

Buzzings

The latest happenings from the family of
Albert & Rena Bakker



GRANDMA BAKKER

Christmas day went to Moline Church in the morning. Afterward, Don & Mary picked me up and went to Elaine for dinner. Steve & Brenda and their two children, Todd and Danielle, and Shari too.

Monday night I thought it was raining against my window after checking it out, it was the roof leaking inside my room. The window sill was all set and the plants were getting dripped on so I had to move a lot of stuff. Some of the help came and brought some towels to put in the window sills which soaked up the water. By morning, it was dry, not as bad as a couple years ago when there was a big leak in the ceiling which dripped on my TV and spoiled it. Did get a new TV.

Saturday we had a big family party at the Meadow Place, the building next to my place. Arla figured out there were about 52 there. Tom's family didn't come as they had just come back from Haiti.

The sun is shining very brightly today, but very cold.

Sunday was my birthday so we had a big birthday cake at the party.

God bless you all—Grandma Bakker



Bakker Family—January 31, 2009

Next newsletter deadline: MAY 1, 2009

CAL & LISA

It was good to see many of you at Grandms Bakker's birthday party.

Mostly, we've been trying to survive another winter. The newspsper says they had 138 inches of snow so far. That's the official reading at the weather station, which means we've had much more than that where we live. We just had our first thaw in four weeks. Maybe that's due to Global Warming. Or not.

Winter has been busy for all of us in Northern Michigan – snow shoveling, roof shoveling, show plowing and getting the wood in to keep warm are the main activities next to working and playing with the grandsons.

Morgan made it home for Christmas on December 22nd in time to celebrate our family holiday together with Lydia and Brian who were able to spend a long weekend with us in the frozen north. Morgan has since stayed here for the rest of the school year as his father is probably going to be deployed as soon as April to Iraq or Afghanistan. He's doing well in school and is enjoying getting to know his new baby brother – as are all the rest of us. Braden is a joy and a gift that none of us can get enough of. Cody is enjoying the school year, as well, and is also a big help with snow and wood duties like his big brother.

Jared was home for about two months break between semesters and is now back in Ireland working for Taylor University's Irish Studies Program until mid-May. We loved having him home for those two months, but know it was kind of a time out of time for him and he probably won't have need to live at home with us again. He's hoping to continue his education in the fall and begin working on his doctoral program in the Chicago area.

Cal is anticipating his annual trip to Florida camping with the high school youth group. This year he is leaving on Friday April 3rd, and Anna and Lisa are leaving the same day and taking Anna's kids to see their Totten grandparents in Hudson, Florida, near Port Richie. Lydia is traveling along, and we aren't sure yet if there will be just Anna's 3 boys or if John's other two children will be coming along. The trip promises to be lively and challenging, and we're really looking forward to some sunshine and sea air for a few days.

It was really good to see and spend a few moments with those of you who were able to be at the Bakker bash. Hope David is feeling better soon – it's no fun to be laid up and in pain. Thanks so much, Sisters, for putting it all together again this year. I know it's a lot of work, but we do appreciate your efforts. Last I saw Morgan he was enjoying munching on some peanut M&M's. What a great time we had this year. Looking forward to seeing everyone again soon.

Cal and Lisa

BOB & ARLA

Here are the Buzzings:

Every day is one day closer to Spring. Yeah ! We've had more snow than the average snowfall already this season & the deer are having trouble finding food in the woods this year because the snow is so high, and their food is covered up.

When schools are closed, we also stay home from work because the roads are not safe for travel. Do the Homeschool kids get a day off too? (Editor's note: We save our snow days for spring!)

Our church is now reaching out into the community & we both volunteer to help the needy doing Outreach Service Projects. We don't rake our leaves here at the condo because we pay an association fee, but we sure had fun raking leaves for others & yesterday Bob & the team helped a family move into a new home.

Our kids came here for Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 22 & Elaine, Shari & Mom were here on Thanksgiving Day.

Dave, Karen, Abi & Zac came here for Dinner on Christmas Day & they said it's not that far of a drive !

