THE MEYER CHRONICLES

Family Happenings

December 2003

SOME HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

At Christmas time, family and friends gather together.
As snowflakes gently blanket the earth,
Tiny tots visit Santa with wish lists in hand.
Trees are trimmed with ornaments and lights,
As the lighting of the tree lightens the room,
Then Oohs and Aahs are heard.
The aroma of cookies and pies float throughout the house.
Stockings are hung awaiting Santa’s visit.
Midnight mass attended to celebrate the birth of our Savior.
May you have a joyous holiday season.

Betty Meyer - 2003

LOOKING BACK
(by Betty)

At the close of 2003, I looked back to see what the space in time had given rise to concerning the lives of our family and friends. My thoughts about each person began to flow alphabetically. Not according to our names, but how certain letters of the alphabet seem to be prevalent in our daily living. So, throughout The Meyer Chronicles this year, you will find articles about each of our family and the “letters of their lives”.

DANNY
(by Betty)

Letters: B, U and Y

He’s getting to be “George Forman”. Danny likes to Barbecue, From Spring to the Fall of the year, you’ll find him on the patio grilling up a storm. (It tastes good, yum, yum) When he’s not grilling or working, he’s into the Universe; always enjoys reading and watching TV programs pertaining to UFO’s. I’m on his team. We share any information on that subject matter, whether it’s true or not. It’s fun! Talking about being on his team, the real team he follows is the Yankee baseball team. He’s a staunch Yankee fan and has been all his life.
IT ALL STARTED ON CHRISTMAS
(by Jimmy)


As most of you know, last year Mom was still a resident at one of the finest hotels in the Capital District of Upstate New York – Glendale Nursing Home. On Christmas Day, since Mom could not get to us, the family decided to go to Mom.

We synchronized our watches and we all planned to meet at Mom’s hotel at 2:00PM. The weather was holding, but the forecast was for snow. We all began arriving, loaded with a roast turkey dinner, and all of the trimmings! We also had plenty of Christmas presents to swap and share.

Attending the event were Mom, Dad, John, Susan, Danny, Matthew and Jimmy.

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MATTHEW
(by Betty)

Letters: C, D and M

One of Matthew’s favorite places to go is to Church. When the Pascazio’s get into their car, Matthew asks, “Where are we going, Mom”? “To church” Susan replies. “Yippee” shouts Matthew. He attends Sunday School and is also a member of the Caring Kids Club. Periodically, they draw pictures and make greeting cards which they send to the sick and shut-ins. It’s such a nice thing for the children to do; It teaches them to be thoughtful of other people. I know how much these greetings are enjoyed by those who receive them. How do I know? ‘Cause I’m one of the folks who look forward to receiving them.

The next C in Matthew’s life is the Cub scouts. He’s growing up so fast. I remember when Susan was a Brownie and Billy, Jimmy and John were Scouts. Matthew is a busy little guy. For the past four years he has been taking Dance lessons. His group will be going to nursing homes at Christmastime to entertain the folks there. He has another interest in his life and that’s Music. When he’s in the choir loft, he watches the organist with an eagle eye. He absorbs every note and sometimes pretends to direct the music. He was overjoyed when his Aunt Dawn told him that she had a real organ which she wanted to give him. He now has the organ and plays it every day.
IT ALL STARTED ON CHRISTMAS
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In the great room of the hotel, a table was set, and the family went about the task for the day – the celebration of Christmas and the fellowship of sharing family moments. There was quite a bustle of activity. Jimmy began carving the turkey; Susan and Danny helped set the table, while John continued to unload and bring in various food dishes and Christmas presents from the car. Matthew helped out where he could, and Dad got settled in with Mom and watched everything come together.

It was not long before we were all at the table, saying grace and eating our holiday feast! The food was great (we made it ourselves). Everyone was a participant, each making a dish or two, and bringing it along with silverware, tablecloths, cups and whatever else we needed.

After dinner we opened Christmas presents and retired to Mom’s room to visit and say our goodbye’s. By 6:00PM, we were all ready to head home for the evening.

All of the time we were inside, we knew it was snowing outside. But what we did not realize that it was SNOWING for the four hours that we were celebrating Christmas!

