

# 新年 - 枝春

Happy Chinese New Year from the Wu Family!

Can you believe we have entered the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century! The last decade certainly has been a time of change. Fortunately, though, 2009 was not too eventful for us

Dachywan continues his routine of working at Oracle during the week, and golfing on the weekend. Elizabeth, too, continues her routine of seeing patients, but now 4 days a week to accommodate Conrad's kindergarten pick-up schedule, and doing preferably routine deliveries and surgeries. The biggest changes can be seen in the kids.

Stephen is now a sophomore at Case Western University. He switched his major from biology to chemistry, and is interested in something medical after graduation. He is working hard in pursuit of his goal of completing his BA in 3 years. In the process, he has matured noticeably, but fortunately is still a kid at heart. He's really gotten interested in his electric guitar, and brought it to school with him this year. He is also doing more photography & video work for the school. He has become quite knowledgeable in these subjects and has been putting his expensive equipment to lots of use! And he's picked up basketball: the archetypical Midwestern sport.

Alyssa is now a sophomore in high school, and actively working on the school's yearbook. She has continued her volunteer work at the local hospital. Additionally, she has volunteered at a law office, a dog show, and various other community projects. This summer, she attended a leadership camp in Chicago with a focus in medicine, and now she, too, is contemplating medicine as a career. She has more time to explore different interests because she quit gymnastics this spring. So in addition to volunteering, she has gotten TOTALLY into juggling and piano. She can do amazing things with 4 balls and with 3 clubs. And she has been learning about a piece a week on the piano just by listening to pieces she likes on YouTube and then finding the sheet music! And the biggest event: her braces came off!

Conrad started kindergarten last fall at Challenger, a private, academically-oriented school. Although he had a rather rough 1<sup>st</sup> month adjusting to the high expectations of the teachers, he is now doing quite well: he can do simple addition and subtraction and read simple Dr. Seuss books. He can also now swim 50 feet on his own with no problem! We also discovered that he LOVES T-ball, which he attends once a week. He also loves going to Chinese class once a week, which he started this fall. And he had his first birthday party: we did it at Chuck E Cheese where he had one of the best days of his life!

We "lost" a few relatives in 2009 due to moves, and those losses sure made Thanksgiving a quiet affair! Elizabeth's sister, Judy, and her entire family moved to Switzerland. Niece, Tina, went to Korea to teach English & other niece, Lydia, still hasn't returned from Taiwan. So we had 6 people missing from our traditional feast!

Because of Stephen's college schedule, we only took one trip as an entire family in 2009. Instead, we have individually taken trips. Dachywan visited his parents in Taiwan in March. Alyssa had her 2 week camp in Chicago. Stephen was in Stockton over the summer taking summer classes. We had a "family" vacation (missing Stephen) in February in which we went to play in the snow at Bear Valley. Elizabeth went w/Conrad and her mom to Nashville to attend a wedding in October, and had a BLAST! Surprisingly, Nashville is a great tourist destination. And Elizabeth took all 3 kids to Las Vegas for a juggling convention in which Alyssa greatly improved her skill and Stephen got hooked onto juggling, too!

For our one family trip, we went to Reno and Tahoe where Stephen & Alyssa enjoyed snowboarding again, and Conrad went to ski school for the 1<sup>st</sup> time. By the end of the day, he could easily go on the bunny slope lift and come down all by himself! And the whole family also spent a lot of time sledding and playing in the snow on the days when we didn't "hit the slopes."

Wishing you good fortune and good health in this Year of the Tiger!

