

The Hogan's Christmas Letter 2009



It is the night before Christmas when all through the house many creatures are stirring even a mouse (actually a hamster named Sunny), The stockings were not all hung by the chimney but with care nevertheless with hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there already. (Patience Matthew)

The children were nestled all snug in their bed (Emily likes to cuddle but Matthew doesn't – we have a small problem but Matthew is always reasonable), They both have visions of sugar-plums dancing from iPods or BlackBerries or whatever makes music around here, and mama in her kerchief or is it really a hoodie from the Gap and I in my ski cap courtesy of Matthew's soccer team present (yeah Juventus go team go – more on them later).

When out on the lawn remains unraked leaves from fall, now what is the matter does it clatter? No one sprang from their bed to see what the matter was because as usual there was a raucous clatter in the house somewhere near the Wii. Away to the window we all flew like a flash and tore open the French doors and threw up my hands with pride at our Christmas lights, will Santa approve?

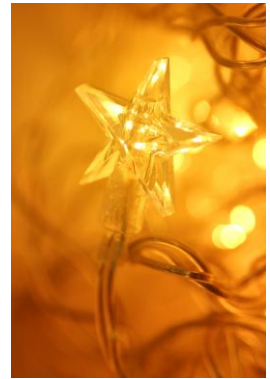
While moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow was a miss (or mist) with rain gave the luster of mid day objects like snowboards and new skis and other objects below the slopes of Mt Seymour. And what to my wondering eyes should appear are two children reveling in the joy of speed and snow on their own kind of sleigh and who needs eight tiny reindeer anyway.

With a little old driver (I guess that would be me), still so lively and somewhat quick, for I knew in a moment it was time for St Nick so let's wrap it up more rapid and quick like Sunny in his wheel going around in circles.

Life with the Hogans has been circles and spins in a dance that we all have embraced as we all adjust to new routines and challenges. Emily has stepped up her dance and become a full time dance student at Pro Arte School of the Performing Arts and loves it. But her Grade four studies have presented new challenges with lots of homework. She with our 'gentle' encouragement gets the job done. You would think Emily's activities would stop there but alas no, for she also takes piano and Korean lessons which she must exercise every day. Poor girl but don't feel too bad she still gets her quota of Wii, Youtube and play dates (you can add skiing to the list now) and she still loves her book club meetings every month with her almost boyfriend too-smart-John who reads even more books than Emily does. I love taking them both and participating with the other parents in this very enriching book club.

Matthew might not take soccer to an Art form but he has certainly, along with his team mates, made a mark with their unbeaten (not even close to being beaten) streak so far this season. Their secret? They actually listen to their coach! Their coaches Clark and Ivan have done wonders

getting them to pass like pros and keeping a man on D no matter what. I love going out with Matthew and seeing them play. Matthew also enjoys his weekly science workshop where they seem to engage in art as much as science. Matthew chose snowboarding and he like Emily have taken to the slopes like ducks to water. My long hiatus from skiing has come to an end and I look forward to a healthy dose of slopes snow this season.



Matthew also embraces mountain biking and skateboarding and hopes to get his skating in order this season. Matthew has a very strong go mode now he needs to figure out how to stop. This applies to his snowboarding as well. Matthew is also learning Korean and is coming along with that too.

Genie has finished her last course in Early Childhood Education with one practicum remaining. It has been a long program for her but she has thoroughly enjoyed the learning as it has bled over into her parenting style and by association my own parenting style and philosophy.

Patrick continues his fulltime programming with Bancorp Financial Services where he holds up all day (and night) in his cozy home office in the back 40 where two big screens blazing all day revealing the fruits of his efforts. Still mountain biking (with Matthew mostly) and enjoying a little music.

Genie is an extraordinary full contact mom and like me find our time for personal endeavors lacking. We both wonder why we even own a TV since we don't ever watch it and when rarely we watch DVD's it's usually on our laptop from the comfort of our bed late at night when we aren't reading kids novels (especially Patrick who tries to keep up with Emily's reading which has become more and more entertaining).

Big changes coming up soon. Genie's sister Jiwan and her daughter Hessu are coming out to live with us for at least two years as she hopes to get her daughter converted to a less stressful education system enjoyed in Canada. Our kids are ecstatic about their cousin and auntie coming out to live with us. Genie is very pumped about it as well. Their energy is mellow and well that's a good thing for us. Hessu will attend the same school as Emily and Matthew so everything is coming together.

Well that's a wrap for this year. All of us here extend our loving best wishes to a memorable holiday season and a blessed and prosperous New Year.

Heartfelt best wishes from the Hogans

