

Seasons Greetings

from the entire Arnold Family

Dear Friends,

We apologize for being so late with our annual letter. Much has happened this year, too much near the end of the year.

This has been quite a year for the Arnold family. Once again our world has changed more than we expected and faster; some for what we perceive to be good and others not so good.

With all of our parents now gone, Dru and Hap are still getting used to the idea of being orphans. While time passes, there are still all those emotions and problems to deal with.

We are still so very lucky and we all know it.

The Arnolds have been in our new house now for 4 1/2 years. The travel trailer has moved to Bill and Joanne Bernard's. Never has a trailer had such an easy life. I think in the six years or so we had it, it got slept in maybe 10 people nights, never an entire night by our family. Our steel building, known in our family as Hangar One, is filling nicely. The Old Man (42 Chevy pickup) is down being re-done. We still haven't gotten a roof on the BBQ area, maybe next year.

Young Jackson is now just over seven and wears a size twelve. He is a big First Grader, school is going well, though given he knows how to read and write, some aspects are boring. He is still growing by leaps and bounds, not only physically, but spiritually and mentally. He is so amazing, there are no end to Jack stories. He is concentrating on being God's Buddy, something we all need to do more of.

William is in his Senior year of High School and is still doing pretty darn well. His grades are all right, he finally gave up on Lacrosse. William is still serving as an acolyte in our small Anglican Church. He finally finished his Private Pilot License this fall. He isn't sure what he wants to do right now. Our guess is he will be going to San Diego State University in the fall. Though he is huge, 6-3 and 245, he is still the Rodo and is really a wonderful fellow.

Dru has continued in her full employment as a nurse for Hap and taking care of Jack and William. She is once again the room mother for Jack's First Grade class. We are still supporting Smart and Final with their wholesale rates on cupcake mix and those cute little cups.

Hap finally finished up with his medical retirement from the Guard. The Air Force system was very disheartening; the treatment in no way honorable. While support from his unit, his former Wing Commander, Medical Commander, the Commander of USAFE and several congressmen made it all come out close to right in the end, the entire operation left a bad taste in the mouth. Perhaps there will be a change in the future. At least the Guard stands by their people

Physically Hap is doing very well. He still has nerve damage, walks like a penguin and all the rest, but he is here with us. We are all happy that we are together more. He is flying and happy about that.

While Jack asked if we had deer for pets, before we had squirrels, we haven't really added to the family this year. The various and assorted fabric based life-forms who in outward appearance vaguely resemble different species, but are all rodents at heart, as in pigrat, sharkrat, tigerrat and even the occasional rat-rat, form our main family unit augmentation.

We got a chance to go on a family vacation twice this year, for the first time in six years. We decided we really liked it and think we won't wait so long for the next one. In August, we all went to Hawaii. We spent the entire time on Oahu. I know many world travelers look down on it as too touristy, but we had a great time. Pretty funny to see the great hulking Rodo in the back of a Mustang convertible; the boys loved the little red car. We had a great time snorkeling in Haunama Bay, driving around Diamond Head's crater, exploring all the airfields and looking back to their activities

We don't think you can go to the USS Arizona Memorial, see the film and then go out to her without being affected. Between that and the drive around Ford Island, we were continuously talking about Great Uncle Jack

and Aunt Muriel and what it had been like on 7 December 1941. We all owe our predecessors for our freedom and in our family we don't have far to look.

The big news for Brother Bruce and wife Lorena is Lorena is out of the pewter importing business, Ante Gifts was sold. Their daughter, Megan, is doing quite well at pre-school and is taking up more and more of their time. They seem to be surprised, but pleased. Once again we had Thanksgiving at their home, it is a beautiful place and the food was wonderful.

