

Wood Family Newsletter

2006 Holiday Season

Joyous Greetings!

Contents:

Jenny	1
Vienna	2
Andy	3
Kitties	3

We hope that you are enjoying a happy and peaceful holiday season.

Certainly there's plenty to be thankful for: good friends, good health, and good times come quickly to mind.

So as we're wading through our assemblages of unfinished projects, deadlines, homework assignments, and amazingly soon – college

applications – we want to take a moment and catch you up on our recent adventures.

We know that holiday newsletters have the same kind of reputation as fruitcake, but we still enjoy reading those of our friends and loved ones. So we thought we'd continue our tradition of writing one to help close out 2006.

In this newsletter, we'll tell

you some of what Andy, Jenny, and Vienna have been doing. We'll be sure to include lots of pictures and news nuggets. But our primary goal is to send some warmth and joy during this holiday season.

So here we are again – sending out our letter at the last minute, hoping it gets to you on time. Keep us posted on your doings throughout the coming new year!



Vienna, Andy, and Jenny in Times Square. This was from our Summer Road trip: Three weeks from one end of the country to the other and back!

You can relive our trip by visiting <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/vacation2006/>

Jenny Update

Jenny has been very busy this year with a lot of projects.

She was elected President of the 20th District PTA in January and has been doing an awesome job keeping the district humming. The district includes 40 schools in three counties. Jenny has an executive board to support her, whom she calls her "minions." She loves having minions! She has enjoyed the challenges and learning opportunities this position has brought her. She is also looking forward though to the end of her term in summer.

Jenny also has been a counselor in the Young Women's program at church. She's always wanted to have

(Continued on page 2)

Jenny Update Continued...

(Continued from p. 1)

a calling in YW, especially while Vienna is in the program. Being called to YW was a real blessing to her and she is having a blast serving with the girls and other leaders. She especially loves the chance to spend more time with Vienna.

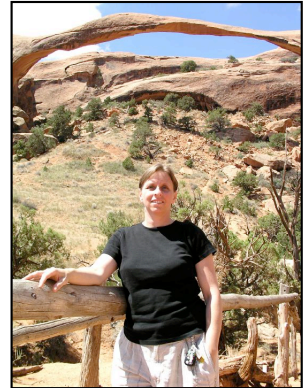
Early in the year Jen's mom, Jean wound up in the hospital on a ventilator. The experience was challenging for both women. Jean still suffers from infections that keep her from recovering properly and Jenny has learned to deal with doctors, lawyers, insurance and Social Security. The ordeal isn't

over but both Jean and Jen have learned more from the experience than probably at any other time in their lives. Jenny may not enjoy this part of life, these days but she understands the long-term blessings she's gaining from it. She is stronger, smarter and more compassionate than ever before.

Jenny is still working at Seagate as an admin in the Tax department and while she loves her job and the people she works with, she has another plan up her sleeve. Recently, she has decided to get into real estate investing. She's taking a class, reading everything she has time for and preparing herself to purchase her first property sometime next

year. She's excited at the prospect of being her own boss and not working the standard 40-hour per week job.

Finally, Jenny has an exciting adventure coming up in February. Seagate is sending her along with a few hundred other folks to New Zealand for ECO Seagate. A five-day experience ending on the last day with an adventure race through the mountains and wilderness of NZ. The first four days will be spent training with her team of five, and then the big race that will include hiking, biking and rowing. She's psyched for the adventure and the three days she'll spend by the lake in Queenstown afterward.



(T) Arches National Park
(B) South Beach, FL

Vienna Update



Vienna in front of our nation's capital (on what felt like the hottest day of the summer).

This year Vienna continued in her studies of piano, expanding her repertoire of songs by several dozen hymns as well as many classical pieces and a contemporary jazz song. Right now she is learning Beethoven's *Pathétique Sonata*, a personal favorite of hers.

Earlier in the school year Vienna participated in her high school's production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, portraying the Scottish Lord Angus in this brilliant production. She learned a great deal about the process of putting a show together and made many new friends along the way.

In summer she attended the annual church-organized Girls' Camp as a second-year youth camp leader, learning important leadership skills and getting the opportunity to meet new people and be an example to the younger campers in the nightly tent devotionals and Peer-to-Peer chats.

Andy Update

Andy continues working as an associate professor in the communication studies department at San José State University. And he still thinks he's got just about the luckiest job he could have.

In August, right after returning from the family's three-week road trip, he caught a flight for a ten-day trip to Asia, researching his newest book, on *omnitopia*. He visited Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Singapore in a whirlwind excursion of airports, metro systems, tourist sites, and other phenomena related to what he calls, "a structural and perceptual enclave whose apparently distinct locales convey inhabitants to a singular place." We're

hoping that he'll come up with a more user-friendly definition for *omnitopia*! In the meantime, you can learn more about his project at his website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/omninode/>.

He also took the lead in organizing our family Halloween porch display. This year's theme: *Alien Autopsy*. With a gory alien, creepy *X-files* music, and Area 51 "footage" projected against the far wall, the display had rows of kids lined up to watch Andy wield a scalpel while explaining alien anatomy to the awe-struck children. Of course, he created a website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/halloween2006/>. He can't wait for next October.



Vienna and Andy at Arches National Park in Utah.



Peace on Earth

We can't think of a better image to complete our newsletter – and our wish for genuine peace on Earth – than this snap of Ariadne (L) and Aspasia (R). When Ari came into our lives last year, she steered away from the big cats (Artemis is too dignified to allow herself to be photographed). But once she got a little older, she decided that she wanted to be the feline queen of the household.

Aspasia, naturally, had other ideas. But Ari is supernaturally determined and her adopted "big sister" had to find space in her heart for the interloper. They fight still, often in the form of "aggressive grooming." But they still manage to keep each other warm. We wish the rest of the world could learn from our kitties. Maybe next year...