



Happy Holidays from the Heisel Family



Hello from the Heisel Family! We're still living in Australia. We've had an active year of Australian sport and Deb and Paul went to the horse races during the spring racing carnival. The kids are almost done with school for the year, so they are looking forward to have time off during the hot Australian summer.

Paul (41)

It's all downhill from here. Yes, past forty – there isn't any turning back. Adventures this year went beyond Australia, Paul spent time in UK, Spain, and Switzerland. Both trips 'overseas' were his first introduction to Europe. Interesting places. Note, using dialup in Spain, you're screwed. In Australia, we spent time up north nearer the equator at the lovely Trinity Beach, close Cairns, which was the family vacation for the year. He still loves the wine and is playing baseball for the first time in 20 years for his local club, the Sandringham Royals.

Deb (20 or so)

Deb has really settled into Australian life. She's very active in Robbie's school and has done wonderful things for their charity efforts. This year she organized a fashion bazaar and a ball (as in dancing) for the school. She had a great time at Oak's Day, which is a day at the horse races. Everyone dresses up, has lots of champagne, and bets on horses – now that's a winning combination. Deb was a big winner on the day, picking a 6-1 winner in one race. The proceeds went towards the other not so good bets on other horses. Make sure if you get the chance, drop her a line or email sometime.

Rachel (14-1/2)

Rachel finishes Year 8 at Star of the Sea College, and has really grown up this year. She's a piano player in the orchestra and (hold your breath) one of the BEST Japanese drummers EVER – serious scholarship material. Very independent now, she is a typical teenager and constantly questions authority. She does ride the train everyday to school and baby sits for another American family. The Australian accent is coming along nicely.

Robbie (13)

Rob goes to a new special school for disabled children, Port Phillip Specialist School. They have small classes and this year the school put on a great play. Robbie played an action hero and was the voice of the Chief from Get Smart! He loves going to the local library. After turning thirteen, Robbie asked me if he was a man. I told him he is when he starts acting like one, which he said, 'Sure.', and went off to play. He still likes swimming and dinosaurs, though he's moved out of the toy phase. He does have a growing sense of humor and likes to watch parodies of shows on the internet. So if you see Robbie giggling, it's probably because of that.

James (11)

James will be going to a Jesuit school next year, Xavier College, which is two train stops down the line from our house. He continues to be the center of social activity in the family, and is constantly being asked to go here and there and do this and that. He had a sleepover for his birthday with four other boys, and it was a success, but they never went to sleep! He played Australian Rules Football this year and enjoyed it, and he plays basketball all year round. No baseball this year. He's getting taller. The computer seems to be his favorite thing, so computer games are a big interest now.

Joseph (8-1/2)

Joe attends Sacred Heart Parish School. He's playing baseball with the 12 year olds, a team his dad coaches. He's learning to pitch and is finding he likes it. He plays basketball year round and has sprouted up in the height department. He, like James, played Australian Rules Football and greatly improved over the season. There isn't a sport he doesn't like and he tends to be fairly decent at all of them. One of his favorite things now is wrestling, so we're surviving Wrestlemania all the time. He does have an Australian accent, so expect it when you talk with him next.

Libby (3-1/2 months)

What a difference a year makes! She's really grown up and is a little chatter box, and can be very bossy towards her siblings. She's fully potty trained (thank GOD) and will be going to kinder next year, which is like preschool. Dora the Explorer is her favorite thing. We spend lots of time reading with her and she goes with us everywhere, including all the baseball and basketball games. She's taking swim lessons and doing very well, not crying and screaming like some of her siblings did at that age. Of course she's riding scooters and wants a bigger bike, always trying to catch her brothers!



Season's Greetings

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year From the Heisel Family

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We love you Grandpa Bob

We love you Grandpa Jim

Season's Greetings

Merry Christmas

Season's Greetings