



Todd, Ana, Brian, Sarah, Mary Lou, Cori, Chris, Amanda
Kainoa, Jasmine, (Zoey)
La'akea, (Ginger), Zacharie, Shannon



Sarah, Jesse, Eve, Jasmine, Zacharie, Todd, Ana, La'akea, Cori, Mary Lou, Brian Shannon
(Dojah, Zoey, Willie)

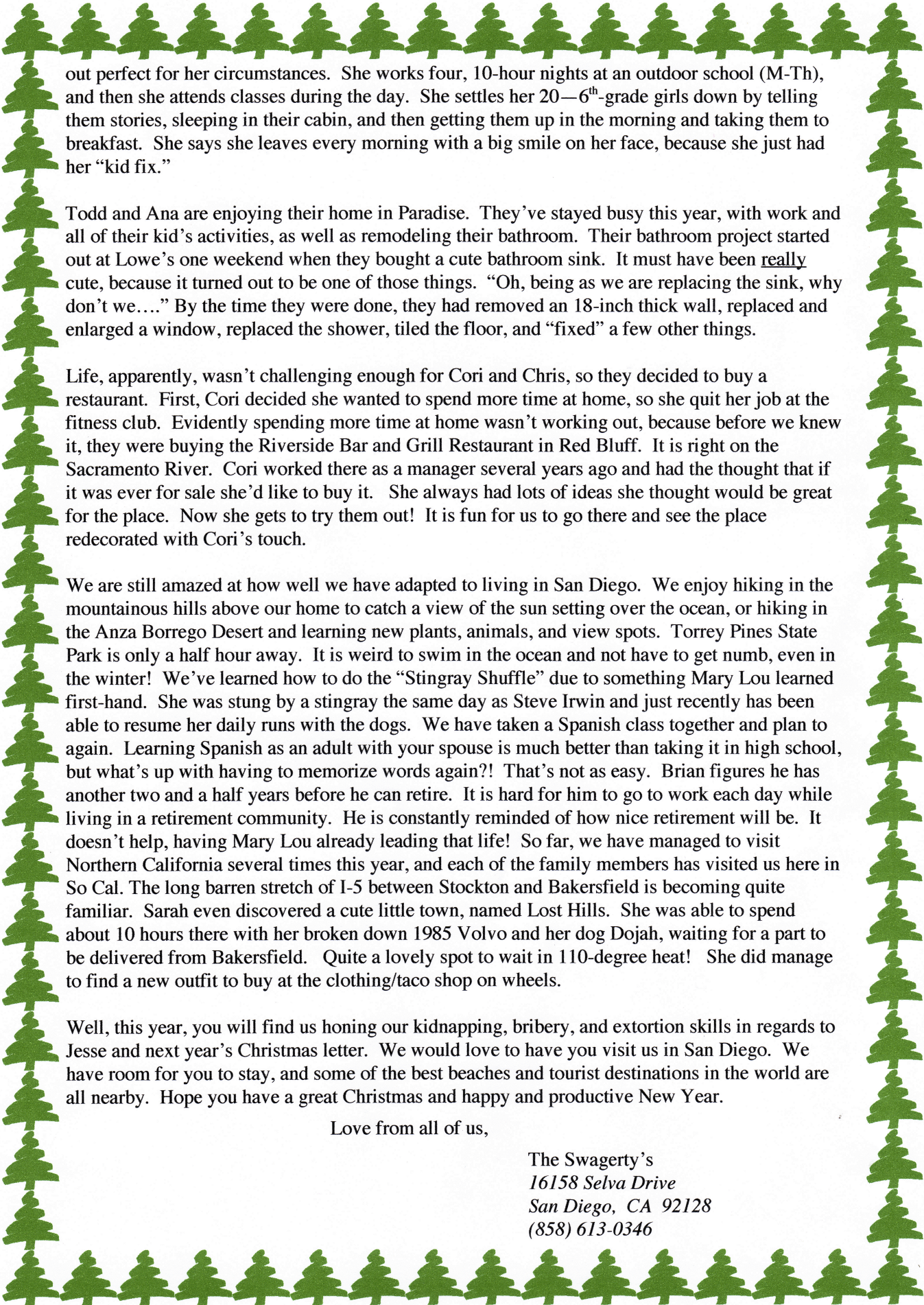
Merry Christmas

Our kidnapping attempts were unsuccessful! Jesse is still at large in San Francisco, living with his childhood friends. He claims to be "too busy" to help out in the writing of this year's Christmas letter. Too busy!! I guess being a server at Bubba Gumps must be pretty demanding. "Let's see...was that the shrimp bowl or basket?" I suspect that his new girlfriend, Eve, is taking up some of his time, but he could always enlist her assistance. He also lists his upcoming trip to Thailand as an excuse. I don't buy it! He has his sister, Sarah to be his translator and tour guide. I even heard that he wants Sarah to get the tour books of Thailand for Christmas so he won't have to lug them around. Nice guy. Anyway, I wouldn't let Jesse off of the hook. Mary Lou and Brian are poor substitutes as Christmas letter writers.