Brother Tuck, wife Robie and daughter Alison moved across the street into the old family home. They now have the same address as their horses. Brother Tuck is now an active member of the El Cajon Mounted Police and really enjoys it. Tuck is the Chairman for this year's Los Senderos annual ride, no small honor, and no small amount of work. Robie's job teaching Art at Valhalla High School seems to be even more enjoyable as the years go by. Ali is growing to be quite a young lady and enjoying school.

After years of doom and gloom predictions, sister Jacquie lost her radio station job in Oakland. In no time at all she landed a far better sales and marketing position and seems to be very pleased. Her calls are certainly less stressful than when she was at the radio station. We think Jacquie and her friend Becky will probably make it down for Christmas this year. It will be great to see them.

For the eighth year in a row in October, and for a change not on Hap's drill (no more of those) and not during OFA, our excellent friends from the RAF, Bob and Kay Denton, came to visit from the UK. Each year they say it their last trip, each year we welcome them back. This time they spent more time in San Diego than before, though we never seem to see enough of them. This year we got to go on a trip to Tucson and Page, Arizona and Laughlin, Nevada. Bob, Jack and Hap loved the aircraft museums and Boneyard in Tucson, Dru and Kay were really good sports and convinced everyone they had a great time also. We all had a great time visiting with Deb, Allison and Bill Childress and a super dinner at Hidden Valley. Everyone really enjoyed the stop at Page, with the speedboat ride to Rainbow Bridge, the world's highest natural bridge and a 50 nm trip each way. The weather was lovely and the plane performed flawlessly. It is always great to see the Dentons and they are the absolute best guests and tourists.

The Aviation and Marine insurance and accident investigation business is doing well, we still have six offices, San Diego, Long Beach, Phoenix, San Francisco, Honolulu and Pago Pago, American Samoa. Office travel has been very light for Hap, just one trip Dallas in February, one to San Francisco in December and the annual OFA meeting, this time in Sunriver, Oregon..

The high point trip this year was to Dallas for a roughly 25th Year Reunion of the 91st Tactical Fighter Squadron, Hap's first operational unit. Thanks to Ray and Bev McCoy all the Bluebeaks got together, just like the old days, except 25 years older. It was amazing to see all those "old guys." Most everyone was recognizable, older but lucky to be there. Bob Solomon was the only one any of us had problems figuring out who he was. Bob was the commander when Hap got there and he looked exactly like he did 25 years ago. Amazing and pictures from the old days bore it out. Bob still dresses funny, but hasn't aged one single day.

The Baron has been replaced by N6867Y, a 1969 Turbo Aztec. Brother Tuck made the deal in July and by the end of August the newest Prince of Peace was airborne. She has far more interior space than the Baron and is faster at altitude. With the turbos, she will climb at gross from sea level right to flight level. She tops out at 220 knots true burning 40 gph up in the flight levels. Down where people live without oxygen she will do 175 knots true on about 25 gph. She has all the de-icing, except a hot plate and that is on order. She has a little less range than the Baron and seems a bit noisier, but all in all she is quite nice.

Hap and Brother Tuck made it to the Organization of Flying Adjusters (OFA) annual meeting in Sunriver, Oregon during the first part of September 1998, flying the company's new bird.

Those of you who have sent us your holiday letter, thanks! We really enjoy them, it is great to know what our friends are doing. For those of you who don't send them, start!

This year, more than any year in the past, it has been made clear how lucky we are. We have been blessed with health in soul, mind and body. Those of our family here on earth are all healthy and extremely happy. Once again, we have concrete evidence of just how kind God has been to us this year. 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 God be with you as He has made so clear He is with us.

Best wishes and Love, Dru, Hap/Bill, William & Jackson and the Gang of Many; Rat, Zaxxon, Rex , Roy, Sabie, Horsy, Bunny, Archie, Hand Rat, Jack Brown, Eugene Rat, Snort, Oinks, Crunch, Stewy, Goldie, Tylor, Rigatoni, Mongo, Jacko and Albert

PS: We now have an e-mail server at the office. If you would like to communicate via e-mail with us:

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