Family News

December 2, 1995

The Latest:

Our last issue was December 11, 1994. We have an entire year to cover in a couple of pages, so hang on.

The biggest single event of 1995 is not Opal. It happened the first of April. Kathy began working in Electronics at Walmart. She is sometimes called the "computer lady", and has been full-time since they moved to a new Supercenter last August. She is the assistant manager in the department.

I call it the biggest event of 1995 because it has meant a big adjustment for our family. Kathy usually works in the evening until 8:00 oclock. The kids and I share cooking meals and look forward to her days off. She also works every weekend so the kids are stuck with me. Justinn calls me a neat freak when I go on a cleaning rampage on the weekends.

Kathy is working because she wants to, and enjoys getting out of the house. Since her working is extra money, we were able to trade our car in for a '92 Doge Caravan in July and love it! With both TJ and Perry bigger than I am, we needed the extra room. Now the whole family can ride together without being squeezed.

In August we had a brush with Hurricane Erin. It came ashore 60 miles west of here near Pensacola. Some people lost power for 2 or 3 days, but there was little damage in our area.

Kathy has never liked going to the beach very much. Since she works on weekends the kids & I have gone to the beach more this year than the past three years combined. We went the Saturday before Opal hit and enjoyed the dunes one last time before they vanished in the storm. Below is a photo after Opal. About 30 feet of the dunes all along the beach are gone.





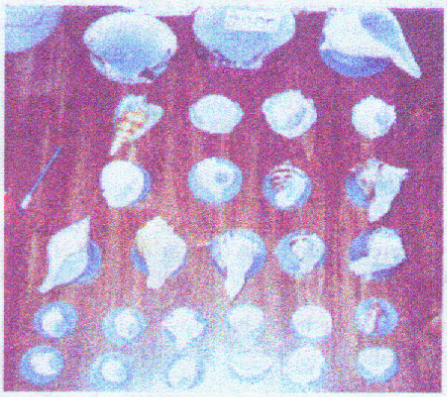
We stayed in our house during Opal and the kids saw the awesome power of 120 mph winds. The eye made landfall around 6:00 pm, about the time we lost our power at our house. TJ, Perry, and I stood at the back door and watched shingles blown from the roof into the pool, and the tin from the bike shed wrap around trees in our yard. The damage at our house was minor compared to the rest of our county.

It is the first time in my company's history where we had a 100% outage. Not one of the 26,512 meters was spinning when we assembled into survey teams the next day for damage assessment. We brought in 265 extra people and 60 more trucks. We worked 16 hour days for 10 days. We are still doing some clean up work. The average time without power was 6 days. At our house we were without power for 3 days. Overall we feel fortunate the storm moved quickly and dropped to a catagory III. Kathy worked through much of the cleanup and the kids were real champs taking care of things at home.

On the second Saturday in November we had 8 tornados touch down in our county. One of the twisters touched down near Walmart. Kathy was working that day, but was away from the store delivering a TV. I heard Walmart had been hit and was worried the whole time I was at work. There were several homes damaged by the twisters and another 6,000 people out of power again. We're beginning to think someone is just not living right around here.

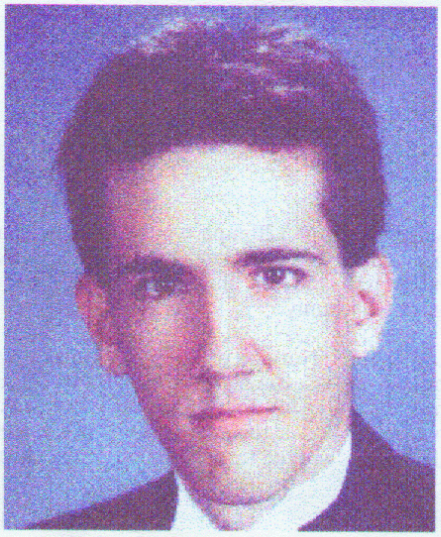
We bought a color printer in July and can now do our candles in color. The living room is full of 8x10 pictures I've printed after blowing up snap shots and video images. We've also started making candles out of seashells and coffee cups with color photos on them.





