

# ¡Feliz Navidad!



*In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*  
Romans 8:37

## Down Home Christmas

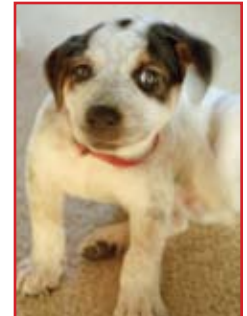
As last year's Christmas letters were hitting your mail box, Crystal flies down to Bolivia with her middle sister, Amber, for their last visit to the Youngs while on their mission field. The Youngs celebrate 25 years in Bolivia, first in the jungles (giving Crystal toddler pictures with Sharpied-out naked natives in the background); and then, after being



attacked by the jungle natives in the Amazon basin) to the mountain city of Cochabamba. Cochabamba holds roughly a half million citizens and the Bible Institute where Mr. Curt trains Quechua mountain pastors, whom he accompanies regularly back to their remote villages in *valleys* 8,000-13,000 above sea level.

**Crystal, Amber, Ruby,** and Mrs. Young take an Andean *flota* [bus] up to Lake Titicaca and the city of **Copacabana**. While there, they visit the ancient Church of the Virgin of Guadalupe during the **daily blessing of the cars**—think Presbyterian baptism for everything from mopeds to buses.

Back in Cochabamba, Crystal goes to school with Ruby and celebrates Young family Christmas before returning for Christmas Eve here in Evington with a hand-carved, 3-foot-tall chess set and a beautiful guitar for my Christmas gifts. Amber stays on to complete her internship, working with children in a hospital.



## Bright Horizons

In February, Crystal begins working for Bright Services, a staffing agency with 7 offices throughout Virginia. In July, the firm makes her the branch manager. By year's end, her small office has grown exponentially faster than any year that BiPlane Productions has seen—and that's saying something. My modest editor won't let me list her specific accomplishments. Her position, though, affords her the opportunity to (1) learn more about our community and its business leaders, (2) find jobs for more than a handful of our church friends and family, (3) participate in the activities of the Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce, and unfortunately (4) fire more people than the Donald.

## Dog Days of Dumb and Dumber

In 1 month, we become a 2-job, 2-dog, 2-car couple. We pick up Daisy, a loping, behaviorally-challenged mutt (half beagle, half hound) from the pound. Diva and Daisy are good buddies (especially in tug-of-war) but partners in several crimes against the resale value of our house. Sadly, Daisy returns to the pound in July, after we are unable to break her of her biting and digging. In Daisy's place, Crystal picks out TiVo, the offspring of what must have been a forbidden barnyard romance (hound/Rottweiler).

Though now bigger than Diva, TiVo lets Diva dictate feeding time, sleeping spots, and barking protocol. Compliant and affectionate, TiVo needs no leash on walks and no door on her pen. Diva, on the other hand, leaps over our 4-foot fence at will and dominates every dog we baby sit—including Sam's Rottweiler.



We take "the girls" on several mountain and river hikes throughout the year, including to the 3,875-foot summit of the Peaks of Otter.

**2005.** Wow, it hardly seems half a decade since we left home and college to head into the mystery of marriage and career. While every year has given us 52 weeks of climbs and vistas, this year's path wound higher into both endurance and reward. We are thankful for the moments our paths and yours have crossed, and we hope your journey has likewise helped you to grow and conquer and cherish.

## March Madness

13 months to the day after bringing home Crystal's Beetle, we trek to Maryland for Crystal to meet my mistress. Relieved that my new love interest weighs in over 2,000 pounds and will always sleep outside, Crystal approves my purchase of a 2002 silver Mini Cooper S.

### Picking a license plate worthy of

an Italian Job that wouldn't incense the state troopers proves difficult. Teaching siblings Tim (14) and Emily (17) how to drive stick reminds me of the famous James Bond preference of "shaken, not stirred."

In September a cop pulls me over after a now-typical green light rev session and asks, "Did you know you took off like

a **bat out of hell?**" Not knowing how to answer that question, I ask if I had done anything illegal. Apparently not, as I escape without a ticket.



## Christmas in July and April

On April 23, my sister **Larissa adds a brother-in-law** to the family with a Christmas-themed wedding. During the ceremony, a heavily-medicated Timmy faints but is caught by a speeding Uncle Steve. US, who just happens to be wearing almost the exact groomsman outfit, switches ties and stands in for the balance of the wedding & post-ceremony photos. The wedding video doesn't show

the event; suspicions of abnormal growth between the processional and recessional footage spark a Senate hearing.

