



MARLER

Christmas Newsletter



Volume 15

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December 2005

We have had a great year! We have avoided any major hurdles which is a blessing. We look forward to the New Year and hope it continues to go smoothly. However, we will be separated quite a bit the first half of the 2006. We will pray Jeff remains safe when abroad, Keegan's health continues to improve and the kids developmentally flourish.



We concluded 2004 with the four of us together safe and sound. Christmas was simple and cozy. New Years rang in with a super firework display on the strip.

January was typical. We continued with the kids demanding schedules. Jeff continued his flying schedule along with running the scheduling office for his unit by himself. He was ready for an office swap.

In February we did a little home improvements in the kitchen. New simulated granite countertops, venetian bronze sink fixtures and recessed lighting on the first floor. Little details such as cabinet knobs really change the look of a kitchen. During the month Jeff had a Superbowl party at the house for some work buddies. Keegan & Kristy chose to go shopping instead. We also had a fabulous Marler Brother reunion. Jeff's two brothers



and their wives came to Las Vegas for business. We enjoyed spending time eating, visiting and gambling together. Jeff finally left the scheduling office and moved to the Plans shop while completing his Instructor Pilot training. Kristy's new Ford 500 (car she won from Tiger Woods) arrived. It was fully loaded and gorgeous. It has been an adjustment moving from a spacious minivan to a luxury car but the transition was well worth it. Kristy even had a special license plate frame made up to thank Tiger.



In March Keegan had a Tinkerbell party to celebrated her 6th birthday. Keegan dressed in her Tinkerbell costume and fluttered around the party. She had a great time. During Spring Break we traveled to Salt Lake, Utah to visit the children's autism specialist, Dr. Jepson. While there we



met another Doctor to explore neuro feedback. Braden handled it fairly well but Keegan would have nothing to do with it. We decided to not pursue this avenue. The Easter bunny stopped by in March as well.

In April Kristy spent her 39th birthday with her Mom (celebrating her 60th) and sister Kerri. This is the first time they have vaca-



tioned together since the sisters have been married and mothers. They stayed at the Paris Hotel on the strip and had a fabulous weekend. Soon after, Keegan underwent her annual MRI. The procedure went smooth and Keegan remains blessed! **NO recurrence** for the fifth year. We are approaching the 2006 "cured" date! Jeff also celebrated with a promotion to Captain. Kristy & Lt. Col. Porterfield, his commander, pinned his



new rank on him. After a small luncheon at the unit the kids presented Jeff with a ***Captain Jeff Marler "RHINO" HH-60 Instructor Pilot*** desk name plaque. We are all so proud of his military career! Kristy & Jeff celebrated the promotion by staying at the MGM Grand hotel and partying like rockstars. Not easy at their age (ha ha). Also this month, Braden started the spring soccer season. This would turn out to be his last season.

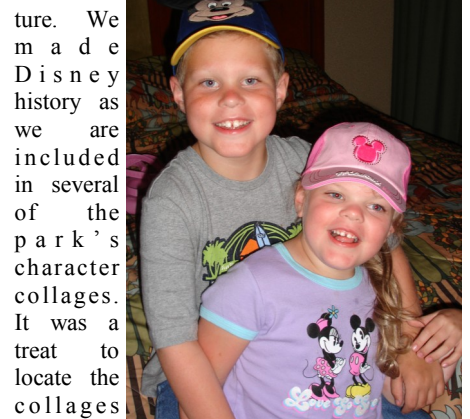
In May we celebrated Mother's day and ended school a little early to go on our annual Disneyland vacation.

In June, we spent the first week at the Grand Californian Hotel in Disneyland. It

was Disneyland's 50th celebration and they pulled out all the stops. We spent six days



enjoying both Disneyland and Disney's California Adventure. We made Disney history as we are included in several of the park's character collages. It was a treat to locate the collages and our



photos. We marked this special occasion by buying two engraved pavers that line the entrance of the parks. One for our family and the other for our wedding. We spent the second half of our honeymoon at this park sixteen years ago. Once again, we rode all the rides and visited our favorites several more times. This year Keegan was more adventurous where Braden was a little more anxious. Maybe it's a stage? However they both loved the fast rides with the most movement. We can't wait to return next June! We



then drove to San Diego and vacationed for a week while Jeff learned how to land his helicopter on a Navy ship at night. The morning we were to leave Kristy woke up to an earthquake. It actually shook the hotel quite a bit. Jeff & the kids slept right through it. In mid-June the kids resumed swim lessons. Braden

had shown a lot of progress from last summer and Keegan proves to be part fish. The kids love the water. Later in the month, Jeff was off to San Antonio for the Air Force Instrument Instructor Course. He was there over Father's day. During the month, the kid's home ABA schedule increased since school was out for the summer.

