

Happy Holidays from The Scherzingers

Well despite our predictions, 1998 turned out to be a pretty good and interesting year. The most significant event is that we are having a new house built! The new house is nearly completed and is located only about one mile from our current home. That means the kids don't have to change schools and our phone numbers won't change. It's ours as of Dec 23, but we don't move until Jan 12. Bruce has maintained a web site since the beginning of construction, so if you are interested you can see the details at <http://bigfoot.com/~zinger/newhouse.html>.

Eileen and Bruce happily celebrated their 15th wedding anniversary on October 15th. We've lived in Virginia now for 12 of those years, so I guess we can officially call this our home.

Bruce is still working part-time for APL, at least until the launch of the FUSE spacecraft (currently scheduled for late March '99). He started working at Lockheed Martin in Rockville, MD, in late August. The new job entails maintenance and upgrading the FAA's en-route Air Traffic Management system. The big upgrade, which Bruce is scheduled to start working on in February, will allow airlines to dynamically schedule flights. This new system



will eliminate the need for fixed altitude "lanes" and should make the job of air traffic controllers easier at the same time.

Eileen is still working as an au pair community counselor for EurAupair. She still teaches Hands-On Science and preschool science classes at Sunrise Valley Elementary. She also still assists in the computer lab at SVES (go figure!) and participates in the babysitting coop at Congregation Beth Emeth (our synagogue).

In March '99, Eileen will become a Bat Mitzvah. Nowadays, this Jewish ritual is typically accomplished at age 13. But when Eileen was 13



it wasn't quite as commonplace as it is today. Eileen has been working extremely hard learning to read Hebrew, Torah, and Haftorah and reciting tropes. At the rate she is going, Eileen will be ready. But she couldn't have picked a more difficult year to attempt this, what with our house being built and us moving in January.

David is still in the GT program at SVES and is doing quite well. He is working toward being a straight-A student while at the same time is becoming a veritable violin virtuoso. He attended summer "strings camp" at the end of which was a concert that was recorded onto CD. The results are impressive, and all the grandparents enjoy listening to their copies.



David continues to enjoy reading, math, and

science the most. He still attends (and enjoys) Hebrew school three days a week and helps Eileen with her studies when she needs it.



Rachel has had a pretty good year also. For her that means there were no major incidents and that her condition has not deteriorated noticeably. We changed her medication, which resulted in considerably fewer seizures although the ones she has now are pretty intense. Overall she benefits because she spends less time in seizure.

Rachel continues to grow at a "Scherzinger pace". She is over 4 feet tall and weighs about 60 pounds. She will be getting a new wheelchair in early '99. She is also getting the largest bedroom (not counting the master suite) in the new house, which includes a roll-in shower. Her bedroom will eventually be augmented with a ceiling track hoist, which will be used to lift her in and out of bed and her shower and potty chairs. The track will avoid having to carry her between the bedroom and bathroom; instead we'll just glide her. The house has exterior ramps at the side and front entrances. The garage has an oversized bay (for the van) that has an adjacent loading deck so we can load and unload Rachel's wheelchair much easier. This will be especially nice in inclement weather and will obviously make the van last longer.

Andrew is now attending kindergarten at SVES along with David and Rachel. It is great to have all three kids attending the same school finally (only one PTA for Eileen!). He played T-ball in the spring, but probably spent more time sitting on the ground pulling weeds. Getting his first trophy was a huge thrill for him.



Andrew is starting to read and is doing quite well. He loves tormenting David with toy insects and continues to demand the loving attention of his big brother (i.e., drives David crazy). His natural charm has attracted quite the female entourage (he's got about five girlfriends now, but we've lost count). Andrew now attends Hebrew Sunday school with David and seems to like it quite a bit.



Lea Nömme is our new au pair from Estonia. She replaces Elodie (from France), who only lasted with us for about three months. Lea quickly became a member of our family and enjoys spending time with us. We all love her and have asked her to tell her parents that she won't be coming home (we're going to adopt her...just kidding!). Lea has been a HUGE help this year as we plan for our big (one mile) move in January.

We aren't really sure what 1999 holds in store for us, but we do know it is destined to be a memorable year. We close on our current house Dec 21 and on the new house Dec 23. We will move on Jan 12. During the time in between closing and moving, Bruce will take a lot of

time off work to do some final preparation on the new house. This will include building shelves in bedroom closets and in the (unfinished) basement, having our stored belongings and some new furniture and appliances delivered, painting the garage (weather permitting), hanging ceiling fans and light fixtures, moving as much of our stuff as possible from the old to the new house, and getting the computer network working. Of course, we also have to pack as much as we can. Also in January, we will be having a deck and screened porch added to the back of the house. So we are sending our annual newsletter out **ON TIME** for a change because we know we won't find time to do it early in the new year.

We hope to see many of you in 1999, whether it is for Eileen's batmitzvah or just a friendly visit. If you'd like to stop by, give us a call, send email, or just write a letter. Here is how you can contact us:

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Happy New Year!