It sure was good to see everyone at the Pot Blessings Birthday Party. The highlight this year was Mom's 92nd Birthday Celebration & THANKS to everyone for bringing all the delicious food. The Bakker's sure know how to cook & bake! This year the Bakker family collected 30 non-perishable foods in cans & boxes & the items will be delivered to Project Hope Food Pantry in Dorr. PTL

- Shari won the Old Fashioned Bottle Cap guessing game & her lucky prize was the OLD Pringle Bag along with a container of fresh new Pringle Chips.
- Don won the guessing game of counting Chicken Candy Corn & his prize was the Chicken Container with the Candy inside. Did he share ?
- 30 items were hidden in a plastic juice bottle that was filled with birdseed & Morgan won first prize by writing down the most items he spotted. Abi won second place & Andy was the third place winner.

In March we are making plans to rent a condo in Bonita Springs, Florida again, and this year we are looking forward to Sunshine.

That's all the deer tracks from here, Blessings, Arla & Bob

NO PARENTS LEFT BEHIND . . .

These are real notes written by parents in an ALABAMA school district. Spellings have been left intact.

1. My son is under a doctor's care and should not take PE today. Please execute him.
2. Please exkuce Lisa for being absent she was sick and I had her shot.
3. Dear school: please ecsc's john being absent on Jan. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and also 33.
4. Please excuse Gloria from Jim today. She is administrating.
5. Please excuse Roland from p.e. For a few days Yesterday he fell out of a tree and misplaced his hip.
6. John has been absent because he had two teeth taken out of his face.
7. Meg an could not come to school today because she has been bothered by very close veins.
8. Chris will not be in school cus he has an acre in his side.
9. Please excuse ray Friday from school. He has very loose vowels.
10. Please excuse tommy for being absent yesterday. He had diarrhea, and his boots leak.
11. Irving was absent yesterday because he missed his bust.
12. Please excuse jimmy for being. It was his father's fault.
13. I kept Billie home because she had to go Christmas shopping because I don't know what size she wear.



RYAN & JAYNE

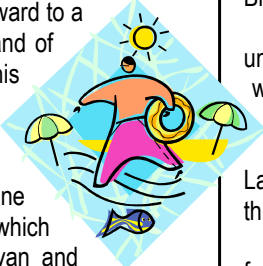
Hello Everyone:

Today was over 40 degrees. Yes! It was so good to see some of the snow melt down, even if it is all dirty and yucky underneath. We're counting the days until spring. At least we'll have a reprieve- Ryan and I are celebrating our 10th anniversary (March 12) by a trip to St. Petersburg, FL. And we're leaving the kids home! Well, not "home", but they're staying in Michigan. I'm looking forward to a special time with Ryan, and of course- that sunshine! This whole thing was a complete surprise to me, he made all the plans.

We've survived one yucky bout of the flu, which fortunately just struck Ryan and Jake. And we're stronger for it, right? Other than that, the kids have been coloring up a storm and making crafts to give to everyone they know. Natalie just wants to do whatever the big kids are doing.

It was great to see so many aunts, uncles and cousins at Grandma's party. So nice to catch up with everyone, and to see all the kids. They sure do grow up a lot in a years time. And what a beautiful bunch of kids they are!

Keep warm everyone.
Jayne and family



ELAINE

Almost forgotten are the busy days of autumn's pruning, transplanting, and composting of summer's flowers, and the hours of leaf-blowing and raking of autumn's leaves. It's all "buried" under 90+inches of snow of which I've displaced a fraction with 22 rounds of snowblowing with my trusty snowblower. Pots of soup to warm the spirit are a treat for many meals. Oh, to see some snowdrops peeking out of the ground!

The days and weeks go by in various pursuits. In October Mom's daughters got together to organize and tidy up some things at the farmhouse. In November a friend and I went in calm weather to IN to visit for two nights: for me a sister-in-law and her husband, and she to visit her friends only to come home to Allegan/Ottawa County crawling through a heavy snowstorm. Shari and I went to Frankemuth after Thanksgiving enjoying German cuisine and festivities there. In December I put together an album of Oscar's life, finally finishing it before what would have been his 72nd birthday, December 8. I went to the first lecture of Calvin's January Series enjoying a speech on John Calvin who was born 500 years ago! A couple afternoons a week are spent at school with 3 groups of advanced 1st grade readers being encouraged to read with expression and thoughtfulness in Caldecott honor picture books and other "classics".

