

the Famlet monthly

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Dear Family,

I have never cared much for New Year's Eve parties. When I mentioned this late last year to a couple of work colleagues, one of them thought about it for a moment, smiled at me and then stated the obvious: "It's because you don't drink." The other friend agreed. Neither could imagine having to suffer through the length of an entire New Year's Eve party without the assistance of alcohol.

I am unlikely to take up drinking, but fortunately in recent years we have begun getting together with a small group of friends from church whose presence I am somehow able to tolerate for the duration of a standard New Year's Eve party. This year it was our good friends the Kempers and the Jenkinsons. I home teach the Kempers, Rick Kemper home teaches the Jenkinsons, and Colby Jenkins home teaches us. And so, standing in our kitchen at a few minutes past midnight on January 1st, we all agreed that we could count ourselves as home taught for December and January, and somehow the whole ordeal seemed worthwhile.

Not getting blitzed on New Year's Eve made it easier for Sophie and me to make our now-traditional pilgrimage up to Gaithersburg early the following morning for the Montgomery County Road Runners' annual New Year's Day 5K. It was Sophie's first run in a while, but she is a trooper. After climbing the last hill and making the final turn toward the finish line, Sophie asked whether she could stop because she felt like she was going to throw up. *She asked for permission to stop.* What a girl. I would have just stopped, but not Sophie. Sophie is a machine.

We all got together at Grandma's for "New Year's Day dinner," which was a make-up of sorts for not having gathered for Christmas dinner. It was nice.

The next night, Crystal and I went duckpin bowling with Grace. It was league night, and so we had to hang out forever to get a lane, but Grace insisted on waiting. I wish I had thought to snap pictures of some of the duckpin league bowlers. It is a segment of society with which I am somewhat unfamiliar. They pound the cigarettes and beer pretty hard, but, man, can they throw that duckpin ball down the lane! Takes it all of a second and a half to hit the pins.

We eventually got a lane. Grace beat us both.

The next night was our last with Hannah. In what might be becoming a new Saturday-night tradition, we binge-watched several episodes of "Once Upon A Time," a show which, it pains me to admit, I might be starting to enjoy.

At 5:30 the next morning, Sophie and I drove Hannah to BWI and kissed her good-bye. It would have been a sadder occasion had we not known that we were going to see her again in two weeks.

Losing Hannah meant losing a driver, which is unfortunate because the next night I had to drive Grace and friends to Brownies while Crystal, Sophie, and Lucy went to a Girl Scout service project at Manna Food Back. They stocked shelves and assembled backpacks of food to send home with students on Fridays

so they'll be able to eat over the weekend. (Many students get free breakfast and lunch during the week at school.) This sounds a lot like the kind of thing our youth (and others) do regularly at the Bishops' Storehouse, but no one has figured out yet how to get SSL hours for that, and so Manna Food Bank it is.

The next morning brought several inches of snow and our first school closure of the year. This resulted in about two minutes of frolicking in the fresh snow followed by four hours in the basement playing Mario Kart. Kids these days.

The following Saturday (we're all the way up to January 10th—it was an eventful month) Crystal and I were able to attend a reception at the temple visitors' center with President Eyring. His brother is the outgoing director of the visitors' center and the event marked the opening a truly amazing new exhibit—a 3D, scale model of the temple with the front wall removed, providing an interior view of every level in exquisite detail, from the furniture to the paintings on the walls to the 24 pulpits in the seventh-floor Priesthood Room. It is truly something to behold. President Eyring described the computers that were used to design and build the model as "science fiction." If I understood him correctly, there is one such model in one of the Salt Lake Temple visitors' centers and there will be another in Rome. He said he had a special feeling about Rome but did not elaborate. Among other things, he talked about his father's work with Einstein at Princeton. He said that President Hinckley used to say to him, "Hal, considering where you came from, you ought to be a lot better." It was a memorable evening. Good food, too.

Two nights later, we took Sophie and Grace back to the visitors' center for family home evening so they could see the exhibit. Lucy stayed home to study. The next morning I entered the kitchen to find her eating a pile of nuts. I told her she was what she ate and suggested that might explain some things. She replied, "Funny, I don't remember eating a sexy beast today."

And...that's Lucy.

The following Saturday we loaded up our 11-year-old Toyota Sienna, which is starting to look its age but still runs well, and at 3:00 Sunday morning we began our triennial 863-mile drive to Orlando. The girls and their bladders are maturing, and so the stops were less frequent and we rolled into Grandma and Grandpa Kent's fabulous cluster of timeshares at the Sheraton Vistana Villages at a little before 5:00 p.m. We were joined there by the aforementioned grandparents as well as the Roland-and-Marci Kents, the Brent-and-Brenna Fowlers, Darcy Dunn (these are all relatives of Crystal's) and, eventually, Hannah. Hannah was supposed to fly in on Sunday night, but a delayed flight out of Salt Lake caused her to miss her connection in Houston, resulting in Hannah's first-ever night all alone in a hotel room. She caught the first flight Monday morning and was no worse for the wear.

Hannah spent Monday and Tuesday with us at Universal (mostly doing Harry Potter stuff) and Wednesday at the Magic Kingdom before flying back to school on Thursday. Then she went skiing at Deer Valley with the Kempers on Saturday. It sounds like she's living the dream. For details of the rest of the week see the pictures. We are happy and hope you are, too.

Love, Tim et al





Left: Sophie and I approach the finish line at the annual New Year's Day 5K in Gaithersburg
Above: Sophie and Grace next to the new temple exhibit.
Below: The Magic Kingdom





Above: Grace with Frozone and Mr. Incredible. For more photos of her autograph quest, click the picture or [here](#).
Below: Lucy, Sophie and Grace in "Germany" at Epcot. For more photos of our Epcot funny hat quest click the picture or [here](#).
Right: Sophie and Caroline Kemper at Deer Valley.

