

Browns' 1999 News

Volume 3, Issue 1

December 31, 1999

A Vacation of Sorts

It began with a vote on where to go for our 1999 vacation. Candidates included Tahiti, Hawaii, California, and the Caribbean. The winner was “Dude Ranch” (the PC term is “Guest Ranch”). An extensive search process was undertaken. After all, we had to find the **perfect** ranch, *n'est ce pas?* Finally, the winner was selected – an establishment in British Columbia, which shall remain nameless for reasons that will become apparent.

On the appointed day, we set forth in our trusty Suburban. Our first stop was at a wedding reception for Bill's daughter (see article “Kim's Wedding”). After logging up on soda, chicken, wedding cake, and other goodies, we resumed our journey, taking the ferry from Bremerton to Seattle and heading east on I-90.

Our trip was without incident and we arrived at the “Nameless Guest Ranch” late the next afternoon. The setting was in a lovely and secluded valley surrounded by mountains. A small creek flowed through the valley and

horses grazed peacefully in the pastures. All was serene. Only the whine of millions of mosquitoes disturbed the tranquility.

The hostess showed us to our room – just slightly larger than the lumpy queen-size bed that took up most of the space. Dinner was a tasteless spaghetti concoction. After dinner, the host explained the schedule of activities, mostly limited to riding horses. Bill went fishing in the farm pond where he caught one minnow and many mosquitoes caught him.

After a restless night in the lumpy

bed, we were greeted by the smell of breakfast being cooked. We sat down to dine on homemade egg McMuffins – not nearly as good as McDonalds!

By this time we had reached the conclusion that the *Nameless Guest Ranch* wasn't for us. After a heart-to-heart talk with our host and hostess, we hit the road. Ill humor prevailed in the Suburban as we headed into the British Columbia hinterlands with no idea where we were going or what we were doing.

Mary, our chief lodging researcher rooted through the AAA book to find something – anything! She came up with several candidates and Adele spent an hour on the phone trying to make arrangements. We were finally able to get into a place called “Fairmount Hot Springs Resort.” Attractions included indoor and outdoor pools of various temperatures, miniature golf, horseback riding, and massages.

With more than a little trepidation, we arrived at the large resort complex.



In the Hot Springs waterfall at the Fairmount

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Elizabeth's Year in Review

Minasan Konnichiwa – For those of you that do not speak Japanese, it means, “Good afternoon, everyone.” My year started on the morning of January 1, as it did for most, and I awoke realizing that the next weekend I had the first orientation/preparation for my year abroad. At that point in time I was convinced I wanted to go to Austria – I had not even considered Japan. After my realization, I went back to bed and my daily routine. On

January 9, I got into the car, drove to Reed College (well I wish I had drove), and began to change my future. I decided to go to Japan, so over the next eight months I prepared for my trip. I cannot lie, I really only spent 3 of those 8 months actually preparing.

In the meantime, in school, I joined the girl's golf team, continued my marching band journey, and studied hard for a 4.0 (all A's).

Right now I am in a Japanese school, *Aomori Akenohoshi Senior High School*, I had one of the school nuns help me to

edit this and she insisted I wrote out the official title. I would have just said *Akenohoshi*. It is an all girls' school and everyday one is required to wear the same uniform. And yes, I do change my underclothes and shirts.

I remember when mom and dad would tell me to get ready to go to Japan, they'd nag and nag until I got a particular task done and then they'd start on another. The memories! I am very glad that they

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Mary's Year in Review

This year has been very stressful but it has been beneficial too. Well it all started out when we had to decide on what school I was going to and boy was that a challenge. Although my parents were set on me going to St. Mary's I had a different opinion on what school I was going to go to but we finally decided (a week before school started) that I was to attend SMA.

School work was hard enough without the extra stress of sports. But when basketball tryouts came along I decided to give it a try and little did I know that I would make the Freshman team. Then my life actually started to get more organized because I began to set my priorities straight. So some of my stress was released.

