

Merry Christmas
from the entire Arnold Family

Dear Friends,

As we near this Christmastide, we recall with great clarity all those who have gone before us that we might live free in this wonderful country. We give thanks to God that we were born here, into loving families, at this time. We thank God for our family members who have gone before us and given so much that we might live free and thrive. In particular, we acknowledge the un-payable debt we owe 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 each year past, 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.

The Silver Tipped Grizzlies (STG) (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 the 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, like our Cessna 150, it will fly soon! Maybe even sooner than it was going to fly last year. If you want to get on the mailing list, send a note to our SOF: cmac@grzly.org.

Not a lot of news from the Guard. Everything seems classified, but we think the 163rd is still flying Predators. They may like it, maybe they are having a good time, maybe not. Still, they are getting paid.

No family vacation this year, Dru and Jack went on an educational field trip to the east coast. Jack has been studying the Revolutionary War this year, so they went to Philadelphia, Valley Forge, Washington DC and various areas in Virginia. They visited Great Grandpa AC and Irene's graves at Arlington. They missed the famous water tower of Fort Monroe erected to mark the birth of Grandpa Chuck, however. Williamsburg and Washington were big hits, not to mention Hap's old house in Valley Forge on Mad Anthony Wayne Drive (a hidden message there). You can find more about their trip and see pictures here: <http://web.me.com/jackpippin/Site/Welcome.html> or go to <http://www.descansorodents.com> and visit the travel page.

Just like the past years, there was quite a lot of business travel for Hap, several trips each to Lake Powell, San Francisco, Reno, Sacramento, Seattle and Dallas over the year. Sometimes, Seattle seems more like home than San Diego. Numerous Aztec flights around the southwest and a couple trips to the East Coast via Jet Blue and US Airways. 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 New Orleans at the Hotel Monteleone, with Tommy, Cathy and Corrine Cook hosting. Several times it looked like we were going to be weathered out as we slipped in between two hurricanes. Tommy had a lot going on with claims, but managed to pull off one of the best ever annual meetings. The Cooks are a wonderful family and we are fortunate to have them as friends. 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.

Since we have been doing the custom printed Christmas cards, each year the cover has been a new to us vehicle. Some have been pretty weird, but cool. Each year we promise not to buy any vehicles. This time, for the first time in a really long time, we did not! No vehicle delivery trips. Maybe some weird trip next year.

We know this will be a major surprise to the reader, but for the seventh year in a row 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 2009, 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 back flying, although it still has write-ups and the heater has yet to work properly. On the other hand, thanks to Brian Smith's designer touch, she is a beauty!

Jack is now in tenth grade. He is still working at the office with Hap on Tuesday afternoons and Fridays. As you can see from the card cover, he is taking a theater class in addition to the Free Teen Guitar Class (<http://www.freeteenguitarclass.com>) on Wednesday afternoons. Jack is really coming along as a guitarist. For his 16th birthday, the Arnolds and the Ackers went to Reno and saw world famous technical guitarist Joe Satriani. For those of you in the know, he is THE MAN. For the rest of us, he plays very well. In any event, the concert was a big hit with all involved and Hap loved the flight. Before the concert we had a real treat, we got to have dinner and visit with Ann O'Keefe, Dru's closest friend in her medivac crew from Desert One, and her fiancé Rich. Jack's schoolwork is coming along extremely 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, Jack 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. He is taking a writing class from Susanne Barrett. She is an excellent teacher and seems to be able to shape Jack's writing without interfering with his creativity.

Jack and Dru have been working with the Pine Valley Players, a new startup group two villages to the east of us, put together by Diane Holly and Mary Aragon. The Pine Valley Players have put on two plays, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and an original play by Diane Holly, *Journey Through Christmas*, as well as a two month workshop. The cover of this year's Christmas card comes from the second play. Jack has been doing the acting and Dru the stage work. Both have enjoyed it very much, Hap has been doing the watching and enjoying it even more. It has been an excellent experience for all involved. Diane Holly is incredibly talented. As talented as Diane is, she and Mary are both even nicer. We are fortunate to have them as friends.

Our church is beginning its fourth year. Membership has been stable this year. The parish, known as Alpine Anglican Church of the Blessed Trinity (<http://www.alpineanglican.com/>), moved with the Diocese of the West under the leadership of Bishop Richard Boyce to the Reformed Episcopal Church as part of the coalescing 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. The church is so small that everybody has at least two jobs. Jack is the Senior Acolyte. He and Father Acker (also known as Father Ironhand) are now playing their guitars for the pre-service gathering songs every Sunday. 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 and Rector of the Church of the Faithful Centurion, an unaffiliated church of the Anglican Way, Hap is one of Blessed Trinity's three licensed Lay Readers, the Junior Warden and member of the Vestry, as well as being the Beadle. The last job is the most interesting; 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.

We have not seen him or heard from William for about two years. We would appreciate your prayers that God's grace may keep him safe until he finds whatever he is looking for.

Sister Jacquie is working on a project for internet funding for Broadway plays; www.ebroadwayplays.com/. She has been working on getting healthy.

Brother Bruce is still working in his law office. His 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 has had a bit less to do with the El Cajon Mounted Police Unit as his two years as Captain are over. Robie enjoys her job teaching Art at Valhalla High School as much as ever. Ali is a sophomore at Cal State San Marcos. She lives just off campus, although it is only an hour drive. She still has a boyfriend, Albert, who we are finding more and more is a great fellow.

As for the past two years we had Thanksgiving at Tuck's cabin. Dru cooked a 22 pound turkey and pies, Robie, her mom and sister, as well as Albert's mom, did the rest. What a great time!

Mrs. Kay Denton, our excellent friend from York, in the UK, was pretty sick; but like every time to date, pulled back from the edge and seems to be doing very well. You will never hear that from her, nor be able to tell by looking. 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. Thankful in all things comes to mind. Nonetheless, your prayers are appreciated.

This year the Friday after Thanksgiving Desert Shoot had good participation: Hap, Jack, Butch, Steven, Frank 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. We are up to 293 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 and count our blessings: 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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