Seeing family is always a highlight whether planned or otherwise. Shari and I go to the GR symphony concerts about once a month. A couple months ago she wore Mom's maid-of-honor dress (of Aunt Sena) to a "girl's-night-out" and received a prize for the oldest dress. Steve came on a SOS call yesterday, Sunday noon, to check my defunct furnace...it needed a new fuse. How thankful I was for warmth and heat once again! And it's always a joy to often see Brenda, and Todd and Danielle who are growing up ... almost too fast.

There is always some wildlife activity here too; deer roam in the yard and in the woods at unexpected times, day and night. Other furry creatures scurry about when surprised, and there was a "crater" in the snow with feathers all around where a bluejay met it's match. I'm looking forward to doing the February bird count once again soon. You can join and/or see the results at www.birdcount.org I hope to again see the eagles in Holland where I spotted 6 at Lake Macatawa last week; I've heard there are many more in the area. The ice in my pond is thick but hopefully it'll soon be time for my fish to wake up....

Thankful for God's faithfulness for His love and care for our families while we praise Him from Whom all blessings flow! Elaine

SCOTT & SHELLY

The Boermans are getting kind of sick of winter--Whitney asks "Mom, what day is spring going to be here?" We are looking forward to a Florida trip in early March. Whitney got registered for Kindergarten, and is very excited that she will get to ride the bus next year. Cameryn is starting to potty train (yay!), and has decided she is now a "big girl". We also took the rail off of her bed. In February, we plan to make a trip to Shipshewana, IN to celebrate Scott's parents' 55th wedding anniversary. We are eating at the Essenhau and staying at the Farmstead Inn overnight, and the girls can't wait to go swimming. Also, we'll be taking the girls to Disney on Ice at the Arena. Scott is thankful to still have a job at Fifth Third, and Shelly is still driving up north almost every week for her job. I think that's all for now---think SPRING!!!!



EVER WONDER ...

WHY DON'T YOU EVER SEE THE HEADLINE "PSYCHIC WINS LOTTERY"?

WHY IS "ABBREVIATED" SUCH A LONG WORD?

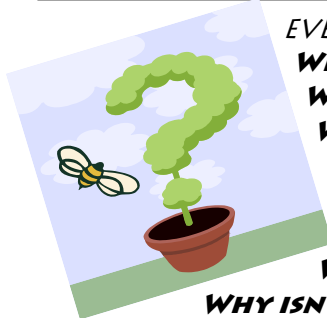
WHY IS IT THAT DOCTORS CALL WHAT THEY DO "PRACTICE"?

WHY IS LEMON JUICE MADE WITH ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR, AND DISHWASHING LIQUID MADE WITH REAL LEMONS?

WHY IS THE MAN WHO INVESTS ALL YOUR MONEY CALLED A BROKER?

WHY IS THE TIME OF DAY WITH THE SLOWEST TRAFFIC CALLED RUSH HOUR?

WHY ISN'T THERE MOUSE-FLAVORED CAT FOOD?



TOM & DENISE

We don't have a lot of news for you. We took care of Ellie for six weeks and then Tom & Denise and Ellie's grandpa Bud flew to Haiti for a week to take her back. We tried to bring them as much food as we could in our suitcases - things they can't get in Haiti. We had good flights



and everything went well - we were very impressed with the work there. Many of the Haitians are Christians but they are so very poor! I tried to send just a couple of pictures but it's really hard to narrow down. Children of The Promise has a web site www.childrenofthepromise.org if you'd like to find out more about the orphanage or volunteer! The school we saw is Nehemiah Ministries at www.nehemiahvisionministries.org. We stayed at the house of the founder of Nehemiah ministries.



We have snow and it has been really cold here. Dan has had his yearly strep episode (just before we left) but otherwise we are fairly healthy. We got to see Marie & Jason and Krista briefly a few weeks ago and hopefully Marie & Krista will come while Jason is on a mission trip to Mexico this week. My co-workers are anxious to have me back since I took some days off to care for Ellie and bring her back to mom and dad.

