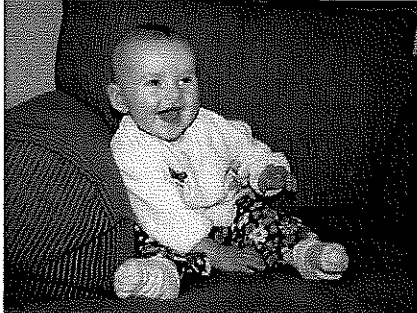


Dear Jan, please share with all Rotarians.  
Many thanks!  
Karin

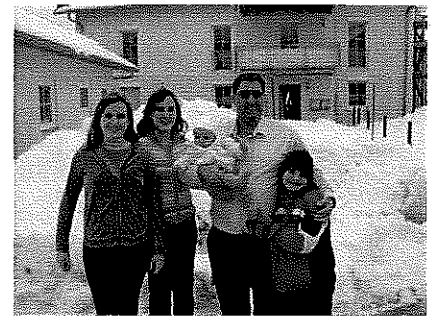
## Christmas Letter 2009

I always admire my friends who are able to put a Christmas letter together in time, and this year I want to join this club. ☺ The past year had been a good year for us, and it was filled with moving from California to



Germany, family, friends, work and the great pleasure of watching our daughter Lisa growing up. The first picture, which I would like to share, has been taken in January 2009 in Los Angeles. Back then, Lisa had been almost five months, and she enjoyed watching her Dad making some fun faces. We enjoyed our time in California, and we truly had a hard time leaving so many friends behind!

Then, it was time to leave. Before we left, our great friends Marilee and Geoff invited many of our friends, and the Rotarians of Manhattan Beach (who are – as I still think – the best Rotarians in the world!!), to our good-bye party. We had a great time, but it had been sad to say good-bye!

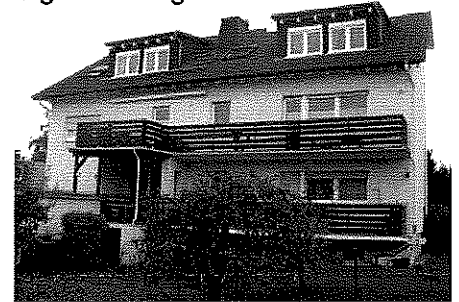


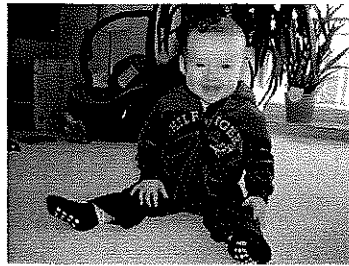
Marilee and Geoff helped us to pack up, and drove us with all our luggage to the airport. There, to our surprise, our friends Mary and Ingo joined us for a good-bye drink (see picture). After arriving in Frankfurt, we stayed in a hotel for two weeks, which had been not easy with all our luggage, and being totally jetlagged. For the first few days, Lisa was up till 2am in the morning, and we spent a lot of time in the hotel bar, just that Franz could get some sleep. We had to find a place to live, and my new job started immediately. My new assignment is in the Healthcare Diagnostics Division of Siemens, and I am working as Manager International Compensation & Benefits. After a few quite intense weeks, we had been lucky to find a nice apartment, in a town close to work. Our new place has a nice balcony (the first floor of the house), a garden, and his located in a quiet street.

It had been great to be home and to see family and friends again. On the picture above on the right, Franz is holding Lisa, and my nieces Verena and Marion and their little brother Michael show her snow! They are in front of our home in Bavaria, which we bought in the year 2005.

After a long, long winter (I thought it would never end, and it only had been two months for us), we enjoyed spring and summer in Germany. On the bottom right picture, you can see our home village in Bavaria, nestled in a green valley in early summer. We spent most of our spare time home in Bavaria, and Lisa loved to crawl around outside the house. Of course, we had a lot of "firsts" in eating, developing, moving, and exploring the world.

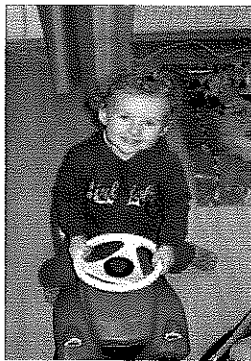
In June, we went to Birmingham (UK) to attend the Rotary International Conference and the Alumni celebration. Lisa enjoyed her first Rotary Conference, and Franz favorite place in Birmingham turned out to be An international food festival with a "German" beer tent. We had a great time in meeting with many friends, and enjoying the great atmosphere! The Rotary World Convention had been a great experience for us, and I was quite stunned when it turned out, that Ban-Ki Moon (Secretary General of the United Nations) had been the key note speaker. He gave an inspirational presentation on how Rotary can contribute to defeat hunger and poverty in developing countries. I also got the chance to travel to the UK, Ireland and Spain, but just for business trips and there was not much time to explore the places.





In September, Lisa started day care for two days per week. Almost immediately, she loved to be at the place and to play with other toddlers. She is happy to go there, and this is giving Franz some more time "on his own".

Over the last few months, Franz has been working in getting his business up and running. We set-up a new homepage for him ([www.energymeister.de](http://www.energymeister.de)), got some promotional material, he attended some trainings, and he was able to find some customers. He is specializing in energy audits for homes, which will-soon-be a legal requirement to have in Germany (when you rent or sell). Such an energy audit provides information about the energy use, and the opportunities to increase energy efficiency. Hopefully he will be able to expand his business next year.

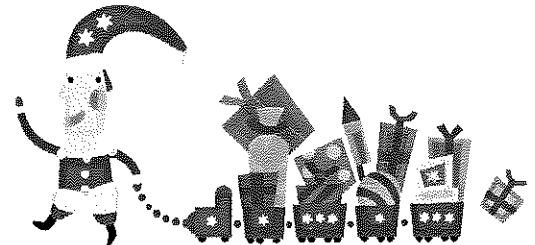


I would like to end this letter with a recent picture of Lisa, where she is driving her little bobby car. She loves to drive her car, and otherwise she is so happy crawling, that she is not too keen on walking yet. She is able to do a few steps independently, but she is determined that crawling is still the best way to get around. I think she will change her mind fairly soon.

After a busy year, we are looking forward to a few quiet weeks to celebrate Christmas and to be home with our families in Bavaria. Our plans for 2010 include a vacation in Israel (in February), some weekend trips in Europe, a visit of the passion play in Oberammergau with our friends Dale and Des from New Zealand in fall, and many hours with family and friends.

We are grateful for such a wonderful, healthy and enjoyable year 2009. We wish you and your families a great holiday season, many peaceful hours, and a Happy New Year 2010! We hope to be able to meet many of you next year, and to spend some time together. Our thoughts are with you and your families. You are always invited to visit us in Germany.

Karin + Franz



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**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year 2010**