



★ December, 1993

Dear Friends,

What a difference a year makes!! We wish you a very merry Christmas and a very happy and HEALTHY new year. Our 1993 year has been a wonderful one, in sharp contrast to 1992. Mel is doing just fine. He is playing tennis 2-3 times a week, is working on all sorts of gardening and home improvement projects around the house, is teaching Sunday School, and is teaching at UT. He was awarded the Chancellor's Council Teaching Excellence Award in April and has been asked to give talks to several organizations with an interest in teaching. He recently went to St. Louis for the annual plasma physics meeting.

**Pat.** I'm in the middle of my 8th year of teaching 6th grade language arts and social studies at St. Andrew's. It is hard work, but wonderful, too. My principal is terrific and the faculty is a joy to work with--and the kids are just great. My back is still a real problem, but I think it is slowly getting a little better. Sometimes I can even sit through a movie--and I did make it through the opera two weeks ago. I was really glad when it was over, though. I made it through the Capitol 10,000 in 1:19:24--walking and running. I walk 3-4 miles 3 times a week and have a rigorous regimen of daily back exercises. I finally got to the quilting stage of a quilt I am making for Sarah that I started 10 years ago. Mel has adapted the quilting frame so that I can quilt standing up. I took a wonderful trip back east in June to celebrate the occasion of four nieces' graduations in my sister Nancy's family--3 from college and 1 from high school. While I missed the college graduation ceremonies, I made it to the high school graduation, helped with the cooking for Nancy since she was still working, and made a graduation cake for the huge party that was thrown to honor the graduates. My brother Robert and his family and youngest sister Sandra and her family and my parents were all there. It was wonderful!

Mel and I had three wonderful trips this year. In March we flew to Baltimore just after the blizzard to attend Beth's recital. We had a good time visiting with Beth and her friends and seeing the sights of Baltimore--what a lovely place. In early July to celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary, we flew to Aspen where we visited Beth again. The MAIA QUARTET was participating in the Aspen Music Festival. We hiked and walked and enjoyed the wonderful music. The mountains are so beautiful. Then at the end of July we flew with Sarah and Mardie to the family reunion in western Kentucky--Pennyriple Forest State Resort Park. There were about 40 of us from 8 states and Nepal (foster niece Pragma's parents were here). The younger generation is growing up and made a request that they be allowed to have their own reunion--without us old fogies!

**Beth** continues to play with the MAIA QUARTET. They have been quite busy this year, playing among other things, a children's concert at Lincoln Center, a concert at the German Embassy in Washington, D.C., and premiering a ballet at the Kennedy Center, with other concerts in Portland, Oregon, Kansas City, and Columbus, Ohio. She and the quartet are still based at Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore. They will be coming here again in January. She loved being in Aspen this summer and put many miles on her hiking boots.

Last winter **Sarah** worked at a chemical plant in Houston and finally came to the realization that she didn't want to do chemistry--she wants to teach chemistry. She is now enrolled at the University of Houston in a teacher certification program and was the recipient of a special grant. She is working part-time at Rice. An extra activity that she has enjoyed since she started at Rice as a freshman 6 years ago is mentoring a girl who is now a senior in high school. She has taken up quilting and is doing lovely work.

**Mardie** is in her fourth year of architecture at Rice and has developed an interest in public housing. She will graduate in May, but there are two more years left in the program. She doesn't know where she will be next year for her preceptorship working with an architecture firm. It could be anywhere from Paris to Houston. After that year she will come back to Rice for a year of graduate work. She will be spending the holidays in Chile. She had a rough time with her tonsillectomy in August and recommends that anyone needing it done to get it done sooner rather than later.

We've just had a wonderful Thanksgiving as my parents drove in from North Carolina for the holiday. It was so good to have them with us. We're looking forward to having Beth and Sarah here at Christmas along with my cousin's daughter Jessamy who works as a reporter for the Ft. Worth Star Telegram in the Arlington branch. We hope that your holiday will be a happy one filled with family and friends and fond memories of times past. In October we saw the signing of the Mideast Peace Accord, something we would never have believed possible. We hope and pray that there will be more breakthroughs so that people will be able to live in peace with one another. *Merry Christmas.*

Beth, Mel, Sarah, Mardie & Pat

