

# Herzmann Family Christmas Letter 2023

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Robert Herzmann<sup>3</sup>, AND Charlotte Herzmann<sup>3</sup>

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## Abstract

Behold, the one Christmas Letter that you will actually read and the only one requiring multiple dictionary consultations to decipher its sesquipedalian prose.

## 1 Materials and Methods

Our family comprises Daryl “Daryl” (45), Elizabeth “Liz” (sum of subsequent five prime numbers greater than 2), Margaret “Maggie Moo” (10), Robert “Bruh” (9), and Charlotte “Burger” (6). The cat-shaped void in our hearts persists.

### 1.1 Housing and Domestics

We remain at our permanent house, which will one day serve as our mausoleum. The only repair was having both garage door openers conspicuously fail within a week of each other. We purchased a new couch with a chaise lounge. The chaise is a popular spot for the children to bond whilst observing screens.

Our lone tree, a once majestic ash, was ravished by the insidious *Agrilus planipennis*, the emerald ash borer. Figure 1 shows the tree’s demise at the hands of a teenage arboriculturist violating numerous OSHA regulations. It has been replaced by a nascent *Liriodendron tulipifera*, tulip tree.



Figure 1: Arboricide in action.

### 1.2 Conveyances

Without neither sufficient funding nor a lottery windfall, we have abandoned prospects of purchasing a *Ford F150 Lightning*. For those of you that contributed funds, they remain in escrow. Our ancient minivan and chaste *Honda Pilot* will suffice for now. They will also make envious rides for the kids to drive once they are of legal age and/or the parents get tired of driving them around everywhere.

### 1.3 The Matrimonial Partnership

As of and even after authoring this correspondence, we remain married. There was a brief scare when a contracted Photographic Chronicler posted family photos to *Facebook* without Daryl included. Thankfully, Photoshop was able to rectify the situation.

Daryl experienced multiple mid-life crises after deciding to train for a marathon (Figure 2), which included growing long hair. Schadenfreudian pleasure is still found with his daily automotive purgatory commute to the altar of productivity at Iowa State University.

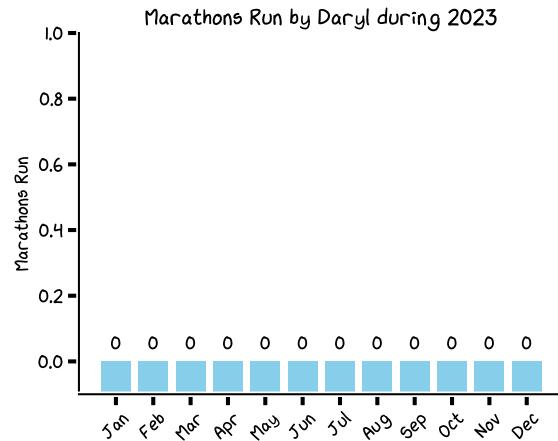


Figure 2: Prodigious training result.

Liz denotes that nothing of consequence has changed in her life over the past year. She still teaches at Southview Middle School here in Ankeny and allocates all other time to the children.

## 2 Miss Charlotte

Charlotte opines: I love my mom and dad. I like going on trips, it's the best. I do a sport. I like to read *Dogman*. I like 1<sup>st</sup> grade. I love you. To elaborate slightly, she very much enjoys school and spending time with her friends. She likes soccer and will be trying basketball and volleyball soon. As her great-grandmother's namesake, she continues to be a fiery and loving spirit.

## 3 Mr Robert

4<sup>th</sup> grader Robert wanted an AI to creatively phrase his activities: Robert's leisure activities include digital recreation, with a preference for the competitive platform known as *Brawl Stars*. This virtual environment provides an outlet for his strategic thinking and competitive spirit. He demonstrates sustained engagement in the sonic arts, specifically focusing on the piano. This dedication was recently showcased during a public performance. He has also shown a strong affinity for the written word, particularly the magical world of *Harry Potter* and the humorous insights of *Calvin and Hobbes*.

## 4 Miss Maggie

I'm in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, my last year of elementary school. I got the opportunity to start band at school and I have now played clarinet in one out of my two band concerts. I got the opportunity to lead my school's "Awesome Assembly". I am also in yearbook club again. Outside of school, I continue to play volleyball and now am on an Ankeny volleyball team (AVBA). I continue to fulfill my passion of dancing and was in my 3rd nutcracker performance. This year I rocked being a ballerina doll, Russian dancer, and a flower in *The Nutcracker*. I found a new passion of crocheting and have made a chicken, penguin, and a whale. I also recently got into graphic design and made the family Christmas card this year. I will again this year request toiletry items [editorial: to donate, not that parents fail to provide such things] instead of birthday presents for my 11<sup>th</sup> birthday in January.  
— Love Maggie

## 5 Family Trips

We took a spring break expedition to the vibrant metropolis of St. Louis. Being at the top of the Gateway Arch on a windy day offered a more nauseating than usual view of the city. We explored the Meramec Caverns, which was a much different experience than previous claustrophobic ventures underground.

Our family vacation trip was to Yooper Michigan, specifically Munising (Figure 3), in August. We were filled with disquietude to learn that the *Edmund Fitzgerald* was not destined for Cleveland as sung by Lightfoot (1976), but rather was headed to Detroit. This was apropos, sans the wreck, for our return trip home as Liz and the kids disembarked in Cedar Rapids by the airlines as Daryl raced them to Des Moines in the minivan. The kids got an authentic first experience of the horrors of airline travel.



Figure 3: Family pictured in front of Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore.

Acknowledgments Our family wishes to thank you for the generous support, prayers, cards, gifts, and visits you have provided us in the past year. Color page charges associated with this missive may preclude the children from attending college. AI attempted to tone down my rhetoric, but failed. Full LATEX source of this letter can be found on Daryl's Github page.

## 6 References

Github, 2023: <https://github.com/akrherz/akrherz>, last viewed on 9 Dec 2023.  
Lightfoot, Gordon. "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald." *Summertime Dream*, Reprise Records, 1976.