

15 December 2002



Dear friends and family,

This last year was a good year for the Hackett family. Ron finally retired from the U. S. Air Force in July. His retirement was delayed four months because of the war on terrorism. After delaying everyone to keep critical skill sets from leaving the military, they finally started releasing folks to retire and separate. Ron took advantage of all the leave he had saved over the years and started his new job at SRS Technologies in April. Starting work while on terminal leave from the Air Force gave us a little extra spending money. Ron's and Debi's parents all came for his retirement ceremony, as did Aaron and Christina. Aaron and Christina plan to marry next May, and Aaron is working on his plumber's license.

Debi decided to get a job closer to home. She went to work part time for Factory Connection in Fayetteville and quit Hancock Fabrics in Huntsville. When school started in the fall, she signed up to substitute teach at the high school. She gets lots of calls and works more than she really intended when she started, but she enjoys it. We needed another vehicle now that Candi is driving, so Debi got a 1988 Ford Bronco II. It took a little work to get it fixed up, but Debi likes it much better than the Grand Am. She continues to sew, and was recruited by Ron's office to help build a large, inflatable sphere for one of Ron's projects. A machine at the Marshall Space Flight Center cut the gores, and Debi seamed them together. The finished product will be 16-feet in diameter, so this was no small effort.

Candi turning 16 this year and is now driving. She took over Debi's Grand Am and accessorized it into a real teen vehicle. Dad was a little embarrassed when he had to take it to a garage to get a tire repaired. She is doing well in school. She made the honor roll and was recently inducted into the National Beta Club honor society. She stays active in drama, show choir and the Lady Birds, a group of female vocal performers. Church also keeps her busy. In addition to all the special activities and camps, she also teaches children's church for the young children. Candi has a serious relationship with a young man named Jonathan. He will be moving to Georgia next weekend, so it will be a long distance romance.

We had planned to vacation at Niagara Falls this year, but we never made it. We had borrowed Debi's parent's motor home for the trip. We decided to take the cats with us, and Candi brought her best friend. The trip started on time, but things started going downhill. The first hour, the cats got sick. The second hour, we blew a tire. The third hour the transmission went out. There we were stranded in Bowling Green, Kentucky on a Saturday afternoon. Ron had to take a taxi back to Nashville to get a rental car. We finally made it home, took our pop-up camper and went to the Smokey Mountains instead.

Our second floor expansion project made significant progress this year. Last year we added Ron's office. Now Candi's new bedroom, a bathroom and a great room are nearing completion. The drywall work is done, and the plumbing is roughed in. Ron did all the electrical work himself. Candi and Jonathan painted the base coat on her new walls yesterday. Candi and Debi plan to sponge paint the walls and have several other decorating ideas they got from watching *Trading Spaces* on TV. Candi plans to move into her new room next weekend, just in time for Debi's parent's visit.

Hope the past year has been good to you and your family. If you ever find yourself in south central Tennessee, be sure to look us up. We'd love to have you stop by for a visit. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Love,
Ron, Debi and Candi

