

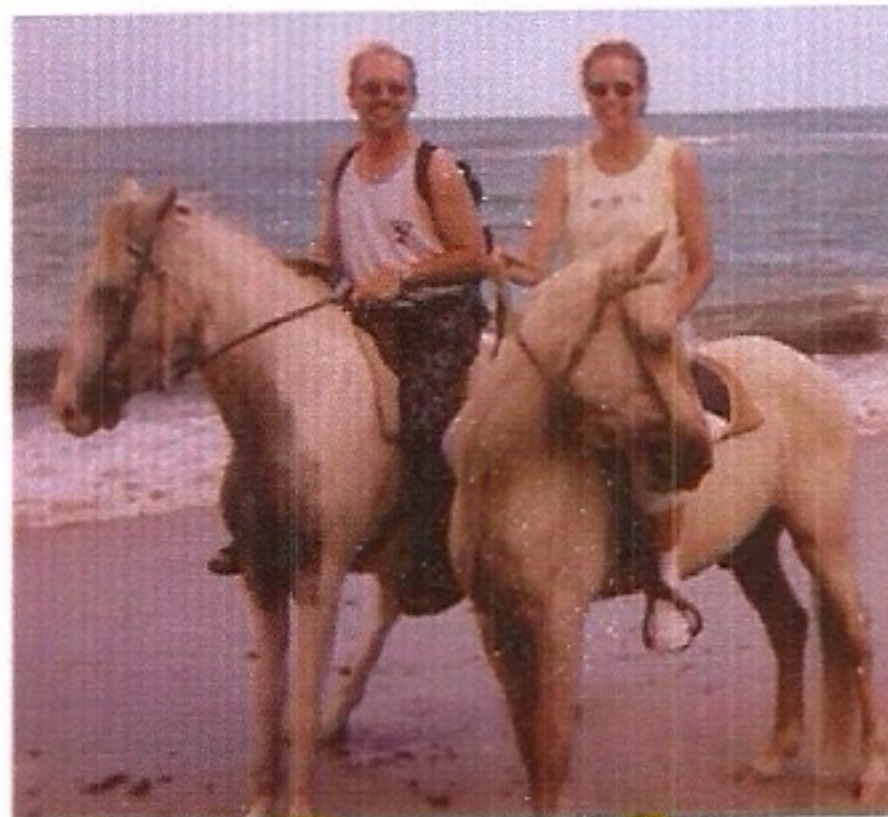
*And so the year draws to a close, a year that has been overflowing with mile-markers, activities and emotions.*

*The year started sadly for us when Don's aunt — who had raised him since he was seven — passed away during the beginning of January. Within weeks, Kate's Grandmother died, and throughout the year we have been mourning relatives, friends, parents of friends, our children's friends and the parents of our children's friends. We hope to never see another such year, and we continue to hold all of them in our hearts.*

*We passed some important milestones this year as well. Emily finished up her first year of Junior High, while James finished up his last. He was also confirmed this spring, and is now considered an adult member of the church. Don and Kate celebrated their twentieth wedding anniversary in November, and just last week, Emily turned 13, so now we are the parents of teenagers in the plural.*

*We did lots of work on the house this year. We remodeled the master bathroom, and redecorated the master bedroom, the hallways, the powder room, the family room, and the living room. We also carpeted the basement, and laid a new laminate floor in three rooms downstairs. Whew! It's exhausting just writing about it! You should have seen us actually doing it! We did get professional help with moving plumbing in the master bath, and we got lots of assistance and support from Kate's folks on the other projects.*

*We got to do some traveling this year. James went with busloads of other Naperville eighth graders to Washington D.C. to see the museums and monuments, as well as to Scout camp in Michigan. Emily attended a canoe camp, but unfortunately didn't canoe very much due to a drought-cursed river! As a family, we camped in Virginia and did the whole Virginia-Beach-Williamsburg-Busch-Gardens thing. (That's Kate and the kids at Busch Gardens) We somewhat reluctantly gave up our autumn*



*trek to Devil's Lake, Wisconsin, to go to Kate's twentieth college reunion in Galesburg, Illinois, but it was loads of fun to see folks we hadn't seen for quite some time. And for our anniversary, we left the kids in the grandparents' care while we cruised the Caribbean for ten days. (Take a gander at us horseback riding on the beach in St. Kitt's — the whole trip was equally romantic!)*

*As a freshman, James turns in good grades, attends the Climbing and Environmental Clubs, went to the Homecoming Dance, is closing in on Life Scout, works part time at a climbing gym, and plays all sorts of drums.*

*Emily sings in the Chorus, plays piano, violin and hand chimes, is now a Cadette Scout, continues her impressive grade point average, and is either reading a book or writing her own nearly all the time.*

*Don and Kate are still busy in the community, at the schools and in the church. Gnu Media Design Company is in its sixth year, going strong and keeping us plenty busy. We look forward to more of the same — with even more vacations! — in the coming year.*

*We hope you have wonderful holidays and we wish you much happiness in 2003. Say "hello" anytime by email at [kate@gnumediadesign.com](mailto:kate@gnumediadesign.com).*

*Blessings,  
Don, Kate, James and Emily*