



Happy Holidays from the Worcester Home

(down South in the 'burg - 2003 Edition)

Hi,

I hope my little bit o' Holiday cheer finds you enjoying this wonderful time of the year. As I have done the last couple of years now, I am enclosing a letter with a rundown of what has been happening in and around my life over the past twelve months. I will try to be brief, but I can tell you up front that it'll be a couple pages here. It's been a VERY interesting 2003...

For the first time in a LONG time, I will only have one W2 coming to the house this year, having spent the entire year with just *one* employer. I am still working as an eBusiness Architect (fancy name for a web developer/designer, which I picked for myself) for Chisano Marketing Communications, and I'm really enjoying my job there. I was a little bored at times the first few months I was there, and even second-guessed my decision to make the move and not even consider my former employer's offer to match Chisano's salary offer. However, we have had some great projects this year, I've learned a great deal, and I received an excellent review and salary increase back in October. I continue to do freelance work as well, though I didn't have as much side business this year as I did in 2002. I've spent a lot of time in recent months finishing up a web-based calendar that I will be marketing to the public under my own company's name (Perpetual Web Creations - <http://perpetual-web.com/>), and that should bring in some steady, residual income in the months and years ahead.

I didn't achieve my goal of running a marathon in 2003, but I have renewed that goal for 2004. Once I started running longer distances and running a few times a week, I began to experience a number of aches and pains in my legs. I even broke down and saw a sports medicine doctor back in January. After an examination and x-rays (my main problem was shin splints), they tell me that I was close to breaking my own legs! So I eased up a little, bought another pair of running shoes and it has been a long road to get back to running regularly without leg injuries. I am running a lot nowadays though, and just completed the 5-mile Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning. There is a marathon in April 2004 that I'm shooting for now.

Also in 2003, I continued to take guitar lessons and I'm finally starting to feel pretty comfortable with my abilities there. I just have an acoustic guitar for now and I'm far from being able to join a rock band or anything, but I am now able to play some of my favorite songs and I'm going to push my instructor to show me how to play from the sheet music from now on, instead of the guitar tabs.

I had the chance to take a few vacations this year, more than I've taken in the previous few years combined! Jay (my brother) won a sales contest with his former employer, and his reward was an all-expenses-paid vacation to Jamaica! Since he's such a great guy, he took me: his loving brother. We had a wonderful time in the island paradise and two weeks after we got back, headed to Arizona for a week to see our Aunt and Uncle in Phoenix, along with Jay's boys. In August, I spent a weekend in Cleveland with my girlfriend and her kids, and in September I made another trip to Texas to spend a weekend with my friend Greg and his wife. I took some great pictures from our trips to Arizona and Cleveland, and put them up on my web site: <http://shaunw.com/trips>. I don't know where I'll be heading next, but hopefully I have a few more great adventures ahead in 2004. I guess I'll have to get my own digital camera here soon, and stop bumming Mom and Dad's.

Also in 2004, I had the pleasure of finding someone very special to me. There is a young lady in our church named Julie that was going through a divorce, and looking for someone to do things w/ her oldest son (Tyler was 8 at the time). So, I began doing things with Tyler and his siblings (Julie has 5 beautiful little faces in her house): taking them to the movies, roller-skating, bowling, playing outside, etc. During our time together, Julie and I also fell in love. For

the first time in a long time for me, I found someone who was as crazy about me as I was about her. Julie filled my life and my heart with so much love and joy in such a short period of time, unlike anything I've ever experienced. However, after her divorce became final, the feelings of loss and failure from her marriage just came in and bowled her over. Add onto that the fact that she is raising five willful kids at home and taking 6 classes this past quarter in school – she just became very depressed, stressed and very BUSY. After several weeks of trying to make it work, it was obvious that it just wasn't going to, at least for now. So, Julie and I broke up at the end of October. We continue to be close friends, I still see her and the kids in church and out, and there is no weirdness or looming feelings when we spend time together. Just in the past few weeks, I have noticed that some of her old spark has begun to come back and that makes me happy. I don't know what the future may hold for any of us, but I am trying to move on and look for "the one" once again. I would like to continue to remain in the minds and lives of Julie and her kids though, as long as that's possible.

Also thanks to Julie, I have become slightly more involved in the church with my time and GREATLY more involved in my heart. I find myself praying several times a day now, and trying to be a better Christian, and a better man. I still have a long way to go and a number of obstacles to overcome in my life, but I feel closer to Christ today than I have in a *long* time and I am hoping to get more involved in the church in the year ahead, and continue to improve both my outlook on life and my witness to others.

The other Worcestersters here in the Dayton area are all doing well also. Sadly, my brother was unceremoniously let go from the company that sent him to Jamaica. Just a few months after the trip, where he was rewarded for having some of the best sales in the company, Jay was told that he wasn't selling enough! However, a couple months later he landed an even better job with Reynolds & Reynolds in downtown Dayton. R&R is a very solid company; arguably one of the largest and most successful ones in the area, and it's a much shorter drive for him to get to work. His boys, Nick and Chris, are great young men and thanks to their Uncle Shaun learned a couple new things this summer – how to swim and ride a bike! Chris has begun to ask about being baptized in church and I think Nick is slowly but surely beginning to hear some of what they are telling him at church and seeing the Lord work in his life.

Dad went on the Hilly Hundred bike ride with me again this year, and although he didn't make it too far, he continues to be one of the oldest folks out there and he can be proud of that alone. On Thanksgiving, he was telling all of us about a ride he heard about in Indiana next June that has a few different routes of varying lengths, and we are hoping to do that together – Mom, Dad, Jay and I. Dad is very active in a couple different groups within our church, and with other churches in the area, most notably the Urban Suburban Partnership where they try to bring people together in Christ from different races and economic backgrounds. Mom volunteers at church as well, continues to work part-time for a pet supply company near where I live here, and the two of them continue to enjoy dancing, biking and vacationing often. They take so many vacations; I rarely remember where exactly they are on a given weekend.

Are ya still with me? I think that's pretty much the highlights of the year. Maybe one of these days I'll be able to compose a one-pager. I hope and pray that the Holidays find you well, and best wishes for a joyous and prosperous New Year!

Happy Holidays,

Shaun