I exhaust my videography assistant, (my big stud cousin with whom I held a marathon ping pong & billiards contest during my winter trip to Ft. Wayne) **Noel**, with all of our runs to and from our balcony perch.

Grampa Boberg claims that his Oldsmobile would suck my Cooper up its tailpipe on a drag in front of the family hotel. Sadly, he leaves for home before substantiating his claim. Larissa and Frank (Bell) renew their vows on July 23 at my grandparent's estate in Western New York for the balance of family who could not make the trip to Baltimore.



## Dynamic Digital Duo

Before summer arrives, our buddy Dizo returns home with intriguing stories from his tour of duty in Iraq. To commemorate the event, Crystal's brother, Sam, and I spend over 50 man hours filming and editing a 32-minute docucomedy, which drew great reviews and a roomful of tears—from people who know us. Rated PG-13 due to portrayed violence to a mannequin, it finds no outside financial backing.

Upon release of the film to limited US markets, I decide I could use some more free time; Sam decides to change his major to broadcasting. We hook up later in the year to work together on promoting his leaf-raking business as well as a dating site for Christian janitors and the women who might love them—among other Communications class projects.

## A Garnish for the Resumé

October brings Crystal's debut at a **local art gallery**. She sells 3 still life paintings on opening night and 4 portrait commissions within the first 2 months. Encouraged by the renewed interest in her art, she then *almost* drops her Mary Kay gig to focus on her day job and her studio work. I would not be so lucky.

Just for fun, she **sings in her manager's wedding** with a couple members of our church praise band. She sings Carrie Underwood's "Inside Your Heaven" but gets no flack or record deal from Simon.

Crystal photographs a wedding for which she also makes the wedding cake and assists in decorating. She is then booked to coordinate 2 weddings in 2006, work for which is well underway this year due to the deadlines for booking subcontractors in a town of 7 or 8 colleges.

I videograph 2 weddings this year but find that my work inspires no requests for future gigs. It seems brides don't appreciate the Blair Witch-style masterpieces.



## With One Arm Tied to My Torso

On April 26, I undergo arthroscopic surgery on my shoulder to tighten a socket where the joint was painfully free-moving. Coming out of anesthesia, the 3 nurses it took to constrain my convulsions decide to use “an abnormally high dose of morphine” to subdue me but then require me to pee in order to leave the surgery center—to which request I ask the attending nurse, “Which toilet do I aim for? The one in the middle, right?”

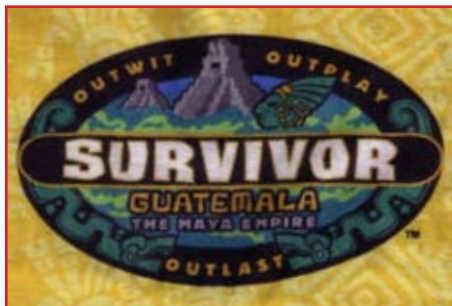
As a souvenir of the occasion, I am given a copy of the arthroscopic photos taken during the surgery. Crystal vetoes their inclusion in this Christmas letter. You're welcome.



Discharged to 6 or 7 months of strenuous rehab (2± hours per weekday), I'm advised to take 2 weeks off work and 7 weeks from driving my Cooper (or any standard-shift vehicle). I semi-coherently field “emergency” client calls the next morning but manage half a week off before returning to work with my right arm strapped to my stomach. I lose over 10 pounds the first week after the surgery. My local client, Counts Realty & Auction Group, generously lends me an automatic Sierra pickup until I could return to shifting.

Thanks to the guidance and encouragement of my **physical terrorists** (Dugger, Brandie, Krista, and Lavern), I conquer my rehab assignment in only 5 months.

Encouraged by my rehab success, I join the YMCA's “**Survivor**” fitness challenge with 74 other contestants. For 6 weeks we are weekly given random strenuous challenges. Only 11 of us finish, and the staff recognizes me as the first finisher. For my effort, I get a new duffel bag full of workout gear but no lovely parting gifts from Proctor & Gamble or any of the sponsors of Price is Right.



## Filling the Money Pit

Henry Ford said, “Chop your own wood, and it will warm you twice.” Despite a family tree chock full of contractors and very little experience in their footsteps, I set out on mission to add a Caribbean-themed bathroom to our basement. **8 months later**, with help from family and friends and a local plumbing contractor



(and \$400 in free ceramic I won in a newspaper essay contest), I unveil my own Extreme Makeover *Basement Edition* room. I'm most proud of the motion-sensor lighting, a 48” rain shower, lots of retro in the fixtures, glass everything, and a one-of-a-kind functional art piece. And while it doesn't include the intended Jacuzzi® or panoramic faux-windows (despite the \$5000 tab), I manage to **impress Crystal** and prove Ol' Henry right.

