

This Christmas letter is different because Mom, who initiated it and has driven it forward so far, died on January 7th.

But as long as we talk about her and think of her, she is still with us and that is why we are keeping the Christmas letter alive.

The picture shows our family grave in Dietldorf, where we have set up and decorated a Christmas tree in her memory.

We also like to keep you all up to date on the development of our families and would be delighted if you would like to tell us about your actions and thoughts.

You can read more here:
www.vilshof.de

Hello everyone,
this year everything is a little different and instead of our mother Maija reminds me of writing the lines for the Christmas letter....

So here is what happened with us:
Cris and I are healthy so far, like Christiane I had my thyroid removed in the summer because of a stupid lump, but everything is ok now and I was then allowed to spend another weekend in beautiful solitude with me and my computer and yoga mat in fine isolation for radioiodine therapy at the Barmherzige Brüder Regensburg- there are worse things!

To our children:

Wanda and Thomas and their dog Bella are still in Weiherhammer and have made their house and garden beautiful with the help of hard-working helpers.

Leo and Irina are still good and loyal neighbors,

Rosi is currently doing an internship semester in math and is working a lot with numbers and optimization, Janis came back from Australia in the summer and is now studying artificial intelligence and data science in Regensburg. They both live in the student hall of residence, almost opposite each other, Rosi has the food processor, Janis the portafilter coffee machine, so they complement each other wonderfully!

In March, our faithful Luna said goodbye to us, and we lasted about 3 weeks before we got a new dog. Now Toni watches over us, over all the sticks and piles of leaves and sounds the alarm with a loud bark if he hears anything.

With these lines I wish you all a good time

Best regards,

Marita and family

Maija

Our house has become emptier since Mum left. I always imagine that she is in Riga - as was often the case - and having a good time there. So she's still there, just not physically.

Dad is doing quite well, he looks after himself as far as possible, fires up the heating and still drives his car, taking trips to the recycling centre and providing services for the food bank in the city triangle. When there is work to be done in the forest, Stephan and Julius drive and help out.

Stephan continues to work at Möbelum and cycles a lot on his way to work and in his free time, sometimes in combination with the train. This year he has even travelled to France, Austria, the Czech Republic, Saxony and Thuringia.

I still work in the organic market and enjoy working with the customers, my colleagues and the food. I've been playing the trombone in the Burglengenfeld school big band again since the summer and I really enjoy playing beautiful music with young people.

This year I cycled along the Berlin Wall cycle path, which was really varied and educational. I was also allowed to try out a folding bike and I was so enthusiastic about it that I bought one in the autumn. I took it with me on the train to Düsseldorf and experienced the city.

Lina (23) is studying music there and of course we take advantage of this to visit her in her current living space and take in the culture, food and scenery on offer.

Zoe (21) has moved out with Wanda and Thomas and moved in with her boyfriend who lives opposite; she looks after a child in kindergarten and now wants to gain further qualifications in this area.

Julius (19) unfortunately broke off his training as a landscape gardener, but has been working in a small landscaping company ever since and is now on holiday for 2 months.

I wish you all a good time with good health and friendly people!

News from Stephan, Linus, Finn, Nils, Astrid

Even though Mum or Grandma is no longer with us, she often comes to mind - at certain events, stories - and I always wonder what she would have said about this or that; so somehow she is still with us!

There have been a few changes for us this year: Stephan has closed his office in Regenstauf, as there has only been someone there sporadically since Corona - and that is of course also a cost factor. So we were pretty busy in the first quarter: clearing out and rearranging, sorting, selling, giving away, disposing of. He has now officially had the office at home since July.

It's business as usual for me, I'm having fun at work and at the same time - weather permitting - I can do my sports and get some fresh air for the day on my bike. The summer was great for swimming in the river, sometimes you meet friends or the neighbour and can have a little chat in the water.

Linus (22) is still in Kempten in his milkmen's flat share, will normally finish his technician course in the summer and then wants to do something in business management, we'll see what happens. He comes home less often now because they often explore the area at the weekend and do things, climb the Haldenwanger 'mountain' or go skiing, for example.

