

**Merry Christmas**  
from the entire Arnold Family

Dear Friends,

Once again, we ask your prayers for the members of our Armed Forces and Coalition Allies protecting our freedom, at great cost to themselves and their families. God bless the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coastguardsmen and contractors of our country and Coalition and their families.

This has been a very interesting year. All in all we finished the year far better off than last year, a year which was very good in and of itself. One thing has not changed, we are still so very blessed and we all know it.

Uncle Jack is doing well, this year at the birthday of the Jacks, he was 93 and Little Jack (who is the taller of the two) was 13. It appears Uncle Jack is the last surviving Air Group Commander of the Pacific War's Second Cruise. The Commander of "Hornet"'s Air Group Two may not be able to get into his old flight suit, but the helmet still fits. The start of this is being written on Pearl Harbor Day and Uncle Jack just finished telling the story of the torpedo plane he shot down from the ground. That made him the only known US pilot to have five officially credited kills and not be an ace. Turns out you have to have five air to air kills. Apparently it does not matter how good you may be with a BAR! Hap still visits on Wednesdays and Hap, Dru and Jack on Sundays. Uncle Jack is doing pretty well, though he would be even better if he would walk more.

The Silver Tipped Grizzlies (mostly retired Air Guard people) have been getting together now for a few years the third Saturday of each month at a local airport for breakfast. They call it breakfast, but Jack and Hap mostly eat hamburgers. It has been quite fun, Jack put together a website: <http://www.grzly.org>. Take a look and see what we have been up to. Better yet, join us. If you want to get on the mailing list, send a note to [cmac@grzly.org](mailto:cmac@grzly.org).

We managed to get in a real, or at least sort of real vacation to Hawaii. Once again, we went to Oahu. This time we stayed at the Navy Lodge on Ford Island, where we walked over to where Uncle Jack shot down the torpedo plane, visited the "Utah" Memorial, as well as "Arizona." Then, we moved to the beach bungalows on Bellows AFS for a couple of days. No air conditioning and no internet, but right on the beach. We left Bellows for the Hale Koa on Waikiki. Air Conditioning, but no internet still. The Hale Koa is the nicest hotel on the beach and the staff the very best. We got to spend some time with Jana and Randy Young from our office in Honolulu, we liked them before. Now that we know them better, we like them even more. We just missed Shamim and Obra Gray who moved there the next month. Next time. We did get to spend time with Putt and Susan Richards. They have a beautiful new home on the North Shore. Once again, we had a superb meal and a lovely visit.

The annual meeting of the Organization of Flying Adjusters (OFA) was at the end of September, first of October 2004 in San Diego at the Catamaran Resort, with us hosting. It was 11 years ago that we hosted the meeting here. It took that long to decide it was a good idea again. There was a bit of classroom activity and a lot of fun. We had a dinner cruise on the "William D. Evans", after all we are aviation adjusters, what would a aviation meeting be without a cruise. Unlike Vancouver, no fire this time. A great disappointment to all involved, not much for stories. We had a Luau on the Beach, the kids' party next door made fun of the old people, but we watched them pack it in with a drink in each hand! After the meeting, there was a Mexican BBQ for everyone who was staying over Saturday night at our house, then a wine tour for the really hard core on Sunday. We thought it was the best conference we had ever been to, but what do you expect, an honest assessment? In theory Hap was the Conference Chairman, but in reality all the work was done by Dru, Patty and Jack. Hap, Dru and Jack want the record to be clear that Patty Cruz did the most to keep everything organized and in line. We would never have made it without her! We had a great time visiting with all our friends, but it was wonderful to say, "Good by!"

This was a big car year for the Arnolds. After five years of driving a Jeep Wrangler, Dru decided she was tired of thinking 14mpg was a good average for a tank of gas. She sold her green machine and cast about for what to get. We drove 15 different cars, and we do mean different. The 14<sup>th</sup> was a Scion Xa. When she got out of it, she was smiling and said, "That was fun!" Six thousand miles later, it is still fun. The Blue Scooter gets 32mpg real world here in the hill country and holds all of us comfortably. With leather and satellite radio, it is not exactly slumming. Even more bizarre news in our car world came from Hap. The last new car he bought was his 1971 Volkswagen. It was the last new car he wanted. Until now, that is. There is a Mustang GT Convertible in his space now, Torch Red with a beige interior and top. With 300hp, it is somewhat faster than his old Crown Victoria, but not as fast as the R1100RT. Warmer with the top up, though. Every 35 years seems to be about his car buying interval.

