

Dear Family and Friends,

Another good year has flown by—and here we are again in the season of Advent—filled once again with hope, peace, love, and joy brought by the Christ Child at Christmas.

This has been a year of sorting out stuff for the 2 of us. We have lived in our home now for more than 44 years and we have come to realize that it is silly/impossible to keep everything. Immersed in family history as we are, it is hard to let things go. Pat started looking for fabric in her stash to make doll clothes for Emily and realized she had no idea what she had. Three days later, one of the bedrooms was filled with fabric from the last 50 years. Pat spent several weeks distributing fabric to the Austin Quilt Guild, the Episcopal church in the neighborhood which has a group which makes dresses for little girls in Africa, the Sunday school teacher at church, and so forth. She also kept plenty for projects—especially making doll clothes—and there is so much more room in the house! Mel has spent the past month or so going through the 40 boxes of books and notes and research that were delivered to our house (and placed in our garage) from his UT office 3 years ago just before we went to Spain. It is so hot in the garage for much of the year that it makes it really hard to get out and do it—but he is! It has been painful for him, but he is also doing a great job redistributing his books around the world and is doing quite a business on Amazon.com selling them. We continue with both our family history projects and Mel keeps adding to the U. of Texas Physics Department History site he created.

Beth and Eugene continue to enjoy their life in Iowa. This year was a big transition for Beth; after almost twenty-two years, the Maia Quartet came to an end in November. Beth is looking forward to new possibilities and the professional freedom of this next chapter. Emily and Ethan both love school and are avid readers. Along with violin, Emily now plays flute and has taken up swimming more seriously. Ethan has moved from gymnastics to baseball and continues with his piano studies. The family enjoyed a magical trip to California this summer where they spent quality time with the aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and Grandma Rose on Eugene's side of the family. They are all looking forward to the arrival of baby Oakes/Deifell! For up-to-date news on their family (thanks to Eugene), check out [www.geneandbeth.com](http://www.geneandbeth.com).

Time is flying for Sarah and Joe who are coming up on their first anniversary on 12/29. Last mid-December they found a house in Arlington that they loved and decided to buy it. Getting married followed 10 days later in a very small, just perfect wedding in Arlington with Joe's parents and brothers in attendance.. They are still thrilled with their house and its proximity to the metro. They are very much enjoying having out-of-town guests! This summer they enjoyed family trips with both the Winter/Oakes family in NC and the Pierce family in Scituate, MA. Much of the summer was spent working on the house and yard, so there was no time for fabulous international travel, but they are hoping that will happen in the near future. They are both into rock climbing.

This fall brought many changes for Mardie and Tony. After three relaxing years, they moved off the houseboat in Sausalito and moved back to San Francisco. They are housesitting for friends while considering buying a house in a great San Francisco neighborhood near a number of good friends. Tony secured some funding through an innovative venture capital program called Runway to explore starting a company so he is working days, nights and weekends with a business partner that Mardie and Tony both really enjoy. Then, as if moving and a new job in the same month wasn't enough change, Mardie announced she was pregnant. They are expecting a baby boy on May 3rd and are getting quite excited. Mardie is exceptionally grateful to have skipped over morning sickness (especially while moving). Mardie rebranded her organization this year, changing its name to Hello Housing ([www.hellohousing.org](http://www.hellohousing.org)). She and her team continue to work hard on addressing the foreclosure crisis in California by putting to great use federal stimulus funds. So far, they have purchased 35 wrecked bank-owned homes, renovated them and either sold them to qualified families or rented them to people at risk of homelessness with a mental illness.

We've had a busy year with lots of travels and company here. In February, Mardie and Tony were in Austin for a week to visit and to take advantage of the SXSW festival here. In March, we were delighted to meet—and then host—a visit from Winnifred and Bob Hebb from Richmond, VA. Winnifred is a cousin Pat found during her family research—a 4th cousin descended from James Scott Winter, our great-great-great-grandfather. They came to Texas to see and photograph lots of wildflowers, but there were not many because of our terrible drought.