Love Tom & Denise and kids

DON & MARY

Don went deer hunting to the UP again in Nov. Same report as other years. Good food (especially the bacon) and fellowship - no deer.

Dan and Bonnie came for Thanksgiving. Dan set up the converter box for our TV and installed new office phones. To avoid more frustration we bought a new TV in January. Quite a situation to figure out.

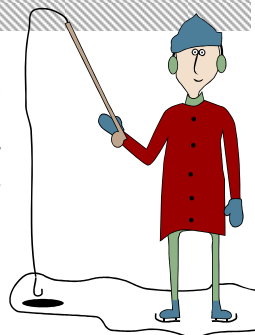
Uncle Harold Apol (age 86) and his daughter Rachel stayed with us 5 days in November. They came for Uncle Al Apol's funeral and to spend time with the relatives. They really enjoyed our bird feeder when sitting at our dining room table and Rachel and never seen a cardinal before. We also enjoy our birds and our best count is 8 cardinals at once and 11 bluejays.

We took Amtrak to Chicago in Jan. to a trade show and it was the coldest week of the winter. Only 1 hr delay going there and 3 hr delay coming back. It still beats driving to the windy city. Next week we plan on going to San Diego to a Koi conference.

Last Saturday we took a ride to Fish Lake where Matt & 4 boys were ice fishing. After 3 hr they had zero fish - but I heard they caught some last week at Reeds Lake when Rachel joined them.

It's been a long, cold winter here in Michigan. Snow, snow, snow - it just keeps coming. But the calendar says only 45 more days until spring!

Don & Mary



DAVE & KAREN

Most conversations here lately are a lot like watching the evening news on TV. It starts off with the weather report - then a little bit of news, then a lot more about the weather, a little more news, and it ends with another weather report. So, let's just say, it's been a cold, snowy time in Big Rapids since the last newsletter. We've been told we live in a "bowl" and thus the reason it is always a LOT colder here than almost anywhere else in Michigan. And this is not a bowl of cherries - it's the pits! Every night we leave the faucets dripping to prevent freeze ups - but in spite of that, the HOT water even froze one night! However, spring is coming :)

Dave is still going to physical therapy three days a week following his shoulder surgery in September. He is doing much better - but has been able to avoid shoveling snow most of the winter. Consequently, we went and bought a large snow blower in the middle of the first major snow storm. It has gotten a lot of use - with Zac at the controls. We also use it to snow-blow the driveway at our cabin, which we have been able to enjoy many times throughout the winter so far. The fireplace makes it warm and cozy. We also enjoy watching the wildlife there - mostly herds of deer and wild turkeys.

Zac has been enjoying being on the school bowling team and most Saturdays and a few days during the week are involved with that. That goes through February and then he hopes to play baseball and possibly track and field. He is also taking another class at Ferris State University in addition to his high school classes. He is looking forward to graduating from High School this spring and trying to decide which college to attend next fall.

Abi has completed the first term at Baker College in Muskegon and spent the 1 month Christmas break working at Meijer quite a bit. She also works there on weekends now, but stays at Baker College during the week.

Karen is still trying to sell houses and property - and the real estate market seems to be improving a bit. It's a great time to buy a house, especially for someone who has been renting. Let me know if you know of anyone who either wants to buy or sell!

Looking forward to Spring -
Dave, Karen, Abi and Zac

MATT & JONI

Not a whole lot new going on over here. Matt finished up our home improvement project on his week off after Christmas. We just needed to put the tile around the fireplace that was put in 2 years ago when we remodeled our livingroom. He kind of made a mosaic with broken pieces of tile. It turned out awesome! Everyone got to help out by placing a couple of pieces on the wall. It was a lot of fun.

Matt and the boys have been going ice fishing for the past few weekends. They're waiting the catch "the big one" but haven't had too much luck yet. One weekend they caught several bluegills and they took them home for supper and last weekend they caught some perch. They even took Rachel along two times and she caught a fish both times!



We all went out to see Lake Michigan on Sunday, Feb. 1. It was really cool. It was about 38 degrees that day, and partly sunny, hardly any wind at all. There were some really neat ice formations and a lot of other people out there checking things out too.

