

***Belated Best Wishes for the 2009 Christmas Season and the New Year!
and now for Eldon and Cathy's year in pictures...***



After undergoing open heart surgery in Sioux Falls, Dec. 9, Cathy, along with her daughter, Kari, arrived in California Feb. 3. While Kari was here, all three of us went to Tibbies dinner show on the Queen Mary. Kari left for South Dakota Feb. 10. In March, we attended our annual Ft. Leonard Wood Army reunion in Sun City West and Goodyear, AZ. with Dick and Gladyne Douglas, Seattle/Sun City West; Duane and Harriet Quail, Goodyear; Pete and Joyce Fish, Ventura, CA; and Jamie Stenbeck, Katy, TX. On our way home, we stopped to visit Eldon's cousin, Myrlene Helma and family in Phoenix, and Cathy's sister-in-law and husband, Darlene and Clarence Vosberg, in Prescott Valley, AZ.



The first part of May, Kara Peppel, Eldon's great niece, and a friend flew from Omaha to visit us for a few days. Before Kara left, Eldon's daughter, Kathleen, joined us for lunch at Costa Mesa's South Coast Plaza. Also in May, Eldon's niece, Sharon King, her husband, Bob, and son, Sethroy from Seattle visited us for a few hours.



Late in May, we flew to SD, and in June attended the Bonesteel Alumni Reunion, where Eldon's class (originally nine guys and eight gals) observed its 60th year since graduation. Of the remaining five guys and five girls, Melvin Shroeder, Bonesteel; Dick Sage, Charlotte, NC; Malvern Jons, Bonesteel; Norma Taylor Peters, Sweet Home, OR; and Eldon attended. Dana Blakkolb Doolittle, Orange, CA; Joyce Fisher Banning, Huston, TX; Joan Reynolds Huntzinger, Omaha; Carmen Roach Cronk, O'Neill, NE; and Dennis Sieler, Longview, WA were unable to come.



For the fifth year in a row, we rode our tandem bike in Gregory's July 4 parade. We flew back to California late in July. While we were in SD, Cathy's cousin Glen Burke and Gretchen Hausmann, Tumwater, WA visited us.



Aug. 1, the Newport Beach American Legion honored Korean War Veterans, so Eldon dug out his old pinks and greens. The tie, cap and socks fit perfectly, but the cap and socks had several moth holes. The pants had shrunk too much to be wearable. The shirt fit almost perfectly, except that Eldon's eyes bugged out a little when he buttoned the top button. The jacket also had shrunk considerably. With some difficulty, Eldon could buttoned it, but he decided it felt better unbuttoned. As you can see from the accompanying photo, Eldon has not changed a bit since 1955.



Sept. 5, we again flew to SD where we helped Cathy's mother-in-law, Daisy Johnson, celebrate her 103rd birthday Sept. 16 at the Gregory nursing home. The five generation photo includes Cathy and Daisy (front); Kari holding her granddaughter Saran Singh (whose 3rd birthday was Sept. 15, and we celebrated a few days later); and Coleen Singh (Kari's daughter) holding her son A Jay. The Singhs live in Chicago. On Sept. 30, at a dance we attended in Reliance, SD, we were pleasantly surprised to see Eldon's cousins Rod and Wendy Peterson.



Oct. 16, we left for CA in Cathy's Toyota Matrix. We stayed in Longmont, CO that night, and the next day we had breakfast with Eldon's cousin, Bob J. Dvorak and wife, Katherine. Then we had very nice visits with the last of Eldon's aunts and uncles, Vi and Bob C. Dvorak (both 94). Vi was undergoing treatment in a Longmont Care Center, Bob was in a Ft. Lupton care facility. Vi was especially excited to see us. We were so glad we took the time to visit them. Aunt Vi died a few weeks later.



After staying in Grand Junction Oct. 17, we enjoyed touring the Arches National Park. We arrived back in California Oct. 19.



Cathy's birthday was Oct. 27, and the following week end we had a big birthday party at the Garden Grove Elks Lodge.



Oct. 31, we went to Halloween Parties at the Huntington Beach and Garden Grove Elks Lodges. Eldon was Count Dracula and Cathy was a Bavarian bar maid.



Nov. 15, Eldon failed to do his job of steering our tandem bike in the Huntington Beach Central Park. We ran off the bike trail and upset. Eldon got only a couple of scratches, but apparently Cathy hit the neck of her left femur on the handlebars. The next day she underwent a partial hip replacement at Newport Beach's Hoag Hospital on the same leg she had a knee replacement a few years ago. Thanksgiving Day, in 85-degree weather, we shared dinner on the beautiful patio of the Newport Rehab Center. Dec. 18—less than five weeks after the surgery—we danced four slow dances at the Santa Ana Elks Christmas Ball. Everyone, including Cathy's therapists, are amazed at her quick recovery. But she's a tough SD ranch gal, and within a few weeks, we plan to resume our former schedule of dancing and biking three to five times a week.



Dec. 19, we cruised Newport Beach's Balboa Harbor to watch the annual Parade of Lights—beautifully decorated and lighted boats and homes along the water. In the background is the Balboa Pavilion, where the cruise started and ended.



Dec. 23, we enjoyed lunch and a nice visit here in Fountain Valley with Eldon's lifelong friend Marge Paulsen Jueck of Montclair, CA; her son and daughter-in-law Tom and Vickee Duncan of Upland, CA; Marge's daughter, Paula Duncan, and friend, Mary Truesdale of El Dorado Hills, CA. We spent Christmas day with the Ron and Olga Sarouhan family.

OTHER IMPORTANT 2009 EVENTS—In Nov., Dane Wernke, Cathy's grandson, moved from Lowell, IN to Gregory. Unfortunately, during 2009, we lost some loved ones and close friends. Besides Aunt Vi, those who passed away included Max Nielan, a long-time Bonesteel friend, Joan McDonald, wife of life-long friend Bill of Sauk Centre, MN; Clayton Berg. Eldon's college friend and roommate, of Helena, MT; and Ken Palmer (former Fountain Valley neighbor) of Hemet, CA. Ironically both Clayton and Ken were 77 years old, both grew up in Sioux Falls, and both were killed within a few weeks of each other last spring, both in freak accidents by vehicles they were driving—Clayton by a tractor and Ken by a rental truck.

Ballroom dancing, tandem biking, and attending stage productions, plus Rusty and Andy Barie's little league ball games and other sports events continue to be favorite activities. We also often enjoy being special guests at events sponsored by Cal State Long Beach and South Dakota State University.

HAVE A GREAT 2010!!! (as we plan to do)