



# Merry Christmas!



*It's Christmas again! (Comes faster each year, doesn't it?) The Christmas story, briefly (even tersely): God gave us the gift of His Son, that those who believe in Him might have eternal life instead of the eternal death we all deserve. If you have not yet received this gift to yourself, please do so.*

*That is the Good News.*

*Like you, we have recently seen and heard other less good news – at this writing, the cease fire in the war in Israel against the Hamas organization, in hope of gaining return of hostages, has passed, and the war has resumed in earnest. Israel has no choice for its own survival but to remove the threat entirely. It is a hard time for many. Possibly you have friends, or relatives, in Israel, perhaps even in Gaza. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! In our own country, we have seen unprecedented (and sometimes disturbing) actions in the Congress and in the courts. It is a time to remember that we are under the God Who is from everlasting to everlasting, Who knows the end from the beginning, is surprised by none of it, and is in complete control. We may put our trust in Him, come what may. This also is Good News, which rumor and the media can't obscure.*

*We share some of our more trivial matters. We had yet again imagined the possibility of moving north to Michigan; several of Anne's family are there, and we'd like to be more in touch. Yet again, this appears not to be in the plans (numerous interacting details, not one dominant thing); Texas is stuck with us for a while yet. Nor is Texas a bad place to live; a bit, uh "warm" in the summer, but less of the ice and snow in what is called "winter". So far, we still have seemed to have escaped Covid due to masking and distancing; our 4 "jabs" each probably have expired in effect.*

*Larry has now been "retired" for more than two years. He is not yet sure what "retired" means; he had in mind a few months of sorting out the overall collection of papers and other accumulated whatnot, and then relaxing into some pleasant "hobbyist" activities, fixing this and puttering about that, and maybe finding some part-time work (no, not as a greeter at Wal-Mart – not qualified; he's a bit too grumpy). Hah! Anne (having been "retired" a bit longer) could have informed him better (she says she did, if he only was listening . . .). He has part-time work, all right, it just pays like "women's work". Anne has herself been plowing through accumulated paper dealing with one event or another over the last few years. We keep thinking there is an end to it. The volume seems to be getting smaller. Larry has observed how friend Ed W. has handled his retirement so far, and is scared. Ed, older than Larry, does more in retirement than Larry did when working full time – is this what he is to expect, that work increases exponentially with time?*

*Anne, for her part, has been shopping – the annual review of Medicare Part D drug plans, that is; she once again emerged victorious. Well, she's had some other shopping to do also; she lost a few pounds (Larry thinks he found them) and, as you ladies know, changes in sizes result in changes in inventory. She soon hopes to get back to exercising; her swollen feet and ankles, and foot pain, currently seem less problematic. →→→*

We had a very “warm” (that means hot) summer here in Texas. We took pity on the squirrels and put out water for them for a while. (Might as well. The city has been charging record water bills to keep the lawn alive. What’s a few more quarts?) One of our oak trees has been shedding acorns for months (want some?) and has produced, and is still producing, a real bumper crop. We understand they call this a “mast year” – although it seems to be mostly about one tree. No, wait, now two others have joined in. Anticipating a massive cleanup, Larry built a wood frame floored with chicken wire, set it on the patio, and has collected a bunch of acorns in it so the squirrels can still find some after the cleanup. He has ordered a cage-like tool that is supposed to do the rest of the pickup. So he’s kinda employed by squirrels and nuts. He’s had a couple squirrelly employers in the past, so what’s new?



He also (for some reason that now escapes him) extended the line of shrubbery in the front of the house along in front of the front fence. Ah, yes, here’s why! Some of the crape myrtles we thought we’d removed a year and a half back somehow reasserted themselves amidst the shrubs we’d believed replaced them. He had to remove these interlopers, and, seeing how hardy they seemed, decided to transplant them to this new location. That entailed laying a few more patio blocks and digging a bed. We’ll see in the spring what comes of it. Kept him off the street, though. No pix yet – too ugly until/unless they take.

Sooner or later, Fall will arrive here in North Texas. A normal Fall will fill maybe 25-30 30-gallon bags with colored fallout from our acorn factories and other trees. But at this writing, at the very beginning of December, we have put out only a few bags. Our “ground crew” stand at the ready, though, in red, green and gold Christmas livery.



As previously, we’ll add a bit more content to our family website (link below). For encouragement to vote, or at least amusement, you can find the article “King of the United States” there, in the “editorial” section. Also, if you like our cards, we’ve made a few available on the site.

We’re always happy to hear from y’all as you may find convenient. And we wish y’all a  
*Merry Christmas* and a *Happy New Year!*

Our love,

*Anne & Larry*

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