

First Sunday in Advent, 2005  
Anchorage, Alaska

Dear Friends,

It's Advent in a transitional year for us. The three of us, Suzi, Rich and Kevin, are finishing up our first full year in Anchorage running KUDO radio. Throughout this time Rich has continued to run



a regional media program in the former Communist world, expanding into the Middle East, using the Internet and telephone. He had three trips abroad, one to Morocco (below—Suzi was able to join him there) and Jordan (Petra is on the left), one to Armenia and Georgia, and one, planned for early December, to the Balkans. The last one is to close out the program. The IREX regional media development program ends on December 31 and Rich will put his full attention to Anchorage radio.



The three of us have put much of our energy into developing KUDO and while the station has shown improvement in listenership and influence, it still has a very long way to go. Personally Kevin has joined a singing group, "Rouges and Wenches," works as a theater technician at the Performing Arts Center and volunteers as an EMT. He has also found time for a girlfriend, Shannon.

Suzi has taken up watercolors again and has taken some classes to improve her skills and Rich has concentrated on losing weight and getting in shape, using the Nordic Trac ski machine that Brian and Liz gave him for Christmas a year ago.



Brian spent some time in Alaska and closed in a new addition to our house in Sitka (left), which we think is spectacular. It makes us happy to know that is where we will end up after our work at KUDO is done. He works as a carpenter and theater tech in Minneapolis while Liz is in grad school at the University of Minnesota in recreational therapy.



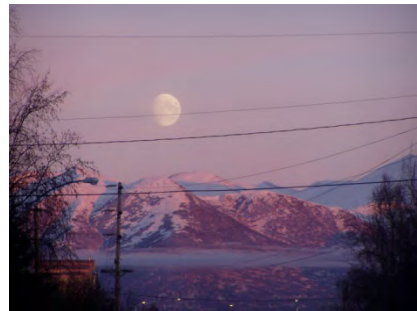
Our cat, Smite, died this year and the dog, Merlin, went into mourning. We had to get him a new cat to play with and Matzi (Albanian for “cat”) did not disappoint. Matzi stalks Merlin and they happily chase each other around Suzi’s chair, changing directions at some unspoken signal. Sometimes the cat cuts across Suzi while she tries to read in order to effect the direction change. The cat also likes to lie in wait for the dog on our bed. When the dog walks below the cat pounces. Merlin does not know what to do with “cat falling from sky,” but it entertains.



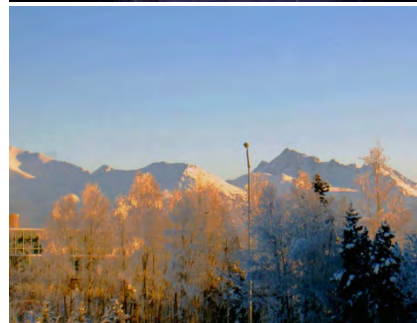
Aside from work related travel, Rich and Suzi went to Winnipeg and met Liz and Brian at the festival. We got to see Dad and Kay on that trip and Suzi spent an extra week there. We also traveled to New Jersey for Rich’s Mom’s 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Kevin dutifully stayed home to run the station but got his chance at a canoe trip in the Kenai. He also traveled to Minot, North Dakota to be a troll at HolstFest, a huge Norwegian-American festival.



We also did some sightseeing in Alaska, with highlights being flight seeing to Denali (Mt. McKinley for those living “Outside” see the top of the letter) including a landing on a glacier. Another highlight was a Portage Glacier Cruise. We have enjoyed walks along Anchorage’s network of trails. The moonrise to the right Rich took walking back down our street. Wildlife viewing here is a cinch. We will no longer take anyone seriously who talks about stalking the wily moose. He comes and knocks on the door, and sits in your yard.



We hope you all have a blessed Christmas, Solstice, Kwanza, Chanukah, New Year, Holiday Season – Any or all of the above.



Peace,  
Suzi and Rich McClear