The weekend of the Fourth of July, we stayed at the Mandalay Bay hotel to enjoy the awesome pools and holiday fireworks. We returned home to host a block party. It was great food and friendship despite the incredible heat! By mid-month, Braden celebrated his 8th birthday. He had a small, fam-



ily Pirate party. Braden enjoying the quiet gathering and great gifts. At the end of July, Jeff & Kristy celebrated their 17th wedding anniversary. They feel blessed to still be together and in love after all these years and devastating hurdles.

In late August the new school year began. This year Braden spends majority of his time in a typical second grade class (which includes "SPECIALS": PE, music, science, computer lab, library and art), with Resource for academics and a half an hour a day in a secondary Autism room with the assistance of his aide, Mrs. Sandy. We all simply adore her! She is a Godsend for our family! Braden has many friends including his best



friend Katie Wolfram (a pure angel). He has really blossomed! Keegan continued home schooling with a Kindergarten, OT and speech teacher until we could transition to an elementary school in September. Now that school was in, swim lessons were out. We also did a little more home improvement with a Braden bedroom make-over. It is more calming and grown up. Unfortunately, he refuses to sleep in his room. Autism strikes again! We are working on dealing



with the anxiety.

In September, Keegan's IEP team met and agreed to transition her to an elementary school. We had her transferred to Braden's school and start in a half-day special education, Kindergarten class. The numbers are very low as we didn't want to over burden her or stress her too much. It also has helped her socialize. Her wonderful teacher, Mrs. Astell, quickly decided we should slowly increase Keegan's day to full-time. We agreed that placing her in the primary autism room with Mr. Dean (Braden's teacher from last year) would be beneficial. The numbers are very low and she would get the one-on-one attention she has been accustomed to. She too received her own aide; Mrs. Cristine. This will help keep Keegan safe and secure. The best part of Keegan's new school experience is that, Mrs. Terri Shumaker, her home school teacher from last year helped her tran-



sition into the school. This helped Keegan tremendously. Keegan appears happy and stimulated among her peers. While this huge moment was taking place, Jeff was deployed to assist with the Hurricane Katrina effort in New Orleans. The USAF helicopter task force saved/transferred over 4000 people from the flood waters.

Before we knew it, it was October. Jeff left again for San Diego to retain his currency from the June school. Jeff's 39th birthday came and went with little fan fair. Finally, Halloween arrived and so did Grandpa Lappin. Kristy's Dad enjoyed all the quality time spent with the kids. He even dressed up for festivities this year with them. Braden was Superman, Keegan was a cute witch and



Grandpa was a pirate. They looked adorable! We went to Jeff's unit's trunk-or-treat event as well as going door to door in our neighborhood. Braden especially enjoyed passing out candy to the kids this year.

In early November Jeff worked the Nellis Aviation Nation Air show again. Braden really got into watching the airshow this year. Crawling into all the displayed aircraft were a close second. For Thanksgiving we took the kids to Oklahoma for a Marler family reunion. We stayed in Norman at the

Sooner hotel on the University of Oklahoma campus (our old stomping ground). The room was over the top decorated in OU memorabilia. It was perfect for the occasion. We loved being on campus, seeing the



growth/improvements, visiting a few old college friends and hanging out during an OU vs. OSU football game. More importantly, we enjoyed visiting with all the aunts, uncles, cousins and Jeff's Mom & her husband. We had an excellent home-made Thanksgiving meal and invaluable family time. We even managed a family portrait in the brisk, crisp, air among beautiful fall colored trees. As soon as we returned from Oklahoma Kristy got out the Christmas boxes and made the house look festive. She just loves to decorate for the holidays.

In early December, we had a visit from the best man in our wedding: Specialist Bill Winn now Dr. William Winn and his wonderful family. We were treated to see the "Blue Man Group" and had a cozy dinner at our home. We will be hosting two parties this month. One with our lovely neighbors and the other for all the teachers, aides and therapist who have help our children. We insist on hosting a Christmas Gathering to thank our therapists for their dedication and commitment to our children's fight with Autism. Some of our girls have moved on. We want to say a special Thank You to: Kathryn, Kassandra, Autumn, Krysta, Amy, Whitney, Noreen, Terri, Kris, Heather, Mrs. Morales, Mrs. Sorenson, Mrs. Sandy, Ms. Anderson, Mrs. Engh, Mrs. Marie, Mrs. Astell, Mrs. Cathy, Mrs. Cristine, Mr. Dean, Joyce, Janet, Katja, and our wonderful principles Mrs. Douglass and Mrs. French. All these special people have really big hearts and we adore them. We feel so blessed to have so many wonderful friends and neighbors. We still have some shopping to do for Christmas and plan to take the kids to the mountains soon so they can play in snow if it snows.

We continue to have monthly Lovaas workshops, endless therapy hours (ABA, Speech, OT) and school. The kid's schedule remains full and they continue to achieve. We are proud of their accomplishments and their drive to succeed.

We hope your family remains blessed and together during this holiday season and New Year. We continue to pray for our fellow service members overseas, their families and America. If you are ever in Las Vegas, be sure to look us up. We love to see old friends. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Love,

**Jeff, Kristy,
Braden and Keegan
Marler**

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