Remembrance Day is done and we are on the long slope to Christmas. It's slow for kids but age pushes Santa's sleigh a little faster each year. Now it seems like I just vacuumed up the needles from last year and it's time to go to the local Canoodle Tireto be mugged by a tree lot cherub in Scout, Beaver, Girl Guide or Naval cadet mufti.

Anyway, it's been a year since the last time you didn't get the Blaseckie family roundup. Thought you'd get away with it 2 years in a row, eh? Not so fast there, Sparky.

The year got off to a terrific start, once again thanks to Granny and Grampa taking us to Puerto Vallarta. Yes, we're lucky; no, you can't borrow them. We swam, we segwayed (2 of us got some great road rash as souvenirs--Segways are marvellous but not miraculous, even with all sorts of prayers as the handlebars pass underneath). We generally did up the tourista thing in a big way. Hardly had time to feel bad about losing my camera and wedding rings but that's another story.

It's Nicole's 3rd year out of the nest. She graduated from the Camosun program in Criminology and is spending a couple of years working retail to get her bearings for the next step. That's the theory anyway. She's now the assistant manager at the Tillicum Nygaard store so, for the first time ever, I have a whole bunch of clothes that actually match and are, like, designed to be that way.

Once she has enough money saved up I'm sure she'll tell us wither lambykins goeth. I keep hoping she'll spend a year or two at my old Alma Mater to turn her associate degrees into a full fledged Bachelor's of something-not-golf. She's also considering staying closer to home and much warmer by taking related courses at Royal Roads. I think that's so she can run into Wolverine or that bald dude in a wheelchair.

Rachael is chewing through the final year of her History degree. She's playing her cards pretty close to the chest about what comes next but I'm pretty sure it will involve a year or two of travel. Seems she's got the family itchy foot genes.

In the meantime she is living at home and keeping up her part-time job at the BC Museum Gift Shop. So I have some mighty snazzy china for my tea while lounging in them fancy Tan Jay duds.

Mark is still doing his buoy thing and travelling and generally all the stuff he's done for the last 25 years or so. I don't know how I've ended up with a guy that old but, there it is. Not that I'm complaining, especially now that the old guy needs help carrying his suitcase on some of the trips.

Like a conference in Paris this fall. And, because we was already all the way over there, we added a week to the stay and made a bit of an excursion to Wales.

I know, rough.

I'm puttering around the house these days, trying to find some discipline and determination to complete a few writing projects. I'm putting the finishing touches on my first crack at an oral history project undertaken for a friend of ours. Her father established a charter air service in Northern BC and has a lot of stories to tell. Several hours worth as it turned out, although a substantial amount are the same

stories told different ways. Yeah, I know, that's what editing is for and I've learned just enough to put together about 8 to 10 hours worth of audio.

Thanks to technology there's PowerPoint to organize all the voice bits with pictures from the family photo albums. Once I'm done, the clan can gather round the glow of a 'puter screen for a 2 day Dan marathon. It's not Ken Burns quality by a long shot, (no music or fancy stuff) but I think it's pretty fascinating just to hear the family history. And it's not even my family!

Actually that's part of the problem, I get into listening to him talk and forget what I wanted to cut out.

I wish I'd thought of this when my folks were still around.

Let see, have I covered everything? Gratuitous bragging with a hint of smug?...check.

Making the kids sound like princesses?...check.

Spackling over the cracks of the past year with lots of glitter and oh look a distraction?... check.

So, I guess that that just about wraps it up. Where are you these days? What's happening and how are you doing?

Whatever you're up to I hope it brings you joy and comfort because that's what it's all about. Have fun and, while you have family around--even if it's only for a few minutes--be sure to take the time to be quiet, to be thankful. It is a season of peace, after all.

Here's to joy in the New Year and peace in your hearts.