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The Manick Family Year in Review

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We started 2007 as we do each year — with a vacation in Yosemite Valley. Although we always look forward to the snow, this year we were greeted with sunny and warm springtime conditions. All was not lost—we did some hiking, saw some beautiful scenery and I was even interviewed by CNN. During the first half of the year I was plagued with a rotator cuff injury that surfaced last September. It kept me from participating in many of my favorite activities, such as crossing my arms and drying my back. The pain has since subsided and the thought of surgery has diminished. In April Adam managed to cut off the tip of his thumb while doing a school project at home and he, Julia and I spent a tense evening in the emergency hospital. I've since been reluctant to ask Adam to "give me a hand." ❖ We had a lot of "coming of age" in the family this year. Adam graduated elementary school and is now attending middle school as a 6th grader. Julia, who just turned five, started Kindergarten and is already reading and writing. And after several years of attending evening classes, Darlene had her B'nai Mitzvah ceremony (sort of a Bat Mitzvah for the "over 13 crowd") in June. Even my dad came of age by celebrating his 80th birthday. ❖ Our summer turned out to be somewhat eventful. Princess Julia took a dance class which culminated in a dance performance to the tune of "Femininity" in which she ended up stealing the show. She also learned to swim. Adam became a Boy Scout, which should strengthen some qualities necessary for his future role as a girl scout (tying knots, identifying animal noises, obedience, etc). The highlight of our summer was a two-week vacation in Hawaii. First we spent five days in Waikiki, Oahu, where we hiked to the top of Diamond Head, played in Waikiki Beach, and snorkeled in Hanauma Bay (unfortunately a tourist drowned just feet from where we were sitting). Then we went back to our favorite vacation spot: the Hyatt Regency Resort on Maui's Ka'anapali Beach, where we mostly just relaxed, ate, played and enjoyed our top-floor room with an amazing ocean view. ❖ In October we expanded our family unit by adopting a couple of rescued kittens: a six-week old male tabby ("Tigger") and an eight week old black & white female furball ("Luna"). They have since grown significantly and are settling into their new empire. They even occasionally allow us to share their pillows at night. Did we need new dependents? No, they were Darlene's idea. And as we have over the last several years, we spent a long Thanksgiving weekend in Palm Springs with my parents and some good friends. ❖ Darlene's eating disorders practice (aka "Bambi's Escorts") weighs in as a success. And she recently fulfilled a longtime dream of owning a piano, which is now the focal spot of our living room. As for me it was a good year: I had many memorable times with my family and friends, drank some good wine, made a few decent photographs (just for the exposure), and have recently accepted a long-awaited promotion at LAX. My parents—now married 56 years—are doing well, while my brother (now a Macy's VP) is still living near Seattle and hating it. ❖ It has come to my attention (through careful and objective observation) that time is passing at an alarming pace. The kids are growing so quickly and I'm starting to see visible signs of age in my friends. And as young as I am, I'm still hounded by the AARP. I think at times we need to be reminded to appreciate what we have and not sweat the small stuff. My sincerest wishes for a happy and healthy new year.

Steve, Darlene, Adam and Julia
... and of course, Luna & Tigger too!