

# CHRISTMAS 1999

1999 has been a good year for us...easy to take, but no big events. I still haven't taken any vacation time in the tropics, but I continue to dream of palm trees and warm breezes. I am going to Las Vegas in early January for a week, and I plan to travel to the Grand Canyon and stay for a couple of days, taking a helicopter tour while I'm there. Las Vegas is the site of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES), and you probably know, there is a reason they are letting me in for free! If ever there was a person into "gadgets", I'm it.

We took the pets with us in June and drove to the north end of Vancouver Island for a small vacation. Neither Kirk nor I had travelled this far "up-Island" before. The scenery was beautiful, but the weather was the pits! Rain, rain, and more rain. I took my beloved Camry over the logging roads from Port Hardy to Cape Scott, and Tucker and I hiked the trail to San Josef Bay and back (an hour each way) in the rain. Sylvester and Kirk (the sensible pair) stayed in the car and poked around the parking lot area. We also had a look at Gold River, Strathcona Park, John Hart Dam, and other sights along the way. We're glad we saw new territory, but we won't be in a rush to return.

Tucker and Sylvester continue to mature...they are both now just over two years old. They will have a tussle every once in awhile, turning the house into a three ring circus. The next minute they appear to be perfect angels.

Sylvester stays pretty close to home, but Tucker likes to travel around and meet other dogs. His best friend is Woody (a black spaniel - poodle cross) who lives up the hill from us.

His girlfriend is Holly (another Jack Russell Terrier), who likes her cookies, and can be a bit bossy.



Sylvester & Tucker being perfect angels



Joe & Sylvester renovating the cat condo

I decided to enhance my Internet presence this year, and run my own web server. The JoeTourist website now has its own unique Internet address: [JoeTourist.net](http://JoeTourist.net) I'm having fun with this new web server, and I have put it to good use by not only hosting my personal websites, but also hosting a website for my 30th High School Reunion (happens in August, 2000 in the Cowichan Valley). It is great to not bump into the limits which the @Home web hosting service imposed on me previously.

In August, I decided to really commit to digital photography in a big way by purchasing a high-end digital camera made by Nikon. The Nikon Coolpix 950 delivers superb, high definition, high quality digital images. Prints I have made from some of the 700+ digital photos I have taken this year appear (to me) to be indistinguishable from machine prints made at a photo lab. I enlarged one shot to 16" x 20", and it now hangs in the dining room in a frame. There are lots of examples of my photography on my website.

Mum and Dad continue to cope with their advancing years pretty well. Dad voluntarily gave up his driver's licence this year, so Mum is now the only driver. They only drive short distances within Nanaimo, but appreciate the mobility the car still gives them. They are not well enough to travel anymore, but enjoy the occasional visit to Victoria to my place (I pick them up and take them home).



Hilda & Cec  
- 63<sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary

I finally had enough of my allergy symptoms this past Spring, and went to my doctor to get some cortisone-based nasal spray. In combination with my usual antihistamine, the nasal spray virtually eliminates my allergy symptoms, so now I can live a normal life all year round. Sweet release! Kirk copes with his chronic medical conditions on a day-to-day basis, and enjoys taking care of Sylvester and Tucker. Our two pets are excellent therapy for both of us.

**Kirk and I hope you have a wonderful holiday season...**

**Here's hoping your "Year 2000" is your best year!**