

# Herzmann Family Christmas Letter 2020

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Robert Herzmann<sup>4</sup>, AND Charlotte Herzmann<sup>5</sup>

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17 December 2020

## Abstract

Our seminal 2018 Christmas Letter (Herzmann et al., 2018) first attributed the passage of another year’s worth of time to attrition. The same was not to be true for the year 2020. This letter summarizes our fortunate year of surviving *COVID-19*, the derecho of 10 August 2020, virtual schooling, and the presidential election.

## 1 Introduction

The size of our family is unchanged this year and comprises Daryl “Daryl” (42), Elizabeth “Liz” (28+), Margaret “Maggie Moo” (7), Robert “Ro-Ro” (6), Charlotte “Charly Friend” (3), and one cat with a dog’s name of Snoopy (12). We are thankful to have survived the various calamities of 2020 and the children from each other.

### 1.1 Housing

Our lone house has not moved and thankfully survived the 15 minutes of 70-80 MPH ( $\approx 35 \text{ ms}^{-1}$ ) wind gusts during the August derecho. Our lone tree was shielded by the house and was not damaged. The only damage is shown by Figure 1 with the cheap charcoal grill busting out a side of a poorly constructed deck. The immediate lesson learned was to acquire a propane grill (Hill, 2003).



Figure 1: We will rebuild and have already rebuilt with screws this time.

To buoy the economy, we decided to effort a large number of remodeling projects around the house. We a) replaced the roof, b) replaced six exterior doors and windows (Figure 2), c) replaced kid destroyed dining room carpet with plank, d) replaced kitchen peninsula with an island and e) Daryl finally got a broken kitchen cabinet fixed after eight years of supposed diligent home ownership.

### 1.2 Employment

Daryl is somehow still employed by Iowa State University even though he only moves between the computer, refrigerator, and bathroom each day. His productivity is at an all time low with one or more children home each day. Good times. Not driving to work each day does potentially save money though (Figure 3).

Liz continues to vacillate between full time virtual, hybrid, and full time in-person teaching depending on which sport the school needs to be in physical session for in order to qualify for tournaments. She looks forward to being on the other side of the pandemic and enjoying more time with all of you.

The children understand the compensation side of doing work, but have yet to develop expensive tastes that would motivate the desire to do more work for more compensation. We continue to work on instilling American Values in this regard.

## 2 Miss Charlotte

The astute reader would denote that Charlotte’s nickname last year was *Charly Burger*. The *Burger* portion apropos for causing family grief. She has acutely conceptualized this and no longer wants that moniker. “*I am not a Burger*” she says and so we call her *Friend* now. She enjoys hoarding mommy’s dry

erase markers and spilling trivial amounts of food on her clothes so that she can sashay around the house in her underwear. For this letter, she wants to type her name for you: **C H A R L O T T E**.

### 3 Mr Robert

Robert says that Zoom schooling is the best form of schooling. He has a school provided Chromebook of his own that he diligently only does his assigned work on and does not spend time watching YouTube, PBS Kids, nor football highlights. He has the same teacher as Maggie had for first grade, as was also the case for kindergarten. Maggie is the angel student that tricks the teachers into wanting the next sibling in line.

Robert is happy for the big snowfalls we have already had this season. He loves to go outside and push snow in arbitrary directions. He likes wrestling with his daddy and eating grilled cheese sandwiches.



Figure 2: Children holding up rafters whilst we replace window in load bearing wall. Hiya OSHA!

### 4 Miss Maggie

Maggie continues her training in the various forms of dance and likes the new jazz routines at her weekly class. She loves her new loft bed as shown by Figure 2 and particularly sleeping in everyday possible. She and Robert got such beds this year and neither have yet to fall out at night. She loves school, playing with her siblings, reading, and her parents. Check back next year to see which of those items have changed.

When outside, she loves to swing on our new-to-us swing set and porch swing. We currently do not have inside swings. She is excited about receiving her first communion this coming April. On her computer, she likes doing her school work and nothing else, of course, like say PBS Kids.

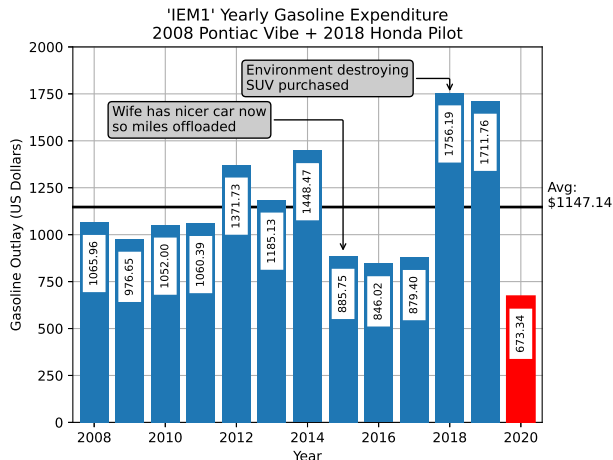


Figure 3: Any gas budget savings from 2020 were lost in day-trading \$SPX options.

### 5 Marriage Synopsis

This past June, Liz and Daryl were hoping to celebrate their 10 year wedding anniversary (24/7 2010) on a trip, without children (gasp), to Jamaica, but alas. An attempt, again without children, will be made this coming June. So hopefully next year’s letter will have the obligatory “couple in their swim-suits looking perfectly in love” photo. Until that time, you will have to take our word for it.

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 and work compensation that can pay outrageous color print costs, this letter will be produced again next year. Please note that the format chosen for this correspondence was completely Daryl’s idea and execution. Liz had marginal editorial control and Reviewer #3’s comments were ignored. Full L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X source can be found on Daryl’s Github page. This work was **not** sponsored by the National Science Foundation.

### 6 References

Github, 2020: <https://github.com/akrherz/me> , visited 17 Dec 2020.

Herzmann, Daryl E., et al. Herzmann Family Christmas Letter, 2018.

Hill, Hank. *The Miseducation of Bobby Hill*. King of the Hill; S7E16, 2003.