This whole idea of going to Thailand was thought up while Jesse was traveling in Brazil last January. When he asked people he met, who were also traveling, where their favorite place to travel was, the overwhelming answer was Thailand. Jesse, Eve, and Sarah are flying from San Francisco on January 2. Sarah was able to get a week off of work and will be able to stay eleven days before she has to return to work and school. Eve is able to stay for two weeks. Three or four of his roommates will join them and stay for a couple of weeks. Jesse will be there for thirty days. Sounds fun. As parents, we cringed a little when Sarah was reading us the State Department travel warnings for some of the areas. I'm sure it will be OK; our kids don't look too American!

If things go afoul, we will have to send Shannon over there to rescue them. After all, he is a federal peace officer and works for Home Land Security. Actually, he just took a test to put him on a list to be promoted to Bozeman's Mate 1st Class in the Coast Guard. Once promoted, he will get a pay raise and be able to work regular hours, as opposed to "fireman's hours." Amanda is enjoying her second year of teaching first grade in Sacramento.

Sarah was figuring out how much longer she has, before she is able to graduate from college. Turns out she could have as few as eight classes left to get her B.A. She is thinking about joining the Peace Corps and pursuing her teaching credential after she graduates. Her current job works



out perfect for her circumstances. She works four, 10-hour nights at an outdoor school (M-Th), and then she attends classes during the day. She settles her 20—6th-grade girls down by telling them stories, sleeping in their cabin, and then getting them up in the morning and taking them to breakfast. She says she leaves every morning with a big smile on her face, because she just had her “kid fix.”

Todd and Ana are enjoying their home in Paradise. They’ve stayed busy this year, with work and all of their kid’s activities, as well as remodeling their bathroom. Their bathroom project started out at Lowe’s one weekend when they bought a cute bathroom sink. It must have been really cute, because it turned out to be one of those things. “Oh, being as we are replacing the sink, why don’t we....” By the time they were done, they had removed an 18-inch thick wall, replaced and enlarged a window, replaced the shower, tiled the floor, and “fixed” a few other things.

Life, apparently, wasn’t challenging enough for Cori and Chris, so they decided to buy a restaurant. First, Cori decided she wanted to spend more time at home, so she quit her job at the fitness club. Evidently spending more time at home wasn’t working out, because before we knew it, they were buying the Riverside Bar and Grill Restaurant in Red Bluff. It is right on the Sacramento River. Cori worked there as a manager several years ago and had the thought that if it was ever for sale she’d like to buy it. She always had lots of ideas she thought would be great for the place. Now she gets to try them out! It is fun for us to go there and see the place redecorated with Cori’s touch.

We are still amazed at how well we have adapted to living in San Diego. We enjoy hiking in the mountainous hills above our home to catch a view of the sun setting over the ocean, or hiking in the Anza Borrego Desert and learning new plants, animals, and view spots. Torrey Pines State Park is only a half hour away. It is weird to swim in the ocean and not have to get numb, even in the winter! We’ve learned how to do the “Stingray Shuffle” due to something Mary Lou learned first-hand. She was stung by a stingray the same day as Steve Irwin and just recently has been able to resume her daily runs with the dogs. We have taken a Spanish class together and plan to again. Learning Spanish as an adult with your spouse is much better than taking it in high school, but what’s up with having to memorize words again?! That’s not as easy. Brian figures he has another two and a half years before he can retire. It is hard for him to go to work each day while living in a retirement community. He is constantly reminded of how nice retirement will be. It doesn’t help, having Mary Lou already leading that life! So far, we have managed to visit Northern California several times this year, and each of the family members has visited us here in So Cal. The long barren stretch of I-5 between Stockton and Bakersfield is becoming quite familiar. Sarah even discovered a cute little town, named Lost Hills. She was able to spend about 10 hours there with her broken down 1985 Volvo and her dog Dojah, waiting for a part to be delivered from Bakersfield. Quite a lovely spot to wait in 110-degree heat! She did manage to find a new outfit to buy at the clothing/taco shop on wheels.

Well, this year, you will find us honing our kidnapping, bribery, and extortion skills in regards to Jesse and next year’s Christmas letter. We would love to have you visit us in San Diego. We have room for you to stay, and some of the best beaches and tourist destinations in the world are all nearby. Hope you have a great Christmas and happy and productive New Year.

Love from all of us,

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