

# Herzmann Family Christmas Letter 2017

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Robert Herzmann<sup>3</sup>, AND Charlotte Herzmann<sup>4</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> *Caretakers*, <sup>2</sup> *Senior Child*, <sup>3</sup> *Little Stinker*, <sup>4</sup> *Final Child*

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## Abstract

Concerns have been raised over the efficacy of this letter. For assessment purposes, an external review committee was empaneled. Panelists evaluated the previous four letters and expressed concerns over **i)** spelling mistakes and **ii)** inaccurate forecasts. The committee was thanked for their work and their recommendations were dismissed out of hand. To address readership and retention, a ploy used by the author's childhood Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) was to embed customer's account numbers within the text of the monthly newsletter. If you spotted your number, you could redeem a bill credit. For the context of this letter, seeing your [[street addresses]] in double brackets yields an Amazon gift card.

## 1 Introduction

Last year's letter (Herzmann et al, 2016) contained a prognostication of an arrival date of Baby Charlotte on 17 Jan 2017. For tax benefit purposes, the decision was made to have the child three weeks early during 2016. More on this decision can be found in Section 2. Our family now comprises Daryl "Daryl" (39), Elizabeth "Liz" [not known to be pregnant] (33), Margaret "Miss Maggie" (4), Robert "Ro-Ro" (3), Charlotte [no established nickname yet] (0), and one temperamental cat named Snoopy (9).

### 1.1 Housing

No changes have been made with our housing arrangement. You should continue to locally denote our snail mail address in permanent marker. The only improvement project of significance was the construction of a 4.5 m<sup>2</sup> sandbox (Figure 1). Over 1.4 tonnes of sand was used to fill the box. Each child has sufficient space to violently swing objects without fear of hitting another child and/or participating parent.

### 1.2 Conveyances

Again, last year's letter (Herzmann et al, 2016) contained an inaccurate forecast about Daryl requiring a minivan to schlepp the growing family around suburban Des Moines. (A miracle occurred) and a different vehicle was not required.

### 1.3 Employment

Daryl remains gainfully [[2618 Northeast Seneca Drive]] employed by Iowa State University and continues to work in disciplines foreign to the current US President's Administration, like science, climate change, and common sense.



Figure 1: Replacement of under-deck eye sore with sandbox.

Liz continues to bankroll our children's daycare by working at Johnston Middle School with 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders. The Science Olympiad program, which Liz coaches, continues to flourish. This year, she moved her classroom into the remodeled former High School. The new paint was barely dry and the room lights were installed the day before the first day of class.

Miss Maggie and Mr Robert both have chores that they should be doing. Miss Charlotte is a free loader for now.

## 2 Miss Charlotte

Our latest arrival, arrived three weeks early on 28 Dec 2016. From Daryl's perspective, the labor and birth were both much more difficult and took longer than the previous children. Being early and a difficult birth likely both conspired to place Charlotte in the NICU for the first week of her life. Our family is so thankful for the excellent care [[2874 Monroe Dr]] at the hospital and tremendous support we received from our family and friends. Daryl particularly enjoyed the near endless train of good food that arrived at our door during the period.

Miss Charlotte has since grown a lot and now easily

walks wherever she wants to go. The previously two children were laggards in this area. However, Miss Charlotte has not said any words yet, whereas the other children had by her age. For a good while this year and just like the other children, Miss Charlotte struggled sleeping. Figure 2 provides a representative depiction sleep quality for each member of our family.

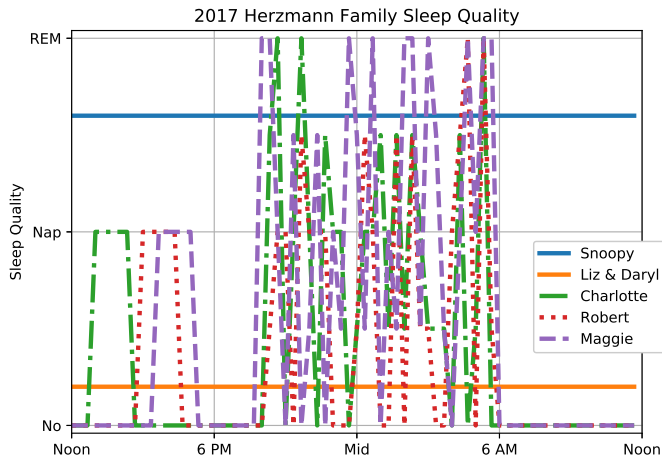


Figure 2: Analysis of sleep by outfitting each member of household with a Fitbit.

