

Greetings from
The Bird's Nest II
Christinas, 1983

Compared to all the excitement we reported in 1982, the Mount Rafter Stenkevics spent a relatively "normal" year in 1983. Richard is now a terrible toddler with seven going on eight teeth and about as many words. It is hard for us to believe that about a year ago he was a preemie on an apnea monitor. Julia, aged three, has a busy schedule of playgroups and classes every week, even though she attends no formal nursery school. We fully expect Marie, aged six, to teach Julia to read long before Julia hits kindergarten two years from now. Marie, a 1st grader at the public school only a few blocks away, is working hard at learning to read. Her problem is that her reading tastes are too sophisticated for her books. She would much rather have us read to her such books as A Cat in the Hat to Herself. Anne in Wonderland than read A Cat in the Hat to Herself. Anne not only excelled reading Brownies this year, as Marie joined a local troop. Anne still manages to mowings a week to work on professional projects, such as the translation of a 17th-century French pharmaceutical text and, more recently, a biographical essay on the French-Canadian novelist Anne Hebert. Tom has gotten involved in computers at Howard and into politics in Mount Rafter, where he worked on a voter registration drive which led to a clean sweep of the incumbents in the spring municipal elections. He is also active in PTA at Marie's school and is trying to set up a newspaper recycling program in Mount Rafter.

Our biggest event in 1983 was the visit of Anne's cousin Joey Scott from Scotland. After showing her around D.C. and N.Y.C., we led Joey up to New England, where she met her first cousins (Anne's paternal grandmother, her brothers and sisters) for the first time. It was great to see them catch up on several generations of gossip. Joey's visit was an excuse for us to visit Maine for the month of July. Anne's family is doing well, despite the death of their cherished Labrador, Rosie, this spring.

Anne's father had a luxuriant garden this year. He was particularly proud of his peas. Anne's mother is auditing a humanities course this fall and grumbles a lot about the Duke Ages. Jack and his wife, Debbie, are busy renovating their old farmhouse. Carl continues to work in several directions simultaneously, including No-Nukes and town politics. He may go into business for himself manufacturing a super-duper wood chipper he designed himself; that is, unless some mystery woman has other designs for him.

Tom's family has two new members: William Son Fittipo, who married Mary Beth on May 23rd in Salt Lake City. Billy and M.B. rode to their wedding on a motorcycle trailed by helium balloons. Leave it to M.B. to find the only other Italian in Utah! The second new member is Theresa Beth Gallo, born to Tom and Steve on Nov. 14th. Terry looks just like her "big sister" Christina, who is now two years old and has an A-1 personality. But poor Chris still does not know what has hit her. Don't be teaching 7th grade in Hoboken this year and has become quite a travel agent on the side. She always has a new trip up her sleeve. This summer she visited the newsguys in Utah and then moved on to Lake Tahoe. Eddie has found himself yet another apartment down in Las Vegas-on-the-Atlantic, and has acquired a pet coonaroo from Tom. Tom's Dad had a traumatic operation for polyps this fall, but is doing fine now. On a cruise to Bermuda this summer, Dad's wife Josephine broke her collar bone, but otherwise they said they had a great time!

All the best to you in 1984. Phoebe on Big Brother!

Tom, Anne, Marie, Julia and Richard Stenkevics

Sketches by Julia

Baking Richard's mark