



December 1988

# Holiday Newsletter

January 1989

My good friend and best man at our wedding, Joe Caparella, stopped in just a few days ago and said, "WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU IN THE LAST YEAR IS INCREDIBLE. YOU MUST HAVE LIVED A DULL LIFE BEFORE"! His comment foretells this year. May 1989 be a good year for all. Cleo and I send warmest greetings for the holidays and may the New Year bring mirth, health and prosperity to you and loved ones.

Since this is a HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER there is no better reference than comments on the monthly Arizona Highways calendar. Each month features unique photographic gems — landscapes showing flora and fauna that literally defy description. Arizona is so varied: low deserts, piney woods, mountains, canyons, high deserts where the eye can see a hundred miles, from sea level to the San Francisco peaks that rise thousands of feet above the Flagstaff plain. In winter the higher elevations are snow covered. In the warmer, low desert south, Saguaros stand straight and stark among the rocks, shrubs and dry washes. Wouldn't you like to join us here?

We ended 1987 visiting Cleo's daughter, Beth, and husband Gary at their home in Las Vegas. Beth is a senior supervisor at Bullock's department store and Gary's real estate manager for Summa, the umbrella corporation for the Howard Hughes enterprises. Beth was so busy that our visit was limited to three days.

We stayed home in January to recharge our batteries and to enjoy a visit by Ebbie Indestad from Deltona, Florida. Her husband, Harold, died unexpectedly in mid-December and coming here eased the loss. Harold, when in high school, spent several years with my mother and dad at the Waupaca, Wisconsin farm. His mother had passed away and he needed an anchor. He was like a brother to me. Fortunately Cleo and I were there during December just a few days before his death for which I am most grateful.

On Tuesday, February 2nd, I had the pins removed from my right hip repair resulting from a 1986 accident. They were protruding and most painful. More will be told later in this letter.

On the 17th of February Cleo and I flew to Puerto Vallarta to spend three days with Reed and Joyce. What a good time they showed us. It was their third visit there so they knew the spots. Cleo got to know them well since our marriage she had only briefly been with them. Puerto Vallarta is a port city on Mexico's west coast. It really got its place 'in the sun' when the film 'Night of the Iguana' was produced there featuring Liz Taylor and Richard Burton. Their homes are on a hill across from each other on a narrow cobbled-stone street.

At the end of February Cleo's 92 year old father came for two weeks. We had a great time touring the area and played his favorite card game, Pitch. Who do you think won? Dad, John Forsen. I said to him just before he went home, "John have you had a good time"? His reply was to the point, "Yes, Bill, so far"!

On March 18th Cleo, her two daughters, Patti & Beth, son-in-law Gary, sister Charlotte, my son Leigh and I went on an eight day's cruise to the caribbean basin. Ports of call were Puerto Rico, two Virgin Islands and the Bahamas. We had a magnificent time and both families got to know each other really well.

Off again to Beth and Gary's in Las Vegas on May 7th. Leigh was invited to join us, as he was in Los Angeles, and the stop was on his way home. We went to see one of the last performances starring Sigfried & Roy with their beautiful cats — lions, tigers, etc. They are now on tour of Europe for the next two years. I never cease to be amazed how man can manipulate and train large cats.

Leigh and I left on the following Monday for our plant in Wisconsin. I liked the changes that have taken place since I left in early 1987. I am mighty proud of the accomplishments Leigh and Reed have made in plant growth and product development. While there, Bruce, Jean, Hope and Will came for a few days so I got a chance to see the entire Larson clan.

On May 17th Rolland and Carol Freitag from Watertown stopped in unexpectedly at our Sun City residence. The next day I was home and they came back and we hosted them at dinner at the Lakes Club. Rollie's CPA firm has serviced our business and personal tax needs for the past 40 years. He is the senior partner.

This is the biggy! On May 24 we went with the Phoenix Zoo on a 20 day safari to East Africa. We stopped in Amsterdam for one day and enroute home one day in London (Heathrow Airport). The rest of the time was in Kenya and Tanzania. The trip was a photo session and the 33 person group was under the superb direction of Dr. Savoy, director of the Phoenix Zoo. It is one of the world's famous zoos which is privately endowed. Animal life in the wild is something to behold, government camps were excellently maintained, we slept in beds in motel-like structures, tables settings included silverware, napkins, etc., the food was fair, game runs were dusty and the roads were rutted and generally poor. If you had a doughnut type seat cushion and disposable air respirators you were one of the fortunate few who fared better than most. Now for the news, Bill got salmonella food poisoning from a warm box lunch with chicken. We were in the Serengeti plain at a camp when 'all hell' broke loose! After two hectic days Cleo was able to get the tour company representative to get planes in to evacuate me. I was delirious, dehydrated, fever stricken and an all around mess. She doubted that I would make it even with the administrations of a black Tanzanian doctor. On the second day a medical missionary plane landed on a dirt strip and evacuated us to Kilimanjaro International airport where we were met by a Kenya ambulance plane. Arriving at Niarobi International airport the tour company had an ambulance and nurse waiting to take me to the Niarobi General Hospital. An Italian doctor immediately set the wheels in motion — x-rays, EKG, blood letting, chemical tests, etc. I was put to bed and had nice Kenya black nurses the night through. Next midday I was released and the tour company took me to the Niarobi Club (an International hotel) until I would be able to re-join the tour two days later. We cannot say enough about the management and personnel of Abercrombie and Kent, who arranged the tour. I had another bout but I had been forewarned by the doctor that part of the virus was still in my system so we had medication which shortened the duration of what we refer to as the Mexican Two-Step. Though we missed about 6 tour days the safari was exciting and I'm glad we went.

I was exhausted and jaundiced but Cleo had arranged for a party on June 14 at home for my 75th birthday, before we left, and I saw no reason for her to cancel. I had fun but the guests expressed concern about my health. Pale, maybe. Now, do you think I looked that bad?

We went to Flagstaff on July 9th to complete arrangements to build a one-level three bedroom cottage (but it is a year 'round home). It is located at 7000', among the pines, five miles south of the city and only three miles from the airport. Frequent air service is available to Phoenix, Las Vegas and Albuquerque, New Mexico. It is ideal to escape the desert's summer temperatures at Sun City when 110° F. is common from June 15 through September 15 and the monsoons provide plenty of humidity. Occupancy is scheduled for mid-March.

We left for a two weeks holiday on August 17th, which was to take us through northern Arizona and on to Utah, Montana and Idaho. It was cut short at Park City, Utah, when Cleo stubbed her toe on a raised piece of concrete, falling on her right face and putting a tooth through her upper lip and a severely bruised right cheek bone. She really had a shiner - too, a lump half the size of a tennis ball. We did get in a few holiday days before the accident so the trip was not a total loss. She still has not fully recovered and the city's insurance carrier will pick up most of the doctors' expenses.

As I said earlier, my right hip had caused considerable pain and discomfort and the orthopaedic surgeon had determined that the fracture and repairs made in 1986 had not healed properly; also the right leg was 3/4" short causing a decided limp when walking. Surgery was performed in Phoenix on 9/15. A total hip replacement and other repairs have turned out successfully but I had no idea what an ordeal it would turn out to be. Anyway, it's over and my recovery is good. I should be as 'good as new', maybe even better, within the next sixty days.

But, that ain't all! I got a severe gall bladder attack on November 14th and immediate surgery was recommended and performed. I'm home now and doing well, I hope to be on top of things again mid-month.

I SAY, BILL, THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ONE YEAR AND CLEO SAYS AMEN!

THE LARSONS, 10220 Brookside Drive, Sun City, Arizona 53581

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