The county has changed our address for the 911 system. The new address is: 1963 Juniper Lake Road.

I'm still peddling my bike to work and enjoy it. I've almost got 2000 miles on the spedometer. I enjoy the quiet time it gives me and the money it saves on gas. The kids gave me a bike helmet for Father's Day and I wear it faithfully. I think I embarass some of them because all of the school busses go by me each morning.



TJ:

TJ will be 18 this month. He is a senior in High School, and I can't call him a kid anymore. He's turned into a handsome young man and we are very proud of him. He plans to attend a 2 year college about 40 miles from here. He is planning a degree in Computer Sciences. The photo to the left is his senior picture.



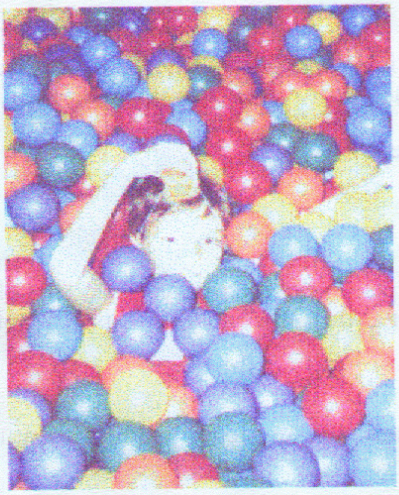
Perry:

Perry is 15 and will be going into high school next year. This past summer he had to make up a class at school. With Kathy working and no school bus, we wound up buying him a new bike. He rode it to school. We rode together in the mornings. He had to ride about half a mile further than I do. He has shot up this year and is taller than me. In the picture to the left Kathy is painting Perry's hair green for a pep rally at school. Notice that he has to get on his knees for her to reach his hair.

Justinn:

Justinn is 12 and in the sixth grade. She is going to the same school as Perry. This year she has to change classes as well as teachers at the new school. She got her first ten speed bike for her birthday this year. She wants to ride it to school, but the jury is still out. The picture to the right is a picture of her on her first and last day of elementary school..





Marc Thomas:

Marc Thomas is 9 years old and in the fourth grade. This is his first year at a school without his big sister. He is handling it just fine. For his birthday I took him to Discovery Zone in Pensacola. I allowed him to invite 5 people. His 5 guests were all girls! Guess thats one way to eliminate the competition. Can you find him in the picture of colored balls?

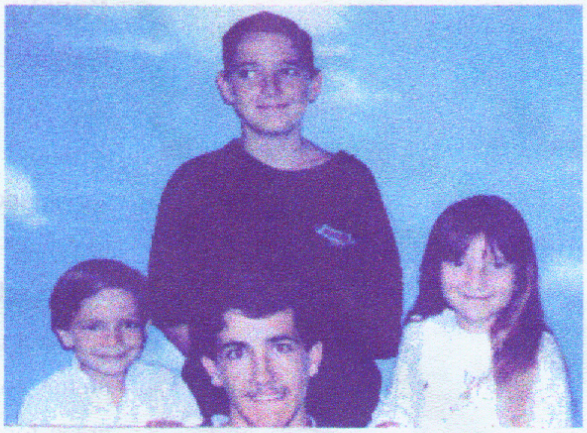


Merry Christmas

1995

From:

All of Us!



The Gipsons
1963 Juniper Lake Road
DeFuniak Spr., FL 32433

Favorite Thought:

If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.

Henry David Thoreau

From Our World to Your World:

Don't forget we've had an address change. If you ever get on the Internet you can E-mail us. Justinn is now a regular on America Online and has her own E-mail address: Jusgip@aol.com

The rest of us are at tomgip@aol.com

Have a safe holiday and if you have any complaints about the Newsletter just take them up with the editor.