

Happy Holidays: December 2011 Letter

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine

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Happy Holidays

This time of the year, we all are celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah and so many more holidays. This is really the time of the year we look back and say "Wow, is it over already?" We go over the year's accomplishments—and the part of our to-do list that we really never got done.

My mother, who had a heart attack last September, was given a week to live. We decided to take her to hospice and knew that the end was certain. We sat there and saw people coming and going, and families coming together to say their last goodbyes; it was very sad. My mother, who could not have heart surgery due to her age, kept believing she would get better to make it back to her home to watch Monday Night Football. Well, a week later, she did leave hospice care. Upon returning home, she had a list of things she looked forward to, and they were quite simple: family, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chicago Bears playoffs, Super Bowl and birthdays. More than a year later, she is still thinking about watching football and playing cards with her girlfriends—simple things that we all experience. None of these are material items; they are just about being with people you love and doing what you love to do. I am proud and happy to say that my mother, Eleanore, is still living, and I spent this weekend with her talking about what she really wants in life. She said just for me to be happy and for the Chicago Bears to beat the Green Bay Packers this year.

Each year, I like to make a list of all the fun things I did that year. This year's list is simple: I got to know my mother better than ever and learned about my father, who I never met. I am thankful for the extra time with my mother. Most of us do not get this additional time with people we love the most. I encourage you to do what your heart is telling you to do. I believe you only regret things you have not done, rather than remember things you have done, as you get older. That is one thing my mother shared with me. She never learned how to drive a car and still wishes she did that. We can put that on her list for 2012.

Happy holidays to everyone. Have fun, be safe—why wait? Tomorrow is not guaranteed.

Michael S. Dee *President and Publisher*