

We are looking forward to Christmas with anticipation. All the kids, spouses and grandchildren will be here this year.

As we get older we find more to celebrate, in June, our friends the McMillans 50th wedding anniversary, in July sister in law Joan's 70th birthday, in December Cousin Bud's 75th birthday. Funny but none of this sounds old to us. We walk into a room of strangers who are in their 70's and 80's and think who are all these old people, but the people we know who are the same age don't appear old to us. We fortunately have good health. Joe's mind races constantly and he packs each day like he did when he was 50, although he does take a nap. Judy wonders why she gets so little done. She recalls when they had three small children and Joe suggested she do a certain task "when she had a four hour block of time". She was wondering what world he was living in. Now she has that four hour block and wonders why she gets so little done.

We seem to go to a lot of funerals, the saddest being that of Brittany the 23 year old who lived with us last November and December. Joe tried very hard to help (bike rides, spiritual sharing (she loved Joe's Mom's rosary), college planning, doctor visiting, etc.). Unfortunately, she was very addicted to alcohol and died in front of her parent's house in February.

On a positive note, we went to Minnesota in December to joyfully celebrate Joe's brother Jim's wedding to Shiela Hughes from St. Cloud. At ages 68 and 69 that is a real sign of faith, hope and love.

We went to Europe in the spring (we visited friends in Geneva, traveled to Spain by train, and then a bus tour through Spain and Portugal). Our highlights were Gaudi's La Familia church in Barcelona; Montserrat near Barcelona and Manresa (the caves where Ignatius of Loyola wrote his Jesuit order plans). Unfortunately, the churches in Europe have been mostly empty. There is a joke. The Catholic Church wants to canonize the last two popes but they can't find a miracle. Our new Pope Francis has already caused a miracle – the Italians are going to church.

We are blessed to live in one of the most beautiful and climate friendly places in the world (we're biased). Our flower gardens and orchards are doing very well. Joe has planted one or two of the many fruit plants that grow in our climate. We just harvested our last apples and the beautiful orange persimmons are hanging like jewels on the leafless trees. Judy has a flower garden that features roses, foxgloves, zinnias and hydrangeas. Joe's vineyard produced over 9,000 pounds of wine grapes on $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre. He sold all the Chardonnay (next year he has been told by family to keep at least half to make wine) and all the Pinot Noir (Pinot is very challenging to make & Joe needs a few years of wine making experience). He made lots of Petite Sirah & Zinfandel wine (over 25 cases). He has some new testing tools and is documenting the growing and wine making process and talking to local experts (his goal is to make an awesome Zin before he is 85).

In August we traveled to one of our favorite camping spots, Yosemite. Joe and his brother Bill from Colorado, our son Joey and cousin Bud climbed Half Dome (this was Joe's 5th time; he is now 73 and this is his last time). They started at 6:00 AM and got back at 10:00 PM and Joe was really, really tired and the beer tasted awfully good.

Judy is retiring this December as a photographer after 30+ years. She photographed over 500 weddings and countless families and children. Her head is still full of beautiful pictures, but not for compensation anymore. She has started volunteering at our local grade school and loves the diversity of the students.

Joe continues to love volunteering. He is on the capital campaign for our diocese and our parish. He has helped our parish develop a strategic plan. His most exciting current project is attempting to link parishes with Catholic Charities in areas such as immigration, health care, housing, etc. He is somewhat frustrated with the hierarchy of our church, but loves the positive messages of our new pope ("Who am I to judge" and "Let us do good things together"). Joe's generally positive outlook continues to grow with inspiration from an 80 year old former Jesuit priest that leads a parish spirituality group (he says he is getting happier as he gets older). Joe's long term concern for his children and grandchildren are income distribution, climate change and the US government's failure (California is starting to recover).

We spent Thanksgiving in Eugene, Oregon with Dave and Becky Lorenz. Dave is a district forest manager and Becky substitute teaches and volunteers at everything. Josiah led a book reading team to almost first place in state competition last spring. Mary and Frank Roller live in Cupertino, California. We traveled to Cape Canaveral in Florida to watch Frank's satellite launch in September, an awesome experience. Frank lost both of his parents last year. Mary continues to teach

3rd grade. Nate and Tyler are amazing swimmers and love to play soccer. Amy and Mike Edmondson from Boise, Idaho finished their house project and have a good start on landscaping. Mike is in charge of fish for the state of Idaho and Amy works at HP and volunteers as a soccer coach and at church. Their three daughters, Rachel 13, Emily 10 and Jennay 7, are into music and soccer. Joey and Belinda live 5 minutes from us in Santa Rosa. Joey's construction business is starting to take off after a couple of very lean years. Belinda teaches school where the 2 girls attend. Katie is officially a teenager and plays volley ball. Anna plays soccer and loves it that her dad is the coach.

Christmas joy and peace in the New Year,

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Kate Lynn and Anna



Rachel, Jennay and Emily



Josiah at Nate and Tyler's swim meet



Mary and Frank's family at Lauren and Ryan's wedding



Joe, Joey and Bill Tembrock in front of the cables on Half Dome



Joe and Judy at the Alhambra in Spain



La Sagrada Familia