

We hope to find you well and wish you a peaceful and relaxing holiday season and a successful start into the year 2004!

It has been an eventful year with many changes for us and this letter will give us a chance to share some of our adventures with our family and friends.

Besides adjusting to life with two children, we moved from Austin, Texas to Chicago (Evanston), Illinois for Andreas to attend Business School at Kellogg. Moving was not easy, but with some luck and the enormous help of friends and neighbors most everything went smooth, and by now we pretty much settled into our new life in Evanston.



Birthdays happen every year, although this year there was something special about them: Anaise celebrated her first birthday with a real party, as requested by her sister. Meriel's birthday happened to be on the day we sold/moved out of our house, and Diana turned 30 - celebrating her special day with friends and family back in Germany. We brought back some wonderful memories of this summer, especially since it was the longest time we ever visited: for nine weeks, the girls and I enjoyed hanging out with Omas and Opas, ate a ton of fresh fruits from the garden, drank fresh, homemade apple cider (see picture) and had a blast at the pool. One

big event was Anaise's christening, which took place in the famous cathedral in Mainz, Germany. Both girls formed loving bonds with our families and friends, and my mom could even make it possible to see her granddaughters again early December.

Anaise started talking a few words, although she understands way more than she admits. Well, she can always run away and hide if she gets in trouble ... and her big sister might follow right after her. If Meriel is not singing to her babies, reading her favorite stories or hiding our keys and cell phones in some paper bag, she spends a lot of time with Anaise and the two girls explore the world together.



It took us a while to adjust to the changes, and we still talk about our friends in Austin. Late summer, we spent a fair amount of time at the wonderful beaches of Evanston and visited the Chicago zoo several times. Now we enjoy play groups, music classes, field trips and more together with our new friends. Through JointVenture/KelloggKids, the club at the Kellogg School of Management for partners and families, we met many nice families from all over the world. The community at this school is so amazing, that I am going to contribute to it as well by being part of the Kellogg Kids planning team this coming year.



I miss my time at the Skandinavia store after having worked there for almost five years, full- and part time. However, I feel busier than ever, and I am not even working outside the house anymore (only if you count the many trips down to the laundry room or running the daily errands). Well, I should not complain about being busy and will pass on to Andreas, who wasn't bored either.

The switch from being a chip designer at Motorola to being a Business School student at Kellogg certainly required some adjusting. But after an introductory week school started at a very high pace and forced everyone to adjust quickly. And it has been a very intense and rewarding learning experience so far. Besides offering great teaching, the school provides a strong platform in my search for a summer internship in 2005 and a position in 2005. Besides learning and searching for a job, I had the opportunity to get to know great class mates with a wide variety of professional backgrounds.

Before school started, I was able to finish two more marathons. In the Motorola Marathon in Austin I finally was able to achieve my goal of running a qualifying time for the Boston Marathon. The Chicago Marathon in October was probably the most enjoyable marathon I have ever run, with picture perfect running weather, a wonderful course through downtown Chicago and great support by the Chicagoans. Unfortunately school pretty much kept me from doing any more serious running, but I am hoping to find the time to seriously prepare for the next Chicago Marathon.



After successfully finishing the fall quarter, we finally found more family time together. While visiting friends in Boulder, we admired the Rocky Mountains, hiked and frolicked in the snow. We welcome the last days of the year doing things we never get to do during the year (like finally writing to all of you), relaxing and getting ready for an exciting new year.

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