

Marler Christmas Newsletter



Because this was such a big year for us, here is a quick recap of the last half of 2018. Jeff and Kristy decided it was time to retire from the military and planned a move to the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Kristy and the kids moved in July to get Braden and Keegan a full year in their new school. After getting the house mostly unpacked, Jeff flew back to Tucson to finish his last 7 months on active duty. The kids started school and Kristy continued to get our new lives set up. Jeff's commander allowed him to come to Texas for 2 months (Oct/Nov) to get some on-the-job training with FlightSafety International through the Air Force Career Skills Program.

After Thanksgiving, Jeff returned to Tucson for his last 6 weeks before his retirement ceremony. Jeff flew back to Texas to be with the family for Christmas. Kristy's Rusty Rooster Designs business kept her busy in her craft studio and decorating luxury homes.

Jeff flew his fini flight in a military helicopter on January 3, 2019 with his long time friend, Andy Travis. A week later, Kristy, Braden, Keegan, Kristy's Dad Jim Lappin, Jeff's brother



Kelly and wife Kayla, and many lifelong friends (Tom, Rhonda, Rod, Julie, Deb, Andrew, Jennifer, Paul, and Cyndie) flew into Tucson for the retirement ceremony. Jeff laid out over 30 years of memories so everyone could see his long, interesting career. There is a tradition in the military when an officer receives their first salute from an enlisted person; the officer presents them with a silver dollar. Since Kristy's Dad, Jim, is a retired Senior Chief Petty Officer, Jeff wanted to have his final salute on active duty come from Jim. After receiving his Final Salute, Jeff handed Jim a 1988 silver dollar (the year Jeff and Kristy were married) and then the official retirement orders were read. Both Jeff and Kristy were presented certificates and several awesome gifts from Jeff's coworkers. On January 11, 2019, 33 years and 1 day after he first enlisted as a Private First Class in the Army, Jeff retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force. That night we held a dinner for family and friends and relived a lifetime of memories. We appreciate everyone who was



able to come to the ceremony and everyone who sent their well wishes. Early the next morning everyone flew home and Jeff began a 2-day drive from Arizona to Texas in the famous Ford Five Hundred that Tiger Woods won for us in the Skins Tournament, Thanksgiving Weekend of 2004. If you forgot how that happened you can read our 2004 and 2005 Christmas Newsletters. Unfortunately two miles from home the car's engine made a loud sound and began running roughly. Jeff was able to limp the car home but knew the engine was probably blown. Jeff had his first day at work at FlightSafety the next day so he borrowed Kristy's Volvo XC90. Only 72 hours after

retiring from the Air Force, Jeff started his new career with FlightSafety as a Helicopter Instructor Pilot. The local Ford dealership said the Ford's engine needed replacing and wanted too much to replace it. While Jeff was looking for someone else to fix the Ford Five Hundred, he needed a car to get to work so he followed Kristy's recommendation and got a Volvo S90.



This year both Braden and Keegan were enrolled in our school district's special needs program: Focus on the Future (FOF). In February Braden was selected as FOF Student of the Month and was recognized with a certificate at the monthly Rotary Luncheon. At the end of the month Jeff finished his FlightSafety training and started teaching on the Bell 412 helicopter. Being a simulator company, Jeff doesn't actually fly anymore, which makes Kristy very happy.

On March 1st, Jeff was officially no longer on active duty and so that chapter of our lives was officially closed. Two days later was Keegan's 20th birthday but unfortunately she was sick. When Keegan recovered Kristy took her for a spa day. Getting a manicure/pedicure is one of Keegan's favorite things.

In April, we celebrated Kristy's 53rd birthday by registering her as a Texas resident and getting her a new Drivers License and Voter Registration card. But we are still diehard Boomerers!!! Since this was Braden's last year of school we wanted to begin transitioning him into the next phase. Braden began going to Special Abilities, which is an adult day program.





Before we knew it was May. Because Braden went to four years of high school in Germany, we celebrated his senior year in 2016. But because of his autism, Braden was allowed to continue in school through end of the 2018-19 school year. At the end of May Braden received his diploma from Flower Mound High School. Although academics were difficult for Braden, we are so proud of how he persevered and continues to grow.

In June Kristy and friend, Jennifer, traveled to North Carolina for another Wild Women of Waldmohr reunion. They went to visit Cyndie



In August, Keegan began her "Senior" year of high school. Since this is Keegan's senior year, we planned for her to participate in many activities,



which included Homecoming. In Texas the Homecoming mums are huge and something you have to see to believe. Kristy made Keegan's Senior mum and dressed Keegan in school colors for the homecoming. We attended our first Flower



Mound High School Jaguar's homecoming football game. Although Texas high school football is serious business, Braden and Keegan weren't very interested.

In September Jeff and Kristy took Keegan for another game when the Flower Mound Jaguars played the Lewisville Fighting Farmers, because the football team invited the Flower Mound High



School Circle of Friends (CoF) to participate in their second half entrance onto the field. Circle of Friends encourages high school students to interact with the special needs students and Keegan is invited to all the CoF activities. During halftime Keegan was escorted onto the field for the football team's entrance. (Keegan will have a Super Senior year of high school next year and get her diploma in May of 2021!)

In October Jeff and Kristy went to their first OU-Texas football game, which OU won! Although we have to be to the Texas Fairgrounds during OU-Texas



weekend we'd never attended the game. A big THANKS Mike and Tracy Smith for the tickets. The next week all four of us attended a CoF costume party. We celebrated Jeff's 53rd birthday by continuing a Marler tradition and threw a Halloween Costume Party for some of our neighbors.



In November, we pulled a Wal-Mart and went right from Halloween to Christmas. Kristy knew she would be busy with her design business and wanted to make sure our house looked festive.

We plan to stay at home for a quiet Christmas and the New Year in Flower Mound. We pray 2020 is good to us all. May GOD Bless you! Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

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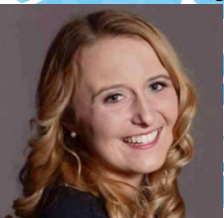


and Paul Maloy before they moved back to Germany. All of these ladies lived in the same village with us from 2012-2016. The weekend was a perfect opportunity to enjoy each other's company again, laugh, drink wine and see the wild horses on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. The ladies have already planned the next reunion for New York City in fall of 2020.

While Kristy was gone Jeff prepared the Ford Five Hundred for sale. After a local mechanic installed a rebuilt engine, Jeff heard a rattle he wanted checked before putting the car on the market. Unfortunately by the time the Ford dealership finished those repairs (more expensive than estimated), and we negotiated a price, we sold the car for slightly less than all the rebuilt engine and repairs. Financially it would have been smarter to just junk the car in January, but Jeff didn't want the Tiger Woods car to go out like that. Although we are sad to sell the car, after 14 years it was time to "let it go, let it go" (from Disney's movie Frozen).



In July, we celebrated Braden's 22nd birthday. It is so hard to believe, it was that long ago we had him in his baby crib. After Braden opened his cards and presents, we enjoyed an old-fashioned train ride to the Fort Worth Stockyard where he met a longhorn. Luckily we found a



bright and compassionate person to supervise the kids when we have time for a date night. Haley is studying to be a Neurologist at the University of Texas.