



Seasoned Greetings



All the News That Fits...With a Little Spice

December, 2000

Greetings and Welcome

When I was younger, there was a book called *101 Elephant Jokes*: "How do you carve an elephant out of granite? You take a VERY large piece of granite, and carve away anything that doesn't look like an elephant!" Well, our lives are like that. A lot of small, undefined, day-to-day activities bring form to our lives. People usually only focus on "special" events, not the day to day grind. How many snapshots have you seen of someone brushing their teeth? Or a video of them stuck in traffic? Seasoned Greetings is mostly about our special trips, activities and things, even though our lives are mostly the day to day stuff: hassling with the kids to take a bath, checking email, telephone tag, and paying bills. But our daily activities can be special too.

We should not forget to step back every now and then and appreciate the little joys of life, not just the big parades. Listen to wind chimes in front of the house, enjoy a quiet thank you, or even just a smile from a friend. After all, even most parades just symbolize a softer, quieter concept, like honoring those we respect, or our freedom. So as you read through this year's Seasoned Greetings, and hopefully share our joys and laughter, please remember the day-to-day "little things" that are really behind it all.

So to one and all, newcomers to Seasoned Greetings and "seasoned" veterans: step up and enjoy the parade!

A LABOR OF LOVE

What could be more fitting for a Labor Day activity than to teach one's children about work and earning money? That's just what Steve did this past Labor Day. He went out to Sam's club, bought lemons, lemonade mix, and cups. At home, the kids and Kathleen made chocolate cookies, as Steve printed signs on the computer and made lemonade. It was a terribly hot and humid day, not the type of day you would want to be outside...unless you were selling ice-cold lemonade!

First no one showed up. Then there was the inevitable spill and mess...by Steve. He called Joan on his FRS walkie talkie,

and she came out to the corner to relieve him as he ran back to the house, changed and came back. It was then that business started picking up. A hot humid day and two cute kids were the perfect combo for a thriving Lemonade business! With all the hassles of managed care nowadays, Steve's been thinking of possible career changes. Unfortunately, the weather is unpredictable, and as time progresses, college age kids selling lemonade wouldn't quite have the same Norman Rockwell appeal.

After about an hour or so, the sky started looking a bit gray off in the distance. Gray turned to dark gray, and distant became close. Steve tried calling Joan, to be ready

for a quick evacuation, but as they later discovered the volume on her walkie-talkie was down. The wind started picking up, branches blew, signs and cups fell. Claire held things down, Zoe started crying in fear of the nasty wind, so they started loading up the car, and Joan came just in time to help out. Just as everything and everyone got into the cars, the rain started, and in the two minutes it took to get home, it was a torrential downpour.

The car was unloaded, and the profits were divided up. Later that day, the family went to Wal-Mart to spend their hard earned dollars. What better way to spend a hot day, and what better way to spend Labor Day!

Long Trips:

In April the Resnicks went to Club Med, Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic.

They had a great time and met a lot of nice people. Claire behaved well, but Zoe was some trouble & whined a lot. The family relaxed, but was also active, ate a lot of good food, and played tennis. The weather was nice, no sunburns, no diaper rash, and nothing sprained nor broken!

In an effort to relax and to break away from the goddadu pattern (goddadu this, goddadu that), Steve purposely avoided trying to "do it all". Having proven to himself that if he tried hard enough, he could "veg out" and relax, he decided on the last day to try the trapeze. After a quick instruction on a basic set of moves: swinging, hanging from legs, and a flip dismount, he patiently waited his turn. A few experienced people went ahead, then another beginner. The other beginner was clearly an athletic type: muscular, adventurous, long-haired, and an earring. He screwed up. Steve then slowly proceeded up the ladder, stood on the platform and paused to take a deep breath. Then he took another deep breath, and then another. Well, there were others waiting, and not only were Joan and the kids watching but a few of our new Club Med friends had come to watch. Steve grabbed the swing... swung... hung from his legs... swung... flipped... and landed smooth as silk!

Relaxing that week set the proper tone for his acrobatic feat: "Don't worry, be happy!" Sometimes not trying too hard works best.

It was a bit hard coming back, having to keep in mind the

TRAVEL



spirit of not trying to do too much... relaxing can be difficult!

In August the family rented an apartment at Wildwood Crest on the Jersey Shore for a week. The Seapointe Village development was nice, with three pools, a tennis court, camp and lots of kids on Scooters. The Boardwalk had the usual assortment of children's rides, junk food, dollar stores (which Steve loved), and kids on scooters. The week was about half shore stuff, such as the Pool, Beach and Boardwalk, and because of three days of rain, the other half was indoor stuff, which included a mall, watching the Democratic Convention on TV and surfing the net with Steve's new laptop.

