



Westward ho-ho-ho...

December 1989

Where are the Morgans this Christmas? One is never quite sure, but to give you a hint we'll be sending most of our Christmas letters east instead of west this time.

We made the big move back home to California July of this year. Actually Tim led the way by arriving here in March while Sharon, Terry, Jocelyn and Amanda kept the home fires burning in Germantown (figuratively). Milestones were reached as Tim bought a house and Sharon sold one, with a little help from power of attorney, FAX, long distance calling, understanding relatives, and our agents.



Meanwhile Terry was finishing his elementary schooling at Lake Seneca in a sixth grade class that will always bring him good memories. Amanda and Jocelyn had as equally a rewarding school year at Waters Landing Elementary. Sharon continued to crank out weekly columns for the Germantown Gazette, teach Hands-On-Science classes, serve on the local PTA board, help out with Scout troops and do some other volunteer work.

Somehow by June 30th the house that had been ours for the last seven years was emptied, our belongings were on the road and all six of us were ready to fly to SFO. That includes Microchip, the hamster. He survived what was probably his first flight. He even had some airline food. He seemed traumatized for a few days after arriving, but soon adjusted. Then we introduced him to our newest family member, Chipmunk, the cat. She's a crazy cat who besides looking like a Chipmunk has ears and back legs like a jackrabbit. Microchip, the escape artist, defies our efforts at keeping him caged--using tape, glue and wire screen--and goes for midnight strolls. Meanwhile Chipmunk keeps guard at Terry's bedroom door waiting for her chance and figuring out how to turn the doorknob. The one time hamster has power over cat, however, is when he is in his exercise ball and can chase the cat all over the house.

Leaving so many good friends in Maryland was without a doubt, very difficult, but reacquainting themselves with grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins helped Terry, Jocelyn and Amanda fill the long summer days.

In July Sharon's family assembled for her mother's 70th birthday with all four children, all but one of the nine grandchildren and two great - grandchildren present. Later Tim's family took T. J. & A to the Monterey Bay area to see the sights.

Although Terry was three when we moved to Maryland and we've made several visits home since, he and his two sisters had some things to learn. For instance, the sun sets, not rises, over the ocean. Pacific coast beaches are beautiful but bring a wetsuit...and a windbreaker...and maybe a sweater...and as any self-respecting San Franciscan knows, that gray wet stuff dripping from the trees most July or November or any other mornings is FOG, not rain. By 10 am it will be sunny and 75 degrees. You may even be able to finish your picnic lunch before the wind blows it away. Mountains are anything OVER 4000

feet and those other things are just "the hills." If you think the chandelier is swaying in the wind but the window is closed AND the ground is undulating like ocean swells, it must be an earthquake. Speaking of...

Our first one was in early August and woke some of us at 1:30 am. But that was BBQ--before the big quake on October 17. That was the biggest one Tim and Sharon have felt since 1969 (the year we met and of the Santa Rosa earthquake). Terry was safe in a neighbor's house, Sharon and Jocelyn huddled under the support wall in our house and Amanda, at risk playing outside, wondered who could be shaking our neighbor's car. Tim was on a bus, watching the streets move, on his way home from work, his exact whereabouts unbeknownst to the rest of the family until he walked in the door an hour and a half later. It's been amazing to see the response of people in the days and even minutes after the quake donating time, money, goods and services.

Tim also had the privilege of experiencing two of the hurricanes that hit Houston this year while there on business. He also did some Navy time in Pearl Harbor. Actually Tim has been close to home most of the time and is involved with Terry in his Boy Scout troop.

The highlight of Sharon's summer other than unloading 160 boxes was attending her high school reunion and embarrassing herself by forgetting the names of her classmates who somehow all looked like they were approaching 40. Quite an accomplishment, considering the senior class only had 45 people and only about half of them were at the reunion.

Currently she is occupying herself by leading Amanda's Brownie troop, doing work with La Leche League and keeping track of the kids' activities. She also ponders the dazzling wallpaper that some previous residents mounted throughout the house (while in mourning, no doubt).

Terry is picking up on his Scout activities and continuing with his favorite pastimes--reading and the computer. He has also been playing dungeons and dragons with two of his new friends.

Jocelyn found a new interest this summer--horses. She has been taking riding lessons and joined 4-H. She also likes to curl up with a good book and spend time with her fifth-grade friends.

Amanda is quite a roller skater and a reader this year. She still likes music, art, gymnastics and is making new friends in her first grade class.



While looking for our Christmas tree on yet another 70 degree day this December, the children decided that since we have a cathedral ceiling in our new house we need a LARGE tree. We talked Terry out of a 13 footer, choosing a 10 foot tree instead. As soon as "Timber" was heard that same child asked, "How will it fit on the car?" (What about the house?)

As we wonder where the snow is this warm December day, we wish you all a very merry holiday season and a happy new decade.

The Morgans
Tim, Sharon, Terry, Jocelyn, and Amanda