

December 15, 1984

Dear Family and Friends,

We can hardly believe that it is Christmas again. In many ways 1984 has been the most rewarding and yet the most strenuous of our lives. For a moment I want to reflect upon the major events and projects that filled our lives this year.

We started the year under a cloudy condition which suggested that Thelma would have to have major surgery unless a miracle took place. As time passed, a number of examinations, x-rays and texts were performed that led to surgery on April 19. After two and a half hours of surgery she returned with praise and admiration for what God has done with the help of doctors, nurses and staff at the Yale-New Haven Hospital. Six weeks later with the help of the boys and Johnnie, she had recovered well enough to return to work. Also this year, on February 22, Major, our first and wonderful pet and watchdog for fourteen years passed away.

Kenneth, our youngest son, had a busy spring filling in for his mother working at Yale University and studying at North Branford High School in his senior year. Ken also played soccer and track on the high school teams, and continued to do his chores around the house.

Finally the big day came for our last son Kenneth's graduation on June 26, 1984. The family gathered with tears, laughter and joy. He graduated with high honors and as a member of the Honor Society, he received two academic awards.

Well the condition became cloudy again as Thelma continued to have serious pain from the first surgery. More tests and examinations show that corrective surgery was necessary as soon as possible. On July 19, she went under the scalpel again, in a few hours later she was out and praising the Lord, saying it's good to have family and friends and a medical center like Yale.

She was home from the hospital on July 26 and headed for a speedy six week recovery. The rest of Thelma's summer was spent taking short walks and gathering the vegetables from our garden and back out in time to help harvest it.

Our annual family camping trip was cancelled this year. Thelma and I went away for a few days on our twenty-seventh anniversary. Kenneth continued to work at Yale University for a summer job.

September marks another big event for Kenneth, he entered into the University of Connecticut at Storrs as a freshman, and he enjoys it there; after all there are no more home chores, like feeding and caring for the chickens, cultivating the garden and cutting the lawn. He is doing fine and managing to keep his grades up. We will pick him up on December 20 for the Christmas holidays.

Marvin, our oldest son who was stationed in West Berlin, Germany for more than two years has returned to the states. On September 21, Marvin was united to a lovely young lady, Rose Marie Storzer of West Berlin, Germany. Now we have a daughter for the first time.

They came home on October 28 from Germany and spent a week with us before going to his new station in Newport News, Va. We, the family and friends thoroughly enjoyed their company at the reception we held to welcome Rose into the family. We are expecting to see them right after Christmas.

Thanksgiving was held at our home which incorporated most of the family. Jeffrey, our third son is still working at Yale and as a chef at a local restaurant in Branford, CT. Jeff decided a week before Thanksgiving that he should become more independent and get his own apartment. He has a nice one room efficiency apartment in New Haven. Jeff also got a new car this spring that gives him better transportation to work.

Thelma and Johnnie were surprised that after Jeff moved out and Kenneth went away to school that there are fewer dishes to wash and the kitchen is much cleaner.

Gregory, our second son is still at home working at Yale and studying at Southern Conn. State University. He is busy day and night. This spring Greg bought a new red Toyota Camry. He is quite happy at the moment and is now the only son at home.

Well we could see the hand writing on the wall, all the fellows are growing up and leaving us with the chores. We undertook a major project to fix up our home which includes: a new furnace, driveway, septic systems, windows, vinyl siding, remodeling the kitchen and plumbing. This project has taken from early summer until now to be completed, but it's done thank God!!! As you can see this year has unfolded with many new experiences and challenges for us, but we are thankful. Thelma and I would like to thank you all for your prayers, the get well cards, greetings, and gifts so many of you have sent during her hospital stay and recovery at home.

Again from all of us to all of you we send our love and the warmest wishes. Have a wonderful Christmas and a good new year.