

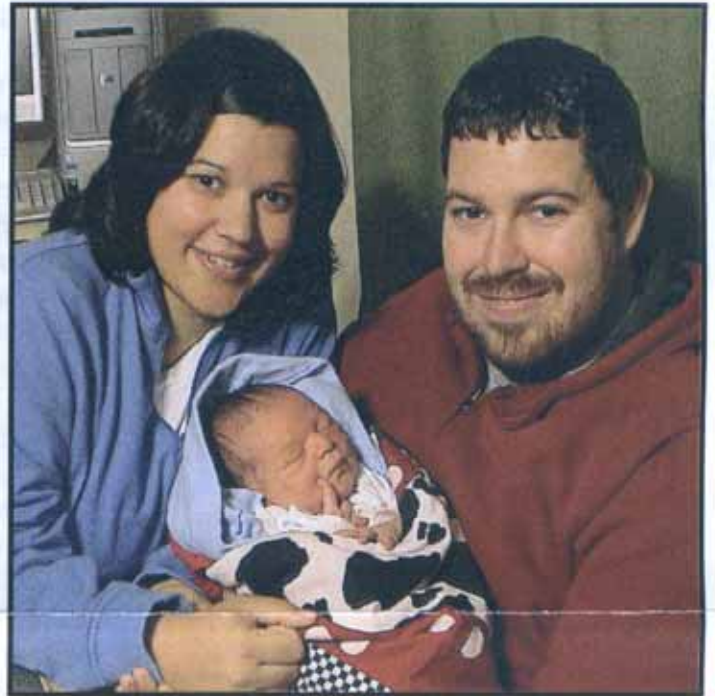


## Merry Christmas from the freeman family

Merry Christmas from the Freeman family! We hope that this letter finds you enjoying the holiday season. A lot has happened in our family since this time last year, and we thought this would be a great opportunity to catch up as we wish our friends and family a Merry Christmas. In March of this year we had a major discovery: a baby was on the way! And most recently, we have decided to accept a job at New Life Ranch, the camp where our passion for camp ministry was sparked, and where we met over five years ago. So as you can see, this has been a life-changing year for us, especially this fall!

The thing that has captured our attention the most has been our new baby boy. The pregnancy was a joy from beginning to end, and we have so many special memories from this time. We will never forget breaking the news to Marla's family at 2:00 in the morning the first day of a cruise, or receiving so many gifts from people who made them just for him. I'll always cherish the night when I laid awake in bed feeling him move inside Marla while she slept. It was my first moment to share just with him. We've been busy putting together nursery furniture, picking paint colors, washing new baby clothes, and testing out new strollers.

Finally, on Thursday, November 30th, 6 days after his due date, Peter Luke Freeman was born at 3:57 in the morning. He is healthy and weighed in at 7 pounds 11.5 ounces, 21 inches long. We are both amazed at how perfect he is, and how blessed our family has been. We feel like the proudest parents in the world, and love taking care of this new member of our little family. Peter's birth has ushered in a new phase of our lives as we learn to serve him and each other in new ways. We hope that you all get the chance to meet this special little guy!



Nothing can take away attention from this new joy in our lives, but there is another big transition coming up for our family. Luke has accepted a job at New Life Ranch in Northeastern Oklahoma. Needless to say, this decision has made the last couple months here in Ohio a little bit crazy, packing and moving with a 3 week old baby. Besides preparing for Peter's birth we have been packing up the house and trying our best to leave Camp Wesley in a good place for the new director coming in January. Fortunately we have had a lot of help from family and friends who have given us a hand with the move. We have packed up everything but the necessities and are ready to load the U-Haul and make a long drive the weekend before Christmas. We are looking forward to taking Peter on walks around this home that he won't remember, but will always have a place in our hearts.

Our new home, New Life Ranch, also has a place in our hearts. Marla attended NLR from 1993 through high school, and we met there when we were both counselors in college working on the Ranch's high ropes course. I remember the first time that I saw Marla she was walking into a staff meeting during training for the summer. Several people ran up to give her a hug and I thought there must be something special about this person who I had heard so much about. That summer was an awesome time of serving campers together on the ropes course and becoming friends. That fall we started dating, and now we are taking our family back to the place where it began. While it is comforting and exciting to be moving to a place we both have fond memories of, it is also a new adventure for us, especially as new parents.

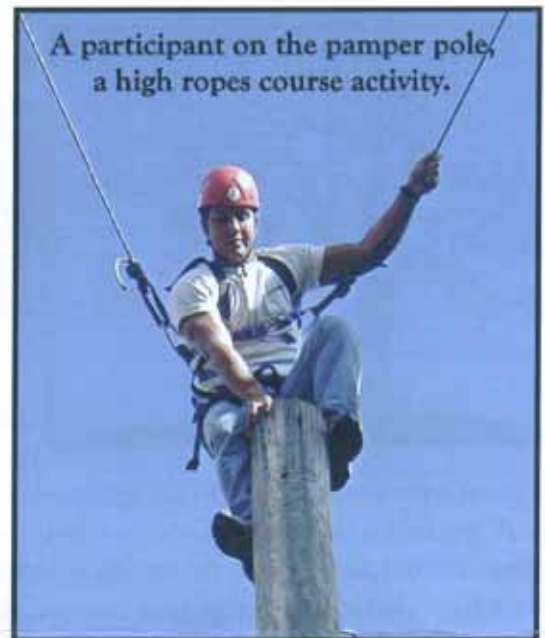
My position at NLR is Outdoor Ministry Assistant. My main responsibility will be managing the challenge course. Groups from churches, schools and businesses come to use the high and low ropes course to build teamwork, leadership, and tackle issues that hold them back from really shining as a team. It is a time when many people learn new things about themselves and gain skills that apply to every area of their lives. The high ropes course includes a climbing wall, zip line, and several activities suspended over 30 feet from the ground. The low ropes course is made up of challenging tasks for the groups to work through together, much like an obstacle course. In addition to managing the challenge course, I will also work with school groups that come to NLR for the outdoor education program. I first felt called to camp ministry when I began leading experiential education programs, and I am looking forward to focusing on this program area full time.



Our hopes for this next year are that it would be a year to settle down with our young family and be able to get into a healthy routine that will be a great foundation for Peter as he grows up. We are excited about reconnecting with our friends and family, and especially with the church community group that supported us in the first years of our marriage and when we decided to make a move to Ohio. We also are looking forward to seeing Peter grow and learn, and to seeing him bond with his grandparents, great grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and other family members. We are also planning on doing a better job keeping in touch with all the important people in our lives.

One way we plan to stay connected with our friends and loved ones is by sending out a few of these family newsletters throughout the year. We would love to add you to the list of people who will receive the newsletter. If you would like to get one just fill out the enclosed card with your information, and we'll put you on our list. We've also started a family website that we'll update with news and pictures. You can check it out at [www.lukeandmarlafreeman.blogspot.com](http://www.lukeandmarlafreeman.blogspot.com).

As we enjoy our new little boy this Christmas season, we can't help but turn our thoughts toward the gift of salvation that God gave us through His little boy. We hope that you join us in celebrating His amazing gift. We hope that you and your families are blessed this Christmas season, and that 2007 will be as exciting a year for you as it will be for us!



With Our Love,

Luke, Marla, and Peter

[www.lukeandmarlafreeman.blogspot.com](http://www.lukeandmarlafreeman.blogspot.com)