



Happy Holidays



from our home to yours.

Seasons Greetings! Wow, time really flies when you are having fun. It has been quite an exciting year at our house. We hope you have had a great year as well; here is an update on what we have been up to.



A great sledding day at a local hill

The boys are growing in leaps and bounds. Chandler had a terrific year in grade three and is, so far, doing the same in grade four. We are very fortunate to have such wonderful teachers. Chandler's grade three year first... Chandler was part of his schools junior choir and we fully enjoyed his concerts. His teacher entered his class in the French Drama Festival in Summerside last May. They did a fabulous job presenting their short play in French. He has had a taste of doing research already, doing a paper on "Frogs", complete with a visual presentation all in French. Now in grade four, this is the first year for any instruction in English and in October his class began research papers on Heroes.



LIVEstrong wristbands were here. Over 10,000 in all!

They decided on what makes a hero and then made their choice on whom they would do their research. Chandler chose Lance Armstrong and presented his paper and poster to the class. He wore his "LIVEstrong" t-shirt and handed out the yellow wristbands to his class afterwards.



Chandler & Tristan at the annual Kub-Kar rally



Chandler admiring the sights on Rodeo Dr, LA



We had a great year skating and playing "Pond Hockey"



Chandler really enjoyed the "catching" gear



Chandler loves to do homework! Grrrrr! :)

Chandler is still involved with Cubs this year. They did a little fundraising, tree-planting, attended both a winter and summer camp and various other activities. Ball practice started in June and he had another great season in the mosquito league. He also enjoyed his fifth year golfing at Rustico with Grampie. He practiced lots and even took out one of our shed windows... He can really drive them! Look out Tiger Woods!

Connor had a great year in kindergarten. He made lots of new friends and became quite a social guy... lots of birthday parties to go to! They had many field trips relating to their themes and Mommy helped drive and volunteered on them all. He was our proud graduate on June 16th; it was very exciting, but hard to fight the tears.



Connor proudly graduates from Kindergarten



Connor doing drills and working hard



Connor loves to wear shades...



Our happy Connor loves play-doh! Very creative!



Connor working hard doing "chocolate" math



Connor is definitely our comedian (table manners?)

Connor turned six in May and has already lost lots of teeth. He is still working on getting one of his front teeth back. This summer he decided he would play soccer. He had tried it when he was four and did not really care for it, but insisted that he wanted to play this year; and play he did! He was on the CIBC Stratford Gold team and played with great effort. Some buddies from kindergarten were on his team and they had a great team spirit. He also decided to give golf a try with his big brother; Dad can hardly get the smile off his face! They were both good students at the lessons and especially liked riding in Grampie's golf cart.



The boys love to ride with Grampie in the golf cart



Practicing their "chipping" at golf lessons

Connor began grade one French immersion in September. At first, he found the days long, but has adjusted well (and so has Mommy). It is so amazing how quickly they start picking up a second language and Chandler is a great help. He has also been attending Beavers this fall. He has lots of fun and it seems to be great exercise as his face is red-hot coming home each week.

The boys had another successful summer in swimming lessons with the Red Cross. They are loving the water and are big fish. On the subject of water, we had lots of frozen water this year, as Mark built our own outdoor rink in the front yard. It was fun family time as we all used it a lot. The boys also had a great time at Brookvale Ski Park this year in their first attempts at downhill skiing... wow, by the end of the day, it was like they had been on them all their lives. They had a fantastic time whipping down the hills! The boys got lots of kilometers on their bikes this year, building their muscles on trips with Mommy, long rides with Daddy and even their first "race" at the "Tour de Pants" in Brookvale. Lots of fun!



The boys had a great time learning to downhill ski



The boys really enjoyed skating in the front yard



Cooling down after a hot summer bike ride



My "other" kids. The boys with Will and Matt.



The boys had their first taste of "competition". Fun!



Taking time to pick blueberries at the fun-fly in NB



Taking it easy at the lake in Chandlers boat



They came a long way after two weeks of lessons



Our last day at Rainbow Valley. Great memories.



First day of school 2005. Connors first day in grade 1.



Outside enjoying a warm Autumn day



All the boys enjoyed Marathon Weekend here on PEI

The boys decided to be different characters from each other for Halloween this year. Chandler was Darth Vader from Star Wars and Connor was a Ninja Turtle named Raphael. Oh yes! This is very much a boy's household.



Darth Vader and a Ninja Turtle... Look out!



Pumpkins by design... where's the knife?

Every year, I ask myself what will we have to tell about next year. Well, after this year, I'm not going to even ask that question anymore! Mark has been in this kick of setting and accomplishing goals. Once the decision is made, look out... Last year he competed in the Red Cross relay in a two-man team. Well this May he decided to do it solo! That is a 10km run, 23km road bike, 8km run, a 17km mountain bike and a final 8km in a canoe or in a kayak if you are doing it solo; 66km all together. He did awesome and completed with a time of just under four hours with a placing of 30 out of approx 160 teams. This relay was his driving force (good excuse) to build his own

wooden kayak over the winter. Something he has always wanted to do. He spent a day kayaking (42km) with Jacki Lewis who kayaked around PEI in aid of Breast Cancer programs.