Up on her floor of the house, we add laminate “wood” flooring throughout, leather couches, and almost-Soho decorations. Dog-induced changes include the addition of a kennel & fenced patio and the moving of a fence for ungated access to my office.

Work has commenced on a basement bedroom to create a guest suite. We've already got the wireless internet & printing and laundry access; so, all we need for business travellers are a coffee pot, an extra iron, and pay-per-view.



Shirt front:  
“Can I get a spot?”  
Shirt back:  
“I'm in rehab.  
What's your excuse?”



## Amber Waves of Graduation

**Crystal's family** convenes on Lynchburg to see Amber graduate from Liberty University. Irreverent key note speaker, Sean Hannity, proves as much a disappointment as was Carl Rove, the previous year's honorary doctorate recipient. With the Youngs, church friends, and college buddies, we **throw a fiesta** at our local soccer park.

Completing a 4-year psychology degree in just 3 years, Amber is able—at just 20 years old—with help from a certain staffing agency to start her career as a school counsellor/behavior therapist in the local public schools and is promoted in just 3 months.

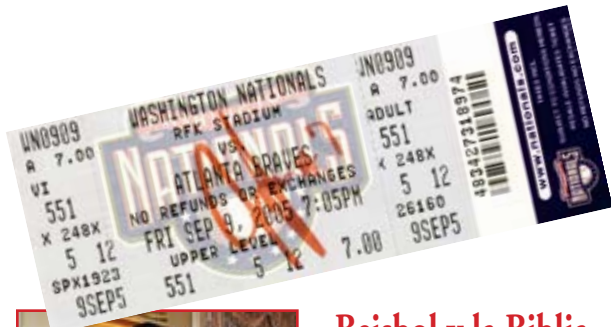
## Bumpy River

During their furlough to see Amber graduate, Crystal's parents move into the basement apartment of their house (top half is rented during their absence) with Amber and Sam, before both kids grab their own apartments in town.

Before undergoing surgeries to remove first a brain tumor and then cataracts, Mr. Young accompanies Sam and I on a canoe fishing trip down the James River. Well, I was the drop off and pickup guy (I don't fish due to my Hindu convictions). While I read a book at the pull out spot for what was supposed to be a 2-hour tour, Sam and Curt capsize and paddle 5 hours through the Blue Ridge Mountains, something not unheard of but a first for sober navigation of that stretch of river.

Curt's surgeries at UVa and then the eye clinic go much more smoothly, as does the surprisingly short recovery period—sparing Dawn and Ruby from more scary rides with their previously legally-blind chauffeur.

Before the family returns to Bolivia for the family's last term of missions service, Amber & Crystal treat Ruby to her Quince (15th birthday party, the Latin version of our Sweet Sixteen). The youngest, Ruby is now the tallest of the Young gems.



## Beisbol y la Biblia

On September 8, José & Marie, Jen, Allen, and I attend a DC Nationals game against the Braves. After the game, José introduces us to Jeff Francoeur and Julio Franco at the Ritz Carlton. “**Frenchy**” shares childhood stories, team tales, and his Christian testimony before heading off to bed. **Franco**, though (a pinch hitter), treats us to an IHOP midnight breakfast that lasts past 3am with discussions of faith, baseball, workout routines, and family. He orders a 7-egg omelette! At 47, he’s the oldest player to hit 2 home runs in a single MLB game. With Ripken retired, I decide I have a new active baseball hero.



On the way home, Allen and I race the Cooper down an unfinished highway with no lines or (posted) limits.

In October, I travel to North Carolina with Allen to watch him **race his ATV**, part of a 32-heat ATV & motor-cross competition. Despite recovering from a broken femur from a previous ATV accident and mechanical problems in his first heat, Allen finishes 8th and manages to grab some air.



## Boys of Summer

Timmy returns to Lynchburg for a week in August to train with José Columna at Liberty University. After an exhausting **week of drills** and sprints, Timmy runs a sub-7 60. His skill sets and teachability lead José to comment that a minor league signing might preempt a college scholarship. After hearing this draft-interest news, Crystal tells Timmy that he’s her retirement.



After sun down on the final night of his training, Timmy, José, and I attend the Liberty University fall-kickoff block party, competing in mechanical bull riding, gauntlet course & bungee running, 4-way video game car racing, and that gladiator thing where you spar with padded sticks while standing on pedestals. I haven’t had that much fun in my socks since Timmy and I used to play hockey on the Pledge-sprayed tile floor in my attic bedroom during high school.

