

I WILL HONOUR CHRISTMAS IN MY HEART, AND TRY TO KEEP IT ALL THE YEAR.

CHARLES DICKENS, A CHRISTMAS CAROL

As I honour Christmas 2000 in my heart, I think fondly of friends like you and the personality traits which you possess that qualify you to receive this Inglis holiday newsletter.

ANIMAL TALES

All Quiet on the Inglis Animal Front, except for the occasional blood-curdling shriek from our very recent addition, Maya the cat. Remember Catticus was a refugee from Burton's college days; Maya is a refugee from Erin's college days.



Backpacking with Ian, Snowy's ready for the trail in her new booties.

Snowy stares at her new housemate curiously as if examining a large and unusual tropical insect. Catticus, on the other hand, takes an intensely personal interest in the newcomer. With the occasional pounce by Catticus to convey his rightful position in the hierarchy, every day of the first two weeks was December 7th for poor Maya. But now they appear to have signed a peace treaty.



Maya, Snowy, & Catticus sharing The Coveted Spot

IAN

It's 7:40 a.m. and raining outside. I'm eating breakfast when all 6-foot 4-inches of Ian fills the dining room door frame. He's wearing a large dark parka over his backpack, so that he looks like a combination of Zorro, André the Giant, and Quasimodo.

Ian (holding up a very large crowbar and asking in his booming, earnest voice): "I've gotta move the concrete bumpers in the parking lot. Do you think the bus driver will let me on with this thing?"

Me (spoon frozen mid-air thinking 'if I were driving that bus I'd just keep on drivin', pretend I never saw the guy'): "Sure."

Thus begins another banner day for Ian. He still practices criminal defense law, backpacks, works increasingly on local transportation issues, and has the parking spaces at his building perfectly aligned.



the well dug by Ian & his brother for a water source

He's made two backpacking trips this year to Big Bend National Park with his brother, who wears camouflage a lot. On one trip the first night out they ran out of water in the low mountains. All ended well, though, as they were able to find water by digging a shallow well in an arroyo bottom.

In other news, Ian's motto remains "Function Over Form". John carries the weighty responsibility of folding the household laundry, and since his shoe size surpassed Ian's, it's been hard distinguishing his white socks from Ian's.

Wishing to be helpful, I collected all of Ian's white socks and gave them to him with a red marker instructing him to place a distinguishing mark on the socks, thus simplifying John's task.



John demonstrating Ian's not-so-subtly marked socks



Toni & Ian dining out for anniversary of wedding date: March 12, Paleolithic Age

WHAT WAS I THINKING? OK, I was thinking a small, subtle red dot on the underside of the sock. But Nooooo. Ian places two giant red Xs on each sock.

Nothing new from years past — still neonatal nursing, writing for the healthcare network, community healthcare volunteer work, blah, blah, blah.

This year, though, I did do something I've never done before: a presidential campaign ad. I talked unscripted from a nurse's point of view for 30 seconds about Bush's record on health care in Texas. It aired on 100 TV stations in 13 swing states right up until Unelection Day. My 15 minutes of fame came when it aired in its entirety on *The NewsHour with Jtm Lehrer*.

BURTON & MELISSA

Burton & Melissa are still happily married and living in Dallas. Burton continues with his arboriculture, and Melissa continues as a neurosurgery scrub-nurse.

Last year I mentioned that Burton was awarded the first ever National Garden Conservancy Preservation Fellowship. It ended in April, and he enjoyed it.

Burton had his 15 minutes of fame this year when Monica Lewinsky came to Dallas for a book signing. A friend of Burton's gave her a private dinner party, and Burton, who owns a giant smoker and a reputation for making the best barbecue around, was asked to cook for the party.



*Melissa & Burton
(the cook) camping
with us at
Enchanted Rock*

ERIN

Turning 21 this year, Erin is in her last year at UT. She's studying hard for the MCAT (medical college admission test) which she's convinced she'll fail miserably despite irrefutable evidence to the contrary. She works as a clinical assistant on a hospital oncology floor and at Chez Nous, a French restaurant close to her place.

She still lives in a downtown apartment where her neighbors were not impressed with her cat Maya's hilarious practical joke of tripping them on their way down the stairs. Nor did they appreciate Maya's weekly Call of the Wild — the killing and dismembering of local pigeons for their viewing pleasure. No sense of humor or imagination, those people. City folk.



*John & Erin with various cousins
(in September)*

JOHN

John's a junior this year. Last spring he had a stellar baseball season as shortstop and was even voted the season MVP. That's MOST VALUABLE PLAYER OF THE SEASON, in case any of you missed that.

After the Junior Varsity played its season, he was invited up to play with the Varsity team as shortstop for the play-offs last May. Out in the



*happy to be out of ICU
(in May)*

sticks of Central Texas, some 20 miles from the nearest hospital, he got beaned in the temple by a carelessly thrown baseball during the pre-game warm-up, causing a bleed into the brain. (That's epidural hematoma for you medical folks, and no, he wasn't wearing a helmet because he wasn't batting.)

The emergency surgery was an unqualified success, even though by all accounts he should not have survived. If this sounds horrifying it's because it was. He is just the same though, except that every morning he wakes up with an uncontrollable urge to spew sports trivia back and forth with his father and to play on-line computer games. No, wait — he was

like that before the accident.

But seriously, John truly is a MVP in every way. He's a living monument to its being Bedford Falls at the Inglis domicile, though it came way too close to becoming Pottersville.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A BRIGHT NEW YEAR!

This time of year we set aside life's difficulties great and small, and raise our glasses to one another with goodwill, laughter, and joy in our hearts. Here's to you. Have a merry holiday and a Year 2001 to remember.

Love, The Inglises

