

Happy Holidays from the Coldirons!

As the year 2001 draws to a close, we are happy to report that life at the Coldiron home remains full of activity, good health, and joy.

In October, we were delighted to welcome Carmen into the family. She is a cutey, sharing lots of happy smiles and coos ... she has already outgrown her initial nickname of Squawker, thank goodness. Kip's mom stayed with us for several weeks around the time of Carmen's birth, and boy, were we glad! She was an enormous help, and made Carmen's birthday as easy as possible. "Easy" is perhaps too strong a word for this particular birth, but it gave us a few stories to tell. Like how Kip calmly convinced Dianna to proceed to the birth center, although she was on the floor of the garage with pushing contractions. And how Dianna wouldn't let anyone check the sex of the new baby for a long time because she simply didn't want to move after the birth. And how Addie's first question upon waking from her nap was, "Is the baby out of mommy?" She was so excited to help bring baby Carmen home that day!



Addie celebrated her third birthday this year, and remains such a joy! She and Kip make up stories each night at bedtime, and her imagination is really showing. She is quite protective and proud of her little sister, and has proven to be a great helper. She loves to help make dinner, to comfort Carmen when she's crying (e.g., "Baby Carmen is sad, mommy; she wants her big sister to hold her."), and to vacuum and dust, among other things. This year included the first plane ride that Addie remembers, and she can talk at great length about how planes start on the ground, speed up fast, go into the air, etc. This year also included Addie's first dress-up Halloween. She dressed up in a bunny costume and greeted the kids who came to the door. She wanted to do the same the next night, and the next, and ... in December, she was still asking when the kids would come back for more candy!



Business is booming for both Community Cleaners and Kissaluv's. With all the mold remediation work going on in Houston, Kip has his hands full trying to keep up with his commercial and insurance accounts. The cleaners now has a night shift, clothing stored to the rafters, considerable off-site storage ... and has had to turn away business. We realize it's a good "problem," and it has given Kip added impetus to consider how/if to continue growing the business, and what might constitute professional life after the cleaners.

Kissaluv's is growing, too, and we're wondering whether it can continue to be run as a part-time business by a mom with two little ones who really misses her time in the kitchen and the yard. Dianna finds the business challenging and rewarding, and she's learning a ton about fabrics, manufacturing and such. As it grows, however, it becomes more and more distracting from other, important parts of life. We'll see.

We have recently begun working to make our relatively new-to-us home our own ... this year, the entire interior has been painted (not a single white wall in the place—hooray!), and we've made a start on landscaping and decorating. Wish us luck to continue the momentum!

Kip managed to get away to the annual Peckham family reunion in New York this year, having a terrific visit with folks he hasn't seen in years. He has a great photo of Mary Ann and Sandy, who babysat Kip and his siblings, shaking their fingers at him just as they did when he was young. He is quick to point out that former babysitters and family members alike referred to him as "the good one," which he gleefully and often repeated in the presence of older brother Alan, who was also at the reunion (and subsequently stomped all over Kip's team in the fantasy football league they belong to ... hmmm, wonder if all that teasing is related!).

This year, we hope to attend a Coldiron reunion in Florida, make a bunch of progress on the house, and play like crazy with our girls! Care to join us? Come on by! We have lots of room and would love to visit ... whether or not you bring a shovel or paintbrush!

Warm wishes from Houston,

P.S.

Although we don't have an official family website, we have posted some recent photos at Internet address <http://www.kissaluv.com/coldiron.htm>