

Dear friends,

As we finally know the president-elect after the historical electoral dispute here we are again delivering our Holiday wishes to our friends over the world. At last year's note we offered you a picture of how it's like to live in the midst of the Silicon Valley.

Things have kept moving. Housing market kept tightening although industries and people working for them have been moving away from the Valley. People like us who are lucky enough to have our home address in Palo Alto began wondering who'll be taking care of us when the plumbing breaks, kids go to school, when a car needs to be fixed, or even when we get sick. As much as we want to maintain the normality in our busy lives, you scratch your head when you witness people hire a company to decorate their houses for the Holidays, or hire a worker to grow their vegetables in the community garden. My neighbor once heard that we'd soon have some kind of revolution because people are so famished for time. We hope it'll be a peaceful one.

The City of Palo Alto is currently putting the utilities underground in our neighborhood. They strongly recommended everyone to pay an additional \$\$\$ to put a conduit for a fiber-optic cable, promising a 10M bps Internet connection. In February they will actually connect all the homes, but there have been two small changes for the fast Internet connection — the speed will be 100M bps and only the big houses (aka digital haves) will be connected. Now that the City has declared us on the other side of the Digital Divide we have to continue living with our slow modem connection for the time being.

After recovering from a burn-out (very common here) syndrome, Yoko started working full time again at the same company. It was a wonderful year-and-a-half break for her. If you have not done so, she highly recommends to slow down for a while. It certainly gave her a renewed motivation to tackle new challenges.

The highlight for Yoko and Giordano this year was a trip to Northern Italy joined by her sister from Japan. Trip to Bellagio, Vicenza, Venezia, Verona, Bergamo and Milano was one of the most memorable events for both Yoko and her sister, Yoshiko. We must report Yoko's Italian did not have a chance to be practiced during two weeks non-stop chatting in Japanese.

Giordano also made a record number of trips for conferences. He was a co-chair of the Electronic Imaging Symposium and the Internet Imaging Conference; he has also been teaching a short course on Color Imaging on the Internet at four conferences.

Deanne has been working hard (happily) at school to fulfill her requirements to transfer as a Math major. She has also been working as a student intern at Smith-Barney watching lucky people's portfolio grow.

Happy New Millennium !!!

Love,

Giordano, Yoko and Deanne

