

Seasons Greetings

from the entire Arnold Family

Dear Friends,

This has been a very busy year for the Arnolds of Descanso. Once again our world has changed far far more than we expected and way 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 6 1/2 years. The steel building, known in our family as Hangar One, is almost full. You may remember from last year, The Old Man (42 Chevy pickup) is down being re-done. Three new (to us) Tactical Vehicles joined our green fleet this year, an M601, a M38A1 and an M151A2. We finally got the patio and BBQ roof done and grass around the house, a few more finishing touches and we will be done for now.

Young Jackson is now just over nine and still wears a size fourteen. He is a big Fourth Grader, homeschooling, having dropped out of school in First Grade. He finally grasped that math, although not fun, is really going to be necessary. He is learning the subject now, but he still prefers history, military at that. 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 managed to get through his first year at San Diego State University as a Criminal Justice Major. On 14 July 2000, he left a letter saying he was leaving his job at the office, dropping out of school and essentially our lives. We have had a couple of letters from him. He sold his Jeep, bought a couple of trucks, said he was enrolled at a Junior College taking two classes and has gone through at least two other jobs. He is apparently living at his mother's old house. We ask that you pray he remain safe until he finds what he is looking for.

Dru has continued in her full employment as a nurse for Hap and taking care of Jack. She is now Jack's Fourth Grade teacher, another full time job. With Jack going to school at home, we quit supporting Smart and Final with their wholesale rates on cupcake mix and those cute little cups.

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 think he is moving about much easier, though it is difficult at times. He usually only uses a cane to walk long distances and stand around. We are all happy that we are together more. He is flying and happy about that.

Our cat, Angelina Catalina, Angie Cat, or AC, is keeping the area mouse free. 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, still form our main family unit augmentation.

This year we did quite a bit of traveling. January saw us visit our very special friend Kay Denton in York, England. Being the middle of the winter, you would think the airlines would be empty. Every last seat on the airplanes over was full, including the cockpit jumpseat. We had a wonderful visit with Kay, spending the entire 10 days in and around York. It did not rain or snow the entire time we were there; on the other hand it was a bit brisk, the days mostly in the 30s. We got a chance to see things Hap had seen ever so often from the air, but none of us from the ground. Jack loved the National Railway Museum, or NRM as it is called on the signs. We have a photograph of him in the Thomas the Tank Engine simulator. Great fun. The area around York is Bomber Command territory, so we did a lot of that also. Super to see Mrs. Kay.

February brought us to Chicago to visit our good friends, Lynn and Bill Hall. The five days we were there were pretty nice, except one day of rain. That day we went to the Museum of Science and Industry. It was wonderful to see the Halls and spend time with two of their kids, Steven and Lindsey.

The day after we got back from Chicago, Mrs. Kay joined us from York for a month. It never ceased to amaze us where she could find sun to bake in. She is a superb houseguest, except she didn't let Dru cook even one meal. On the other hand, she is also a superb cook. By the time she left, Hap had gained 15 pounds, just what

he needed. As this is being written, the weight is finally gone. Lots of exploring with Mrs. Kay and we all made it to the Blue Angels season opening show at NAF El Centro. We were sad to have her leave, we pray she will re-join us.

August brought us back to Honolulu. We would have gone in the fall, but scheduled the trip so William could make it before school. Oh, well. Jack, Dru and Hap spent the entire time on Oahu again. While many world travelers look down on it as too touristy, we had a great time. In addition to snorkeling in Haunama Bay, we hit Shark Cove, where Dru and Jack came face to face with a sea turtle. It was great to spend time with our friends Putt and Susan Richards. Putt, an old Ontario Air Guardsman, is now the Wing Commander of the Hickam unit. Pretty neat, the biggest Wing in the Air National Guard. As we always do, we paid our respects to those who have given their lives to defend our country. We have been to the USS Arizona Memorial many times, we don't think you can see the film and then go out to her without being affected. Between that and the drive around Ford Island, we were once again 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.

Shamim Gray, who works with Hap, left San Diego for Jacksonville this summer. Her husband Obra, an S-3 pilot, was transferred to USS ENTERPRISE CVA-68. Obra was just about to come home when 911 happened and the Big E stayed on to pound a few heads into the dirt. He made it home a few months late to see baby Zach, who was born three days before he sailed. Signal - Well Done

Johnny Jumper, who was a Captain with Hap at RAF Bentwaters, is now the Air Force Chief of Staff. A great guy and a great fighter pilot. More than congratulations to Johnny, congratulations to the USA, he truly is the best man for the job in trying times.

Brother Bruce and wife Lorena have finally finished the renovation of their backyard. If you get a chance, stop in and see it. It is beautiful. Tell them the Arnolds of Descanso sent you. Their daughter, Megan, is doing quite well at First Grade. Bruce seems to be taking more time to read at her school, make field trips and the like. Sometimes he seems surprised at the time it takes, 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 have been working on their home. The pool is now renovated and he has an area to park his horse trailer. He is moving up in the El Cajon Mounted Police and really enjoys it. This year he graduated from the California Mounted Police Instructor's School. He says not, but we predict he will teach there next year. This year he was elected President of the prestigious Los Senderos Riding Club, 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. She has begun to really excel in sports, both baseball and swimming.

Sister Jacque had been in a sales and marketing job in the Oakland area. She decided to take time off to recover. She came down and spent a week with us after Thanksgiving.

The Aviation and Marine insurance adjusting and accident investigation business is doing well, we have seven offices now, San Diego, Long Beach, Phoenix, Flagstaff, San Francisco, Honolulu and Portland. Office travel has been very light for Hap, just a couple of trips to San Francisco and the annual OFA meeting, this time in Las Vegas, in September.

The Aztec is doing very well. She is just about up to speed after three and a half years of living with us. With almost eight hours range, she goes further than we do. We flew her to Las Vegas, with a block time about 30 minutes less than Southwest. The Cessna 150 is getting a new and fifty percent more powerful engine and real radios, but hasn't flown in about two years. Hopefully, the new 150 hp engine will be worth the wait. We couldn't decide to do with the old engine, so we bought a Cessna 150 without an engine and are putting it in there. If anyone would like a really nice Cessna 150, ...

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 past year, more than any year in the past, it has been made clear how lucky we are. The world is full of good and the world is full of evil. You have to decide which side you are on. We know our side.

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, & Jackson, Mr. O, Fred, Hiemlich and the rest of the Buddies

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