Here is a picture of something that Michael and Alex made together outside one day. They were being very creative by making some sculptures out of burrs. They ended up with a cat and a rabbit and a few more things. It was really neat. Who needs legos anyway? :)

JASON & JOLEEN

Whew! Time to sit down a bit and write about what's been going on around here.

November was uneventful compared to December and January. Jason and Joleen celebrated their 16th Anniversary and Alex turned 13.

In December Jason worked in Newport News, VA. I had two weddings to photograph the first two weekends, but after those were done, the kids and I traveled down with Jason and stayed in Williamsburg, VA for 7 days while he was working. We stayed at Powhatan Plantation Resort and were able to visit Jamestown, Yorktown, Norfolk and Virginia Beach before heading back North to stay in Washington DC for two nights. We got home just in time for Christmas. We also celebrated Davids 7th Birthday before the end of the year.

January started out great—Sam turned 10 on the 3rd and that ended our streak of holidays and birthdays. Jason traveled back to Newport News for a couple of weeks, then he was home! Yeah! We finally got our ski passes to Bittersweet so he took all the kids skiing on the 28th. That's when David got his leg broken when a snowboarder landed on top of him. We're thankful it was a leg...it could've been much worse. He spent the night in traction and had surgery the next morning to put two pins in the broken bone (femur—upper leg). He came home that night and has been rolling around in his wheelchair and not putting any weight on that leg. The pins will remain in his leg for 3 months. He's doing really well and is totally off his medicine.

So now it's February. Today was nice and warm (Feb. 7)—55 degrees and the boys helped Jason take down some more trees. I'm ready for spring!

Joleen and the crew



ALAN & LYNN

Lots of snow and cold! A real old fashioned winter up here! About 130 inches of snow reported so far here- that's over 10 feet!! It's kind of compacted on the ground, so we don't disappear into it too easily! The coldest temp so far at the house was this morning, when it was 0. Has been -12 at the bottom of the hill. Was bright sunshine all day today, but still not over 9 degrees. We are staying warm and keeping the woodstove running. This part of the Glove is not warming. Grand Traverse Bay is not yet frozen, but has been close to freezing several times, staying covered with ice until the wind blows it apart.

Lynn wanted to see more snow, so she is heading to Colorado for a week to go skiing, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, horseback riding, in the mountains. Praying for safe travel to drive this long distance. I'll wave at Dan and Bonnie!

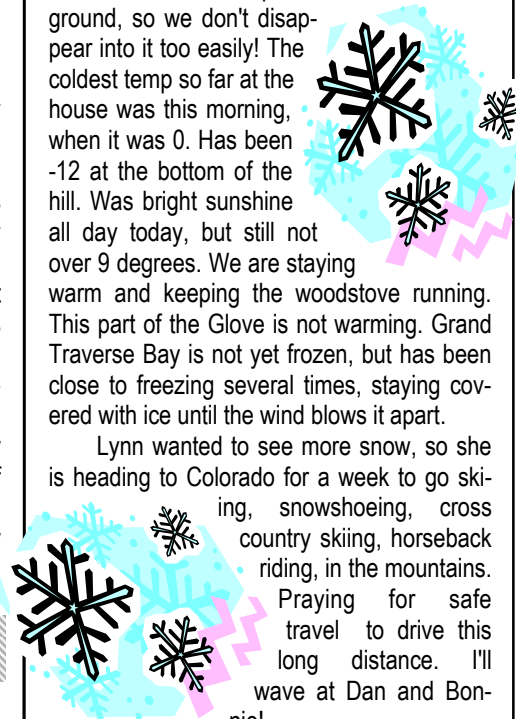
Ben continues with Firefighter training. He was in the building last Saturday for HazMat training, as Ryan was being interviewed for the Sutton's Bay chief job. This area is way less busy than Ryan is used to, with only 1/4 of the calls per year. Neither Ben nor Alan got a deer this fall, but both have applied for spring turkey permits.

Andrew hurt his arm snowboarding last week, and we got a splint put on on our way to the Bakker party. Not sure if it was broken, and he still wants to keep snowboarding! His Cub Scout pack has the Pinewood Derby coming up, where they race wooden cars they have made.

