

April 11, 2021

Dear Joan & Bob,

It has been on my heart to write to you since last December... but way too much has been happening here to even think about getting to this, until now.

The lovely Christmas card with your two adorable grandchildren on the front of it has remained on my desk as a reminder to write to you. So, here I am, — finally.

Last autumn we learned that our oldest son Dan was diagnosed with Glioblastoma. A very aggressive brain cancer. Our hearts have been on a roller coaster of concerns since that time. I am a very prayerful woman and Dan is a big part of my prayer life.

He is yet with us. Sometimes he is totally ambulatory and sharp minded, well-likely, most of the time. He has had his moments, though. He is on hospice to obtain the needed pain medications (Morphine). The V.A. will

Would not prescribe any medications that even began to touch his pain. The pain isn't singly from the cancer issues. He was in a horrific military accident when he was younger. He sustained spinal injuries from that episode. He was a medic in the Army. He went to Korea for a year and worked the Korean DMZ. Later, he was trained to work with patients in the hospital. He screened patients. Took care of those he was qualified to treat (prescriptions included, along with setting bones & stitches, etc.) When he came back to the States he was assigned to Fort Sill, Oklahoma as an instructor (medical) for recruits learning to be medics. He was in the Army for 10 years. He has never told me, but I have to assume his military accident took place there. He has an honorable medical discharge from the Army. He and his wife, who fortunately is a nurse, live about 45 minutes from us. When they left Oklahoma almost 4 years ago, they left behind two daughters and two grandkids. But, this is home to them. Oklahoma is home to Sara & Emily and Sara's family. Emily has no children.

At this time, our 5 children have given us 4 grandsons and 6 granddaughters. The

Youngest one, Rowan Edward Dixon was born January of this year. Sara, the eldest, is 26. Emily is 24. Sara's two children are 8 and 5. Even grandchildren seem to grow up quickly. It was hard enough to see my own 5 independently leave home to pursue life on their own, after watching them grow up too fast. But then... the grandkids came along and what a joy they are!

I retired from the school district after 21 years of work there. That was in 2019. I was on contract the first 4 years. After that, I substitute taught. The last 11 years ^{were} with high school students. Substitute teachers in Idaho receive no retirement benefits. But those first 4 years did start a Persi account for me. There isn't much in it, but it's there. So bad school "politics" were so arbitrary and sometimes downright ugly. I might have stayed on contract longer, if not for that. It wasn't worth the stress. →
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Hopefully, this has found the pair of you in great health! Of the two of us, my husband is the healthiest. He is a long distance runner. He keeps a tally of miles ran each year. He does extremely well for a man in his 60's. He ran a total of just over 1,000 miles for 2020. He has friends who run two and three thousand miles in a year. They're younger than he is, but I think he does wonderfully well. He has ran quite a few marathons, but another friend of his that is more in his own age bracket has (in his lifetime) ran 64 marathons. That simply Boggles my mind! I can WALK a fair distance, but running is another world for me!

Thank you for always remembering me when you send out your Christmas cards! That always touches my heart and means a lot to me. I keep them!

May God always watch over the two of you,

Joanne

P.S. I would probably Email you once in a while if I knew where to send one! My Email is: SPDIXON@HeritageWifi.com

Cell - 208-866-7157 If you send a text. I will find it & reply.