

2008

The Manick Family Year in Review *by Steve Manick*

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Well, here again we recap another exciting year in the Manick household. As usual, the year started with our annual winter trip to Yosemite. We didn't encounter as much new snow as we had hoped, but the valley was beautiful and we had a wonderful time. And our wildlife adventure didn't end in the Sierras. We discovered that we had a subterranean termite colony living beneath our house and their food of choice was our hardwood floor. As we have yet to repair the damage, the highlight of our guest tour is the "relief map of the Grand Canyon" on our entryway floor. 🍏 2008 also saw our housecat population double in size after I trapped two eight-week old furballs on our rear patio in July. Meet the Peanuts: Linus and Lucy. Although more feral in nature, they are now willing accomplices of the previously-rescued cats—Tigger and Luna—that we adopted last October. 🍏 Adam, who turned 12 in July, transferred to a new middle school and discovered a newfound interest in playing the violin. After teaching him to solder, he has built several interesting electronic kits, but he especially enjoys cleaning cat litter boxes. Princess Julia celebrated her 6th birthday in August and is doing very well in first grade. During the summer she improved her swimming skills, started a gymnastics class, spilled 586 drinks, and logged many miles on her electric ATV. And as of this writing, she's mithering her two upper front teeth. Darlene is still practicing (practice makes perfect) therapy with her eating disorders clinic and is painfully learning the challenges of technology in the office. In her spare time she volunteers as a chauffeur. At LAX I'm now managing a new section in IT enterprise architecture (*what the heck is that?*) and I'm still publishing my manick.com and thewinetaster.com websites in my spare time (*what the heck is that?*). 🍏 In early summer we took a family camping trip to Kings Canyon National Park and had a fantastic time. We had the canyon's best campsite along the river and Adam and Julia both became Junior Rangers in their age categories. In August Darlene and I took a much-needed getaway to Carmel (where we are still considering moving), and did some wine tasting in Monterey County and Paso Robles. A quick business trip to Dallas enabled me to visit the JFK museum and at the end of summer we had a family vacation in La Jolla. And as we have done for the past five years, we spent Thanksgiving in Palm Springs, where we were joined by my parents for a Thanksgiving turkey-less dinner. 🍏 Once again we had our annual October scare due to nearby fires. One evening firemen came through our neighborhood telling us to pack our belongings and prepare for an evacuation. Due to the efforts of our dedicated firefighters, the flames never got as close as in previous years. The other item of good news was the welcome and long-overdue change in leadership of our country. After one of the most inept administrations in our history, I feel that we finally have some hope for our children. (This editorial does not necessarily reflect the views of all family members.) 🍏 We are extremely fortunate to all be in good health and spirits. Raising two children in this complex, modern life does take it's toll (especially when your six-year old daughter starts asking questions about love and sex) but, as for me, there's nothing more satisfying. We are looking forward to the coming year. We'll be back in Yosemite, Adam will become a teenager and have his Bar Mitzvah, and Julia will bump Brittney off the pop charts (just kidding).
We wish you health, love and happiness in the new year.

Steve, Darlene, Adam and Julia
... and of course Tigger, Luna, Linus & Lucy!