



Season's Greetings,

We hope this letter finds you all enjoying the holidays and getting ready for a fabulous New Year. We've had a very interesting year to say the least.

We started the year with Jodie and the girls living in Frederick, MD, while Gino continued a 1-year assignment to the Air War College in Montgomery, AL. While Gino was away, Jodie worked full time as a teacher's aide at Whittier Elementary School, just down the street from our home. Erin (10) continued to attend the Whittier school while also taking violin and generally excelling in her studies. Erin also continued her horse riding lessons at nearby Silhouette Stables. Gina (12) had a bit of a longer daily trek, as she attended school about 30 miles away at Mother Seton. Gina continued with the local Girl Scout troop, earning merit badges, participating in community service activities and enjoying the annual camp out.

In April, Gino returned briefly to participate in the annual War College games, held in nearby Carlisle Barracks, PA. The trip could not have come at a better time, as we were able to hold his Colonel promotion ceremony at the end of the sporting events. We held the ceremony at Fort Detrick where many of his former co-workers were able to attend along with family and friends from Pennsylvania. Major General C. Bruce Green, the Air Force Deputy Surgeon General, officiated the ceremony helping to make it a most memorable occasion.

Gino graduated from the Air War College at the end of May with a Masters Degree in Strategic Studies. Following graduation, he was able to come home for a few weeks before returning to Montgomery to attend the Group Commander's course. While he was away, Jodie and the girls had the task of overseeing the movers as they packed us out for the move to Tyndall AFB in Panama City, Florida. The pack-out did not go well and we found out later this was only the beginning. When we arrived at Tyndall on 30 June, we had to go into Temporary Lodging Facilities because our permanent base house was still under construction. The TLF was less than adequate, so we accepted a temporary base house when they offered it to us. The temporary house was small but had a great view right on the water. As we were moving in, we discovered just how much damage the movers had inflicted on our furnishings. It was bad! Fortunately, we were able to file a claim and be reimbursed for the damages. About three months after moving into the home, our permanent house was ready. This time the movers were much better and the move went fairly well. The new house is great (although Jodie still longs for the view at the other house) and we should be in it until we leave in 2 ½ years.

Similar to our situation in Maryland, Erin goes to the local elementary school (Tyndall Elementary) and Gina travels about 20 miles to attend St. John's Catholic School in Panama City. We found a violin teacher on base for Erin but have a healthy drive to get to her riding stables. We have not found a local Girl Scout troop for Gina, but she recently took up drama lessons (as if a pre-teen needs lessons in drama!). As our new neighborhood fills up the girls are finding plenty of kids to play with and, overall, are adjusting well.

Jodie is staying very busy between the unpacking and all the volunteer activities at the girl's schools and the various officers spouses groups. She is the Tyndall AFB representative on the Panama City Children's Museum board of directors and she volunteers a couple of days a week at the base Thrift Shop. While she misses Maryland, we can already tell it will be hard to pull her away from the beaches and sunsets when the time comes to move again.

Gino is enjoying his time as the 325th Medical Group commander. We had a nice change of command ceremony on 11 July. Also in July, Gino flew back home to Bradford, PA to join his brother Joe in celebrating the official Grand Opening of their hotel, The Heritage Suites.

We hope 2009 brings you all good health and tremendous happiness. May God bless you and yours!

Gino, Jodie, Gina and Erin Auteri