

Happy Holidays 2005!

The holidays are upon us. Do they fill you with dread?
Does a jingle bell sound like hooves in your head?
Can another fruit cake make your heart bleed?
Does caroling feel like a blaring stampede?

Well hang in there, it'll be over soon.
Before long you'll hum a much better tune.
Spread a little cheer and give merry a chance.
You'll feel your feet tap and you might even dance.

So open your door, come out of the haze.
Enjoy what you can, it's the holidays!
And now for the highlights, we offer the facts,
for life with the Menczers: Fil, Colleen, Iris and Max.

Things we've learned in 2005¹:

- You can survive on sleeping in 2-hour increments for months on end.
- Soccer is a combat sport (when played Menczer style).
- 5 year olds can get into *any* cabinet in the kitchen.
- If the kids are quiet, they are likely up to something they don't want you to know.
- New teeth hurt: first the baby, then the family members.
- Even without teeth, a baby's gums can pulverize just about anything.
- Babysitters make the world a healthy and happier place.
- If your crawling baby's knees are dirty, it's time to clean your carpets (or try teaching her to walk).
- Hard candy, prosciutto, and eating anything while jumping on the bed are all choking hazards.
- Kids ride twice at Disney World, if the Mom and Dad need to take turns watching the baby.
- Disney World is HUMID in August.

¹ Appreciation to Lee Belew, we borrowed his writing style.

Our quiz has a little different format this year. Which would YOU choose:

1. A. Hillary, B. Condi
2. A. Obama, B. Jed
3. A. Apple, B. PC
4. A. matinee, B. late show
5. A. soccer, B. baseball
6. A. digital, B. film
7. A. coffee, B. slurpee
8. A. scones, B. muffins
9. A. night owl, B. early bird
10. A. Jon Stewart, B. Jay Leno
11. A. movies, B. theater
12. A. wine, B. beer
13. A. tomato, B. tomahto

Results:

Mostly A's? Our friendship is based on mutual respect and understanding.

Mostly B's? Opposites attract, in addition to mutual respect and understanding.

- Having fun can be hard work.
- Piano lessons put your parenting skills to the test.
- Kindergarten teachers are worth their weight in gold.
- Date night is smart even for married couples.
- 40 doesn't seem so old anymore, it's downright vibrant.
- Hosting a lot of gatherings keeps your house in shape.
- It is possible to forget everything you learned with the first child.
- Becoming your mother isn't the worst thing that can happen to a person.
- Sponge Bob is annoying.
- John Mellencamp was right when he wrote about small towns.
- Lavender is the best soap fragrance on kids.
- Martinis make every party more festive.
- Cousins are totally fun. (Welcome to the very newest ones: Tipper and Gabriel. Way to go, Tommy and Jeannie, and Scott and Roselie!)

Things we still don't know:

- Is it called soda or pop?
- Can you be two places at one time if you really hurry?
- Why does this country only impeach some guys for lying?
- How much clutter is one person allowed?
- Is it better to drive the faster route or the shorter route?
- Do you really need three strollers for one baby?
- How much gelato is too much?
- Are you ever really done with any project?
- Is it necessary to wash your car?
- Why isn't chocolate one of the food groups?
- Is it better to send paper holiday greetings or electronic versions?



We suspect that the answers to these questions and many more will continue to perplex us. We know 2006 (wow!) will bring many things. We hope that love endures, good health abounds, hard work is rewarded, and peace prevails.

2006: Bring It On!²

² Photos and movies at homer.informatics.indiana.edu