



I had predicted that 1999 would be a fairly uneventful year. I looked forward to the end of Adam's *Terrible Twos*, a major vacation and a quiet year at home. It's not the first time I was wrong. In late April I was informed that we were looking for a new house, and furthermore, that we had already found *the one*. The next day we had made an offer. Okay, maybe I've gotten more spontaneous in my old age. Well, we didn't get that one, but Darlene was on a mission. Around that time my 1971 Javelin, which I've owned for 24 years, was hit for the fourth time (each while parked in front of our house) and totaled. I guess I can recognize a sign—it read: "not a through street."



One month later we were in escrow on another house. Stress starts here. But don't we need to sell our old house now? Seventy days into our new escrow we were still looking for a buyer. Stress continues. Luckily, a long escrow and a rent-back minimized double mortgage payments. And for someone that hated his commute before, I've almost doubled it. ♦ Adam was a real trooper during the stress of looking for a house, escrow and the move. During all this he turned three and made us realize that the twos weren't so bad after all. One



week after our move he started preschool, which he loves. I'm amazed at how fast he's learning. And I think we have another engineer in the family. Sonoma was also happy with the move, as she now has a *new* house to eat (within one hour of arriving she pulled out two sprinkler heads). ♦ The week we closed escrow on the new house I transferred to a new job in the Project Management Office at LAX—and finally found signs of life in Civil Service. One month after moving Darlene bought a new car—without checking to see if I can fit in it. Now we're using my 2.5-seater as the "family car." In August we took Adam to King's Canyon for his first camping trip (this is in lieu of that "major vacation" I spoke about earlier). Maybe

one day I'll have a backpacking buddy. Darlene is still working several jobs and evenings but, with the aid of photographs, I can still pick her out of a lineup. My parents recently returned from a three-week tour of Israel and are doing very well.

♦ The success of my wine website is earning me recognition both on and off the web—writing wine articles and answering a lot of wine email. This year I made at least five wine-related weekend trips to gather data. **Wine 2K!** ♦ The thing I'm most looking forward to in the new year is that the Y2K hype will finally be over. Of course the next new year will be a major event also when people finally realize that the Millennium actually starts at the *end* of 2000. **Why 2K?** And for all the people looking for the meaning of life, I have an answer: it's singing your



child to sleep, looking at the wonder in his eyes as he examines a leaf, or the simple sacrifice of giving him the last bite of your dessert. We all wish you the best of happiness and health in the new century. Next year, the new **Millennium!**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**  
FROM STEVE DARLENE  
ADAM AND SONOMA

