

Christmas 2003

A Year of Reunions

A time to count our blessings,
to rejoice in His love for us,
and remember our family and friends.

In January, Joe's friends Warren and Jan Wilkins came to Arizona for the Barrett Jackson exotic car auction and we met them for lunch and a wonderful visit. A few weeks later, Patti's Uncle Bill and son Russ came from Tennessee to stay with us for a few days. Then, Joe's classmates Judy Gardner Hoffman and her husband Erwin and Shorty Millsap and his wife Betty came to Arizona and we had another fun get-together. All enjoyable reunions and wonderful fellowship.



Also in January, before leaving for her new three-year assignment in Merry Old England, Tracie came home for two weeks. The Air Force is giving her great opportunities to travel and see the world. (Someday, we hope to get all of our kids home at the same time for a family portrait.) After arriving "across the pond," Tracie has been able to tour England, the Netherlands, and Belgium. In October, she returned to the states for

some additional training in Mississippi and returned home to Arizona for a week. Then, back to England. She spent a recent weekend in Paris; and, for her birthday in January, she plans to go to Spain. We are eagerly looking forward to visiting her in England next May.

In March, we traveled to Washington for Mom Lowder's 95th birthday. It is always wonderful to get back to Washington to spend some time with Mom and with Greg and Cathy. (In this snapshot, they are touring the new Mariners Stadium.) While in Washington, we drove to Camano Island (where we were married) and had a brief reunion with our dear friends Dick and Joyce Raport.



In May, we went to Las Vegas; and in July, we escaped the 115-degree Arizona heat to enjoy a weekend in Patti's favorite place, San Diego. While there, we had a nice reunion dinner with our friends George and Lois Tate whom we had met on a cruise last year. We also took the San Diego rail-trolley down to Tijuana Mexico (no plans to do that again any time soon.) Thank God for the beautiful U.S.A.

In August, after having not seen Jason for 2½ years, Joe was able to have a mini-reunion with him, and with Greg, Cathy, and Mom Lowder in Washington. Jason has been very busy as the national sales



manager for a new high-tech "smart-card" business that has kept him traveling throughout the Southeast and North-east part of the country. Greg also gets in a lot of traveling with his DJ music business. We are proud that both Jason and Greg are successful entrepreneurs.

Later in August, we traveled to Nebraska and South Dakota to visit Joe's sister Judy and attend our nephew Matt and Ellen's wedding. (They are in the center in this photo, Brus and Sheila on the right. Judy is holding Coral.)



We flew to Omaha and drove to Hastings for a tour around Joe's alma mater Hastings College. Then on to Broken Bow where Patti discovered that there really is a place like the Mayberry RFD with a town square just like the picture postcard; and where, even after being gone 20-years, everyone still knows you when you come back for a visit.

We had dinner at the Elks Club with Joe's friends John and Beth Whitney, Shorty and Betty Millsap and Walt and Loretta Griffith. Now we need to get even with Walt for buying our dinner. Before leaving town the next morning we visited Shorty and Betty's farm enjoyed Betty's fantastic peach pie and toured their soon to be world famous vineyard; and we stopped by John and Beth's place and they gave us some delicious homemade choke cherry jam.

Next stop, Rapid City for the wedding and another family reunion. We were glad to spend some time with our nephew Brus (now a captain in the Air Force), meet his wife Sheila, and see their beautiful new baby Coral. We also enjoyed spending time with Joe's cousin Mary Ellen Hunt and her husband Jim.

Additional highlights this year were completing our TrueLoveNeverFails.com and NiceIntro.com websites, and in March, holding our first True Love Never Fails Seminar in Arizona. Now, we are putting the finishing touches on our book with the same title. We continue to seek God's leading for our singles' ministry.

*As we celebrate the birth of our Savior,
we pray that your home is adorned with His love,
blessed with His peace,
and filled with His joy.*