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The Manick Family Year in Review by Steve Manick

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It's hard to believe that the hype and rush of Y2K is already a year old. In March I had the rare opportunity to go on a two-week whirlwind fact-finding trip through Europe, courtesy of the City of L.A. Arriving a week early, I had a cold and rainy vacation in Lucerne, Switzerland followed by a brief stay with relatives on the German-Swiss border. My first work week was spent mostly in western Germany where we toured at least ten cities and included a four-night stay in the Black Forest and a night in a hunting lodge (without hot water) near the Rhine River. We managed to fit in some wine tasting in France's Alsace Region and Germany's Rhine region, and beer tasting *everywhere* else. My limited knowledge of German earned me the position of interpreter for our small group of four. The remainder of the trip took us to Strasbourg, France; Brussels, Belgium; Delft, Netherlands and finally four days in Amsterdam. Returning after 36 hours without sleep, I was welcomed by Adam's beaming face and a five-minute hug. ♦ My new Jeep Grand Cherokee arrived two days before my trip and spent three weeks in our driveway collecting dust before I could really check it out. Three camping trips to King's Canyon convinced me that I made a good choice. Although an organizational shake-up at work eliminated our close-knit Project Management Office, I am left with several strong friendships and the knowledge that there really *is* some (sporadic) intelligent life in Civil Service. ♦ Adam turned four in July and we used the occasion to host our first pool party. Since we've just been looking at our pool since we moved in last September, we finally had a few months to actually use it. He started Pre-K in a new school, which he loves, and has been doing exceptionally well. Unfortunately, he prefers watching *Rugrats* to doing his biochemistry homework. Darlene is still juggling her time between Kaiser, and her day and evening private practice, and family. Most of my personal time is spent on the road or caring for Adam, a job I wouldn't trade for anything. Much of the remainder is devoted to my website, both in answering wine emails and updating content, and I recently acquired the domain *thewinetaster.com* for my wine site. Sonoma, our Golden Destroyer, is still busy relandscaping the back yard. ♦ In August we took a family trip to Monterey, San Francisco, Oakland (where I was best man at my friend's wedding) and Paso Robles and managed to visit about 15 new wineries. In November we took a cruise to Ensenada, Mexico with Darlene's family. Adam had a great time on the ship and I gained 25 pounds. ♦ My parents are doing very well, although they miss seeing Adam on a regular basis. Jeff and Tracee, now living in Oakland, will be getting married in January and are expecting a child in early May. Darlene and I are weighing the possibility of moving to the Paso Robles area for a simpler lifestyle. Can you picture me picking grapes? My favorite moments of 2000 include making banana Mickey Mouse pancakes on Sunday mornings, intimate times with close friends, family pool time, and every minute with Adam. May you have a happy and healthy new year.



HAPPY NEW YEAR
Steve, Darlene & Adam 