

December , 1973

Dear Friends,

Merry Christmas to you all! It is hard to believe that it is Christmas time already, but when we look at the kids and see how they've grown there is no getting around it! Last year on Christmas Eve, Mardie took her first real steps and now it seems like she has been walking for years!

We've had a good, busy year. Beth is six, in the first grade and enjoying it so much. It is so exciting to see her take such an interest in reading and math. She's really blossoming and growing up. Sarah is 4 1/2 and is doing her darndest to keep up with Beth. She goes to nursery school every morning. She has a continual sparkle in her eyes--either mischief or delight! Mardie is 22 months old, adorable, walking, talking and into absolutely everything! We all get such a kick out of watching her right now--she is changing from a baby into a child so fast.

Mel keeps very busy at U. T. He is doing a lot of work on various committees at the university, plus his teaching load and graduate students. He was on the committee to select the new dean of the College of Natural Sciences. Several of his students finished up this year and got excellent jobs which really pleases him (their wives, too, I'm sure!). I'm still active in the League of Women Voters--am chairman of a group on energy conservation. Our group is really going to have to get on the ball as it becomes more relevant every day! I've also been put on a local advisory committee for the Emergency School Appropriation Act (ESAA)--a federally funded project which funds programs to help with integration and improving schools in poverty areas--it is a very interesting group! I went to summer school at U. T. and took a course in Spanish--now I just need to practice a lot. A neighbor and I have taken up jogging--we read Aerobics for Women. We've gradually worked up to 1 1/2 miles in 15 minutes over a four month period. Mel and I are both interested in participating in the Austin Tomorrow program which will directly involve 1,500 citizens. Austin is growing so fast and desperately needs coherent planning. Any of you who are enjoying unpolluted air and water and no traffic, beware of the purveyors of uncontrolled growth!

We were pleased to be visited this year by my folks, Mel's dad, my cousin Raymond George, my Scots cousin Mardie Winter (trekking around the U.S. on a Greyhound bus visiting our far flung family) and my Aunt Doris and Uncle Holly (doing the same only in a motor home!). We wish more of you would get by this way. We've got room--count yourselves invited!

This summer the Winter clan is gathering at Fontana Dam in North Carolina from August 11-17. We hope that maybe we will get to see some of you who live in the area or who might be vacationing there (let's not even think of the gas shortage right now!). If you think you might be out that way, let us know.

What with Watergate, the energy crisis and the poor Vietnamese still fighting, plus so many other world and national problems, Christmas seems to be an appropriate time for reflection. We hope that your holiday season will indeed be "holy days", that you will be together with family and friends--and that you will have a very HAPPY NEW YEAR--1974 already!