

Seasons Greetings

from the entire Arnold Family

Last year we said was a blur, it was. This year was faster yet. As we reflect on the year gone by, once again, we find most things better today than a year ago. God has been good to our family.

Dru's grandmother, Agnes Propps, known to all as Grandmothers, had a small stroke on Christmas day at our home and passed on shortly after the new year. She had a long, healthy and wonderful life, with a wonderful family. Would that we all leave such memories when we pass on. We know one cannot live on this earth for eternity; nonetheless, we still all miss Grandmothers very much.

The biggest news in our Ramona family this year is Jackson Eugene Arnold, born 26 October 1992, at weight six pounds, length twenty inches. The druids said he was to be born on All Hallows Eve, it was not to be so. Still, everything is well with both mother and child. Jack is getting bigger and Dru is getting smaller. Now, if he could just get her to sleep at night instead of waking him up to force food on him.

William is getting bigger and stronger, mentally, physically and spiritually. Jack already demonstrates the Phantom's digital salute at age six weeks. Betsy and Lilly rule the night, they have eaten their way through both our blankets. Zeke and Marie are still very sorely missed.

No wars for the Guard, no wars for the Reserve. All is quiet on the California military front. Things are not as fun in the forces as they used to be; maybe they never were.

Dru is now Captain Dru, with Jack on hand, she has not returned to the 68th Medivac Squadron. It looks like she will be an inactive reservist soon. The war was fun, return to the reality of the Total Force was less than.

Our Guard unit had another safe flying year, not one of our jets were lost this year, thank God. Mark Gable, the backseater who almost lost his right leg in one of our crashes is back flying. Hap finally made Lieutenant Colonel, the cat hunt goes on. The Phantom still flies, 12 December 1992 was the twentieth anniversary of his first Phantom flight, he flew the jet twice to celebrate (63-0742 and 63-1075 - for those of you who track those things). Quite an accomplishment, flying one's twentieth anniversary flight in a thirty year old jet. Hap just flew his last mandatory night tanker. He never did care for night tankers, that part of the fun won't be sorely missed. Flying hardwing Phantoms is still fun. After almost twenty years of flying fighter bombers, adapting to the reconnaissance mission was much easier than first we thought. As they say, like your teeth, just ignore it, it will go away. A specter looms on the horizon, the days of Photo Phantom are numbered and the numbers aren't big. Unless something really amazing happens, the 196 Reconnaissance Squadron will be the 196 Air Refueling Squadron in June 1993. With twenty-six years behind him, the school will have to be short to get Hap to go.

Naval Hospital San Diego has been a great place to work, the people, both patients and staff, are great. Dru is looking forward to returning to a part time schedule.

Betsy and Lilly continue to be super baby rats. We could not imagine not having them. It was difficult bringing them into our lives, but here they are. As our Brit friends say, "Rats Rule!" and they know it. Betsy seems to accept Jack very well, Lilly wonders why we need something that makes so much noise.

Hap's Mom and Dad are doing quite well, having cut back their travels this year, only gone a few months. Nice to see what they look like for a change. All is well there, Dusty sends his regards.

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Dru's Mom made her nursing school reunion in Michigan. Thanks to her carting the heavy weather gear, October temperatures were in the 70's. She found more ceramic rodents, good news for those of us into those things. Things are going well for her in Cucamonga and she has been a super help with young Jack.

Brother Bruce and his fiancée Lorena got married in July, a beautiful wedding and an excellent reception. The crowd included many of our out of town friends, including Dennis and Eunice Cole, from the UK. We had a super trip to the Grand Canyon with them.

Brother Tuck, wife Robie and daughter Alison now dwell in a veritable avocado forest, the stumps having grown back nicely from the Texas Chainsaw massacre and grafting.

Sister Jacquie seems to have survived all of the earthquakes up north in style and is doing better than ever.

February produced an excellent tour of the Southwestern US with the Jeffery's, Joan, Peter and Ada, and Dru's Mom. Unfortunately for Dru and Joan, we didn't find out the heater ducts had been carpeted over until annual time in June.

Our excellent friends from the RAF, Bob and Kay Denton, came back to visit from the UK again in October. They did a tour of Northern California before settling down here in San Diego for a couple of weeks. They make the absolute best guests and tourists.

Both the Dentons and our good friend Joan Jeffery, also from the UK managed to be in town to greet Jack on arrival. Joan called our machine on Sunday morning to let us know she was in town and could Dru please have the baby in the next two days before she left. We couldn't answer, we were at the hospital.

Speaking of the UK, Dru made one last solo trip across the Atlantic in May to visit the Coles, Jeffery's and Dentons. One of the few benefits of being a retired Continental pilot.

The Aviation and Marine insurance and accident investigation business has kept Hap busy. Travel has been light, only one trip out of country, the Organized Flying Adjuster's meeting in Toronto. Hap is now OFA's Treasurer, the only thing he can figure is that he wasn't there for another election. The business opened an office in Hawaii this fall, this one is easier to find volunteers for than Long Beach. Hap is averaging two days a week in Long Beach, two in San Diego, one on the road and one and a half at the Guard. After years of apologizing for its looks, we are proud to report the company Baron got painted this fall, it finally looks as good as it flies.

William is still the "Rodo." Joan Jeffery still brings the English comics, we recommend them to kids who don't like to read. Never a Recce Puke, the Rodo far prefers guns to cameras and now has two rifles and a revolver of his own. He is getting big, this year on our last trip to Monarch Flats, he drove Eugene the Jeep up the hill with Dru as the passenger, she couldn't fit behind the wheel. Rodo is still playing baseball and soccer, he really enjoys it and is far better than Hap ever thought of. Thank the Lord he still doesn't really care if they win or lose. After all, its just a game.

We are all healthy and extremely happy. Once again, God has been kind to us this year, we know how very lucky we are. As we look over our Christmas list, we think of our friends, some we have seen, most whom we have not. We think of years gone by, time spent together. We wish we could have spent more time together. We wish you all a very happy and joyous holiday season. May your God be with you as ours is with us.

Best wishes and Love,

Dru, Hap/Bill, William, Jack, Betsy, Lilly, Rat, Zaxxon Rex Roy & Sabie