

15 January 1985

Dear Friends,

This first full year of our marriage has been an interesting one. Mary Beth has spent her first full year away from home. Our separation from family has made us both very self sufficient and has strengthened our marriage. It has been wonderful.

Our most exciting news is that we bought a house. After looking at over fifty properties we settled on a wonderful one-bedroom house with room for bedroom additions. Those of you who saw the pictures during Christmas will, I think, agree that it looks spacious. It is. Mary Beth is very pleased with the kitchen, and we both like the Den/Library, the bath and the master bedroom. We are planning to start the addition some time this year.

Our move was back-breaking. Mary Beth again packed all the household articles, and we packed the books and records. Richard and his '79 Jeep Wagoneer moved almost everything with a little help from our friends. One of Richard's colleagues was the greatest help, trading home-cooked dinners for a strong back! We did, however, have two months over which to do it, but the first month (September) was a record-breaking hot spell.

Richard had fun when we got the house, and upgraded the electric service to 200 Amps. He has mostly finished the installation of a new gas furnace and a 5 Ton central air conditioner.

Our jobs are going well. Mary Beth returned to IBM where she was given a job almost identical to the one she left in Canada - at an increased salary! Richard spent most of the year working on the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service's new facility designs. This is basically a network headquarters with some of the strangest requirements he had ever come across. Both of us got quite healthy raises this year, and are very pleased. Richard uses an IBM PC-XT in his work, and we bought one for home. Richard

enjoys using the machine, to say the least.

Mary Beth's Mom and Brother swapped residences this year, with Margaret moving to a three bedroom Condominium Apartment, while John and Janet took up residence in the family homestead (since 1901) on Yonge Street in Aurora. When we were back at Christmas (and we did have a white one) the changes which Janet and John had made in the house were most impressive. The greatest change was the re-installation of the doors between the dining room and the front living room, which, with the addition of a wall of custom made bookshelves, has been turned into a library.

Margaret was able to visit us for two weeks on each of two separate occasions this year. Once while we were renting our Condominium apartment and the second time for (American) Thanksgiving after we moved into our new house. Her visit was most opportune as we had run out of steam and she unpacked all the china and crystal. Thanks, Margaret!!!

We wish that we had better family news to report. At Christmas we managed to see Mary Beth's Uncle Harry who was suffering with lung cancer and brain tumors since November. The good Lord was merciful and spared him any further suffering on the seventh of January.

While we were eating lunch one day during our Christmas stay in Aurora, we saw our friend and former neighbor Nora Hillary taken out of her museum-house by an ambulance crew. She was suffering from Pneumonia. We visited her in hospital and she seemed to be coming along. We ask all of your prayers for this wonderful lady.

The one bright medical event of the year past was Richard's father's bout with breast cancer. They found it very early and performed a mastectomy. Dick is as chipper and full of vigor as ever.

We spent New Year's in Somers with Dick. Jay was in the hospital recovering from an operation to remove one of her para-thyroid glands. It had been producing too high a level of calcium in her blood. We are now waiting for the other three to wake up and take over. The operation and some flu-like infection which followed the operation knocked the stuffing out of her. She is home now, but sleeping a lot. Dick is taking excellent care of her. Hopefully she will be feeling a lot better and they will come and visit us this year.

We are sorry that we could not get together with those we missed on our Christmas trip back East. With all that was going on, two weeks was just too short a time for us.

But, we are very glad that we had the opportunity of visiting with those we could on this trip. It was really very nice seeing you again. It is a shame that so much distance separates us.

We would like to take this opportunity to invite you to come and visit us. We do have a sofa bed in the Den/Library, and you would be more than welcome.

We hope that you are not offended by our computerized letter. We would very much like to write all our friends personal letters or call them. Time pressures being what they are, we feel that this is the most efficient way of communicating with our friends and family. The love is still there, and we are thinking of you all.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very happy, healthy and prosperous 1985.

Love from us both,

Mary Beth and Richard Hess