

Merry Christmas
from the entire Arnold Family

Dear Friends,

As we come upon Christmastide, we are reminded of the debt we owe to those members of our Armed Forces and Coalition Allies protecting our freedom, at great cost to themselves and their families, under difficult circumstances with little support from a divided government here at home. God bless the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coastguardsmen and contractors of our country and Coalition and their families.

Like many years, this has been a wonderful year. All in all we finished the year far better off than last year, a year which was very good in and of itself, better in fact than the year before that. One thing has not changed, we are still so very blessed and we all know it.

Uncle Jack left us the morning of 8 December 2007 at about 0925 a little over a month past his 95th birthday. He has been slowing down over the past three years. He mostly he sat in his chair and watched television. He moved about less and less, he had less interest in interaction with visitors. Even so, he did pretty well: he was the last surviving Air Group Commander from the second war cruise of the Pacific War. He was in the hospital and step down unit for about a month, mostly in and out. On his birthday, he was very lucid, making jokes and talking a lot. He felt and acted better than he had in about two years. That only lasted a day, then he slowly returned to an in and out condition. The morning he left, we were enroute to the step down unit, Aunt Dorothy, Endae and Meela were with him. He was very quiet and calm, he was coughing a bit due to the blood clots in his lungs. He coughed, breathed a quiet couple of breaths and let go of Endae's hand. Jack is with his wife Muriel and our family members who have gone before. He is happy and glad to be there. All is well with him.

The Silver Tipped Grizzlies (mostly retired Air Guard people) have been getting together now for a several years the third Saturday of each month at a local Los Angeles area airport for breakfast. They call it breakfast, but Jack and Hap mostly eat hamburgers. Take a look our website: <http://www.grzly.org>. and see what we have been up to. Better yet, join us. Pat Rodgers has been putting together Number 11 prototype F-4 and it will fly soon! If you want to get on the mailing list, send a note to cmac@grzly.org. Charlie is our SOF and keeps the group going strong.

Not a lot of news from the Guard. The 163rd is flying Predators. They seem to like it, but they hide behind the classified label a lot. Maybe they are having a good time, maybe not. Still, they are getting paid.

No family vacation this year, even Dru and Jack stayed home.

There was quite a lot of business travel for Hap, several trips each to San Francisco, Reno, Sacramento, Seattle and Dallas over the year. Sometimes, Seattle seems more like home than San Diego. A quick trip to see our friends in Sunderland for their 125th Anniversary Celebration in June. Very well done, we might add. Good people and a wonderful time. Numerous Aztec flights around the southwest and a couple trips to the East Coast via Jet Blue. A fairly busy travel year for someone who prefers to stay home.

The annual meeting of the Organization of Flying Adjusters (OFA) was at the end of September 2007 in Chicago at the Intercontinental Hotel, with Bill and Lynn Hall hosting. We had a great time, Bill and Lynn did a great job. OFA is like a family to us, we wish we got to see the people there more often, but at least we get together once a year. Chicago was really a good time, we finally got to go inside U-505 at the Museum of Science and Industry.

We weren't going to buy any cars this year. Failed that thought! In January, we got a 1973 VW Thing for Jack to drive, a really nice one in Reno. A short couple of hops on Southwest Airlines and Hap and Jack were in Reno. It was only -5°F at the pass on the way home. Cold enough! The gas fired heater worked, but it could have been warmer. Of course, they could have worn sweaters under their jackets. Mr. K, as he is called, is a bit noisy. He has a plug in intercom and telephone interface! That should have been enough, but Hap found a Sunbeam Alpine on e-Bay. A white 1967, unlike the white 1968 he had in the UK thirty years ago, this one had no rust. It turns out it ran as well as remembered. For once you can go back again. And just like the old days, being an English car, the Demon of Darkness, Joseph Lucas, struck again. As soon as it rolled off the truck it had to go to the shop for electrical problems! Two cars should have been enough for the year. But no, this is the paragraph of not enough. On the Friday after Thanksgiving, Dru bought a Prius. It may be the only Prius on the left coast with a right wing bumper sticker. It is comfortable and quiet. No comment on the mileage, more on that later.

This year was a quiet year in the tactical vehicle fleet with absolutely zero changes. We made more parades this year with additional drivers from church. The GTB, M601, GPW and Fire Truck were this year's parade vehicles.

