

Merry Christmas
from the entire Arnold Family

Dear Friends,

Once again we come upon a Christmastide, remembering those who have gone before us that we might live free in this wonderful country is crystal clear. 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 members of our Armed Forces protecting our freedom, at great cost to themselves and their families, under extremely difficult circumstances with little support from the government at home. God bless the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coastguardsmen and contractors of our country and their families.

This letter is customarily written on the Sunday of Thanksgiving Weekend. We have just finished the four day weekend dedicated to thanking God for our good fortune this past year. Not everything has gone our way, the economy is in free fall, with the government sponsored retro-rockets firing 180 out, but with God's help, we will get past that. But so much has gone our way; we are all healthy, we are employed, we are free to worship and we do. All in all, we can but marvel at the good fortune we have had. This year like each year past, this has been a wonderful year. We finished the year far better off than last year, a year very good in and of itself, better in fact than the year before that. The thing that stands out above all others is our friends. We have been blessed to work and worship with good people around the country who have become our friends. Each year we grow closer to our friends and family. If you are getting this letter, that means you (that may be good or bad depending on your perspective, we hope good). 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 about **twelve** years now, though no longer monthly but about quarterly, the third Saturday of some 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. We know you have heard this before, but 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.

Just like every year since 2001, no family vacation, but this year we did a lot of travel!

91 Tactical Fighter Squadron Reunion in Nashville, Tennessee – April 2012 - An absolutely wonderful experience! Our most heart felt thanks to Sandy and Wendell Ward and Jennie and Chuck Magsig for making it all come together! Not to mention Wolfman and Rob for the usual control. We enjoyed meeting people we don't get to see often and in some cases had not seen since the 1970s. No one has changed, inside anyway, we got used to the external changes pretty quickly. The guys have better stories, the girls are prettier, other than that the only thing that changed is we don't drink nearly as much and almost no one smokes. Some of us are still flying, all are long retired from the Air Force. Hap had to be dragged to the Grand Ole Opry and dragged away, too! We had a great time and spent the next few months losing the gross we gained.

Ventura, California – April 2012 – We got to travel to Ventura, by car – the Aztec was down – to visit with Bishops George Conner and David Pressy of the Anglican Episcopal Church, as well as our own Bishop Jerry Ogles. Great people and a lot of fine stories; their church is quite similar to ours.

Guam Trip for Jack – July 2012 – Jack spent a little over two weeks in Guam visiting our erstwhile neighbors, the Thomases. He had a great time with them, he always does. Jack and Mary Thomas got their Scuba certifications during the trip. Jack got a lot of time with Kurt exploring the island. He had an opportunity to see where Ensign Donald C. Brandt, Uncle Jack's wingman, got shot down in Agana Bay and recovered by STINGRAY (<http://adm-arnold.blogspot.com/2008/01/unlucky-and-lucky-day-for-one-naval.html>). Jack only missed one of the non-rev flights. That gave him an extra night in Honolulu, which was a wonderful time due to the kindness of Patrice and William Li.

Anglican Orthodox Church Biennial Meeting in Statesville, North Carolina – October 2012 – This time it was USAir, not the Aztec; another reminder of how not to fly. In addition to lots of ministers and most of our North American bishops, we got to meet the church staff. It was an incredible experience. We weren't even all the way to the airport before we missed Betty Hoffman, Cinder Carroll, Paulette & Johnny Ratcliff and Susan Kaplan. There is not room to mention everyone's name. Suffice it to say we met not one person that we did not love. We do have to say we could not have had a better time with anyone. We were trying to see if we could fit just a few names in but not have anyone feel left out. Probably not, but our conscience would not be clear without saying how much we appreciated the kindness and fellowship of Jerry, Rick, Dennis, Eduardo, Roger and Roy and the company of Jim and Mary Lou. Actually, you could just take an alpha roster and list out everyone. We have to say that the five days we spent there were the most fun we have ever had in our collective lives. What a wonderful time!

Organization of Flying Adjusters annual meeting in Fredericksburg, Texas – October 2012 – We flew the Aztec to Fredericksburg, this time the whole way on both engines! We stayed at the Hangar Hotel and had a great time. It was wonderful to see friends we only see once a year. The weather was great and the facility engaging. The hotel staff were WSTD, but we had a great time anyway. Once again, Jack had his birthday there and hit twenty among friends. Brian Smith hosted the conference and did a great job. Not to mention that Brian is the best graphic artist known to any of us, so it was also the best looking ever!

