



The Lahn Family

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Christmas 1996

Dear

Well, once again the decorations have come out of the boxes and the house is looking like Christmas once more. It's hard to believe that 1996 is drawing to a close and that 1997 is just around the corner. As we look forward to what God has in store for us in 1997 we can't help but want to look back on all the good things He's given us over 1996.

The year started with Nancy expecting our 4th child, and on June 29th of this year (just two days after Nancy's birthday) a new baby was welcomed into our family – 8 pounds, 20½ inches, and ... *female!* That's right – we finally figured out the right combination for a girl! Jordan (now, age 9), Timothy (6) and Daniel (3) couldn't have been happier with their new little sister – Bethany Grace. Nancy and Murray were understandably shocked and overjoyed that God had entrusted us with such a precious gift.

Bethany has grown like a weed, and is currently over 17 pounds and is sitting up (most of the time) on her own. The brown hair that she had a birth has now been replaced by fine blonde hair. She is already showing signs of being a great shopper (which comes in handy this time of year). It's wonderful to watch her growing and exploring all the new things around her. The latest objects of her fascination have been the Christmas tree with its lights and ornaments, and of course her #1 interest — the kitty (poor long-suffering Spooky!).



While 1996 brought the joy of new life to our family, it also brought the sadness of the loss of dearly-loved one. In May, Murray's "Grandma Bessie" passed away after a long, but not painful battle with cancer. On the day she died we visited her in the hospital, and even though she was sleeping then nearly all of the time, she awoke, looked at Nancy and said "Haven't you had that baby yet?" That evening Grandma passed away and was finally at peace. We know that even though she never saw Bethany while she was alive, she is looking down now and smiling on us.

Jordan is still interested in anything that swims, crawls, hops or slithers. The summer was filled with excitement again at the cottage. With the help of brother Tim, he explored the woods and the water and read and learned all he could about nature. These two naturalists spent many afternoons on the lake in a rubber dingy quietly following and studying a pair of loons who seemed to equally enjoy studying and following them! This summer Jordan's life came into better focus, as he started to wear glasses. Fortunately he loves them and looks good in them too.

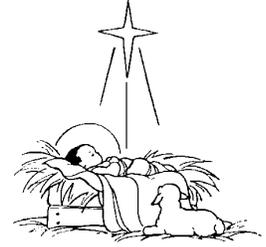


Timothy has been Nancy's helper with Bethany from the moment she was born. Tim delights in holding the baby and in thinking of new ways to make her crow with laughter. He really has been a great help around the house in many ways this year especially. Tim, too, is eager to learn anything he can about animals, and he and Jordan are virtually inseparable. Currently in Grade 1, he is the tallest in his class and as such stands out in the crowd anyway, so it's a good thing the teacher likes him.

Daniel spends most of his waking hours trying to keep up with his older brothers. Fights quite often ensue, but he manages to hold his own. He too is keen to learn and loves to "read" books by himself in bed. He enjoys the time alone with Nancy when Bethany is napping, and also plays well alone. He can often be found telling stories to himself while playing with his dinosaurs (yes, he takes after his brothers in *every* way). We doubt that cleaner dinosaurs exist, as he takes every opportunity to wash them in the kitchen or bathroom sink.

At vacation time, the van found itself chugging its way to the cottage in Haliburton once again, more loaded down than ever this year with one-week-old Bethany and all her paraphernalia. Earlier in the year (April), Nancy and Murray enjoyed a long weekend in Vancouver while the kids had a wonderful vacation of their own with the grandparents in London.

Thanksgiving Sunday was extra special for us this year, as it was also the day of Bethany's baptism. Surrounded by her family and her friends at Good Shepherd, Bethany was baptized by her Grandpa Clarke with Jordan River water that he and Grandma had carefully preserved from their Holy Land trip a few years ago. Speaking of trips... Murray stuck around for *most* of the day, but flew off to England in the late afternoon. Was it a business trip as he claimed, or simply an ingenious plan to avoid having to help with the dishes?



Nancy's business (Cozy Cuddles Baby Products) is still flourishing. 1995 ended with a total of 1027 happy customers, and it looks like about 1500 nursing pillows will find new homes this year. She now has four women sewing covers for her. Somehow, in amidst all the confusion of a new baby and a booming business Nancy manages to keep the household running, the wonderful meals cooking, and the family smiling. (Yes, her loving husband/bookkeeper wrote this paragraph!) Currently she is planning to go back to teaching prenatal classes in February or March.

Murray's big news this year is that by the time you read this letter, he will have announced to Imperial Oil, that after 16½ years he is leaving to join another, smaller consulting company – InfoEdge Inc. Murray will be sorry to say goodbye to all the friends he has at Imperial, but through the wonders of electronic mail he can try to keep in touch (mwlahn@interlog.com & www.interlog.com/~mwlahn). The last few years have been trying for Murray, with budget cutbacks and silly management decisions, and when the opportunity arose for Murray to move he quickly jumped at the chance.



InfoEdge is a small computer consulting firm that specializes in Microsoft style infrastructure designs. The firm was started in 1992 by two ex-Imperial Oil employees. Up until this year, they had 15 employees, all located in Calgary, but with the customer base expanding, they found that more and more of their business was located in the Toronto and Southern Ontario areas. This prompted them to look to expand into Toronto officially, and in late October they opened an office on Yonge, just south of the 401 and hired an additional dozen or so employees. Murray will be joining them in on January 6th, and is currently now working on his Microsoft certification credentials.

We certainly hope this Christmas finds all of you in good health. I know some have had some difficult times this past year, and you can be sure that you are in our prayers. We expect that this letter will find you in the midst of the chaos and confusion of this season but we pray that you will take time to quietly reflect upon God's goodness to you and upon the greatest Christmas present of all – His Son, Jesus Christ.

*How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still the dear Christ enters in.*

May the joy and peace of this Christmas season be yours throughout the coming new year.

Murray + Nancy
Jordan J. Murray
& Bethany