

# 1997 — Here We Come!

And not a moment too soon. 1996 is starting to come apart at the seams as we've jammed so much into it!

Our biggest "news" is our "new" business: "**Gnu**" **Media Design**. Last Christmas we wrote that Don was career soul-searching while between jobs and we finally took the hint from heaven that this was the opportunity we always talked about. We officially incorporated during the summer and started out gang-busters. It's slower right now, but that's sort of welcome, too, as we were too busy to create our own ads or figure out all that tax stuff.

Gnu Media Design is a lot like us — eclectic. We do web pages, brochures, voice-overs, print ads, presentations, newsletters, you name it. We target small businesses, but Don has also done work for Donnelly Business Systems, Motorola and the Gary **Post-Tribune**. There are some drawbacks to self-employment, but Don loves the variety and I am able to "go back to work" while still being here when the kids get home. Think of us if someone you know needs a web page or a brochure!

If you saw the tv-news helicopters fly over Naperville in late July, yes, our basement flooded, but we were among the luckier ones. We only had a couple of inches — enough to soak the carpet, the kids' toys and the paneling. We had more mess and bother than any real loss, unlike friends who had seven feet in their basement!

The rest of the year has been much the same as last. Emily just celebrated her seventh birthday. She brings her lunch to school this year in first grade and still has her cute little teeth, although she can't gnaw on any corncobs, they're so loose. She sings in the children's choir at church and "bridged" to Brownies in the spring.

James is now in third grade, writing cursive, learning to multiply and still the tallest kid in his class. He will turn nine next month — the last single digit birthday! He and Don are again in Indian Guides, going camping together and on field trips. Both children also played on T-ball and coach-pitch teams in the spring.

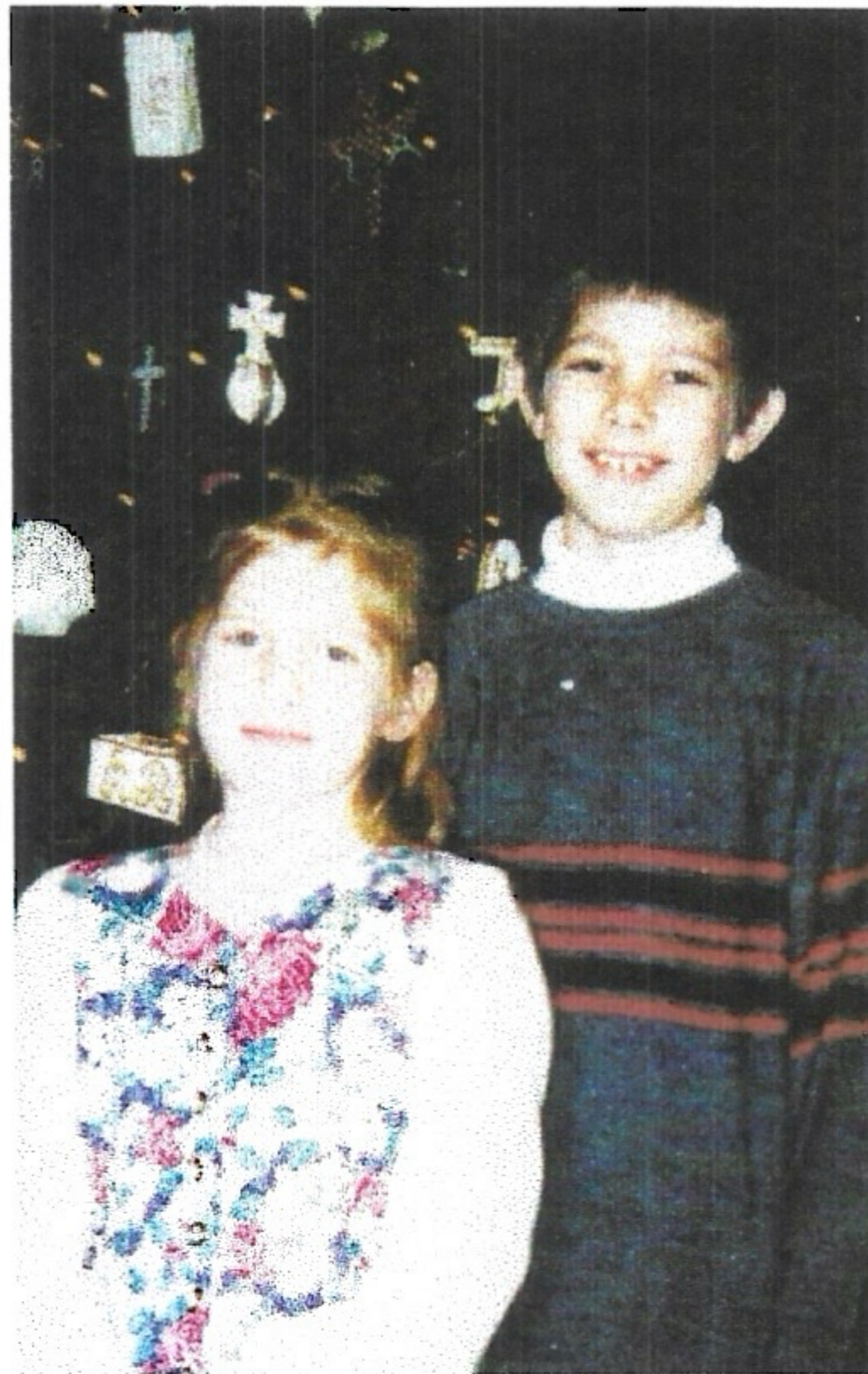
Just before school started, the kids decided to "put

on a show" in the old Judy Garland/Mickey Rooney style. They wanted to do **The Wizard of Oz** and we decided to put it on tape. None of us realized what we were getting into. For the next week, I filmed James, Emily and two of their friends for about six hours every day. They designed the sets, wrote the dialog, created costumes and worked out some "special effects" (like the flying monkeys). Parents would call and ask if their kids were ever coming home. They even sang songs and choreographed some dance sequences. When it was all finished, Don took it to the community access studio where he is a producer, edited it, added titles and submitted it for airing. The night before **The Little Wizard** was first shown on tv, we had the kids and their parents over for a "premier" and awarded Oscars for their fine work. The movie has been shown on NCTV Channel 17 about a dozen times since. They were so pleased with themselves!

In addition to working at NCTV, Don has nearly completed his tenure as Director of Lay Ministry at church and is active in several computer special interest groups. We both still play in the bell choir and were part of the ensemble when the choir produced their first cassette this year. I still teach Sunday School, volunteer in the school library and co-lead the Brownie troop, as well as edit the church newsletter, now in its fourth year.

Needless to say, this year has been a little full, and we are seriously considering the "less is more" philosophy, especially with our new company in the dining room calling to us all the time! Our resolution for the new year is to pare down the extra-curriculars to make more time for the important stuff — our family and friends.

On that note, we hope that all is well with you and your families, that you have a peaceful and blessed Christmas and that 1997's calendar stays blank enough for you to relax, stretch out and hug the ones you love.



With love,  
Kate, Don, James and Emily