

L&W BRADFORD 2600 E. Division #78, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

CHRISTMAS 1991

"Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible sun within us."

Sir Thomas Browne

DEAR FRIENDS:

GREETINGS AND LOVE TO YOU ALL. THE YEAR WAS BUSY BUT MOSTLY UNEVENTFUL. WE SPENT TWO DELIGHTFUL WEEKS ON THE ISLAND OF RAROTONGA IN THE COOK ISLANDS. IT PROVIDED A GREAT CORAL REEF, NEW PLANTS AND BIRDS, AND SHARP VOLCANIC PEAKS TO CLIMB. AN ADDED BENEFIT WAS A STOP IN HAWAII TO VISIT WITH TWO OLD FRIENDS OF AIRFORCE DAYS AND THEIR FAMILIES. I LOVED THE FRESH GEOLOGY OF MONA LOA.

IN APRIL WE SPENT A WEEK WITH A TEAM OF 15 FROM OUR CHURCH, BUILDING A HOME FOR AN IMMIGRANT FAMILY IN THE YAKIMA VALLEY. THIS WAS DONE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF "HABITAT FOR HUMANITY". WE "WEATHERPROOFED" A THREE BEDROOM HOUSE. A PREVIOUS TEAM HAD EXCAVATED AND POURED FOUNDATIONS. OUR TEAM FLOORED, FRAMED, ROOFED & INSTALLED DOORS AND WINDOWS, LEAVING THE INSIDE WORK TO FUTURE VOLUNTEERS. THE FAMILY FOR WHOM THE HOME WAS BEING BUILT (A MEXICAN WOMAN WITH TWO CHILDREN) AND FRIENDS FROM THE COMMUNITY WORKED WITH US. THE "HABITAT" OFFICE PROVIDED MATERIALS AND A SUPERVISOR. THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WAS ROOFING DURING HEAVY WINDS.

WE FINALLY GOT STARTED ON A PROJECT WE HAD SPECULATED ON FOR A YEAR. WE ENCLOSED A WEATHER-BEATEN PORCH. IT WAS MORE OF A CHALLENGE THAN EXPECTED SINCE ROTTING TIMBERS AND PILLARS HAD TO BE REPLACED. MONTHS LATER BY ADDING CARPET, PANELING, WINDOWS WE HAD A PLEASANT ROOM THAT ADDED 10% TO THE SQUARE FOOTAGE OF OUR TRAILER. WE WERE TOO COMPLACENT WHILE THE SUNNY WEATHER OF THE SUMMER EXTENDED THROUGH OCTOBER AND ALL WAS GOING WELL WITH OUR NEW ADDITION. BUT NOW WE ARE TRYING TO TRACE AN ELUSIVE LEAK THAT DAMPENS ONE CORNER OF THE ROOM AFTER EACH RAIN. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT CONSTRUCTION DURING THE YEAR. WE SORT OF LOOK FORWARD TO DOING MORE CARPENTRY PROJECTS. AN ADDED DELIGHT WAS HAVING A PAIR OF TREE SWALLOWS SELECT THE EAST WALL OF THE NEW PORCH FOR NESTING.

Thanksgiving was reunion week with the Calif. and Mass. families joining us Pacific Northwesterners. Our clan now numbers 21 with 2 new grand- children joining us in '91 (Julie a daughter and Ethan a son). Since it rained that whole week, most of our activities were inside (what bedlam that many happy people can make). We continue to baby-sit Hannah almost every working day, so we have been able to be close to her development - something we have missed in other grandchildren. It is amazing how fast these kids learn! Hannah will be 2 in March.