got to celebrate his first Father's Day. Father and son dressed alike for the day. This would have been a pretty uneventful month except we also found out that we were expecting again. Braden is going to be a big brother. Like with Braden we are not going to find out the sex of the baby, so we don't know if he will have a brother or sister.

In July Grandma and Grandpa Lappin came to visit Braden for his first birthday. His uncle Jonathan and auntie Kerri also came to see Braden for the first time. During their visit, Braden had a great party and received lots of gifts, before traveling to Florida for a few days.



**Braden relaxing days before his 1st birthday.**

Some books say that a baby will triple his/her birth weight (9lbs 2oz x3=27lbs 6 oz) by their first birthday. Braden did not quite make it, but still tipped the scales at 25+ pounds and 31 inches. Well on his way to All-American status. Kristy's family was also able to hear the second baby's heartbeat and view the first ultrasound while they were here. We had a wonderful time while they were here.



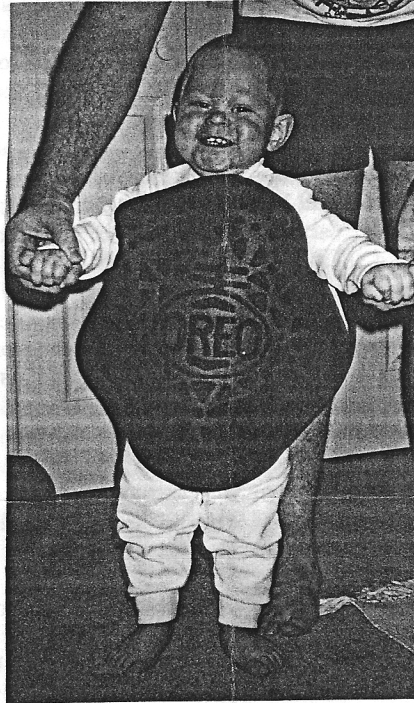
**Don Ho has nothing on Braden in his Hawaiian beach attire. ALOHA! (13 Months)**

The big news in August was Braden began walking with a walker he pushes around. The dogs haven't had a moments peace since.

During September, after a regularly scheduled prenatal visit, we got some frightening news. Kristy's blood work showed a high Alpha-Fetal Protein reading. This is normally associated with multiple births, not our case, or Neurotube defects of the fetus. Since Jeff has a very slight case of Spina bifida we were worried. We were referred to the state human genetics specialists at the University of Alabama Hospital

in Birmingham. A detailed ultrasound showed no apparent problems and amniotic fluid was drawn for lab work. The results of the Amniocentesis two weeks later showed nothing to worry about. Although this was great news we still are apprehensive until we see for ourselves everything is all right.

October brought us the wonderful news that Kristy's sister, Kerri, is pregnant with her first. We are all tickled that Braden will have a cousin to visit in Colorado. Jeff also had his 32nd birthday on the 21st. Halloween was a big event for us. Kristy sewed Braden an OreO Cookie costume this year and we took him around the neighborhood Trick or Treating. Although he couldn't eat any of the candy, he enjoyed seeing the other kids dressed up.

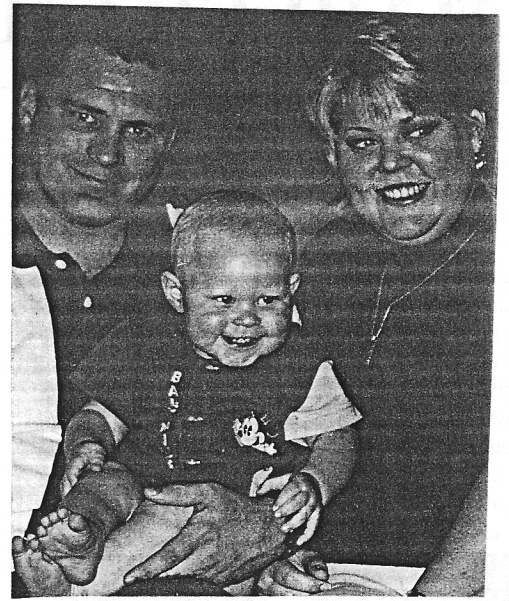


**Braden dressed up for the Cookie Monster.**

In November we drove back to Oklahoma to see Jeff's family. This was the first we had ever seen of our niece, Payton and their first time seeing Braden. Both of our nephews had grown so much as we had not seen them for 3 1/2 years. We really had a good time except Braden caught his second cold and first ear infection on the return drive. It took a torturous 10 days before Braden returned to his old self. Ear infections are the worst. We plan on spending a quiet Thanksgiving at home after feasting at the Officer's Club on base. No mess to clean up afterwards that way, but no turkey sandwiches either.

In December we are expecting Kristy's family again to celebrate Braden's first true Christmas. We plan to visit Walt Disney World prior to Christmas but be home in time for Santa's visit. We also plan to ring in the New Year with Kristy's family before they leave to travel home.

We hope that you have had a good year and a great holiday season with your friends and family. We'll let you know when the newest Marler arrives in early March. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!



**Everyone smile for the camera. Say Cheesey!**

## FAMILY MATTERS

**LAPPIN Jim and Mary**-Enjoyed their visit in July to celebrate their first grandchild's first birthday. Excited about return visit in December and overjoyed about more grandkids on the way.

**HINKLE Jonathan and Kerri**-Happy to have met nephew/godson for the first time in July. Visited relatives while in California for a week in October. They are thrilled with prospect of becoming parents in June. Jonathan is meeting lots of interesting people while moonlighting as a limousine driver while still working full time. Kerri still substitute teaches in the Denver School system and worked evenings at Sylvans Learning Center up until October. Looking forward to their Disney Christmas.

**MARLER Lucille**-Vacationed in the Bahamas in December, traveled to Indiana and Alabama in May, and visited Branson, Missouri in September. Enjoyed family reunion in November and looking forward to grandchild #5. **MARLER Kelly, Natalie, Nicholas, Garrett and Payton**-Continues building restaurant empire. Moved to Tulsa to oversee stores in the area. Travels to conferences winning awards for his franchises.

**MARLER Randy**-Bought his first restaurant in Clinton, Oklahoma. Remodeling and enjoying being his own boss. Looks forward to buying more stores in the future. Also attending KFC franchise conferences in Nashville & Las Vegas.

