

Xmas 2022

Dear friends and family,

This year we are having Xmas dinner at the Denny's near the Boise airport. Paul and I are looking forward to the bottomless cup of coffee, as we will be there for over 4 hours awaiting the arrival of his older sister Paula-Sue, who will be, as usual, pre-emptively pissed off when her flight arrives at 10 pm from San Francisco. About an hour into our "Classic Dinner" choices--- Crazy Spicy Dinner for Paul & the wild Alaskan Salmon dinner for me--Paul's mother, Susan, who just turned 93 in October, and his younger sister, Eugenia, will join us in anticipation of Paula-Sue's arrival. Of course, the children will be with us. I am already anticipating that both Erin and Aaron will have ordered the chocolate chip pancakes off the children's menu. As you may remember, both of our sensory-sensitive tweens have been limiting themselves to breakfast foods for years. Thank goodness Denny's will be open on Xmas and serving all-day breakfast! I was thinking that I could pick up a few crossword puzzle challenge books for the grownups, as we know that the kids will be on their phones watching those imaginative tik-tok videos in which young adults wear wigs and glasses to change characters in their little skits: Now I'm my mother-in-law!; now I'm my wife!; now I'm me! Or those hilarious clips of baby monkeys having their diapers changed with their human handlers lifting their tails and applying puffs of baby powder to their butts. I anticipate that Paul will be first to successfully complete the crosswords. He is just so sharp! We'll see!

Well, what have we done in the past year?!

Paul continues look for work, and I continue to encourage him. In the meanwhile, he has been offering haircuts in our kitchen. This has allowed him to finally pursue his creative side, which he has repressed for years. Not only are his hair styles artistic, but he sweeps the cuttings off the floor and has begun to craft human hair sculptures. What that man can do with hair scraps and glue is simply astounding! We plan to host a show of his work in our basement in spring. Local folks, be on the lookout for an invite!

I have carried on my duties as a daycare worker, snuggling babies and toddlers even when I'd rather not. Truth be told, menopause has hit hard, and between the sweating and sleeplessness, my tolerance is not what it used to be. I just don't have the patience that I used to have for the whining and drooling, dripping noses, and dirty diapers. But, good soldier that I am, I simply mutter under my breath and carry on, taking a nip or two from the mini bottles I keep in my purse, only when necessary.

And I'm not the only one with wacky hormones in the house. With Erin in 6th grade and Aaron in 8th, we are awash in puberty. What a horrible time of life! Hair and bumps are appearing in the most inconvenient of places. Bodily fluids are building up and pouring out without permission, not to mention crushes, cliques, heartbreak, and homework. If we all survive middle school, it truly will be miraculous.

Speaking of miracles, we are all still here, dear ones, aren't we? Have a very Merry Xmas! We will be thinking fondly of you as we sip our umpteenth cup of coffee at Denny's and await Paula-Sue's latest tirade. And Happy New Year!

Fondly,

The Dinkles

Paul, Sandy, Erin, and Aaron

