

Dear Family
 Friend
 Other _____ (please specify)

December, 2015

We hope this letter finds you happy, healthy, and enjoying a restful and restorative holiday season with loved ones. OK now, let's get right to it. We've got kids and you want to see 'em!



The boys' growing collection of crowns (e.g., Corn King, Puzzle King) was retired and replaced with these durable, stylish Multi-Purpose crowns. Whatever you write or draw on there, you're king of that!



The boys made their own masks at the library. In a strange twist of fate, these came in handy after the boys suffered minor facial scarring in a mask-making accident at the library.

This year, everyone in our household had some experiences. Ayelet won the Ira H. Abrams Memorial Award for Distinguished Teaching, the most prestigious teaching award in the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. Ayelet is equally at home when at home, and she regularly does charming and delightful things.

John was nominated for the John P. Ruscio Award for Outstanding Holiday Letter, the only award that is awarded by and for John P. Ruscio. The winner has yet to be announced, but it's not too late for you to try to influence the judge! John's pointless streak of consecutive days walking is nearing 4 years and remains older than Zach. This year he walked more than 5,000 miles—John, that is. Zach walks perfectly well but not fanatically.

Zach started preschool and has the same teacher that Max did for two years. He's making great progress in reading and writing, and he especially enjoys working on puzzles. Zach has long been a Puzzle King.

Max is in 1st grade and wants to be an artist—a famous artist—who writes and illustrate his own stories. He's making great progress in karate, taking home a silver medal in a tournament this summer and recently earning his orange belt. Max is a Meatball King, a title that honors his robust appetite and his quirky sense of humor.



An interesting shopping trip: 1 box of cereal, 2 steaks, 2 packages of chicken, 1 bag of rice, and 4 enormous boxes of Nutter Butters. As I recall, the cookies were purchased to give to needy families.



To hedge their nutritional bets, the boys learn to harvest produce at a local farm. Shown here is some kind of fruit, maybe. I'm not sure, but it's definitely not cookies.

There's more living in our home than just people, and I'm not even talking about the expected 1 spider / ft² that's the average for residential construction in America (mostly inside the walls, I hope). Long-time readers know that we have some fish. Easily excitable readers will note that last year's offer of free clownfish eggs has not expired!



Our clownfish are about 13 years old but we still haven't gotten around to naming them. The little one (male) is guarding about 200 yellow, 1-day-old eggs. The big one (female) is guarding everything else. Keep your distance—at just 2.5" long, she will attack a person!



Sylvia, our rose queen cichlid, is about 3 years old. She's equal parts colorful, endearing, and fiercely aggressive. At 11" long, Sylvia is equally happy to attack her food (dry pellets that don't put up much of a fight) or anyone silly enough to try to clean the tank.

This bonus text is intended to provide some breathing room between the tables of pictures, so take a moment to breathe while you're in this luxurious space.



John (Daddy), Max, Zach, and Ayelet (Mommy). Our human family is currently outnumbered by our guitar family.



My old guitar (center) next to the two I built this summer (red + blue), Max's two guitars (left), and Zach's two guitars (right).

We hope that you and your loved ones have a joyful holiday season and a wonderful new year! Please keep in touch, for example by clicking on some of the underlined things below.

Ayelet, John, Max, & Zach Ruscio

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Holiday Letter Archives:

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~ruscio/holidays.html>

Pictures and Videos of the Boys:

<https://picasaweb.google.com/113323955775289784206?noredirect=1>

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