Of course Liz leaving for Japan made me happy but eventually I started missing her. But I have learned to deal with my emotions and I came to the conclusion that she will be back in a year and then she will start picking on me again and I will wish she was back in Japan. So I guess I can't win either way.

Kim's Wedding

Bill's daughter, Kim, has been busy! Last year she received her Nursing Degree from Olympic College. To top it off, this year she got married! The lucky groom's name is Terry Heiser.

The nuptials were celebrated in Las Vegas on April 20th. Unfortunately, we couldn't attend. However, since Kim knows what we really like, she invited us to a reception at her new in-laws' in Bremerton, WA on July 18th. Featured attractions were to be lots of food, beverages of all sorts, and camaraderie.

We arrived early. Kim was glad to see us, because she didn't yet know all of her in-laws. Terry comes from a big family and there are many in-laws. They are really nice people and made us feel at home. We had a great time, but left early to head for British Columbia (see article "A Vacation of Sorts").

Latest Flash: Kim and Terry have continued their hectic pace by buying a house and a puppy!



What is Kim saying?

Ada Mead Ransom 1917-1999

Adele's mother left us on October 16th from complications of Alzheimer's Disease. Ada was one of the kindest and most loving people I have ever known. She was a wonderful mother and world-class grandmother. It was a privilege to have known her. She will be greatly missed by her family.



Other Family News

- ◆ Bill's Dad is 91 and still going strong. Although he's showing the effects of age, he's probably in better shape than he was 12 months ago.
- ◆ Adele's Dad is a mere 87, but is also doing well. Although the loss of Ada has affected him deeply, he's still in good health and always ready for a bridge game. Although we didn't take him to Alaska this year, but we did welcome him for a short visit this summer. We hope he comes again!
- ◆ Bill's son Scott finally yielded to his heritage and has begun a career as a computer consultant. He working in Visual Basic and doing Web Page design. He has more work than he can handle, but hasn't yet gotten as grumpy as his father. Scott's children (Brittney and Billy) are doing great.
- ◆ Bill is looking forward to his High School Class reunion in Portland next year. He attended the American Community School in Beirut, Lebanon, and is expecting classmates to come from all over the world!

Vacation

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Fortune had smiled! It was wonderful. We swam, played miniature golf, and ate wonderful meals in the nearby town of Invermere, BC. The girls had massages, and Bill had a facial (it didn't help, he still looks the same). Our only regret was that we hadn't brought our golf clubs. There were nine beautiful golf courses within a short drive. The high point was a splash under a hot spring waterfall.

After five days of beautiful

weather and relaxation, we moved on to our next stop – Glacier National Park in the good old US of A. You see, Adele had this desire to relive a childhood experience and stay at the famous *Many Glacier Lodge* nestled in the heart of the park.

As checked into our room, it was clear that the lodge had seen better days. Although the main halls were spectacular, the room left a lot to be desired. We gazed out of our room at a view of the lake and listened to the old steam radiator banging. It was set for one of its two available temperatures – too hot (the other was too cold).

Aside from the accommodations and a cold drizzling rain, the park was beautiful and we had a great visit. Mountain goats posed for us beside the road and a young grizzly bear scrambled across the road just in front of our car and just slightly too fast for our intrepid photographer (Mary) to take his picture.

After two interminable nights trying to sleep on the remarkably uncomfortable beds while listening to the banging radiator, we headed for home. It was a decidedly mixed vacation.

Bill's Year in Review

This was a big year for WHB. He hit the big 6-0, sent his daughter to Japan, and almost retired.

His birthday was celebrated with a gathering of neighbors and friends expressing condolences. They all agree that he looks remarkably well for his age (see the picture!).

The most stressful times of the year occurred while teaching Elizabeth to drive. Although she took driver training, parentally supervised practice was required. Since Elizabeth's other parent is not noted for her calmness as a passenger, Bill was the designee. Although all turned out well, with no damage to autos, people or trees, Liz did find unique ways to make each drive exciting.

Bill was supposed to retire at the end of November, and was looking forward to a future as a world-class relaxer but, as of this writing, a few details still need to be worked out and it looks like January will see the big day.

