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Merry Seasons Greetings from the gentle woods of north Idaho! Because you're curious, the title of this Yule epistle is what us computer geeks call a *regular expression*. It basically means "Remove all the L's." Get it? No L: Noël. There. Now that the computer humor is out of the way, you're free to enjoy hearing about the happenings of the Gookin Men over the past 365 days.



The boys in Chinatown,  
San Francisco, July 25, 2008



Jordan on the Brooklyn Bridge.



## Jordan

I called it at the beginning of this year, 2008 was going to be the year of infinite possibilities (as equated by my observation that an 8 flipped sideways is the mathematical symbol for infinity) and it sure has turned out to be true.

This year has been, on the whole, a year of exciting and fun opportunities and bad timing. I was working at a Japanese restaurant in Midtown and was living in Flatbush, Brooklyn in New York for some time. I really enjoyed my time there though I obviously didn't fit into the cultural spectrum of the area, but it was a lesson in humility.

I soon got the opportunity to work at a sandal shop in Soho and took it. So most of my summer days were filled with hanging out in a really relaxed work environment, sorting sandals, talking to customers, and generally goofing off.

This last summer was very memorable and one of the best I've had. Surrounded by many friends, we partook in all this great city had to offer. But soon it was time to leave ol' Brooklyn and the roomies and I up and moved to Staten Island, to a wonderfully big and inexpensive house all to ourselves! This was the kind of place I had always wanted to find in New York but never had the opportunity to.

But would you believe it? After having moved in, my mind took a contemplative turn and I decided that my nearly 4 year run in New York was drawing to a close. So as of December 16, I will be moving back to Coeur d'Alene for a short time and then heading down to LA to try my luck there. I am truly excited about the changes and feel that it will be the best thing for me, but I will always miss New York and hope to be back sooner rather than later. So upwards and onwards to 2009!



Jordan in New York, surrounded by beautiful women.

# Simon

What I did this year was one of the best that I have ever did. The first thing I did this year was Football. This Football year was a lot more fun than this last year. We got to play against Juniors and we did better than them on offense and defense.

When we played we did really good until the second game, but we did a heck of a lot better after the third game. What I really hated was that our last two games were unfair against us. Our standing this year was 5-4.

Another thing that I really liked was when I got to go and work out after school for an hour and 30 min. Another is that I got to go see the movie *Quantum of Solace*. I think that it was good without any gadgets, but Dave said that he is a more action type not the gadget type.

I think that this year I am going to have a really big difference this year. Also I thought that I wasn't going to do wrestling this year but it turns out that I am going to do wrestling this year. YEAH!!!!

Well I hope that this year I can get better and I also hope that you all can have a great holiday and I hope that we can have a great Christmas.



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## The Endless Winter of 2008



The winter never seemed to end. From December through March we saw 160 inches of snow, nearly three times the normal amount. It was especially bad in February when the snow was wet and heavy; it came down 15 inches in just one day. It snowed clear through until May, when it finally all melted — and flooded! This winter, so far, has been nice. No snow. Yet.



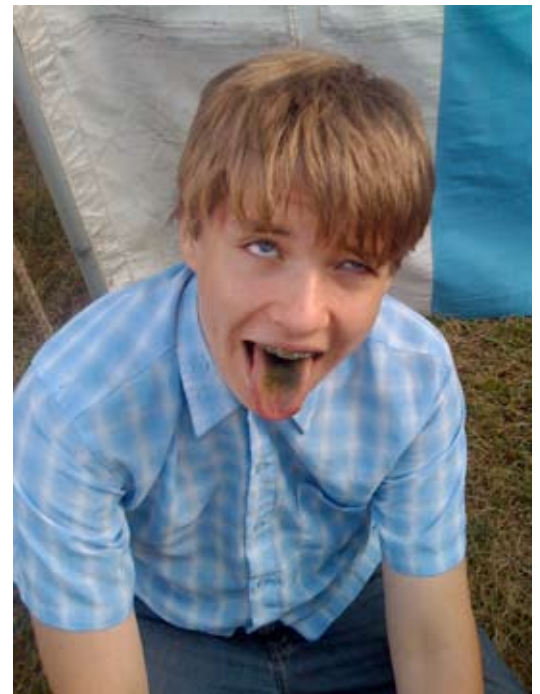
## Jonah

Well, another year on Earth. Where to start? I guess I'll start with the summer, because that's as far back as I can remember. I had a awesome summer; I took two vacations, one to the Oregon coast and one trip to visit my grandma Nonnie in San Diego. The Oregon coast trip had its ups and downs. Ups: very relaxing and beautiful trip. I hadn't expected to be pretty after driving through eastern Oregon on the return part of the San Diego trip, but I was surprised. It went from a barren wasteland to a green forest in an instant. Downs: My brothers and I are getting way too big to all fit in the back seat of that now tiny car. I also fell off of a rock I was climbing at a beach and bruised my hip. That hurt. The

San Diego trip was just as fun. Ups: We stayed in Las Vegas for two days :D. I got to meet the Gookin relatives, who knew I had so many? (Dad) Downs: The thought of reliving the drive through Montana and Oregon again, the endless plains and lack of green, I will die. Just kidding. That was my summer and the highlight of this year. Merry Christmas and a Happy new year.