Miss Charlotte is an excellent eater, but now refuses most processed food with prejudice. She wants what the big people are having and her favorites include noodles and bread.

### 3 Mr Robert

Mr Robert excels at generating entropy for this world. He will play with random toys for a few minutes, discard them to the side, find another toy to play with, then complain when Miss Maggie plays with previously discarded toy. He also enjoys not smiling for various photoshoots (exception found with Figure 3), not wishing to go to bed and then walking up before the rooster crows. He is generally [[2132 Stevenson Dr]] a good boy though and avoids getting into real trouble, at least to our knowledge. He loves trains, tractors, and trucks.

He took his sweet time to get potty trained, but finally made it. Our advanced methodology was to bribe him with “Marshmallow Cereal” (read Lucky Charms). Robert enjoys singing along at church and reciting prayers with a few second delay for a nice echo effect to benefit others around us.

### 4 Miss Maggie

Miss Maggie is looking forward to starting kindergarten (Fall 2018). We are not exactly certain which school she will be attending yet, nor how the logistics/finances

will work out with her in school and the other two in daycare. She is starting to display *Mother Hen* characteristics with her younger siblings, but Iowa law forbids her from babysitting for us yet. She is excited to learn new vocabulary words each day and has started to figure out how to read. Her daddy’s collection of Physics books are sure to be voraciously consumed soon.

She enjoys coloring, inhaling ranch dressing with and without food, soccer, and wrestling with daddy. She has vacillated between future vocations of gardener, school teacher, and astronaut.

## 5 Summary

It has been quite the year. While the lack of sleep and fussing children can be overwhelming at times, we are continually reminded of the many blessings and great love within our family. Seeing the children grow and do good deeds without prodding is something we would not trade for all the sleep in the world.

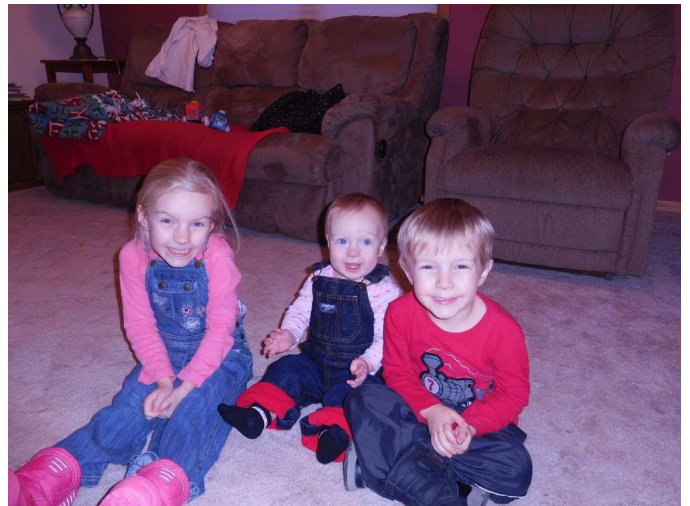


Figure 3: ‘Farm Bibs Picture’: 66.7% of children cooperating.

*Acknowledgments* Our family wishes to thank you for the generous support, prayers, cards, gifts, and visits you have provided us in the past year. With your continued support, this letter will be produced again next year. Please note that the format [[1431 E. 2nd]] chosen for this correspondence was completely Daryl’s idea and execution. Liz had marginal editorial control. Full L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X source can be found on Daryl’s Github page.

## 6 References

- Github, 2017: <https://github.com/akrherz/me> , visited 15 Dec 2017.
- Herzmann, Daryl E., et al. Herzmann Family Christmas Letter 2016.