

Merry Christmas!

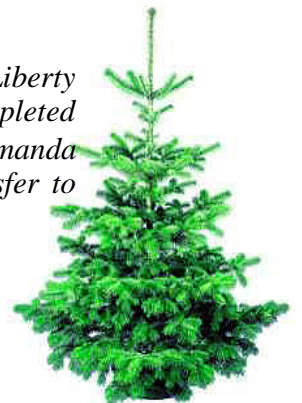
Another busy and fast year is about to end and new one about to start. We started out 2006 with Donna's Niece and Nephew which we had taken temporary custody of in August 2005, being returned to their parents in January 2006 per Florida Child Service instruction. While they have had several apartment moves since being returned to the parents, they are doing well in public school. We appreciate all of the help we received from East Pointe folks making the kids feel welcomed while they were in Jax.

While setting up at East Pointe on the day we were to have our May 2006 Awana awards and funfair evening, I found myself in major pain to the point that I could not pick myself up off of the church lobby bathroom floor. I was transported to the hospital by ambulance and found out that I had a kidney stone. They say that this pain is as close to having a baby as you can get. I must have delivered a 40 pound baby that day. No other incidences since. I hope it stays that way – no more babies.

My mother died in August after battling cancer for five years. The last few months were hard on her and also on dad. My youngest sister moved in to help out during my mother's last month which was a great relief. My sister has permanently moved in with my dad who is 82 years old. He is in good health and it is nothing for him to bike twenty miles a couple of times per week. Having my sister living with him insures he eats well otherwise it would be cold beans from a can.

Our older son, Chris (23) and at the time, his fiancé, Tawney, had planned their wedding for March 2007 but decided to move it up to October 2006. There was a small beach wedding with family and few friends attending followed by a reception at East Pointe. Donna finally got a girl in the family and all of us guys have had to take a back seat. Chris and Tawney are doing well with a nice apartment in San Jose and both busy working and starting their new lives together.

Our younger son, Shaun (22) informed us that he wanted to attend Liberty University to work towards a degree to become a Youth Pastor. He has completed his first sophomore semester with a 4.0 grade average. Shaun and Amanda Meeks, also at Liberty, have been dating and both have decided to transfer to Trinity College in Jacksonville for their next semester.



I'm now down to the wire shopping for Donna. It won't be as hard as last year though. While looking for some computer CDs I store under our bed, I found several gifts I got Donna last year that I forgot were there and failed to give her. I'm excited! They're fairly large, already wrapped and ready to go. I have no idea what is in them but I'm sure she'll be just as happy this year with them as she would have been last year. Now please don't say anything to her about me lucking out and not having to shop this year. You got me in real hot water the last few years.

In closing I want to say that I am excited with all of the neat things and high energy that we see happening at East Pointe. It has been a real joy with Pastor Kevin moving East Pointe towards discipleship and other innovative ministries at church. It has been a real pleasure working with our East Pointe Staff which may as well be called my family.

I also want to say thank you to each person who has been involved in my ministry responsibilities. Thank you for teaching our children during preschool and elementary Sunday mornings. Thank you for being involved in our Wednesday Awana and childcare, week after week. Thank you for being flexible and changing work positions when other volunteers can't make it at the last moment. Thank you for helping out during family campouts and other family events. Thank you to each MMO teacher and teacher assistants that makes life fun for the one hundred children who attend here each week. Thank you for those who prepare children's handouts and teaching materials. Thank you for those who have stepped up week after week to prepare and set up Wednesday night dinners and for those who stay for clean up afterward. Thank you for helping out with cleaning of our facilities after Sunday School classes end. Thank you for being involved in setup and running of our new Essentials Resource Store. Thank you for building and set up of the great train for our playground. Thank you for coming out on Saturday work days and spending your day fixing things up. Thank you for donating and installing cabinets and windows in doors. Thank you for raising monetary donations towards camp and the playground. I'm sure I have missed many others.

May you have a wonderful Christmas and I hope to work along side each of you in 2007. You are all great and I appreciate you much!

*God bless and Merry Christmas. Ken and Donna
View this and past Christmas letters at kenstaley.com/letters.html*