Start of 17km mountain bike stage of the relay



At the finish line... what a team!



Mark's finely crafted winter project - 18 feet long



Mark visits the Terry Fox library in Terry's hometown of Port Coquitlam, BC



Mark (closest rider) racing in his first "criterium" in Charlottetown

He has competed in many runs through the year with the PEI Roadrunners club and has also participated in duathlons and bike races. He ran in the Terry Fox run again this year. This was the 25th anniversary of the run; Mark was in the first year run when he was nine! Mark cycled the Island tip-to-tip in August as part of a fundraiser for school breakfast programs. In October, he also took part in his second PEI Marathon, beating last year's time despite the rotten conditions.



We organized five races in support of cancer research

As if that wasn't enough, we also took on a huge five-month project from May to September. So, picture this... Mark takes me out to dinner sometime in April and lands the biggest bomb on me yet! He said he wanted to raise \$35,000 dollars for cancer research and cycle with Lance Armstrong in a fundraising event in September. I thought, "Oh my God! Lord get me through this one", because he wants this so bad, it shall be done. We had loads of support and help from family and friends... Thank you, we could not have done it without you! There was raffle tickets, pancake breakfasts, flea markets, our own series of cycling races, and over 10,000 "LIVeStrong" wristbands. PEI looks good in Yellow! Who would have believed that we would exceed our goal by a couple thousand dollars? At the end of September, with all the hard work behind us, we went to Lake Louise, Alberta to attend the Tour of Courage. Grammie Donna and Grampie moved in with the boys for that week to look after them while we were gone. Mark rode a total of 190km with Lance and his

friends, and thirty other cycling enthusiasts. It was an amazing adventure and a dream come true, all for a great cause. We spent a couple of extra days in Jasper and Edmonton with friends Jim and Robin Soutar. We also visited the Great Hobbies Edmonton store. The full details can be found at... www.tour.thebowlans.com



A quick stop for a photo on the way to Lake Louise



Some one-on-one time with Lance after day one



It's not everyday you get to ride Lance's wheel!

It has certainly been a year full of travel. In July we (and all of the Great Hobbies family) again attended the Great Atlantic Fun-Fly for radio-controlled models. This year it was held in Caraquet, NB. A good time was had by all and we turned it into an extended weekend touring the beautiful area. In October, Mark, Jim and Gary were planning to attend their big annual trade show that is usually held in Chicago. This year the location had been changed to Los Angeles, so they decided to bring the wives and kids along and turn it into a small vacation. We took in LA, Beverly Hills,

Rodeo Drive, Hollywood, Legoland and Disneyland! Phew! It was jam-packed and loads of fun. We managed to keep it a secret from the boys until we woke them at 4:00am the morning we were leaving. The boys enjoyed the flying and it was a great surprise, one that won't soon be forgotten.



We hit Disney and helped celebrate its 50th year



Oh bother!... The boys get to meet Pooh and the gang



A dream come true for the dedicated Lego builders. And Daddy too!



The boys get their drivers license at Legoland. Cool!



Connor's sixth ride on the carousel.

On a sad note, we lost Mark's grandfather, Leonard Doiron, affectionately known as Grumpy, to a fight against cancer in late November. This Christmas Eve, and our lives in general won't be the same without him, he will be deeply missed.



We love you!

My Dad took a bad fall on the golf course near the end of the season while we were away on our Disney trip. He had surgery to put a few screws into his ankle and is in a cast and wheelchair. He is now working on recovering with some physiotherapy. He has the best care in town from nurse Mom!



The boys put their art skills to work on Grampie's cast

Well on top of all that, I try to maintain my sanity and this household! I continue with a little after-school care of Matt, who is like one of my own. I get to the local gym as many days as possible, attempting to be fit. I usually get in over an hour of jogging, cycling, some weights and strength work. Mark comes with me every now and then, and I am still waiting for it to get easier! I also enjoy being a continued parent member on the board of directors, with the CHANCES family center. It is a special organization that I love having a small part in. This year with both boys in the same school, I am able to volunteer for many various activities. I will enjoy that as much as possible while it's still "cool" for me to be there and take part. The boys enjoy it for now!



Mark & I participated in the Run for the Cure



Some time on the beach as we tour the NB coast



The whole family at Connor's graduation



We spent a lot of time outside skating on our rink



Mini golfing on our trip to Caraquet, NB

So, we seem to be doing a great job of staying busy! Now it is time to get ready for Santa, and we would like to take this time to wish you and yours a very wonderful Christmas with Health, Happiness and Love for 2006! LIVEstrong!

Rhonda

Merry Christmas And a Happy New Year



The Bowlan Family... The End

To view this newsletter in full color, see our website at www.thebowlans.com You can keep in touch with us there all year long!