



2005 began for us while in the midst of Daniela's first Ice show. She was involved in the production of 'Cinderella on Ice', which had nightly performances. The months of early morning rehearsals for this were added to her already busy skating schedule and needing to be at the ice rink every evening at 5pm proved to be quite a rigorous schedule. Opening night was December 15th and the last show was Jan 9th. The success of the performance and the experience gained outweighed the burden of daily early and late night driving backwards and forwards though, and we are grateful to have had the opportunity to be involved.

Another surprise in store for us at Christmas came from very good friends of ours in Texas. They decided that one bathroom for our family of six was inadequate, and generously made it possible for us to add on to our home. The builders arrived in February, and left us in April. We now have a lovely en-suite, which was added on to the room our boys were in. Peter and I now

enjoy a lovely view of the Garden from our bedroom, which, unbeknown to us at that time, would be such a blessing as I spent many weeks recuperating in bed. The alterations have also allowed for a study area for me, which means that all of my paperwork does not have to overflow our bedroom any more. We are very blessed indeed to have such a lovely home now, and we thank the Lord for sending us such practical encouragement through our friends.

Our home schooling and extra curricular schedule carried on amidst the building alterations - despite the interruptions. The boys considered their 'homeless' state quite an adventure and actually enjoyed sleeping in the living room for a few weeks.

At 14, Andrea has enjoyed playing on a high school Tennis squad, she is a patrol leader in Girl Guides and is still actively participating in Irish folk dancing. She particularly enjoys the hard shoe dancing. The girls are occasionally called upon to give Irish demonstrations and it has been rewarding to watch so much growth in this discipline. Andrea has also been a committed junior youth leader at church and even participated in a weeklong outreach up the coast in George. Andrea passed the Royal School of Music grade three exams for piano, and the grade two exams for voice.

Daniela, at 12 spends much of her week at the ice rink. She joined a synchronized skating team this year, and towards the end of the year tried out for a more advanced team as well. This, in addition to her individual lessons and 'off ice' ballet keeps her at the ice rink 5 days a week. Daniela's Irish dancing has improved in leaps and bounds as well, and she has won trophies in both skating and dancing. Daniela passed the grade three exams in piano as well. This heavy schedule would not be possible without Grandma's unflinching participation in lifts to and from the ice rink.

Christopher has enjoyed self-defense classes this year and has continued in guitar and piano lessons. Calvin finished his last year at pre-school and will join our home schooling adventures next year. He is more than ready for school. His pre-school teacher's report described Calvin as "An Orator in the making!"

As the time for our June Great Commission Summit arrived, I was feeling rather tired and not well. During the Camp I began to deteriorate and by the time Peter drove me to the Hospital I had a full-blown case of Hepatitis A. My recovery after a week in Hospital was considered good enough for me to be discharged, but my condition deteriorated despite spending so much time in bed at home. We began to home school from my bed and prayed for more strength and

energy. By August my blood picture was not looking good at all, and I was sent for a liver biopsy. I arrived, this time at Groote Schuur Hospital with an over night bag, and ended up staying for a month! This required a major shift in plans for our family, but of course this came as no surprise to God. He had already set plans in motion for my folks to be able to come out to South Africa a month early. Peter assumed more domestic responsibilities and the girls learned overnight what it was like to be a mommy!

Once Peter left for a State side ministry tour while I was in the hospital, my Mom and Dad literally took over running the Hammond family home. The children never missed a beat in their busy schedule as the grandparents delivered them safely to and from their lessons. Also, I had arranged for a maths and science tutor to come and help us before I fell ill. This too was therefore wonderfully in place as I lay in hospital praying that the children would be OK. It has certainly been a learning curve for us all, and I marvel at how the Lord graciously put all things in place.

Since my release in September, my health has steadily improved. Ladies at our mission arranged for meals 5 days a week for us for several weeks in a row. And while I spent a lot of time in bed into October, I am now up to a nearly normal schedule. We pray that my energy levels will increase by the New Year and that I will be able to participate in some of my activities again. I look forward to starting grade one with Calvin, grade four with Christopher, grade six and seven with Daniela and grade nine and ten with Andrea.

Thank you to all of you who sent emails, cards and encouraging letters. A family in Arizona even made it possible for me to enjoy the healing benefits of Mangosteen juice. We have never doubted God's grace, His provision, His plan and the love of our friends during this challenging year. It is our earnest prayer that we would stay in the center of God's will for our ministry and our family. Despite what our critics and enemies say, we truly seek to serve Him more faithfully, more diligently and without wavering in the New Year.

May God grant all of you His joy and the peace that only a relationship with Him can afford.

With love and appreciation
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