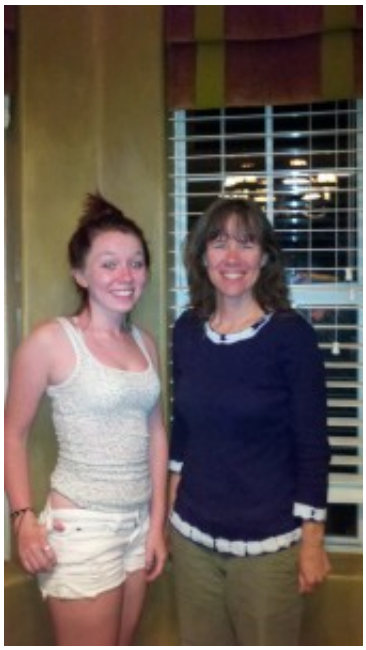
TWO VERY SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFTS!



About 40 years ago a new adventure in my life began and it came as an early Christmas present and a total surprise. There I was in the middle of the night hanging out in the waiting room of St. Boniface hospital in Winnipeg anxiously awaiting the birth of my Son Curtis. Earlier in the evening I had been celebrating my Birthday along with my Wife Lana and my Parents at dinner when all of a sudden it was time to rush her to the hospital. I was so nervous I don't even remember how we got there ... Hell maybe Lana drove. I do remember the hours spent just waiting and waiting though and must have been dosing when I heard my name being called. I looked up to see a nurse holding what seemed to be a tiny alien from outer space. This poor little creature had a slightly misshapen head and her body was covered in some kind gooey substance. Lana it turned out had a very difficult time giving birth so the Doctor had to use some forceps. As I got up and approached the the doorway I heard the nurse say congratulations Mr. Johns you are now the proud Father of a brand new ??? Now at the time I remembered thinking that French accent of hers she sure dragged the Son word out. Then it hit me, she didn't say Son she said Daughter. Daughter! What the hell do you do with them?

Some 28 years later shortly before Christmas I once again received another special gift as I went through a somewhat similar scenario. Only this time they did a C- section which brought Cami into the world looking perfect. I had also known for sometime she was on the way so she wasn't a surprise. When Candis was born Fathers were not allowed in the birthing room and even though I had the right to be there for Cami's birth I chose not to do so. Her Mom Kari with whom I had once been engaged were having a few problems and frankly I didn't think I would get out of there alive.(-:

Candis and Cami couldn't be more unlike each other even though Cami always looked like she could have been Candis' Daughter. The differences between them are pretty apparent. Candis has always been very outgoing and talkative where as Cami is much more reserved and quiet. Cami may appear shy but she has that Johns rage burning inside her which I have never seen but I understand her Mother and cousin Christina have so I wouldn't suggest crossing her. Candis has always been pretty assertive and even as a child would go knocking on doors

whenever we moved into a new neighborhood to ask if they had any little girls there she could play with. What Candis and Cami do have in common and I am most proud of is they are both brilliant!
Candis got turned on to learning from her 5 Th grade teacher Mr. Coke. He turned her into an "A" student which she was all the way into High School which she finished up in France. She made the Dean's list at NYU in New York before graduating Magna Cum Laude from UCLA in Los Angeles where she still makes her home today. Cami started out in Kindergarten as an "A" student and has continued to be one all the way to High School where she is in the honors program as a junior at Wellington High in Florida.

At this time of year I cant help but think of them as the most wonderful Christmas gifts I have ever received. They have grown into beautiful young women and have both provided me with a lot of proud memories. Most of the memories I have about Candis involve singing which she did all the time. I swear her favorite part of Christmas was the ornaments on the tree which looked like little microphones provided for her to sing into to. Her great voice (lord knows she had her 10,000 hours in easily by this time) got her the lead in "South Pacific" at Coronado high school in California where she was the freshman and junior girl of the year while receiving numerous scholastic awards. Candis had such a big voice for such a petite girl that they had to mic the poor teacher who was playing opposite her so she wouldn't drown him out. Later on while attending classes at UCLA she also started writing and formed a band called "The Tortured Poets" which played at Whisky and the Roxy on Sunset Strip quite often. I still love listening their CD and hearing all the tunes Candis wrote which were mostly about her life. Cami has also been involved in doing the show biz thing by being in a bunch of theatrical productions and my favorite moment watching her play Dorothy in her school's production of The Wizard Of Oz. She was even recruited by Lake Worth High School to be a big part of a play they had in a competition.
Candis besides being talented is also very athletic. She finished 3rd in State in gymnastics in Indiana then became a swimmer and a runner and has run numerous Marathons. She even went on to compete in the Iron Man competition which scared the hell out of me. Cami on the other hand I swear has tried every athletic endeavor known to mankind but didn't seem to like them as much as texting which she did 8000 times one month. She is very fast and good at texting I'm told but I'm just not sure what kind of a career that leads to. She has taught me how to do it now though and it is the main way I communicate with her and a lot of others.

