

Seasons Greetings Everybody

2009 has been a year of endings for the Cragg Family.

In March Scott ended his relationship with Tiffany. I flew out to San Mateo, helped separate their material possessions, and then flew back with him in Julie to Manassas Airport. It was a 3 day flight. We took the southern route. We went south of Edwards AFB, looped up and over the Grand Canyon, spending that night in Flagstaff. For the next leg of the trip we followed I-40 to Oklahoma City. The last push was a sunrise to sunset flight into Manassas. One of these days I hope to have pictures of the trip up on my web site.

In May Steven ended his cadet career by graduating and becoming an Army Second Lieutenant. There were about a dozen guests at the graduation. This year's Christmas card picture is from the "boarding" following graduation where we put his 2LT bars on and S/M Kerns rendered the first salute to him. It was the first time in many years that I had both boys available at the same time and was able to get a picture of the three of us. And yes, I know black and gold are not Christmas colors, but they are West Point colors. More pictures from the week can be found at <http://steven.cragg.info/>. After graduation Steven had a month off. That period of relaxation was followed by a series of schools. He will join the 82nd Airborne at Ft Bragg NC in early spring and will presumably be part of the Afghan buildup.

Finally in July I ended my 32 year career with TRW/Northrop Grumman. I was laid off the first of July with two weeks notice and only a handshake from an HR staffer. That's a far cry from the old days when someone with my seniority would get 12 weeks notice and a farewell reception to include heavy hors d'œuvre. With the MBAs taking over company management from the engineers it is clear that professional staff is now regarded as an expense rather than an asset. I really wasn't surprised. I had been working Missile Defense for the last several years and if Obama had walked up to me and asked me to justify why we should continue to spend money on the system, I would not have been able to come up with any good reasons. Since I had been thinking about retiring at the end of the year anyway it was not a big deal.

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2009

While both boys were home I drafted them for some ladder work repairs on the house. Scott and I together continued rebuilding (and cleaning out) the garage. I still have the front wall to rebuild, but the rest is done. Scott set up a workshop there and spent the summer healing from the breakup with Tiffany. As part of that healing process we decided, at the last minute, to go to Burning Man. We made the decision on Thursday evening. Friday I took the pickup into the shop to be serviced and get the air conditioner fixed. Both Friday and Saturday Scott designed a shelter which he then prefabricated. We loaded everything into the pickup and left at 7pm Saturday evening. After a straight through drive we arrived in Winnemucca NV at 6am Monday morning. I am glad I went, but I'm not sure I will go a second time. Pictures from the adventure can be found at <http://ed.cragg.info/>.

The fall has been pretty much routine - theatre and square dancing. Things got very hectic beginning Thanksgiving. For starters, Scott obtained a 3 month contract software development job back in San Francisco. It was rather sudden - He telephone interviewed a staffing firm Monday, interviewed the client Tuesday, received an offer that afternoon, was on a plane Wednesday, and started work Thursday. He is covered at least to March, and hopefully will find more assignments afterwards. Steven went down to a three week airborne school at Ft Benning where he is complaining about aches and pains - mostly in legs and knees from constantly having to fall onto the ground (practice landings). He will complete the school 18 December. I have just returned from visiting the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB. I filled up my laptop disk with scans. Now all I need is some miserable weather which would keep me housebound so I can work with it.

And that was my year that was.

I hope everyone has a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



HAPPY
HOLIDAYS