During our GameCube FIFA & Madden marathons I learn that I will never, ever beat Timmy in any video game. But I don’t hold it against him and travel up to see **his soccer tournament**, in which he scored his team’s only goal in the championship game. In the first round, he makes a one-timer goal from outside the penalty box into the opposite upper 90, and the crowd erupts. He tells a player on the opposing mostly-Hispanic rec team, “*Estoy Peligroso.*”



## Raising the Roof—or at Least the Walls

After buying out an oriental-rug cleaning operation to compliment his upholstery and wall-to-wall business, my dad needs a facility to clean and store his lucrative inventory. Confidence bolstered by my basement success, I drive up to help him and Grampa Boberg build a garage. So, we have three generations of mind-reading going on, as the elder two design on the fly.

While waiting for the Lowe’s truck to deliver our lumber, Grampa and I hold a chipping contest over my parents’ pool, which I win as the flatbed arrives. Well, he puts more balls on the “green,” but I put my last shot on the stick. Grampa gets style points, though, for swinging in those overalls. The Country Western crooner gets further points for tuning my new guitar and giving me my first guitar lesson.

## Sam E. Saves the Championship

Sam and Candido draft a men’s city soccer league from amongst Sam’s college buddies and people associated with our church. With only one regular-season loss, Team El Calzador (sponsored by a local Mexican restaurant) charge into the playoffs and then into the championship game.

During the close match, Sam makes a **game-defining save**, despite playing out of position as goalie (usually a full back). With cheering fans all around the field after their victory, Sam’s team (with players from Africa, Asia, and North & South America) **hoists the Lynchburg Cup**—but not before Candido unfurls his Honduran flag for the photographers.

Throughout the season, the girl spectators are entertained by the shirtless, he-thinks-he’s-hot ref; and there is an inordinate amount of pets (including ours) brought to the games.

Sam’s intramural soccer team at Liberty sadly misses the playoffs. Meanwhile, the United States *futbol* team’s success in the World Cup qualifiers allows me to trash talk with the Mexican & Guatemalan soccer fans at church.



## Will Travel for Turkey

Crystal, Amber, and I head to Pensacola, FL, to see Crista McDairmant get married. We check in on my sister, Faith (a sophomore in college down there), and hang with the Maloneys at their new pad. Despite the thermometer reading about 60°, we Virginians swim in the Gulf of Mexico. We are the only bodies in the water without full wet suits.

Timmy and I test our brotherly love with a 3-hour marathon including: 3 games of basketball, 5 games of racquetball, 2 games of foosball, and a round of bowling. Amber and Crystal spend their free time picking out wedding apparel—much of it by dome light in the back seat of our rental car. I discover that just under half of the East Coast joins us in the attempt to drive through Charlotte on the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

## A George in Common

Crystal attends the **Presidential Inauguration** of George W. Bush, as well as the **Texas Inaugural Ball**, where cowboy hats and boots mingle with tuxedos and ball gowns until 3am. Crystal is interviewed by a Lynchburg radio station the next morning, fielding questions on fashion and circumstance.

Independence Day weekend, Crystal attends the National 4th of July parade with her girlfriends, Jen & Misty, and then takes advantage of their majority to **rope me into a Michael Blublé concert**. Our cheap seats in the grass allow for a delicious picnic spread but no view of the stage. I garner husband points regardless.



## Changes at Church

2005 brings big changes to our *Iglesia de las Americas*. Our key lay-leader and his wife, Josué & Trista Calzada, move to Atlanta as missions trip coordinators. Without Josué as worship leader, the **praise band** changes shape, until we have a Cuban drummer, Dominican bass player, Honduran & Ecuadorian lead singers, Zambian conga player, Thai pianist, and Crystal. Two months later our assembly moves into a new facility with a lot more parking & class rooms—and starts a Spanish class (in which I am a pupil) to compliment the English-as-a-second-language classes we have before Sunday school. We also say goodbye (to Texas) to good friends, Joy & Luis Diaz, who've been an integral part of the congregation since before we moved to Lynchburg. Summer brings the start of our new volleyball outreach on Sunday nights, held at Liberty's sand courts. This brings a lot of single men out, several of which become regular attendees on Sunday morning and/or Wednesday night services.



After passing Secret Service background checks, we are invited to the White House to watch fireworks with the President, his staff, and some dear friends. We sing Mr. Bush "Happy Birthday" a day early and see the twins brought down from the roof to sit with Laura and Condi on the veranda. Afterward, we ride the subway home and wonder why Democrat senators haven't tabled socialized hygiene. (We were glad we used Dial® and wished everybody did.)

