

# MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR 2016

*Here we are again! How does this happen? We blink, and another year has become history.*

*We are so truly blessed with everything we have, but mainly each other after all these years. Carlos and I have 18 years together and in July celebrated 3 years married.*

*As much as I hate to put too much negative in Christmas letters, not every day is a good day in our lives. It's just part of the cycle. Main thing is, we lost Mom on September 13. At 95, she put in one hell of a life; very productive, very treasured. She passed away quietly, in her sleep, and comfortable. No pain and no distress. That's how she wanted to go. Her way.*

*Mom was a "do-er" and never sat around just watching. Her involvement with the City of Hope and the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association were projects of hers that she held dear to her heart until her death. I am so happy to say that she died knowing in her heart how many people loved her and how she touched the lives of so many people during her incredible life.*



*She used to put her mom, Grandma Irene, on a pedestal. Now she's there too.*

*Throughout the year, my hearing just won't settle down, but luckily, I keep track of the good days and the bad, and there are far more "green" days than "red" so that's a big plus. The red days don't even let me talk on the phone, so when I get a green day, I go to town.*

*The weather throughout the year has been exceptional. We haven't had any rain to speak of, and of course, the drought we are experiencing has become devastating to California. I can only hope the winter season brings some relief.*



*So let's start with the kids. Scott...you remember that little boy from years past in Christmas letters since I think since he was 8...will be 39 on his next birthday. He and his beautiful wife, Sonja, live in the Washington DC area where she is a physician and he is making chocolates at home and they are spectacular. You might remember that Scott and I started making candies when he was quite young and he's continued our tradition. You can take a look at his creations on his Facebook page, or his website [www.epicchocolates.com](http://www.epicchocolates.com). So good you'll wanna lick the screen.*

*Next up: Our beautiful daughter, Kate. "Katie" as you recall her being called as she grew up, is still working for Los Angeles County, Dept. of Public Social Services. She's been there a touch over 10 years and as always seems to make friends wherever she goes, so naturally, she's got quite a few at work.*

*Katie has always reminded me of a cousin I have who, as I grew up, I always thought was so pretty. Kate has that smile and that personality that always makes you take notice. Something special about "Daddy's little girl, no matter how old they get. She's still my baby.*





*I can remember the day as if it were yesterday, when this child came into my life. I remember telling you about it when it happened, right before Christmas, 1998.*

*This is our incredible granddaughter, Kristina. Our Kristy.*

*She is attending Ventura City College...yes, old enough now to be a college student! She is interested in the arts, perhaps modeling (ya think??)*

*This is our happy-go-lucky granddaughter, Julianna. Julie to me. Julie is 6 now, going to school and enjoying her young life. She and Kate live close by, so it's always fun when we can get together.*

*Julie-Bean hasn't really plotted out her life yet...a tad early for that. I often wonder if all my granddaughters will go into modeling. At 6, she's showing signs. This little girl steals my heart.*

*Sharp as a tack with a personality to match, she goes after what she wants...in typical Dardenelle style.*



*Next on the "Hit Parade" our boy Troy. He will be 3 in January. This little guy is also a heart melter. He's our only grandson and even though Carlos and I don't see much of him except on an occasional trip back east, I do believe he's got us wrapped around his little finger and will work us when we go back to see him mid December.*

*I can't wait for "grandpa" to come out of his mouth. Last time we saw him he was just 2 and not talking much. Again, in Dardenelle fashion, that silence won't last.*

*And now ladies and gentlemen.....drum roll....introducing the newest addition to the Dardenelle family, Miss Brooke Inge Dardenelle (crowd goes crazy). Brooke was born September 23 and she, like the rest of the grandchildren, will be spoiled rotten I'm sure, but isn't that what grandparents are suppose to do? Of course it is.*

*We can't wait to see her in person. She'll be a couple months old by then and yeah, you can bet there'll be pictures. Lots.*



*I remember years back because of my health, I never thought I'd see 40. I turn around, I think without even looking, and 70 approaches.*

*Dardenelleville is still around, strong as ever. Mom is gone, Brooke is here. We are all good and happy. All is well.*

*Carlos and I wish you the happiest of holidays from the warmth of our hearts to yours.*

*Mike and Carlos*