Hap got a lot of work travel in this year. No cool operational evaluations like last year, but a fair amount of flying. There was a trip to Seattle for the Marine Insurance dinner, then Dallas for OFA Mid-Year, then he and Bill Provance made a trip to Dallas, Houston and Phoenix for business development. There have been several more trips to San Francisco and surrounding areas for work. Plus, Seattle to give a talk on claims and visit friends. All in all a great year for travel.

The Arnold Family Update Drones on ...

We know this will be a major surprise to the reader, but for the thirteenth year in a row our 180 or so horsepower Cessna 150 is still in pieces. Once again, it was supposed to fly by Jack's birthday, but that slipped. It is getting closer. As this is being written, the engine has been fitted, the cowling made, the engine removed for a precautionary teardown due to age, and a new radio package being put in. Soon! The Aztec is operational. It has a Connected Panel and at least it seems every thing works! We cannot more highly recommend anyone than Aircraftsman, Inc., Corona Engines and Affordable Avionics. They have worked well together!

Jack is just over 50 percent done with his Business Accounting degree at Western Governors University (WGU). He is still working at the office with Hap on Monday afternoons and Fridays. The big news on the office front is that he just passed his Texas Insurance Adjuster's license test. Jack is still working hard on the guitar and his progress is incredible, although college has scaled back the practice time.

Jack's friend and horse riding instructor Ryan Hopkins is in Pennsylvania on a dressage internship. To help keep the horses moving in the right direction, Kellie (a very nice young lady) has been working with Jack and Dru. That seems to be going very well. Buttercup still bites the other horses, Luke still looks for things to get in to, Leia still trots nicely and looks lovely, Liberty is still looking for poison to eat and the like. Not much has changed there. Except maybe that Jack and Liberty often go for runs together.

Dru has kept very busy monitoring Jack's college, researching the living heck out of horses, particularly the medical part, keeping the family, including horses, fed and watered, as well as helping with church. She is keeping well and keeping us well.

There is big news on the church front. Our parish (www.faithfulcenturion.org) is the only the Anglican Orthodox Church (AOC) (www.anglicanorthodoxchurch.org), parish West of the Mississippi. Even though the Bible based Anglican church has dioceses and affiliated parishes in 22 countries, we are the only one West of the Mississippi. But, that is not the big news! The big news is that at the Biennial Meeting, after about 18 months of study under Presiding Bishop Jerry Ogles, Jack was ordained a deacon! At 19 years old, he is the youngest man ever ordained in the AOC. Deacon Jack is fully licensed by Bishop Jerry and has done all our sermons since his ordination! He also gave a talk on the Received Text at the meeting and held the group's attention for 45 minutes. Amazing! The church is a huge part of our lives and we appreciate it an awful lot.

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

Sister Jacque has done reasonably well at getting fit and is in the midst of finding a new place to live after the passing of her previous landlady.

Brother Bruce is still working in his law office. It looks like his daughter Megan will be attending the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa next year. They were at their condo in Isla Mujeres on the Yucatan Peninsula for Thanksgiving again this year.

Brother Tuck, wife Robie and daughter Alison are doing wonderfully. Ali and Albert got married on August, so it is now Mr. and Mrs. Esquivel; they are doing very well. Brother Tuck has had a bit less to do with the horse part of El Cajon's Mounted Police Unit as he spends more time with the Black and White units. Robie still seems to enjoy her job teaching Art at Valhalla High School, but we hear retirement noises.

This year we had Thanksgiving Dinner at Tuck and Robie's cabin again this year. Bruce and Megan were in Mexico. Dru used her two hour turkey recipe, even though it took three hours, and we were off low carb for a day! What a great time!

Mrs. Kay Denton, our excellent friend from York, in the UK, is still pretty sick. 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 and thumb 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 there was a Friday after Thanksgiving and a New Year's Saturday Desert Shoot; great participation: Hap, Butch, Tuck, Albert, Ali, Don and Nick, Tammy, Bryce, Rory and Jack. Butch brought a Pumpkin Cromwell to shoot at, and there were hundreds of clay birds. Hap brought the electric trap. The weather was perfect and in three hours they managed to expend more than two thousand rounds each time!

Please keep our family members in your prayers – particularly Mrs. Kay and William Arnold

As we 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 with us. 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.

Finally printed on New Year's Day 2013!

Best wishes and Love,

Dru, Hap/Bill & Jackson, Mr. O and all the Buddies

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