In our cars and all ready to go, we soon realized that we could not find the road. The snow had been falling at the rate of 5 inches per hour! The hotel was located in a fairly rural area, so getting home would be a real trick. It was every man for himself at this point. The hotel had already told their staff that they were in a “state of emergency” and that no one would be allowed to leave.

Dad and I were in my PT Cruiser. When we left the hotel grounds and took a right turn, the roadway was very well hidden by the snow on the ground. I looked around and all I could see was snow, trees, snow, stars, snow, falling snow, and snow. Luckily, I could see the tracks that a lone motorist left in the drift with his vehicle. We followed the tracks and soon came to an intersection at a red light.

It was decision time. The road we were on was less well traveled than the road we were crossing. I knew that the road to the right would bring us to a main road, but it would also bring us up a hill that I was worried about. Going left would bring us to another less traveled road.

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BETTY
(by Betty)

Letters: C and W

One of my favorite ways to pass time is to Crochet. I’m gung-ho for awhile, but then my fingers get numb and my eyes tire, so I set the project aside, but it takes me forever to get back in the groove again. Meanwhile, back at the Computer I’m wrapped up in my thoughts. It’s interesting having a hobby such as Writing. I’m seldom at a loss for words, but when I am, all I can say is “thank you Lord for Mr. Roget”. Without his Thesaurus, I’d really be up the creek without a paddle. I’ve many irons in the fire and enjoy the finished projects. At present I’m attending a writing course; “How to Write Your Memoirs”. I’d better hurry up, ‘cause the way my memory’s going, I’m liable to wind up with a blank sheet of paper, Oh well, if nothing else, it’s a fun thing to do.
**ALFRED**  
(by Betty)

Letters: R, S and T

Alfred is doing well. He’s slowing down a bit, but aren’t we all. He does a lot of Reading. Me too! We share the books and sometimes discuss the stories; giving our opinions about writing. We find it interesting to do that. If Alfred reads the book first, he censors it for me; which I’m glad he does. He knows what I will tolerate and what I definitely shun. You should see our bookcase. Chuck full of all types of books. Every November we go through our collection; sort them out and donate them to the Senior Center’s Annual Bazaar. Alfred spends a lot of time Shopping. He does a good job and doesn’t mind his trips to the stores. He’s a good guy. Another thing he’s good at is Thinking. He never makes snap decisions. Some years ago I gave him a plaque which read:

Take time just to think.  
Action is fruitful  
Only if we first reflect.

Yup; that’s dear ol’ Dad!

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**EAST TO WEST**  
(by Jimmy)

My cousins Michael and Michele McDermott recently moved from Tampa, Florida to Beale Air Force Base in California. Prior to their move, they also welcomed into the world a new daughter, Brooke. They are now a family of four; Mike, Michele, Brayden and Brooke. Congratulations!

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**CONKEY ISLAND HOT DOG CONTEST**  
(by Jimmy)

This year on the 4th of July, I attended the 86th Annual Nathan’s Hot Dog Eating Contest in Coney Island, Brooklyn, New York. It was a great contest to witness and the festive atmosphere made you feel like you were really at an event! My friends from Queens, N.Y. also attended the contest; Danny, Didar, Babul and his family. Takeru Kobayashi of Japan, weighing in at 145 lbs., scarfed down 44 1/2 hot dogs and buns in 12 minutes, defending his title, but unfortunately not beating his previous record of 50.
So straight ahead, or turning left would increase our chances of getting stuck in the middle of nowhere on Christmas night. We took a right, even though it would take us through Scotia and further away from our destination in Schenectady.

We made the correct decision, because we were soon on a main road which was somewhat plowed. Slowly we made it to Schenectady and Schaffer Heights to Dad’s house. At this point, our second adventure began.

The roads in Schenectady were poorly plowed, and where they were plowed, there were very large snow banks in the entrance way to any driveway. This was true for the Schaffer Heights driveway as well. On top of it, there was a van stuck in the entrance to the driveway, and a poor guy trying to get his mother, who was in a wheelchair, up the driveway and into the building. The driveway is approximately 50 feet long from road to front door of Schaffer Heights.

I pulled off the side of the road and parked with my hazard lights on and went to help the man and his mother. We pulled his mom and the wheelchair up the long driveway through about a foot of snow. When we finally got them inside, I turned to head back down the driveway and saw that Dad was braving the storm and climbing through the snow bank. The van was able to free itself from the clutches of the snow and was on its way.