In May, we embarked on a fabulous 16 day Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) trip to Turkey. We started out in Ankara and made our way south through Cappadocia to the Mediterranean and then north up the Aegean coast seeing amazing ancient sites, wonderful museums, and incredible Greek and Roman ruins—Konya, Aspendos, Perge, Hierspolis, Aphrodisias, Ephesus, Troy, Gallipoli, and Istanbul and more. Our group was very congenial (23 of us), our guide was terrific, and the scenery, sights, sounds, people, and food of the country were a delight. Mel celebrated his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday in Antalya and we celebrated our 48<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in Istanbul. What made our anniversary so special is that we met our friends Ayla and Yalçın Guneri who were our foreign students here at UT back in the early 1970s. They invited us to

their lovely home overlooking the Bosphorus for a wonderful dinner and a time for catching up on the many years of our friendship.

We flew out and back from D.C. so that we could work in a stop to visit Sarah and Joe. Both of us got really sick on our way home, so the activities we had planned the 1st week back with Sarah and Joe were limited. We did recover in time for the great post-wedding celebration at Sarah and Joe's—a wonderful weekend with friends and family from all over the country. Pat was overjoyed to have the opportunity to make a wedding cake for the bride and groom.

Shortly after we arrived home, we set out for Vicksburg and the Oakes-Dose reunion. More than 70 folks showed up for the 2 day gathering. Everyone really enjoyed Mel's presentation of the family history (you can see much of the material by going to our Web site—see above). Another high point of June was the celebration of Aunt Doris's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Pat's sister Nancy and Doris's stepdaughter Juanita came for the occasion. Later in the month Pat celebrated her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

In July, the Winter clan gathered at Scenic Wolf Resort in Mars Hill, NC, where we spent a wonderful, lively week with 19 children ages 12 and under (the newest was just 3 weeks old) and 23 adults. We were delighted when cousins Becky, Julius, and Erika Erlenbach dropped by for an impromptu afternoon visit. The Winter "kids" were so happy that our babysitter when we were kids in Coral Gables was able to come for lunch one day with her husband. We all attended their wedding 61 years ago! The 4 of us Winters also took part of a day off and traveled to Waynesville, NC, to visit with Virginia McNaughton who was the Director of Christian Education at Plymouth Church when we were in high school. The grandchildren are all getting older and can do more things—like attend a baseball game of the Asheville Tourists—great fun! Just after we got home from the reunion, Mel's nephew Stuart and his partner Jay came for several days while Stuart attended a conference. We enjoyed showing them the LBJ Library and eating barbecue at the Salt Lick. Two days after they left, Pat's niece Jennifer and her husband and 4 kids came for a visit (ages 2 to 11). They ended up staying an extra day as Randy became ill on their return from a day trip to San Antonio and had to be hospitalized in San Antonio. Pat and Mel went to S.A., swapped cars and picked up the kids and came back with them. They were so good and we had a great time. All were glad to see a healthy Randy and Jennifer late the next afternoon when they got back here!

August was grim in Texas. The heat and the drought were at their peak. Temperatures hit 112 one day—we had more than 75 days of 100 degrees or more over the summer—the worst on record. Foolishly, we stayed put here and stayed inside most of the time. Pat's walking group slogged through the heat at 7:30 a.m. and Mel's tennis group played 15 minutes earlier (at 7:15 a.m.) to escape some of the heat.

In September, Mel and Pat traveled to D.C. where they met Pat's sister Nancy and stayed with Sarah and Joe for a long weekend while they attended the National Book Festival on the Mall. It was so much fun to hear so many famous authors and to see so many folks and families interested in books. Back in Austin it was wonderful to have a visit from cousin Martha Koziol and her son Alan. In October, Mel and Pat traveled to Iowa City to celebrate Beth's birthday and to see Emily (11 this month) and Ethan (9 in February), and Eugene.

So—another year has flown by—and we are wishing you the very best of everything in 2012. We count our many blessings every day—and you are among them.



At the reunion—Tony Mardie, Beth, Eugene, Joe, Sarah in back Mel and Ethan, Emily and Pat

