

Merry Christmas
from the entire Arnold Family

Dear Friends,

Finally printed on New Year's Eve - Once again we come upon a Christmastide, remembering those who have gone before us that we might live free in this wonderful country. We give thanks to God 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 started on the Sunday of Thanksgiving Weekend. We have just finished a four day weekend dedicated to thanking God for our good fortune this past year. Not everything has gone our way, 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 blessings bestowed upon us. 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. *(We know we say pretty much the same thing every year at first, but it is true and needs saying!)*

The Silver Tipped Grizzlies (STG) (mostly retired Air Guard people) still get together as they have for the past 17 years, 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 info, send a note to our SOF: cmac@grzly.org.

We lost our very good friend Brian Smith to lung cancer in April. Brian was an outstanding example of strength in the face of adversity, doing his very best without complaint to the very end. His only worry was about his lovely wife Melany, he had no worries or fear about his own being. Hap and Jack conducted the funeral. Brian left behind Melany and a raft of canines and felines. He was an amazing friend and has been much missed and will continue to be.

Just like every year since 2001, no family vacation, but this year we did a lot of travel! Once again, Hap has been to Dallas and Seattle a number of times each on business, as well as the usual and fairly numerous San Francisco trips. The Dallas and San Francisco trips, as well as that one to Baton Rouge have all been Aztec trips, which makes Hap happy, so to speak. No cool operational evaluations, but a fair amount of flying. All in all, a great year for travel.

OFA Mid-Year once again we took the Aztec so we could all go. Good plan! Fogo de Chao with its all you can eat Brazilian beef, chicken, sausage and others, BBQ for lunch and a chance to meet our friends. Great way to spend three weekdays!

Okinawa Trip for Jack – March - April 2014 – Jack spent a little over three weeks in Okinawa visiting our erstwhile neighbors, the Thomases, who moved there from Guam. He had a great time with them, he always does. This time he flew on Japan Airlines, next time our airline, United, flies there! Jack is already working out travel plans!

Kenya Trip for Jack – June 2014 – Jack went to Kisumu, Kenya with Bishop Jerry Ogles and Betty Hoffman from the Anglican Orthodox Church worldwide headquarters to welcome a large group of Kenyan Anglican churches into the Anglican Orthodox Church Worldwide Communion. The trip was an eye opener for Jack and he learned a tremendous amount about local customs and the like. He also learned he has a way nicer bed and shower at home!

Organization of Flying Adjusters annual meeting in Baton Rouge, Louisiana – October 2014 – Kitten was sick and our cat-carer was having a baby, so Jack and I flew the Aztec to Baton Rouge, we had a turbo failure enroute, so that put the Aztec down for twelve days. The conference went extremely well! TW and Kathy Cook, as well as TW's mom Corinne, put on an absolutely wonderful conference. We had a great time, learned a lot, saw alligators (Jack closer than Hap), toured the swamp (Jack on an airboat) and generally had a superb time. The Cooks are the very nicest family ever and time spent with them is a joy.

Anglican Orthodox Church – October 2014 – We had planned to fly on from Baton Rouge to Enterprise, Alabama to spend time with Bishop Jerry and his lovely wife Debbie, then on to Statesville for the Biennial Meeting. BUT – Remember up above where the Aztec was down for twelve days? Well, that put a crimp in our style! But, thanks to Enterprise Rental Car, no relation to the city, Jack and Hap got a GMC Terrain and made their way to Enterprise where they met up with Jerry and Debbie. The pair had church on Sunday with Jerry's congregation; on Monday they set off for Statesville, North Carolina. After a short seven hour drive, they stopped in Charlotte, South Carolina, where they picked up Dru who had resolved the cat care issue, and a quick hour on to Statesville. The Biennial Meeting was a great success, Rev Jim Cavanaugh, of Pennsylvania, and Rev Elias Mbruh, of Kenya, were consecrated bishops in the AOC. Pretty cool time, great people, great worship and a lot of fun! We all crammed into the Terrain and drove back to Enterprise, after Sunday service with Jerry and Debbie, back on the road to Baton Rouge. The Aztec was back operational Tuesday night and we were home Wednesday well before dark!

We know this will be a major surprise to the reader, but for the sixteenth 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 is back in, all sheet metal work completed, the avionics almost done. All it needs is the electronic ignition finished, weight and balance. Soon! The Ercoupe is actually flying. The Aztec is operational after a couple of epic system failures, including a left engine mechanical fuel pump failure the night before the annual December San Francisco trip. Right now every thing works! We cannot more highly recommend anyone than Aircraftsman, Inc., Corona Engines and Affordable Avionics!

Jack finished his Business Accounting degree at Western Governors University (WGU) in May, his actual graduation ceremony was in Salt Lake City in July. With diploma in hand for several months, he nonetheless enjoyed the ceremony. Jack is currently enrolled in the WGU Master of Business Administration course. He finished his first course just before Thanksgiving. His very first paper was selected by the WGU Director of Evaluation as an Example of Excellence. Interesting as it was a critique of Hap's management skills! Jack is not riding horses so much, but he has taken up motorcycling. Jack has a Suzuki S40 650cc cruiser, which he rides to work most days with Hap on his BMW R1150RTP. He is working full time at the office with Hap running the Collections Division. Jack is still working hard on the guitar and his progress is incredible, although college has scaled back the practice time.

To help keep the horses moving in the right direction, Kellie (a very nice young lady) has been working with Jack and Dru. She had another baby at the end of September, so the horses have been on riding hold, back to being pets. They seem to like it. Perhaps this will be the year we get a circle pen, if not at least Jack and Liberty can go for runs together.

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

On the church front, our parish (www.faithfulcenturion.org) is one of two Anglican Orthodox Church (AOC) parishes West of the Mississippi, (www.anglicanorthodoxchurch.org), the other is Bishop Roy's Saint Paul's Anglican Church in Moberly, Missouri. On the other hand, the Bible based Anglican church has dioceses and affiliated parishes in 25 countries, having added Kenya (see earlier), Serbia and Macedonia this year. Jack continues to be the primary sermoneer (as we term it) and preaches amazing sermons every week. 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 nine 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 doing reasonably well at getting fit, we saw her twice this year on trips she made to the Ontario area and is doing well with her position assisting a disabled Bay Area city executive.

Brother Bruce is still working sometimes in his law office, he spends a lot of time in Mexico; his daughter Megan is back attending college in High Point University in North Carolina and seems to be happy there.

Brother Tuck, wife Robie, daughter Alison and son in law Albert are doing wonderfully. Ali is still teaching elementary level at WD Hall, close to her home and should be eligible for tenure next year. Brother Tuck has had a bit less to do with the Black and White units as he spends more time with the Mounted Unit of El Cajon Police Department. Tuck heads to London for work in January again. Robie seems to enjoy her job teaching Art at Valhalla High School a bit less and we hear more retirement sounds. This year we had Thanksgiving Dinner at Tuck and Robie's cabin again this year. Bruce and Megan were in Isla Mujeres, near Cancun, Mexico where he has a condo. Dru did a great job on the turkey, dressing and homemade cranberry sauce.

Mrs. Kay Denton, our excellent friend from York, in the UK, celebrated her 70th birthday this fall. In reality, she is still pretty sick; but, 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; less participation: just Hap, Dru, Jack and Butch. No Pumpkin Cromwell to shoot at, but we got a new electric trap and there were many clay birds. The weather was perfect! We look forward to a Boxing Day Desert Shoot.

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.

Best wishes and Love,

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

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