A highlight of the year was a visit from Bill's Grandson (Kim's son) Shawon. They did the Oregon State Fair and the Oregon Museum of Science & Industry. Bill had a great time and Shawon has booked his Granddad for Labor Day 2000!



**The Birthday Boy!
Debonair as ever!**

Elizabeth's Year

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nagged, or I may not be here today.

The nagging finally ended when they realized I would be gone for a year, though I didn't have time to savor the peace and quiet because the last boarding call was blaring at PDX. I got on the plane with a big smile... went to Seattle... then Tokyo... and finally Aomori. By that time my smile had turned into a Rotary forced, fatigued upturning of the corners of my mouth. My first host family met me at the airport and we went home and I went to bed. I cannot tell if I am still waking up or I am having too much the time of my life to be home-sick.

I have been here three months, it does not feel strange that I cannot communicate proficiently or that I am the only redhead for 100 kilometers

(that is the distance to the American Military Base) – it has all become my life. I have been sightseeing, curling, and I now call Aomori City my second

home.

Thank you all, I could not have made it this far without you!



Lizzy in her uniform with new friends.

Browns' 1999

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Adele's Year in Review

1999 has been a year of many changes. We spent most of the year getting ready for Elizabeth's departure for Japan. I was fine until the last couple of weeks before she left when I realized she would be gone for a full year! I now understand why the foreign exchange staff told students to thank their parents because they are making big sacrifice – how true that is. Having a beloved daughter away for a year is very hard. I just try to remember another thing the officials said. Instead of missing your daughter, concentrate on the fact that she's having a wonderful adventure.

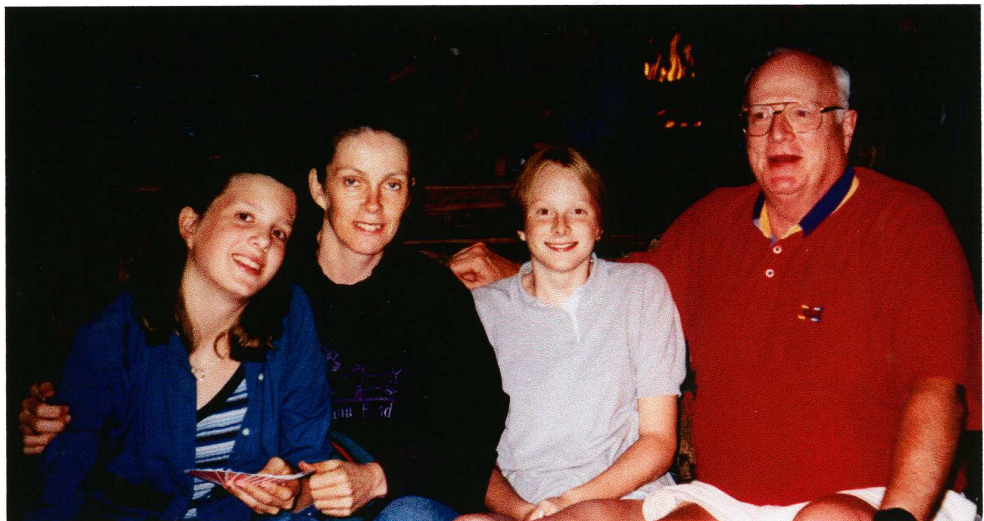
Mary's adjustment to a new (private) school, St. Mary's Academy in Portland, has been important this year. She was hesitant to go – we're going to let her make the deci-

sion as to whether she continues there for the rest of her high school. St. Mary's offers a tough college prep curriculum. Mary dove right in to it and is doing extremely well! She is also her homeroom representative and (at 6'1") plays on the freshman basketball team.

My mother's death from Alz-

heimer's was another change. Mom started deteriorating quickly in September and was gone by mid-October. Although she had suffered from the disease for the past seven years, it does not make her passing any easier.

I'm doing fine at school. I'm still teaching ESL reading, which is what I enjoy most.



The "Gang" at Many Glacier Lodge