My friends often scold me for being a way too soft on my Daughters claiming I've spoiled them by giving them anything they've ever wanted. Luckily for for me I guess is they never wanted much and if they are spoiled they hide it well because they both turned out to be pretty good human beings. My life plan which I have preached to them over and over was they should only pursue whatever makes them happy above everything else. As their Father I have always felt that my main job was to protect them from bad things which sometimes included themselves and I am still on that watch even today. I'm a little more dangerous now though because I actually think I would kill anybody that dared harm them. I feel everybody's human rights end at the tip of their noses and at my age what the hell are they going to do to me anyway.

Seventeen years ago I got another early Christmas present in the form of my wee Daughter Cami whom they brought to me when she was about 5 minutes old. She was screaming her

lungs out as I eased her into my arms and sat down in the provided rocking chair. I began to stroke her silky smooth baby hair and couldn't resist kissing her very chubby cheeks and whispering in her ear how much I loved her and telling her how much fun we were going to have together as she grew into a young Woman. (Little did either of us know that one of those fun things was going from Florida to California on Amtrak. Cami was done with after the first hour with 3 days to go). I went on to explain that I had been very well trained as a Dad by her sister Candis and with her help I thought could even become a better one. Soon she started to calm down and so began our wonderful 17 year relationship. The next day when I went back to the Hospital to visit her I brought my good friend Reid Reker with me and even before I could point her out to him he said, George I would cancel that blood test your lawyer wants you to get because unless I am mistaken that baby over there is either your Brother Reg's, Candis' or yours, don't embarrass yourself Man!

When Candis first met Cami she said to me ... Your not going to do to her what you did to me are you Dad? Do you have you any idea how scary it is too find out when you enter the real world you aren't near as precious as you always led me to believe. I assured her I had changed my ways and Cami only received "Tough Love" from me. Right! My favorite moments now are whenever I get to see my Daughters together and my all time favorite moment was when Cami was Candis' flower girl at her wedding.(pictures)

When Candis finished College she went to work for Charlie Minor as his assistant at Giant Records where she learned the record business as she pursued her life long dream of becoming a recording Artist. Being a quick study she soon became the Director Of Licensing for WEA and was on the fast track for much bigger things when suddenly and surprisingly her baby clock went off. Now she is Supermom as she raises my Grandson Nathaniel and course is the President of the Parents Teacher Association at Crestview Preparatory School where Nathaniel goes to school.
Cami is starting to think about College which her Grandparents Bob and Maggie Summerfield had graciously prepaid when she was first born and it's almost time to take the College tour which I am really looking forward to. My 17 year journey with Cami began with Da Da to Daddy on to Dad then to Dude. Now it's back to Daddy which is my favorite ever since her G'ma Maggie told me any man can be a Father but it takes a hell of a Man to be a Daddy!

I have always felt compelled as a Father to explain the mysteries of life to my girls so they can better control and understand what the future may have in store for them and I want them to to be as independent as they possibly can be. Cami claims my life stories just give her a headache and Candis says you can't use any of my words or phrases because they must only make sense when I say them. She says whenever she uses them people just get angry and Reid Reker completely agrees with her because whenever he uses them he claims people just start hitting him.
I feel both my Daughters both have great futures ahead of them but for now Cami has appointed herself as the designated Daughter who has been assigned the task of bringing me back down to earth now and then. For instance a few years ago as I was playing her one of The Jury's songs from an oldies CD that was just released she asked if it was almost over and I replied no, why do you ask. It's not very good was her very ugly reply! Recently she asked me if I was hanging out with any of the people that lived in my building yet. No I responded, most of

the people who live in my building are too old. Well you're old too Daddy she exclaimed. Ouch!

I love both my Daughters with all my heart which must be pretty apparent and in fact a friend once told me I should consider changing my name from George A. Johns to George (Ask me about my daughters) Johns. My Daughter adventures began a long time ago as a surprise early Christmas gift and the surprises just seem to keep on coming. What do you mean you want a tattoo Cami ... What part about NO are you not getting baby! (continued in my blog entitled to tat or not to tat)