Meanwhile, Dad and I were making our way up the driveway through the snow and storm. As we were moving towards the building, a pickup truck with a plow came up the driveway and began to clear the driveway. A young couple was in the pickup truck and was helping people in need with their plow. They happened to be driving by and spotted us struggling to make our way into the building. We got out of their way and they cleared a path for us and the others that were sure to follow that night.

The snow was still coming down so hard that by the time Dad got in the house, there was about an inch of snow on his hat and shoulders that had accumulated in the 15-20 minutes we were making our way up the driveway.

With Dad safe and sound at home, I started off for my home in Scotia. It was slow going, but I got pretty close to my house. When I approached my house, I soon realized that there was a 4 foot snow bank blocking the entrance to my driveway! Once again, I pulled off to the side of the road with my hazard flashers on and parked my car. I climbed over the snow bank and made my way to the garage where I kept my snow blower. Eventually, all of the snow was cleared, my car was in the garage, and I was home safe and sound.

It was about 9:30PM before I was settled into my la-z-boy and calling to see how everyone else fared with the storm. Everyone had their own adventures, but we were all home and safe.
**JOHN**
(by Betty)

Letters: B, F and M

Without knowing it, John is following in Billy’s footsteps. Billy tried many things before he found his calling. John too has tried all kinds of occupations. His Karaoke show lasted 4 years. He really enjoyed doing that, but 7 days a week was wearing him out. He decided to take a break for awhile. Right now he’s a jack-of-all-trades. Part of the day he spends at Bed, Bath and Beyond unloading trucks, stocking shelves, etc. That keeps him in good shape. He likes variety, so several days he works for Gallo Florists. He enjoys driving the Gallo truck and meeting people as he delivers floral pieces. Just recently he was drawn back to what he really feels strongly about, which is Music, but he’s limiting himself to a couple of days a week. He also performs at weddings and social parties. He’s made several tapes and you can tell he enjoys singing.

**BILLY**
(by Betty)

Letters: M and R

Al spoke with Billy the other morning (evening in Thailand). He told Al that he’s looking into the possibility of enlarging his financial endeavors. His directorship of Star Translation is doing very well. Also, the International Day Care Center of which Billy is involved with has an enrollment of 40 children, mostly families of Ambassadors in the Bangkok area. Now he’s looking into an investment in a Resort about a 3 hour drive from Bangkok. It’s on a bay where dolphins like to swim. I guess that’s a tourist attraction.

Whatever he decides, we wish him luck. Billy’s wife, “J” is still managing her vegetarian restaurant, but is considering adding a menu that would attract more customers. Her brother, “T”, is working with her planning the changes. Billy faithfully Meditates daily. He’s been doing that for many years and finds it beneficial. We’re hoping that he’ll be coming home for a visit when springtime rolls around. If you would like to check out Billy’s activities on the web, check out these two web sites: Ploenchit International Kindergarten [www.ploenchitkg.com](http://www.ploenchitkg.com) Dolphin Bay Beach Resort [www.exploretailand.com](http://www.exploretailand.com)
When it was all said and done, the nor'easter on Christmas Day dumped snow throughout the Northeast, shutting down more than 100 miles of a major highway through central New York, canceling flights and causing power outages to thousands. It was the ninth fiercest snowstorm in the Albany area listed in National Weather Service records dating back to 1884.

At the height of the storm, a 103-mile stretch of the New York State Thruway was shut down between Syracuse and Amsterdam because plows couldn't keep up.

The full force of the storm was felt in the Mohawk Valley, where up to 36 inches of snow fell as fast as 5 inches per hour. The last time it snowed on Christmas in the Albany area there were 3.8 inches in 1985. It was really the right weather for Christmas, and the snowfall total in Scotia reached 23 inches at midnight, breaking the 1978 record of 11.8 inches.

The city of Schenectady, among others, declared states of emergency with local roads officially closed by early Thursday, the day after Christmas. About 2,600 Niagara Mohawk customers in eastern New York and 600 Central Hudson Gas & Electric customers in the Hudson Valley were without power.

Snow storms, power outages and closed roads aside, we had a great Christmas sharing a meal and trading gifts with the people we love.