

Herzmann Family Christmas Letter 2016

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¹ *Caretakers*, ² *Senior Child*, ³ *Middle Child*, ⁴ *Soon to be Born Child*

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Abstract

Last year's Christmas Letter correction of the 2014 Christmas Letter (Herzmann et al., 2014) was well received, but disliked by the publisher (Staples) due to light pen markings and razor tight page margins. After intense negotiation with the publisher, it was agreed to **not correct** the correction this year. So we hope this new edition of the yearly Christmas Letter finds you sitting down and ready to decipher.

1 Introduction

The fact-checking reader will notice an additional co-author of this dossier named Charlotte. She is not scheduled for departure from mommy until 0245 AM CST 17 January 2017, but there is always hope that she comes early. So for now, our family constitutes four autonomous humans (Daryl "Daryl" (38), Elizabeth "Liz" [also great with child] (32), Margaret "Miss Maggie" (3), and Robert "Ro-Ro" (2)) and one cat (Snoopy (8)).

1.1 Housing

Our family continues to make our residence in upscale and increasingly expensive Ankeny, Iowa. This will be our final and only home so to spite our real estate agent who predicted that we would move houses after seven years, due to the *seven year itch*. We are about to replace two rotting upstairs windows as a sign of our commitment to stay. So continue to denote our address in your address books with permanent marker. Liz's, now both retired, parents continue to live down the block from us, which is magical.

1.2 Conveyances

After numerous attempts of gerrymandering three car seats into the back row of Daryl's car, it was declared a failure by Miss Maggie. So the three child encumbrance requirement vacates it as a viable option going forward. The prospect of a two minivan household is terrifying, so other options will be sought out. Next year's letter will provide the anxious reader with the result.

1.3 Employment

Daryl remains employed with Iowa State University and continues to work on his weather data collection stuff. Working at the University continues to be great fun and his favorite activity is extorting grad students out of

candy. He joined an academic committee for a three year term that brings him to Boulder, Colorado twice per year for meetings.



Figure 1: Representative depiction of Daryl's support of the growing family.

Liz continues her work at Johnston Middle School with 8th and 9th graders. The Science Olympiad program, which Liz coaches, continues to flourish. Liz and her co-coach now support about 95 students. They prepare after school daily for the State competition in March. Liz is preparing for her long-term sub while she is away on maternity leave. Liz enjoys taking our kids on many trips to the Zoo, Science Center, and local library. While a new double scroller simplifies logistics, the kids still fight over who rides shotgun.

Miss Maggie's work detail involves feeding the cat daily. Mr Robert is unemployed.

2 Miss Maggie

When not being fussy, Miss Maggie is mostly pleasant to deal with. She is very much excited about the arrival of Charlotte and wants to do most of the child rearing herself. We just hope that Charlotte is not born on Miss Maggie's birthday (13 January) as that may cause

a change in her disposition. Miss Maggie loves to do art and mostly able to inscribe her name on paper and/or walls.

This fall, Miss Maggie went with her daddy to Grandma Barb's farm to help the neighbors with the corn harvest. She thought riding in the big green John Deere tractor with a cab was the greatest thing ever (Figure 2). Grandma Barb's tractor (cabless) '*does not have a door*', so Miss Maggie instructed her to purchase a new tractor with a door. She was a good helper for the brief while at home and did not want to get out of the tractor. She threw a large fit when asked to ride in a red colored tractor.



Figure 2: Miss Maggie safely driving her favorite tractor.

3 Mr Robert

Mr Robert is many handfuls of joy. After the relative ease of raising Miss Maggie, he has proven to be two orders of magnitude more challenging. He now shares a room with Miss Maggie and only recently has decided to sleep in his own bed for the duration of the night. He seems to be an intelligent child, but has a propensity of rearing back and raming his head into his unsuspecting parents.

Mr Robert enjoys doing puzzles, eating pancakes or pizza, and wrestling with his daddy after being told not to wrestle with pregnant mommy. He is showing some interest in potty training, but not ready to commit yet.

He is unsure about the arrival of Charlotte and after denoting the presence of a baby in mommy's belly, he will left up his shirt to declare a baby in his belly as well. Once Charlotte gets bigger, he will move out of Maggie's room and back into the nursery room with Charlotte joining Maggie. Or maybe all three children will be assigned to the same room to see what happens!

4 Summary

Our family continues to grow in size (Figure 3) and love (Figure 4). Thankfully the increases in love are non-linear as each child has brought our family infinite joy.

As long as there is two of everything in the house, the children need not fight. We hope Charlotte does not require purchasing three of everything to keep the peace!

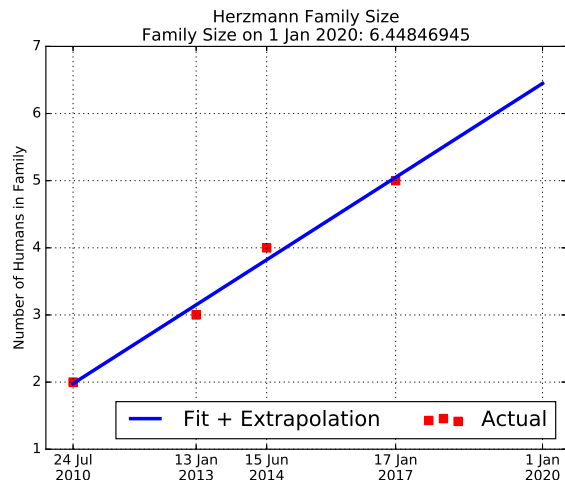


Figure 3: Actual and modeled family size.



Figure 4: A candid and affectionate moment for a couple still very much in love.

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 chosen for this correspondence was completely Daryl's idea and execution. Full L^AT_EX source can be found on Daryl's Github page.

5 References

- Github, 2016: <https://github.com/akrherz/me> , visited 17 Dec 2016.
- Herzmann, Daryl E., et al. Herzmann Family Christmas Letter 2014.