



Merry
Christmas
& Happy
New Year

Love, The Cicero Family
John, Jennifer, Kaitlyn, & Aubrey
2024



THE CICERO FAMILY
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Yes! You did it! You lowered your standards enough to open this letter and make it this far.

We always like to start with a grateful heart, and we must say that 2024 was quite a wonderful year. We visited Death Valley National Park, and while we *did* see a big valley, we did not see much death. See? Gratitude is easy.

Have you seen *Inside Out 2*? Kaitlyn entered high school this year, while Aubrey entered middle school. Help! Actually, the social transitions haven't been too painful.



But do you remember high school? You could choose between choir or band, right? Well, her school offers **twenty-two** different choir or band classes! There are 18 PE classes, 25 art classes...heck, there are two different levels of **zoology** classes. We were gonna bring the course guide home but it wouldn't fit in the car.

For the girls, 2024 was also a year filled with amazing adventures in theater. Aubrey played Amanda in *Matilda Jr.* (even getting "thrown" by her pigtails) and played Violet Beauregard in *Willy Wonka*, which taught her excellent manners, such as storing gum behind her ear. She also landed an ensemble role for *Mary Poppins Jr.* (her first mainstage production!), which will be performed in April 2025. Kaitlyn played Lavender in *Matilda Jr.* (**not** getting to throw her sister) and was a spoon and villager in the mainstage production of *Beauty and the Beast Jr.* But her big news is that she will be in a lead role as Jane Banks in *Mary Poppins Jr.*! We're looking forward to the intensity of "tech week," when we can hang out with 60 teenagers deprived of sleep and hyped up on caffeine and sugar.

Along with acting, both girls had some significant singing performances this year. Kaitlyn, who was part of the all-state choir in middle school, has begun singing the national anthem for the high school hockey games. She also sang "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" for nearly a thousand people at Woodland Park's 4th of July celebration, then ended the year as the soloist at our church Christmas Jubilee. Aubrey has greatly improved in her singing, joining the District 20 middle school honor choir. She also "graduated" out of church kids' choir after her spring performance.



Merry Chrissstmas

"Grab a sledgehammer and destroy a dentist's office." Is that on your bucket list? Well, we can cross it off of ours! Aubrey's karate dojo is moving into what used to be a dentist's office and we helped with the demo. We sure got a kick out of it.

One morning, our refrigerator smelled like something burning. Jen took it apart and found a plastic edging that had become dislodged, coming to rest on the defrost heater. Remember gratitude? We're glad our house didn't burn down. And we even learned something new—food infused with burnt plastic fumes doesn't taste that good.

Two coasts, two sisters. Jen's sister's family visited from New York, temporarily tripling the population at the Hotel Cicero. Then we visited John's sister's family in Los Angeles, taking in the beauty of Joshua Tree National Park in the process.

Jen is coming up on 20 years playing French horn with the Woodland Park Wind Symphony. John's bowling has been good for one thing this year: making everything else seem pretty painless.

John has been at Entegris as a quality engineer for three years now. It continues to be a great place to work and he cherishes the many friendships that have blossomed. This totally isn't a plug for you to check out their careers site. Even though you probably should. You know. Just sayin'.

At the Sand Dunes, we've hiked the "usual" dunes a lot, so we decided this year to hike out to "Hidden Dune." Strangely, after six hours, we still hadn't found it.

If you know someone who wants to donate a car to our family, we have a 15-year-old with a permit. Ideally, that car will have a big rubber bumper around it and will go from 0 to 60 in 5.3 minutes.

Memorable quotes from 2024:

"Facebook is just for a bunch of 50-year-olds to brag about their kids' achievements." (hey, hey, hey, we're not 50 *yet*)

"You know, toilet paper, it...it just turns **back**packing into **glamp**packing."

We're grateful to have such amazing family and friends. You make this world a better place. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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