

***Happy Holidays
from Southern California***

We want to take time to thank each of you for the part you have played in our lives this year. Thanksgiving is always a special time of the year for us because we reflect about how it centers around thanking God for how He has blessed us throughout the year. One of these blessing is your continued love and friendship over the years. We have moved many times, and another blessing of that is our list of friends is always growing. It has been great making new friends in each place. Regretfully, for many, this is our only contact we have throughout the year. We want to bring you up to date with where we are, what we have been doing, and to send our love and blessings for the holiday season.

New Location

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Joe started at the Geraghty and Miller, Inc. office in West Covina, in Southern California, the last week of September. Because we were renting in Albuquerque, this enabled us all to move at the same time. As usual it was difficult to leave. as we had just started to feel at home there. When thinking back over the year that we were there, we did get to see and do many things in the area. Knowing that we only be there a year motivated us to get out and see the sights.

One advantage of the area where we have family. Darlene's cousin, Pat, and her family live about 30 minutes away. Joe has five cousins near here that we are looking forward to getting to know better. This is the first place we lived since Sunbury, OH, (1981 and moves, all to different states) that we have relatives nearby.

Our house in Chino Hills borders, in the back, on the neighborhood park. It is great for the boys. There is half a basketball court, a sand volleyball court, and some playground equipment. It also is a nice place for the boys to roller blade. There is a grocery store within walking distance (although we have not walked there yet) and a Walmart, Toys R Us and Target nearby.

After attending Calvery Chapel in New Mexico and Hoffmantown Baptist Church, we were exited to know that there are many churches here with the same philosophy. We are going to the Calvery Chapel of

Chino Valley, with David Rosales as pastor. David is on the radio in Albuquerque each day, so we were familiar with his teaching when we relocated here. We enjoyed working at the Hallelujah night, an alternative on Halloween night, with booths set up to play different games and everyone receiving candy for playing. The boys came home with more than enough sweets; we sent a bag with Joe the next morning to have at his office.

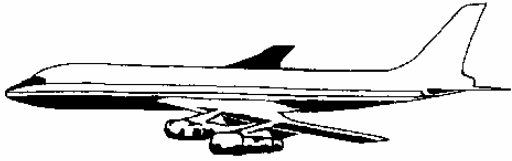


***Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!***

We are sending our holiday letter early (for us) this year. The boys and Darlene are leaving on the train, Dec. 7, to spend a week in Champaign, IL, to visit friends . Later we will be in Cleveland and Ashtabula with our families. Joe will meet us in Cleveland for the week of Christmas. We are looking

forward to spending time with family and are hoping to see some of you also.

Travels



Joe and Darlene had an opportunity to visit Israel in May. Darlene took the boys, by way of train, to Ohio to stay with grandparents. She then flew back to Albuquerque where we joined our tour group of 126 people from Calvary Chapel. It was a wonderful trip with everything going according to plans. We spent 4 days in and around Jerusalem, 2 days by the Dead Sea, 1 day by the Mediterranean Sea, and 2 days by the Sea of Galilee (really a lake). Christmas will never be the same after being there and seeing the fields, where the “shepherds watched their flocks by night” and seeing what a real manger (a chiseled out rock) was like. We now have a picture in our minds of many of the places that we read about in the Bible. One of our favorite memories is taking a rafting trip down the Jordan River.

After returning to Cleveland in time for Joe’s stepbrother Andy’s wedding, we were able to do even more traveling. Thanks to Joe’s business trips and Amtrak’s extra stop over policy, we were able to visit Philadelphia, Washington DC, Orlando, Florida, and Carlsbad Caverns in New

Mexico. A real treat was watching the space shuttle launch while we were Florida.

Update

We are excited about the what we are learning in our home school. We are studying plants in biology. Tim has shown a great interest in this. When you walk in his room it smells like a green house. He has several different plants growing in there. His favorite plant is the bird of paradise. We have planted one in our back yard. We are studying World History. We recently finished a unit on Egypt and have started one on Ancient Greece.

Joe and the boys have joined a boy scout troop here. Jamie is working toward his Eagle rank. We are hoping to work on merit badges over the holidays. Tim moved up to 1st Class. They were able to go to boy scout camp in July and Tim worked very hard to earn five merit badges. John’s will become a boy scout in March, which will mean they will be in same troop. Jamie has been able to do some fun things with the older scouts, called the Ventures. They went on a mountain bike trip in Colorado. They also have been learning how to rock climb at an indoor facility using all the equipment. As a family we biked down the ski slopes on the Sandia Crest, near Albuquerque. What a challenge, yet exciting!

Darlene is planning on working with the crisis pregnancy center (CPC) answering

phone calls from girls wanting pregnancy test and information. We are also hoping to be working with the jr. high kids.

Here is a quote to think about as our precious time with children, family, and friends is here and gone for another year:

“He gives us a choice and a new chance each day
To value our minutes or toss them away,
But one thing is certain, whichever we choose,
We’ll learn very soon Time has wings on his (her) shoes!
And those who are wise will keep pace with each day
By learning to live in the noblest way.”

- Viney Wilder

May God richly bless you and
your family this year,

Joe & Darlene, Jamie, Tim, & John Ritchey