

## Happy Spring!

Thank you for the cards, letters and pictures that so many of you sent at Christmas. We love hearing from each of you, and catching up on your lives. It is also fun to write a letter and think back on the many experiences and blessings of the year. However, I have decided that December is not the best time for me to worry about this type of communication. I've decided to write when I can ... next year it may be Halloween or the 4<sup>th</sup> of July!  
Please keep us on your "mailing list" -- we want to keep in touch!

Our greatest blessing last year came via C-Section on September 17. **Jace** Reed Andersen is the happiest little guy, and is greatly adored by his siblings and parents. I love his content nature. I've learned that it's a lot easier to have a baby when you have children old enough to help out! We have all really enjoyed taking turns feeding, holding and playing with him.  
We are so grateful to have him in our family!

In addition to Jace's arrival, we each had different highlights last year:

At 29 months, **Alayna** managed to conquer the toilet all on her own.

(This was also a highlight for me - I actually had 8 diaper-free months...my first in 8 ½ years!)

**Aliece** started kindergarten in August -- an event she has anticipated for the past 3 years!

(I confess, this was another highlight for me -- am I a bad mom?!)

**Johnny** used "The Force" to defeat Darth Vader, Darth Maul & storm troopers at Disneyland.

(That trip was a highlight for our entire family, but the Jedi Academy was an extra-special treat for him.)

**Aylee's** highlight was learning that she "has" to wear glasses.

(NOT a highlight for me!)

John managed to get all A's in his MBA program, in addition to a promotion at work, extensive work with the Spanish branch in our stake and being an extremely devoted and attentive husband and father.

(That last bit is definitely a highlight for me.)

The highlight of my year, in addition to keeping all of my children alive, fed and clothed was being pregnant along with 3 of my sisters/sisters-in-law. That was a new & fun experience! It was also wonderful to see my brother Jake excitedly leave on his mission to Goiania Brazil.

We are sure grateful for our children - they truly are the highlights of our lives! We love watching them learn and grow, and nothing is more rewarding than the time we spend working and playing with them. John & I are also amazed at the learning and growth that we go through in our experiences with them. I am so grateful for the wisdom and love of our Heavenly Father, who lets us experience mortality in the comfort of families. They bring joy and purpose to life! I am also grateful for my Savior, Jesus Christ. I love this time of year and the renewal of the Earth that reminds us of his atonement and resurrection.

Enjoy *this* Season!

Love,

The Andersens

John, Amber, Aylee, Johnny, Aliece, Alayna & Jace