

## Dear Friends and Family,

Thank you for the cards, pictures and letters you sent during the 2008 holiday season. It was great to hear from so many of you.

As you know by now, the Ray Maas household was delinquent in getting any kind of correspondence out to you. However, I believe it is better late than never.

2008 found our household very active...

**R**ay and Craig continue operating their business, "Effective Concepts" from the basement of our home and Craig's website has resulted in additions to their lighting business from all over the country. Ray is very active with Order of St. Luke, Russian Harvest Ministries, YMCA and several community prayer groups.

**C**har continues to work 30 hours per week at NDSU as an account technician in the IT Department. It appears retirement is not to be. I love my work and the association with students. I have turned in my resignation to the church as a Wedding Coordinator so 2009 is my last year. I continue to provide Mary Kay to my customers so we all age gracefully. Flower gardening is still my first love and the gardens were beautiful again this past summer. The seed catalogs are arriving now so soon I will begin preparing selections under the grow lights Ray & Craig have set up for me.



**I**n January the three of us joined Suzanne, Paul and the three kids for a trip to DisneyWorld. At that time they owned part of the Disney Vacation Club so we stayed at a Disney Resort. This was a one week vacation and enjoyed by all.

**R**ay's health continues to be an issue but his positive attitude and the many prayer support groups along with chemo every three weeks keeps him active, involved in many activities and enjoying life. His energy level this past summer was envied by many as he installed a new deck on the back of our house and added more fence behind my flower gardens.

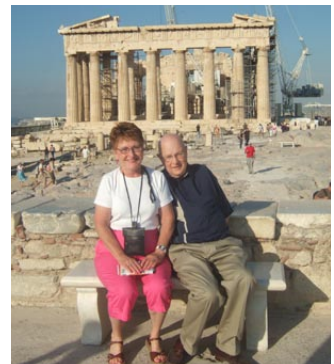
**O**ur winter this season is one we don't want to brag about what with all the snow and extremely cold temperatures. I'm sure many think we are crazy living here but this is our home and our family is here. Ray always says we can put up with it if we can leave for a few weeks so February 26 we are heading south for another cruise of 14 days to the Southern Caribbean.



**T**he highlight of 2008 was the trip of a lifetime which Ray and I took in August/September. Suzanne and Craig sent us on a three week trip for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We departed Fargo August 30 landing in Florence, Italy on August 31 which was our anniversary. On September 3 we boarded a train for Venice and on Sept. 5 we boarded a Princess Cruise ship for a 12 day Mediterranean Cruise.



Our ports of call were Split, Croatia; Alexandria & Port Said, Egypt (we took a bus trip to Cairo visiting the pyramids and an ancient museum); Ashdod and Haifa, Israel (here we visited Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Sea of Galilee, River Jordan, Capernaum); Kusadasi, Turkey (visiting Ephesus); Patmos, Greece; Santorini, Greece; Athens (we spent three days in Athens taking a side trip to Corinth before flying home).



The sites were fantastic and I managed to take over 1000 photos. Craig has some of these photos on Picasa if you care to take a look ([tinyurl.com/84gzzo](http://tinyurl.com/84gzzo)).

The weather was perfect, the seas were calm and all the arrangements made were first class. With the help of WinkFlash and Craig we have put together an album of all the photos taken.

We wish all of you a happy and healthy 2009.

