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The Manick Family Year in Review *by Steve Manick*

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And once again, it's time for the news... The population of the Manick family remained stable in 2003, following a 33% increase in 2002. Also, the home buying market remained steady for the first time in two years in spite of the fact that we were in escrow for one week for a rental house. Current indicators show that we had a good year. ▶ Adam and Julia prove to me that the best job in the world is being their dad. Julia celebrated her first birthday in August with a party that included about 80 of her closest friends. An amazingly happy and good-natured little girl, she's talking up a storm and should be walking by the beginning of the year. With her constant smile, charming personality, big eyes and head of curly hair, I often stare at her in awe. Boy, am I biased! Adam celebrated his seventh birthday in July and is now in second grade. He ended his first grade school year with a Citizen of the Month award and his teacher's "look out Robin Williams" award. He played in basketball and soccer leagues and earned a yellow belt in taekwando with a test that included breaking a pine board with his hand. (Of course, breaking things is nothing new to Adam.) Adam loves to entertain and Julia is his biggest fan. ▶ Our travel this year consisted of family vacations in San Diego and Carmel and "adult" wine trips to Paso Robles and Santa Barbara County. One travel highlight was finding a secluded oceanfront getaway less than an hour from our home. The summer in the west valley was exceptionally hot and the kids had plenty of pool time— Julia splashing around in her inflatable boat and Adam displacing water by doing "cannonballs." Day trips to Catalina, Disneyland, California Adventure and local wineries (of course) rounded off our summer. By summer we had been in our house for a year and, because Darlene hadn't found our new house yet, we finally decided to buy furniture. We just finished with the acquisition of our long-awaited wine cellar. October's "Simi Valley Fire" got too close for comfort as the canyons to the north and south were evacuated and our neighborhood was barricaded. I packed up several boxes of documents and photos and luckily the wind shifted the fire's direction. ▶ In addition to my wine and personal websites, I've been busy publishing the website for my upcoming 30-year high school reunion (would you believe I graduated at age nine?). The effort has put me in contact with several old and new high school friends. The purchase of my new Macintosh G5 has allowed our Internet-savvy little boy to have his own computer to play with. And air travel is once again safe, as I am currently the project manager of the huge CCTV security project at LAX. Darlene's recent production of our first full-blown family Thanksgiving dinner was a complete success (although a turkey gave it's life for the cause) and her therapy practice is doing so well that she no longer has time to make adult videos. As is our family tradition, we're going to start the new year in Yosemite, where we hope to encounter lots of snow. ▶ During this past year we saw a short war turn into a long battle. I was sorry to see Arnold give up his acting job but happy that they found Nemo. I would like to wish you a

HAPPY NEW YEAR
Steve, Darlene,
Adam and Julia 