

Christmas, 2004

My dear friends:

Once again, it's that time of year when I become very thankful for the past year. Rough as it's been in the past, I'm still around to write and enjoy the season.

This year has been a quiet one for me, health wise. I have not had a hospital visit, my kidney problem that I had last year appeared to be infection related rather than diabetically related, and the doctor is confident that I will not suffer kidney problems. After 49 years of this disease, and losing friends to it, I feel grateful that for the most part, things are ok. This year has been stable for me, and I haven't been able to say that for a long time.

I'm still with my mom and Art, and of course, Carlos, who sees to it that I am well taken care of. He's quite the man to endure my health issues, but there isn't a person on the planet who doesn't have some kind of situation to deal with.

I still speak with Georgia nearly every day. She is well, has lost about 75 pounds, and doesn't come close to looking like her 59 years. She is still not seeing anyone, but she keeps busy with her work and church activities.

Scott, who will be 27 in March, still lives in Bakersfield and manages his office from there. He is still involved in selling Cutco knives, but now as a manager, has people under him to do that. He is a hard worker..and it shows. 27. My God!

Katie turns 25 this month, on the 19th. She is doing data processing for an office that deals with nationwide companies. Her husband, Lelan, is an exterminator, and after 2 ½ years of marriage, they seem to be adjusting quite well to the "settled down married" life.

Kristina turned 6 December 2. She is quite the funny girl. If you scratch her back, she will kick her leg like a dog to be cute, and the first time I saw her do that, I thought I'd....well, never mind, but you get the idea. She is in first grade, and I see Katie written all over her personality. I don't know if that's good or bad...but what a delightful child she is....just the light of our family.

Let's see...who'd I leave out? Mom and Art are 83, and still participate in the Pearl Harbor Survivor's Association and the City of Hope...and are absolute whizzes at the computer!! Both are in good health, and enjoy their golden years. My brother turns 60 next year...talk about making someone feel old!! I'm nearing that myself, turning 58 in January. Yes, 58. But I only look 57.

I guess that's about it for 2004...a good year, and better to come in 2005. I wish you the warmth of the season and the love we have shared as friends for more years than I can count.

Michael