



## Greetings from the Coldirons!

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We hope this year-end finds you happy, healthy, merry, joyful, ... or at least hangin' in there!

As for us, we have enjoyed a year full of exciting changes, and we are so grateful for the life we have together and with our family and friends.

Earlier this year, we sold our remaining family business, Kissaluv's. Not having a diaper company co-existing with our home and family school has made a huge difference in our lives! Dianna and the girls are loving their extra time together, and Dianna is making her way through large piles of unread books that have been steadily stacking up these past five years.

Kip volunteers twice a week for SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives), helping folks start and run small businesses. He's having a great time, and small business is certainly a passion of his. He has also set up a garage workshop, tackling projects like building birdhouses, garden beds and trellises.

We're not totally sure what's next for us, and that's okay for now. Someday, we'll probably start another business. And we're seriously considering a move to a more rural area while the girls are young, but our wish-list is pretty extensive so it may be a long decision-making process. <smile>

In the meantime, we continue to homeschool the girls ... really, it's more of a family school, since we all get to learn, play and grow together. Kip has taken on science and music, and he's doing a bang-up job. This past year, we continued studying ancient history (mostly Greece, Israel, and China), mastering mental math ("that's alliteration, mom"), and reading a wide range of styles and stories. We play lots of games, so we have a ton of fun.

Addie, who is just turning 7 years old, is our history buff and reading wild-woman. She's quite analytical and her memory is amazing. This year, she's built a volcano, let her bangs grow out, worn lots of girly-girl dresses, picked up worms with bare hands, taken Irish Step Dance lessons, created very detailed artwork, caught a toad, experimented with rag curls and hairstyles, memorized and written poetry, taken a pottery class, carved her own jack-o-lantern, read well over 100 books at least once (it's hard to document everything she reads!), researched manatees and armadillos, canned pineapple, ... okay, maybe that's enough info, eh?



Carmen, 4, keeps up with our reading and studies amazingly well. She listens and acts out history lessons, loves to play Knock-Out and Animal Lotto, attends Tadpoles classes at a local nature center, has begun reading Bob books and milk cartons, takes gymnastics (she especially enjoys the vault and trampoline), pets every animal she meets, and gallops wildly through the house to the music of "*Ride of the Valkyries*." Carmen is our fearless, animal-loving, "I know" girl!

One of the beauties of homeschooling is that we can travel year-round ... we just pack our books, cds, and imaginations and head out the door! This year, we made several trips to Florida (Kip's mom just moved to St. Petersburg), and visited with cousins we haven't seen in many years. We were also delighted to be in Pittsburgh for Alana's wedding, and at Guadalupe River State Park here in Texas for some end-of-season camping.

We enjoyed visitors here in Houston, too, including Dianna's second cousins Rick and Claudia, who we hope will be regular Houston visitors. Anyone who likes to eat at Ragin' Cajun as much as we do is welcome to visit any time!

In 2006, we plan to do lots more camping and visiting, both locally and cross-country. You can bet we'll be in Florida again ... we finally made it to a Coldiron reunion this past year, and we're excited about joining the family at Uncle Otto's again. Plus with Kip's mom and cousins in St. Pete, we're considering Florida our "vacation home."

Enjoy this upcoming new year ... and the new beginning of each and every new day, for that matter.

And please keep in touch, whether by phone, email, snail mail, or a visit.

All the best,

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P.S.

We also started a family website this year ... [www.thecoldirons.com](http://www.thecoldirons.com) has lots of photos and such, if that sort of thing floats your boat. We can't resist adding a few recent photos of the girls here, too ...



Rag curls!  
January 2005



All gussied up  
December 2005



With the DeVoucalla girls  
October 2005



Reading buddies  
February 2005



Bunny and the Greek  
2005



A dress-up wedding on a "motorcycle"  
November 2005

