



Dear Best Friends,

It is that time of year again where we update you on our lives. Instead of giving you the typical 5-paragraph essay (usually drafted by Milo but this year he's finally expanding into long-form writing since he has plans to major in journalism next year despite our pleas to do something less interesting, because we were totally content with our mindless techie jobs at companies that shall not be named), we're going to give you a list of Dos and Don'ts based on the wacky year we've had (though I know you've probably seen worse from us in the 90s). Here we go...

DO's:

- *Call your kids if they aren't texting back letting you know their whereabouts. Milo gave us a scare on his 18th birthday when he said he "would be back for dinner" and so I elongated his birthday meal as long as I could - I asked everyone to cut up each little asparagus spear into eighths and ate them one at a time, then I had each person go around the table to give a speech on their favorite kitchen appliance (you wouldn't believe the love that Venus has for the automated wine opener - she's only 13!). I texted and texted and didn't hear from Milo until I got a call from our neighbor who said Milo asked to pick him up from jail - he had been arrested for stealing a Carvel Ice Cream cake (picture above if you have forgotten these infamous melting disasters) from Mariano's. We had cake waiting for him! Not an ice cream cake but still... We asked why he didn't just text us what he really wanted to which he replied, "I silenced my text messages because my ex won't stop bothering me, I figured if it was important you'd call..."*
- *Sell your Tesla, like, right now. Both our neighbors on either side of us blew up their garages by charging their Teslas indoors. They should know better! We get it,*

winter in Chicago is brutal, but your \$90k car should be able to handle it. Just don't buy a Tesla. The grassy knoll that was once our front yard is now a singed stubble. How sad.

DON'Ts:

- Call your kids if they are on a date. Especially not a first date. This is a situation where texting is *ALWAYS* better than calling. Venus got asked out by the President of the Latin Club (which, if you haven't heard yet, is making a huge comeback. Latin is dead... sexy!) in mid-March (you must remember though - beware the Ides of March!) and we were excited to send her off to the mall to watch *Elemental*. We got a bit overeager though and wanted to hear about how the date was going after two hours so we called-you know how us Boomers do it-to which Venus picked up and screamed at us for interrupting her first kiss. Oops!
- Have a wedding if you have had even the slightest interaction with *The Plague*. Yes, as in the Great Plague in *Lord of the Rings*. This isn't fiction, after all. Even if it means you lose \$50k, you do not want your reputation tarnished like Cousin Millie's. Millie really took her theme too far and went too deep into Middle-earth without a hazmat suit. She came back with a cake topper that she stole from the Eye of Sauron and sprung that up on us at the end of the night. We aren't talking to Millie anymore, and good thing Milo and Venus don't see weddings in their future.

We could have added more but no need to go on about this year. We're looking forward to next year and changing up our family values: from now on, we will be an analog family replete with typewriters, fountain pens, and 35mm film. We have wound down all of our internet footprints as much as possible, including LinkedIn, Venmo (I know you totally stalk people's transactions on there), and Reddit. A world without Reddit sounds tragic, but we have a 1960s *Encyclopedia Britannica* and the *Oxford English Dictionary* at the ready. What do ya say - want to join us?

All our best,

Your Best Friends~