The tactical fleet has not changed. The M601 was the parade vehicle this year. It is popular with the church because we can fit 10 people with seatbelts. The 1/4 ton fleet has not gotten much of a workout this year. Mr. F850, the fire truck is doing well. He is quite happy in his new building and is now fully equipped.

Our Cessna is still in pieces. God willing, it will fly before summer. Summer 2006, we hope. It is going to be pretty nice, 150hp or so, real radios and maybe even a wing leveler. Sure would like to fly it before Jack gets too big to sit in it.

Jack is now in eighth grade. He is working at the office with Hap on Tuesday afternoons and Fridays, he has an Art/History class on Tuesdays and Social Skills Group on Monday night and Wednesday morning. His schoolwork is coming along well. He is doing very well in math. Dru is learning a lot of math she never quite got and learning to diagram sentences also.

The new election of a heretic to the San Diego Bishop office brought the final battle at Christ the King sooner rather than later. Most of our congregation has split from the Episcopal Church of the USA because it is in freefall towards the fellow with red horns. We have formed a new church in Alpine, CA under the name of Blessed Trinity under the umbrella of the Anglican Province of America. With the return of sanity to Sundays, we now go to church on Sundays. Jack has been the Thursday night Chief Acolyte and is now the Sunday Chief, but some times not only, Acolyte. He is very honored to be trusted with the job and does it well.

We have heard from, and not much of, William. Last heard he was working for a offroad buggy supply company. Please pray for him.

Brother Bruce and wife Lorena seem to be very busy at work and at home. Their daughter, Megan, is doing quite well at La Jolla Country Day School. Once again we had Thanksgiving at their home, it is a beautiful place and the food was wonderful. This year Uncle Jack missed us and most of Lorena's family were out of town. It was a great time to be together, but we missed the family.

Brother Tuck, wife Robie and daughter Alison keep working on their house. It is really looking super. This year Brother Tuck has been the Lieutenant of the El Cajon Mounted Police and is set to the unit Captain this month. His horse continues as one of the top police horses in the state. Robie's job teaching Art at Valhalla High School seems to be even more enjoyable as the years go by. Ali is a junior in High School and is doing very well in school and sports.

Mrs. Kay Denton, our excellent friend from York, in the UK, is not doing as well as we would hope. She has been in and out of the hospital. She has neck deterioration problems, in addition to the heart and kidney problems, which require her to undergo dialysis. Her son Paul and his family, Emma, Jack and Eve now live in Australia. Mrs. Kay is set to visit them in February. When you talk to Mrs. Kay, you cannot help but be in awe of her attitude. She is the most grateful person on the face of this earth. She is a positive joy to talk to. Nonetheless, your prayers are appreciated.

The Friday after Thanksgiving Desert Shoot was canceled this year, in theory postponed until just after Christmas. We have been doing a lot of cast bullet shooting at our backyard range. Jack is an ace with his CAR-15 and even better with his new M1917, just like Grandpa AC's. It is fun to watch him popping those pumpkin balls down range out of a Colt Peacemaker. We are up to 157 ground squirrels since the squirrel relocation program began. Jack got one with the 7.5 Swiss last month. Pretty cool!

Unless it rains, we are going on a Jeep ride this New Year's Day. 1130 Show for an 1200 Go. About 1500 we should be back to BBQ some dead mammal. If you are what passes for local and have a 4WD, come join us. If you do not have a 4WD but want to go, we have spare seats. Heck, we have spare vehicles!

Those of you who are really sharp, with good memories, will note that the title of the letter is now Merry Christmas rather than the previous Seasons Greetings. We have changed the title in recognition of the fact that we are Christians. We are pleased to extend the greeting of our faith. We are very at ease when we get a return greeting of Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah or Right On Ramadan. You can and should be what you believe in, we are Christians; that is what we believe. We recognize others are not of our religion. That's okay with us.

Please keep our family members in your prayers -Mrs. Kay, Jack Arnold and William Arnold

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, we look back over the past year. It is so clear how blessed 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, and a few no longer on the list. We think of years gone by, time spent together. We wish we could have spent more time together. 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, and all the Buddies

PS: If you would like to communicate with us: Telephone (619) 659-3608 or

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