Josiah is enjoying Math, Art, Computers, Reading, and skiing. He and Ben enjoy Boy Scouts; they have a big sled race this weekend. Alan is usually outside pruning the apple and cherry trees, even when it is cold. We still have apples in our cooler- this time of year, it keeps them warm.

Was good to see everyone at the party last weekend!

Please note: our new email address is
AJB2677@centurytel.net



Ruth Paddila De Borst was married to Neil Eldrenkamp who was Aunt Anna's son. Our Moline Church will be supporting them.—Submitted by Grandma Bakker

Twin Peaks

From the Padilla-DeBorst

January 2009

Dear friends at Moline CRC,

We are glad for the opportunity to introduce ourselves to you and we regret the fact that we cannot do so in person at this point. We realize most of you have no idea who we are and may even find it strange that Moline CRC has chosen to count us as one of your missionaries. So here's a brief word on each of us.

Ruth

Although I was born in Colombia and grew up in Argentina, I attended grad school at Wheaton College. I there met Neal Eldrenkamp, whom I married a couple years later. We went to Ecuador with Christian Reformed World Missions in 1991 and served in student ministry together until his sudden and violent death in 1997. In the midst of the pain and loss, I experienced God's sustaining presence. In 1999 I moved back to Argentina, in order to parent my children with the support of my family.

At the end of 2000, however, I began another chapter of life when I married Jim and moved to El Salvador. We began blending families: my original three with his original three. In El Salvador I continued serving with CRWM, but this time working with churches, pastors, leaders and Christian service agencies through what eventually became *Seeds of New Creation*.

In 2006 I began a ThD in Missiology and Social Ethics at Boston University, which will take me several years to complete but is already

giving me tools for ministry, for which I am very grateful.

Jim

Jim grew up in Michigan, attended Sylvan, Grand Rapids Christian High, and Calvin College. After getting married, he served with CRWRC first in Liberia and then in Guatemala and El Salvador, all three war-torn countries. By 1998 he was single-parenting his children and foster-parenting three Salvadoran teenagers, two of whom have now graduated from college.

In May of 2008 Jim graduated from the Kennedy School of Government with a degree in Public Administration. He also teaches International Development with Eastern University.

Maya

Born in Liberia, a lover of dance and baking, she is also concerned about the issues and needs of youth at risk and dreams of opening a center for them - in some place! She is 19.

Anton

Since he was a tiny tot, Anton has enjoyed a deep curiosity for all things scientific. He's also an enthusiastic soccer player. He is 16.

Jonathan

Reading and writing, hiking and singing, all are passions of 15 year old, Ecuadorian-born Jonathan.

Maria Isabel

Poetry is Maria's preference when writing. But she too can read for hours, play hard in a soccer game, sing with gusto and ask insightful questions. She is 13.

Luana

Music bubbles out of Luana at all times and places as does her love of drama, soccer, and reading. She

too was born in

Ecuador and is 13.

Natalia

Our resident artist dreams of being an art teacher and a nature photographer. Music and Sudoku also compete for her attention. She is 11.



Institute for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education

Well, the Institute for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education that we will be initiating for Latin America will work to strengthen a learning community of students, professors, and institutions in Latin America that want to live as members of God's kingdom and to pursue God's justice in the area of higher education (college and up) and through their professions. These men and women will provide leadership to their local churches as

they contribute to the transformation of their societies. CRWM will be working with groups and people who have been seeking these same goals for years (the LATF, UNELA, IAPCHE and the CIEE -all acronyms I will explain in future newsletters.).

We trust this is a helpful introduction of our family. And we remain ever grateful for your prayers, fellowship, financial support and partnership in God's love.

Ruth and Jim Paddila-DeBorst with Maya, Anton, Jonathan, Luana and Natalia

New steps

By the time you read this letter we will have been in our new country, Costa Rica, for a couple weeks. We moved there on January 21st and are currently in full swing adjustment!

New home. New neighborhood. New school: the kids are at the Colegio Europeo, meeting new teachers and fellow-students and studying in Spanish. Jim continues teaching online with Eastern University. And I am beginning the groundwork for the Institute for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education.