## Jeremiah

Hi, I'm Jeremiah Gookin. You probably know by now if you actually read the Christmas Letter's we send out every year. I still enjoy introducing myself. Anyhoo, this has been a back and forth year, It's been tough, and then it was fun. Starting in January, I was getting back from Christmas vacation. 7<sup>th</sup> grade was awesome, I really enjoyed myself with lots of friends. My best friend, Sean, left this year though to go Vancouver and live with his mom, but we still keep in touch. I'm going to skip to this summer because my memory is blank when I try to think back that far. During this summer, I did a lot of things. I went down to San Diego with my dad and brothers, while on the way there we stopped by Las Vegas, I forget what we did there. Then after three days we drove down to San Diego and visited my grandma, and stayed there for a few days. While we were there we went sailing with my dad's brother Blake, Saw the Dark Knight movie, and went out to eat a lot. After we stayed



there for a while, we left and drove up the coast. That was our vacation with our dad. Our vacation with my step dad and mom was going to Oregon, but that was only after we woke up in the morning and worked outside on my mom's greenhouse, which.... sucked.... yes it did. Oh well, it's over now >\_<. When school started I was nervous, I'm not anymore, I don't like it as much as last year but it's still all fun. Well that's basically the end, the years not over and much is going to happen still. (Did you seriously read all that?)



Jeremiah relaxes in our Las Vegas hotel room: the very definition of "vacation."



The boys in the Post Falls Day Parade, June 2008. It was raining like hell, but they had a good time. They were marching with the Sons of Italy. Each of the boys represents something Italian: Jonah is a "goom-ba" (he's also carrying a violin case); Jeremiah is the Pope; and Simon is Julius Caesar. The boys are proud to be 1/8 Italian, though Simon constantly reminds me that he's more Irish than anything else.



Simon, Jonah, Dan, and Jeremiah at Nonnie's house in San Diego. The boys had a great time on our road trip. Highest price paid for gas: \$4.99/gal at Brawley, CA. Lowest price paid for gas was \$3.98 at Dillon, MT. We rented a Chrysler 300 for the drive, which saved about half the price of gas had we driven my Dodge Ram truck.

# Cats



Cosette,  
alive

Tragedy struck the household Gookin this year with the passing of Cosette, who's been in the family since 1995. Fat Kitty got really skinny after being boarded during our summer vacation. She never recovered. On October 20, I found her looking out the window, not quite alive. She's buried in the back yard and, surprisingly, no one has dug her up yet.

Cosette was mourned for a while, but she was just a cat so we got over her fast.

In November, Cosette was replaced by two wee boy kitties. They are Milton Francis and Morton Boop, brothers who look incredibly alike. They've only recently taken to exploring the house. Imagine the joy upon their finding all the cables to chew on in the office! Oh, and the Christmas tree! Such kitty fun cannot be contained.



Milton Francis



Morton Boop

## Ways You Can Tell the Cats Apart

- Milton appears to be slightly smaller than Morton, though he weighs more.
- Morton chews off Milton's whiskers.
- Morton is fluffier.
- Milton is more likely to come out and see, but also more likely to scamper away.
- Morton is reserved, yes even for a kitty.



Before

After

## Dan

I lost 70 lbs. this year. Most of it vanished when I shoveled some 10,000 inches of snow last winter. I still have 30 lbs. I'd like to lose. With snow on the way, that should prove easy. Anyway, I tossed out all my old fat clothes — 8 bags full for St. Vinny's!

The boys and I joined the local Sons of Italy lodge. I had a small role in

*Into The Woods* at the Playhouse. I planted a pear tree and an apple tree in the backyard, as well as other plants outside. I went to my 30 year high school reunion. I was appointed to the school district's Long Range Planning Committee. I've started yoga. And I finished perhaps the biggest book I've ever written, *Troubleshooting Your PC All-In-One Desktop Reference For Dummies*, which is not only 800 pages long but includes a DVD full of videos I made for the book. It took me 5 months to write the thing. Man, did I under-bid that thing.

By the way, if you'd like to lose weight too, ask me how! The answer is Isagenix™! Nope, you won't lose weight fast, but you'll feel great and peppy. Let me sign you up now as a second source of income would be cool.



Dan's 48th birthday;  
Simon and Dan enjoy some CostCo chocolate cake

## On to 2009!

There was lots of awful news this past year. Nasty. The news media is in an anxiety pill that we need not take. Because our view of the world is merely a perception, the constant bad news harangue is something I recommend that you avoid. In fact, my hearty advice for the coming year is to stop reading the news and — for God's stake — stop watching television! Instead, read a good book. For suggestions, visit

<http://www.wambooli.com>.

Merry Christmas!