

It's Christmas 2017
ANOTHER SPECIAL SEASON IS
UPON US



NIPELY NEWS



It's Christmas Time Again

It's hard to believe that this is my 74th Christmas and the magic and spiritual significance is as strong if not stronger than ever. There have been some memorable yuletides over the years.

To name a few:

- 1944 - my first and least remembered, but I'm sure it was wonderful for my parents and grandparents.
- 1965 - Geri said yes (or was it the other way round?)
- 1966 - first year of marriage and first job
- 1977 - Danielle joined us.
- 1980 - David joined in the festivities and we were in Raleigh, NC
- 1983 - Geri's mom joined us.
- 1989 - First Christmas in Texas - that's memorable ????
- 2001 - Mom joined us.
- 2003 - First grand child, Bailey helped us celebrate
- 2006 - Second grandson, Ashtin
- 2008 - Granddaughter Peyton
- 2008 - all my siblings visited in Texas
- 2016 - 50 years of marriage
- 2017- sister Helen joined us

Though this is an incomplete list and many celebrations have been lost in mists of time, all the years have in common that the celebration of Jesus Christ's birthday are in the forefront of our celebration and the reason the season is special

Pool Hours converted to Sewing Studio

No 8 foot pool table or man cave to be found on the Nipe Ranch. Instead, a cozy sewing house (crammed full of material, thread, sewing tables, ironing boards, etc) has taken their place (yes it is now her domain).

To be fair, the projects done in this edifice have provided dresses for girls in 3rd world countries (an astounding number), sanitary products for women in those same places and many sets of blankets, pajamas and quilts for Helen's grandchildren, grand nieces and grand nephews.

Helen is Pranked

This was Helen's first Thanksgiving away from South Jersey (where our sister-in-law Ellen always has a huge Thanksgiving Day banquet) and some let down might have been expected. The season always coincides with her birthday as well making the season a bit more poignant for her.

Cat, her daughter wanted to surprise her and had arranged to arrive the day after Thanksgiving and stay through her birthday. Helen wasn't advised of the decision and I pretended that I had to take a friend from Church to the airport where I picked Cat up. When we arrived home, Cat stayed in garage and I reported that I had gotten my friend safely there. Four to five minutes later, Cat appeared in doorway to Helen's sitting room and pandemonium broke out!!

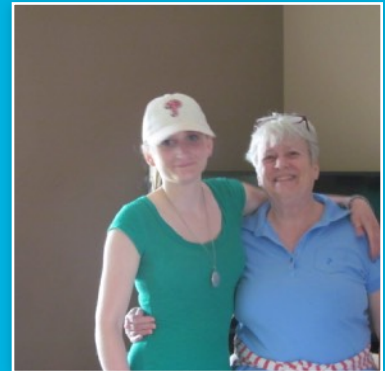
Thanksgiving at the Ranch

We had our Thanksgiving a day late here at the Ranch this year. Helen had been told that Danielle couldn't make it on Thursday (see story above - Cat came on Friday), so we were doing it on Friday instead.

Cat Upperman, Danielle and Pat Mears, Jay and Amanda Martin, David, Ashtin (Stuart), and Peyton Nipe, Geri, Helen and I joined together for food, fellowship and fun. Our 11 folks couldn't compete with the 30+ at Warren's house, but the noise level was probably comparable.



Sewing Headquarters



A Cat Visits



Before, (after is too disgusting to show)

Bailey Gets a Kiss on Stage

In early December, Helen, Geri and I travelled to Krum, TX to watch a one act play at the high school there. Our grandson, Bailey played the “fake brother” in a screwball comedy, “*Wait Wait...I Can Explain*”. The story line is too convoluted to explain here, but during the play the “fake” family and the “real family” are thrown together in zany situations and the “real sister” is attracted to the “fake brother” and vice-versa and at the end of the play, she gives him a kiss. The real sister is a bit of a Goth and the lipstick is black as can be seen in the photo.



Ashtin has First Date

In Texas, homecoming weekends are considered state holidays or at least it seems that way. Mums are elaborate affairs that rarely start at the sublime and usually end up at the extreme. (see example at the left if you're not a Texan and have no idea about which I write).

Anyway, Ashtin was asked to homecoming by one of the girls in his class (*Sadie Hawkins day maybe??*) and he accepted. I have no photos of the event. However, he says he had a good time, but has subsequently not had another date with the young lady in question. But, he is only a freshman and I'm sure more dates are in his future.

Peyton is the Slime Queen

Peyton has been learning science experiments on You-Tube but they seem to mainly be centered on the various recipes for making slime. Every visit is another entreaty for Grandpa to help make slime. There must be 4-5 thousand different recipes and each has a different set of ingredients, none of which we have in the house. She doesn't always remember the exact steps or the measurements and many of her attempts are not as successful as they appear in the videos. The best one required Borax of which we now have a large box that will never be used in my lifetime. They all seem to require Elmer's glue ©. Just a word of assistance, the clear glue doesn't work as well as the white. Of course making it is fun for her, but cleanup is a completely different matter



FRF is Five

In spite of the odds against two churches (especially Southern Baptist ones) completing a successful merger, First Rock Fellowship turns 5 in January 2018. The church is healthy and has been able to progress with very few of the problems that might have been expected when combining two disparate congregations into one. Only the providence of a good God with the infusion of the Holy Spirit have made this possible. Here's to the next five years!

Homefront



Things at the Nipe Ranch have been quiet and peaceful this year, not much to report by way of interest. In fact, it is the first year since 1975 that John has not been in an airplane going somewhere. Many of those years, Geri has been in one as well. John probably has 750,000 miles under his belt if not more in air travel over those years. So, there will be no travel logs for 2017. A cruise is planned for 2018 so maybe next year those who get vicarious adventures from our trips will have one to read about.



John was elected to the City Council of the City of Krugerville this year after an hiatus of 15 years (*at the urging of the Mayor - thanks Jeff, I think*). The city is small but quite progressive and he is glad to be a part of the continuing look to the future. The Aubrey-Krugerville area has grown to become a desirable location for many people seeking a more country feel to their environment and the council wants to grow the city in such a way as to embrace the change in demographics while retaining the small town feel.

Once a teacher....

John is currently doing a long term substitute job as a 7th and 8th grade math teacher for a teacher out on maternity leave. The water in Aubrey must have something in it because, once this one is done another one as a 5th grade science teacher will begin and there are two others (4th grade and 7th grade math) that might fit into the schedule and if not (and he hopes that will be the case) there will be tutoring in the middle school until the end of the year. My good friend, Irv Ware finally decided to retire from his veterinary practice, so maybe I need to follow his lead.

The Final Word

God is still alive! During this season, we need to reflect on Malachi's words of prophesy; "But for you who revere my name, the Sun of righteousness will rise with healing in His wings." It was true 400 years after he prophesied it and is true today.