Finn (19) is in his 3rd year as an apprentice at BMW, has nice colleagues and enjoys his work. He is a hard-working parkour athlete and practises all kinds of artistic things that I sometimes prefer not to see - just like Nils, who often films the whole thing so that we really have to watch it...

Nils (17) is in his 2nd year of training as an electronics technician, he's putting together more and more complicated things, so it's good that I don't have to understand. When he has time off, he often commutes to Munich to see his girlfriend or she comes to us at the weekend. Long live the D-ticket!

In our free time, we are all out and about with friends a lot, we are needed less and less as chauffeurs, hopefully even less soon when Nils has his driving licence. So we're often out and about without children, skiing or hiking with friends, Tiffy rides her motorbike and since autumn I've found an orchestra where I can play the viola (that was my resolution for 2024!).

I hope you can all enjoy the Advent and Christmas season, end the old year in good health and start the new one well. We will hopefully welcome the New Year in the warmth, together with Eri and Toby we are all spending the Christmas holidays on La Palma and the anticipation is growing in parallel with the foggy weather that prevails here!

Hello to everyone from Toby and Eri from Leuzdorf

It's the first time that we haven't had a call from Mum at the beginning of December to say that the text of the Christmas letter needs to be written ... it's funny. But we thought that it would certainly be in Mum's interest if the Christmas letter from Vilshof tradition didn't disappear completely.

And so here's the year from us: a lot has been going on, nice and sad things, but basically we're doing well! Work has remained unchanged and we've been busy at school and church, but luckily there are always work breaks in between. For example, we were in the Bavarian Forest, with friends in Quedlinburg and the highlight was definitely our Alpine cycle tour in the summer: from Lake Geneva to Nice, partly on Tour de France routes. Although there were a few rainy days along the way, it was again wonderful, very strenuous (you don't get any younger...) but as a reward there were always great views at the top of the mountains.

There's nothing new at home except three new raised beds where we can now grow even more food. We are happy about everything that grows and enjoy it when we have time to just sit in the garden.

We wish you the same: time to 'slow down' and enjoy the joy of life! Merry Christmas and blessed holidays!

Christiane and Darius (soon to be 16)

A lot has happened this year - even a lot that mum would have enjoyed 'reporting on'... Darius has completed a total of 3 weeks work experience, 2 times in different kindergartens and once in the swimming pool. He really enjoyed everything (especially the sumptuous catering at the swimming pool). But now he's going to take his school-leaving certificate in the summer and then he'll also be attending year 10 in the M-train, so he still has time to think about where he wants to go.

The attentive reader may remember from last year that things didn't go so smoothly with the bicycle helmet printing, with short-time working again and again, until it became clear in January that the

whole thing no longer had a future. So at the beginning of the year, it was already clear to me that after the first half of the year (we still had work until May) I was going to reorient myself professionally, which then went quite smoothly. After 3 months of enjoying the summer without work, I've now been working at a special school as a school companion for a 12-year-old boy and 1-2 times a week in a residential group for unaccompanied foreign minors since September. I'm particularly fond of the boys in the residential group, they're all terribly nice and polite, happy and grateful when you study with them for school, play football or just chat.

I treated myself to a footballing treat in February in the freezing cold with Linus: Champions League, Leipzig against Real Madrid (with Toni Kroos!), and I also watched the historic 8-3 win of Nuremberg against Regensburg live. Apart from that, the BuLi games were on in my dad's warm living room...

Then this year I discovered another great thing for me: going on holiday on my own! After Darius turned into a nagging teenager and didn't want to go with me anymore, I just left him at home and flew to Fuerte twice for a week each time, doing what I wanted, when I wanted - or not... It certainly wasn't the last time!

Darius also enjoyed his mum-free time, invited his mates over to play and even tidied up before I got home!

We wish you all a nice, peaceful Christmas time, stay healthy!