We know this will be a major surprise to the reader, but our Cessna is still in pieces. Once again, it was supposed to fly by Jack's birthday, but that slipped. God willing, it will fly before summer. Summer 2008, we hope. It is going to be pretty nice, 170hp or so, real radios, even traffic and an HSI. Sure would like to fly it before Jack gets too big to sit in it. The Aztec is just about ready to come out of the shop after installing a new heater and finishing the radio and autopilot installation. It now has roll steering, traffic and weather. The paint job was old when we bought her nine and half years ago, the boots sad. This summer the boots started peeling off, along with the paint. Now with new boots and a great paint scheme designed by our friend Brian Smith, she is a beauty! We finally found a hot plate, so she is not only beautiful, but known ice certified. Soon she might be in air!

Jack is now in tenth grade. He is still working at the office with Hap on Tuesday afternoons and Fridays, he has an Art and History class on Tuesdays and the Free Teen Guitar Class (<http://www.freeteenguitarclass.com>) on Wednesday

afternoons. His schoolwork is coming along well. He is doing very well in math. Dru is learning a lot of math she never quite got around to really learning. While math is good, he still prefers history. Jack is doing a lot of creative writing, mostly short stories in the nine to twenty-five page range. A fast typist, he can really put out the stories.

Our church is beginning its third year. Membership has grown about fifteen percent a year, not a meteoric rise, but steady growth. The parish, known as Alpine Anglican Church of the Blessed Trinity (<http://www.alpineanglican.com/>), is under the umbrella of the Anglican Province of America (APA). The APA is the most conservative of the "Continuing Anglican Churches" in the United States, true to scripture. It is also the leader in movement to unify the various Anglican factions in America into the Anglican Church of the United States. In addition, we are spearheading a movement to bring the Anglican church back into Vietnam. Our Bishop, Richard Boyce, made a trip there earlier in the year. He is an excellent example of how much you can get done, if you don't care who gets the credit. We continue to be involved in the church as a family. The church is so small that everybody has at least two jobs. Until just recently, Jack was the only Acolyte. Now there is a Second Server, but he often has scheduling conflicts. Jack is there every Sunday. He and Father Acker (also known as Father Ironhand) play their guitars for the pre-service gathering songs most Sundays. Jack plays with the Free Teen Guitar Class on the First Sunday of each month when they provide all the music. In addition to being an ordained priest in the Order of St. Luke, Hap is one of our two licensed Lay Readers, the Junior Warden and member of the Vestry, as well as being the Beadle. The last job is the most interesting. You can read about it here: <http://www.thebeadle.blogspot.com/>. Dru is Jack and Hap's keeper and takes care of all the details they both forget, in addition to being an Epistle Reader.

You may recall that last year we were pleasantly surprised when William walked into church in spring after having been away almost six years. We were equally surprised when he quit showing up for church and anything else right after Christmas. We continue to write. As he does not write back, we have no idea what he is up to. We would appreciate your prayers that God's grace may keep him safe until he finds whatever he is looking for.

Sister Jacquie is still up in the Great White North trying to stay warm. Okay for those in Alaska, or even Montana, Oakland isn't that far north. She has been working on losing weight and is down over 40 pounds. Great work!

Brother Bruce and wife Lorena are still working together in his law office. Their daughter Megan is doing quite well at La Jolla Country Day School. Bruce and Megan have made several trips to their condo in Isla Mujeres this year.

Brother Tuck, wife Robie and daughter Alison are doing wonderfully. This year Brother Tuck completed his second term as Captain of the El Cajon Mounted Police Unit, a first for the unit, it being a one year tour. He had a great time, but I think he will be pleased to turn over the reins, so to speak, to incoming Captain Dean Deaton. Robie still enjoys her job teaching Art at Valhalla High School. Ali is a freshman at Cal State San Marcos. She lives on campus, although it is only an hour drive. She has a boyfriend, Albert, who seems to be a great fellow.

For the first time since Hap's dad died, we did not have Thanksgiving at Bruce's home. Bruce and Tuck's cabin, which burned down in the Cedar fire four years ago passed its final inspection the Friday before Thanksgiving, so we all got together there. Dru cooked a 26 pound turkey and pies, Robie, her mom and sister, as well as Albert's mom, did the rest. What a great time! Sadly, as with last year Uncle Jack did not make it.

Mrs. Kay Denton, our excellent friend from York, in the UK, is pretty sick; but you will never hear that from her, nor be able to tell by looking. Hap got to see her on his trip to Sunderland and met her friend Len (as expected, he is great). 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. 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 and a positive joy to talk to. Nonetheless, your prayers are appreciated.

This year the Friday after Thanksgiving Desert Shoot had good participation: Hap, Jack, Butch, Steven, Bryce and Rory. They had a great time. Hap brought the electric trap. You would be surprised how quickly you can go through a case of 12 gauge shells. Again this year we have been so busy we have not done much cast bullet shooting at our backyard range. On the other hand, we are up to 258 ground squirrels since the squirrel relocation program began.

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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