

A Blessed Christmas wish from the TOMANDL's



Blessings come in many forms and ways ... some you see coming and some you don't. January 1st, 2019 dawned bright and promising as we left Jean and Steve's for our first winter away from New York. By 4:00 PM we were in Florida for the winter!

St. Augustine Ocean and Racquet Resort on Anastasia Island was our home for the next two months. Molly stayed with Jean and Steve ... yes, our dog went south for the winter! We joined Pat and Al at St. Augustine for January and February. Did we like it!? We're going for three months in 2020!

We were glad to get away from the ice and snow and cold, but we found to our surprise that the biggest bonus was the sun! Even though St. Augustine is only an hour south of Georgia, the days were over an hour longer right from the start. Even the cool days (we did have a few days in the 50's and 60's) had a lot of sunshine! Add to that walks on the beach, golf every week, sometimes twice a week, wonderful museums, Holy Shrines, historical sights and monuments, and, lots of shopping and restaurants and we had a, simply stated, blessed time! While in Florida, we were able to visit with Jill, John's cousin, Joe, and his wife, Kathy, and, Father Jim Burke in Cape Coral. He's doing well and Jill was getting her house ready to sell (she has now sold it and moved.) Back home we celebrated Easter and looked forward to golf and baseball ...

John once again worked at the DoubleDay games, mostly selling

beer (maybe drinking a few after beer sales ended near the end of the games.) Golf was not as easy ... lots of rain, poor course conditions along with his being the President of the American Correctional Chaplains Association for the next two years and still being at the hospital, time seemed to disappear!

Ted & Beth are busy, Ted has worked several jobs as chef, mostly at Elderberry Pond outside Skaneateles, as well as growing his own business – Complete Detail – detailing cars, trucks, boats and anything else that needs to look new! Beth continues to work at Weedsport School as well as doing wedding coordinator jobs and working at Weedsport Speedway. Tate is seventeen, bought a truck, driving and working at Parker's (a local restaurant) and helping a friend working on a cattle farm. Avery a beautiful young woman, in the 8th grade, who is very busy with school and sports. Twins, Ted and Crew, are in second grade and really turning into young men who like school and really enjoyed playing soccer this summer.

Doug & Ann Marie are busy with work and making sure that the boys get to all their sporting events. Doug continues as Assistant Superintendent for Business at B.O.C.E.S. and Ann Marie is a PA for Rochester Radiology Group. Thankfully she is assigned to Auburn Hospital. All three boys are involved in hockey. Aiden is in the 8th grade, on a travel hockey team and played on a Junior PGA golf league with L.T. Aiden is an honor student at Auburn Middle School. L.T. plays hockey and baseball and he is in the 3rd grade. Carsen is improving his hockey skills and is really enjoying Kindergarten where he just received the award for being a "High Flyer." Ann Marie and Doug had a nice one-piece fiberglass pool installed this summer so next summer there should be some great pool/patio parties!

Johnny continues to run his contracting business and seems to be forever busy! Still hoping that he'll be able to begin to relax a little and take some time off one of these years.

Probably the most exciting and scary (wow, we're getting old) news this year was Jenna graduating from High School with her AA degree (just needs 2 more classes to finish!) We, Avery, Doug and Ann Marie and the kids, Jill and, of course, her very proud father, Johnny, went out to Las Vegas in early June to watch her graduate and to celebrate her achievement. Of course, we also got to the strip and enjoyed seeing Hoover Dam and several other sights while there. Everyone agreed that we need to go back, soon!

In June, we were honored that Willough Strauss visited for a week. John and Carole went out to pick her up and Carole took her back since John had a golf outing with friends. It looks like Molly has a new friend!

John had the ACA/ACCA conferences in Boston in early August for a week. He got to meet Governor Chris Christie who was the keynote speaker at the ACA Summer Congress in Boston.

Later in August, John's mom, Betty fell as she was coming off the elevator at her apartment building, hitting her head on a wooden bench seat across from the elevator. We're not sure but she could have fractured her spine then or perhaps later in September when she had a lesser fall while returning to the rehab facility with John after going to Church. To make a long story short, she has had to move into an assisted living facility ... North Brook Heights. She is still able to go out with assistance to the hairdresser, shows or programs, Church and dinner but is unable to walk without assistance and often must rely upon a wheelchair. But she still has a terrific sense of humor.

Between John and his sister, Jan, they try to see her 5 or 6 days a week and call everyday. She is still doing physical therapy and we're hoping for continued improvement. While this doesn't seem like much of a blessing, she could've easily been killed by the fall so there is much to be grateful for. John's sister, Jill came up for 2 weeks to help when mom first went into assisted living. She had just moved to Mt. Dora, Florida, after 20 years in Ft. Meyers so she is still settling into her new home there now.

We were able to get away at the end of August to see Barb and Dean for a long weekend. Jean and Steve came up from Georgia too. It was great to have the three of us couples together. Though we didn't get to Chautauqua because it was after their closing weekend, we get to Southern Tier Brewing and the girls went shopping ... and we celebrated Barb's birthday!

Carole continues to volunteer at our parish as a Eucharist Minister to the home bound as well as Lector and Minister at Mass. This fall she and our close friend Pat Knox went on their annual "girls get away" to Maine. Our friend Linda joined them for several days of 'Lobsta' and shopping with liberal walks on the beach thrown in for good measure.

We're planning on our winter trip to St. Augustine, leaving Auburn after Christmas. Thankfully Johnny lives next door and we have a new ADT system to watch the house, so we have that peace of mind.

We hope you enjoyed some of the highlights from our year past – **And, we hope and pray that all of you have a blessed celebration of the Incarnation of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and a HEALTHY New Year.**

