

December 2005

Merry Christmas from the Shraders

Dear Friends and Family;

We pray blessings on you in this coming year! And we thank God for getting us through with only the normal bruising and scrapes of life. I thought I would share with you the top ten Shrader happenings of the year, so here it is!

10. Will survives his first YEAR of potty training. That's right. You read correctly. A year and counting! We have learned many of the nuances of the word *patience*. He has actually made great strides and now spends 98% of his waking hours "keen an' die" ("clean and dry" for you novices).

9. Hannah proves she's "got the stuff" by eating a whole crawdad and surviving the missionary kid wilderness camping trip. We suspected that Hannah would be among the toughest of the girls. When we visited on parents' night, she was holding strong, even though the bathroom was a hole in the ground and home was a hammock and a tarp. What a gal.

8. Lena survives Missouri missionary interviews with mono! (This part is from Bill) Lena had a 103° fever while being interviewed for our World Missions appointment. Thus displaying the kind of pain tolerance that makes her really easy to live with!

7. Abi is now walking! She took her time, but she is now a toddling toddler.

6. Colton plays the title role in "Happy the Snowman" at school. He did a great job memorizing his lines and didn't let the snowman suit get him down.

5. Lena not buried alive in laundry! This is bigger than you think. Some people work a lifetime looking for meaning in life. I just want to see the bottom of my ironing basket.

4. Bill and Lena commissioned for missionary service. We were actually part of two very meaningful services—and were prayed for by outstanding missionary veterans and pastors. It was wonderful to process this very important step with people we love and respect deeply.

3. Colton is "knighted"—a huge honor bestowed by his school. His teacher nominated Colton, saying that he is an unusually thoughtful child and a very good friend. Words cannot express how proud we are of him.

2. Hannah takes lead role in church play and sings her heart out—in Spanish! She was frighteningly good up there, and had a blast! It feels really good to see your child in her "element"—and Hannah was there. We were proudest of how she handled herself and made ministry the most important piece—praying for people at the altar.

1. We're on target for Peru! Our progress toward the fulfillment of our missionary call to Peru is on target for departure at the end of August. (Unofficially, we're at 50%—counting regular supporters who haven't yet sent in pledge forms). We've enjoyed sharing about God's call and are loving this adventure. God has been faithful to help us all through frequent separations and helping Bill to keep plugging away on his doctorate.



May God give you a wonderful Christmas & a blessed new year!

Much Love to You All,

Lena, Bill, Hannah, Colton, Will, and Abi