In December, I visit the East Wing with José, Marie, Jen, and my Mom, decorated with Laura's beautiful Christmas trees. (No pictures for proof, as no cameras are allowed.) Afterward, Mom and I break off to check out the state Christmas

trees surrounding the national Christmas tree. Our favorites include Michigan and Alaska. Our own respective states let us down; so, we applaud the tropical territories for their efforts, since bedecked pine trees require superlative imagination any time of their year.

Also, after a high-speed, plastic-shattering crash of the model train circling the national tree, I risk being added to the TSA international terrorist watch list and break through the bystanders to help rectify the wreck and am applauded later by the train organizers. Afterwards, I stage a CNN interview for a proud Mom, who also witnessed the trauma first hand.

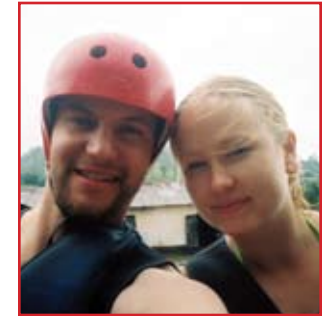
Three times this year, our **mail box holds letters** from W on White House stationery, commemorating our anniversary and respective birthdays. Diddy was right: our votes do rock.



## Winter Salsa

In December, for our first full-week vacation since I started BiPlane and our first without visiting family since our honeymoon, we head to a waterfront cabaña in the Dominican Republic.

Crystal swims with & feeds dolphins and I with sharks & stingrays.

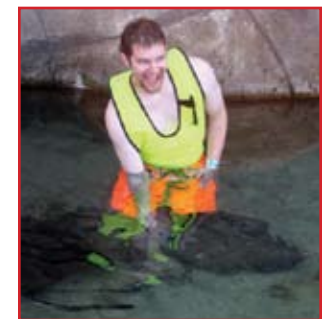


We **whitewater raft** on class IV rapids, try the new sport of cascading (waterfall climbing and repelling/jumping—none of our waterproof camera pictures developed), pick up snorkeling and **long board** & wind surfing, dare motoscootering in third-world traffic, and explore artist shops.

For the full story, give us a call sometime. We'd love to hear from you!

**"The art of living lies less in eliminating our troubles than in growing with them."**

**Bernard Baruch**



**"Life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties."** Samuel Johnson



# BiPlane Productions

auction advertising

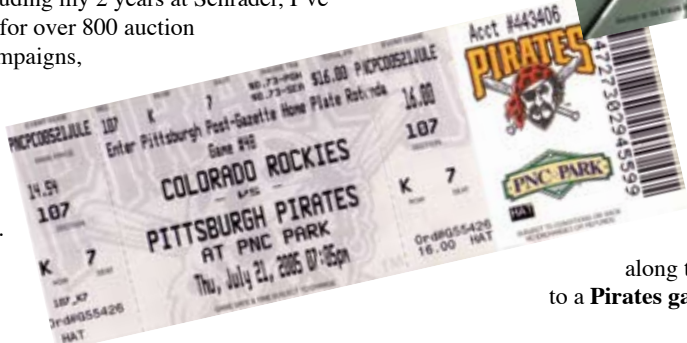


## Anything but Autopilot

After losing a client (over 40% of BiPlane's 2004 annual gross revenues) at the turn of the year, God brings BiPlane Productions several new customers and more auctions through my current customers. Through the end of November, 2005 is the most profitable of BiPlane's 3 years at the 11-month mark.

In January, I speak at the Minnesota Auctioneers Association's annual convention in St. Cloud, where the thermometer reads -29° upon exit from the plane. This is the first such event where I try a design-as-a-class project based on my principles of advertising design. Turns out, it's a big hit and is added to my teaching curricula.

In July, I pick up 6 National Auctioneers Association (NAA) advertising design awards, including my first **national Best in Show**. Including my 2 years at Schrader, I've now designed for over 800 auction advertising campaigns, winning over 70 state & national awards, including 5 Best in Shows.



While in Pittsburgh for the NAA annual convention on the now-beautiful riverfront, I reunite with **the Shupperds**, some of my clients & industry acquaintances, and some of the Schrader gang. Highlights include the **riverboat dinner cruise**, fireworks over the river, and late night strolls along the rivers. Shup buys BiPlane and friends 30 tickets to a **Pirates game**. The stadium folks put us on the scoreboard.

**Blue Stars** = locations of auctions for which BiPlane has designed at least part of the advertising campaign in past 3 years  
**Red Stars** = venues at which I taught and/or held consulting sessions



In August, I am added to the public relations committee for the NAA, helping to shape how the industry is marketed to the general public.