

Christmas, 1999

Well, another year has gone by. Hope everyone is well and had a good year also. This has been a quiet year without much travel, so this should be a simple letter to write.

In February, we threw our third annual Mardi Gras party. We got a chance to use my gift from last Christmas; a propane powered "Cajun" cooking pot. I prepared a whole Cajun fried turkey to the delight of our guests. It went over so well, it will be added to our menu every year.

The party gets bigger every year. People even asked us to give them more advance notice next year so they can put it on their calendar. At this rate, we may have to rent a place for it.

We haven't traveled much this year. John made a trip to Texas to make a presentation to our buddies at Compaq, a trip to San Francisco for training and the usual trips to the great city of Klamath Falls, Oregon.

However, we had some guests actually come HERE this year, to our great delight. First, John's nephew Jamie spent a weekend with us in April while he was TDY at McChord AFB in Washington State. He enjoyed a whirlwind tour of western Oregon, topped off by a surprise 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party for Janet. Thanks to Jamie for his complicity and cooperation in pulling this off as a TOTAL surprise for Janet, as well as our neighbors for helping me plan and execute this conspiracy.

In June, John's sister Nancy came up to visit while attending a convention in Portland. We enjoyed hosting an Oregon barbecue for her delegation. Janet went to great lengths to make sure the menu was comprised of nothing but authentic Oregon grown food. Nancy stayed on for 4 days after the convention, allowing us a little more time to give her a tour of our state and enjoy her company.

We have continued to explore this part of the country on our camping journeys. This year we explored the most northern and southern points of the Oregon coastline. We had an especially nice camping trip to Humbug Mountain State Park just north of the California border.

For our vacation this year, we spent a week in early September camping at Glacier National Park in Montana and Waterton National Park in Alberta, Canada. It only snowed on us once. The picture this year is of the two of us at Logan Pass, where the continental divide runs through Montana. We are about 7000 feet up at that point. Note the mountain goats in the background.

Janet had hoped to see goats and a bear. She got her wish in both cases, although we had to go to Canada for her to find the bears.

Also, we did some hiking. One hike was 12 miles round trip, but it took us to see Grinnell Glacier up close.

Summer was late getting here this year, but so was winter. We had a wonderful dry and unusually long and beautiful fall season. We made the most of it by spending long weekends visiting various state parks.

Now winter has set in, and the ski resorts are starting to open. Maybe this will be the winter that John finally straps on some skis and takes the plunge (figuratively, of course).

Here's wishing you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Please keep in touch.

John and Janet Spain