Medium Trips:

In addition to the longer trips (as well as Chicago, see "the Practice"), there have been several other "overnighters". A trip back in time to the 50's and the "Borscht Belt" occurred in February, when the Resnicks went to Kutsher's resort in the Catskills along with some cousins. Eating, sledding, eating, pool, eating, 3 minute oil paintings, eating, cross country skiing, eating, just hanging out, and eating were the main activities.

Steve & Joan went for a weekend to Bermuda for a conference. Met some old friends, made some new ones, and though "this never happens this time of year" they had rain most of the time (cross-reference: the Jersey Shore)

A "Guys Weekend" occurred in October when Steve and some long time friends went up to some cabins in the Berkshires and did some hiking. They enjoyed some exercise, fresh air, the great outdoors, and acting like nerdy adolescents again.

Short Trips

A great philosopher once said: "There's no such thing as a short trip with kids". Well, maybe one exception: a trip to the bathroom can be short and easy. Well, then again, maybe there aren't any exceptions! So let's just talk about the "not-so-long trips"... There were many mini-excursions this year, including MacWorld and Videomaker Expos for Steve, the Crayola Factory, several Psychiatric workshops for Steve, several street fairs, and many concerts and shows (see "the Arts")

It can be fun traveling and going to various events with kids, but it can also be pretty draining. Another philosopher once said (what do these philosophers do for a living, anyway?): "A journey of a thousand miles starts with one step". As I train for my Great Philosopher credentials, I opt to change that to: "A trip with kids can seem like a thousand mile journey before you even take the first step!"

Seriously though, if it wasn't really a lot of fun, would we really drag the kids all over?...



(Cs on Greetings and Ps on Earth)

A SHORT HISTORY LESSON

Red Dog Productions has a long history. It all started in a dark area of an island. In fact it was a darkroom in Steve's Manhattan apartment during his residency that he started mailing humorous (at least in his opinion) photographs as greeting cards.

This evolved into a one page yearly newsletter, and then to the current six page compendium of facts, figures and random ramblings. Along the way, Red Dog Productions engulfed other media, with websites such as <http://homepage.mac.com/stevexr> (check it out, but note: it's not "www") and videos such as the soon to be released: "the Resnick's: 2000".

Even with his great success in so many areas, Citizen Red Dog still hungers for more. He is still driven, unsatisfied, and restless, and still trying to do too much. Perhaps he could enjoy simple pleasures? Maybe we can get a clue to his yearnings, when, late at night, we can hear from his lips, the quiet whisper of: "Rosebud".

check out our website! :

<http://homepage.mac.com/stevexr>

(note: there is no "www")



After seeing the pervasiveness of Scooters at the Jersey shore, Steve was enticed, and decided to get one. While at the shore, he got the accessories needed by any nerdy scooteree: Helmet, knee guards and wrist guards. Then the Scooter was purchased on the Internet (where else!). Steve hopped on, and off he went, scoot-ing around the neighborhood.

A week or so later he hopped on and scooted around again, but as he started getting close to home, a one inch rut in the sidewalk grabbed the front wheel and BOOM. Over he went. Unfortunately, a helmet, kneepads, and wrist pads don't protect your hips, so guess where he landed. A few days later he had an 8" plum colored bruise on his hip. Anyone interested in buying a used Scooter?

Steve used to do black & white photography in his darkroom, but time limitations have made that impractical. Then Hi-8 Video came around & Steve dabbled in that.



Along came Digital Video, and that served two of Steve's interests: video making (and editing) as well as computers (Mac of course). So in order to have the "Power" to use the somewhat high end "Final Cut Pro" video editing program, Steve got a new G4 Macintosh Computer (the first one designated by the government as a "Supercomputer" and a "weapon") and a Sony digital camcorder.

Now he has something to occupy all the free time he has. (Though he probably spent more time researching which video camera, computer, hard drive etc than he has spent using them!)

Many have asked Steve why he bought a Mercedes SUV: (1) The model and color were exactly the same as the car Annette Benning drove in American Beauty, the movie Steve & Joan saw just after their first visit to the Mercedes Dealer: an omen. And (2) A Mercedes was the car Janis Joplin wanted.

Steve has also gotten a digital camera, a palm, and a Mac laptop. Now he can finally use time away from home to balance his checkbook using Quicken on his laptop, so he can possibly figure out some way to pay for all these new toys!

Even though it was technically a gift from Steve's parents to Claire & Zoe, Steve is looking forward to using "their" Chanukah present: a flexible flyer sled. In order to remind us of the important things in life, it may get named "Rosebud".

Oh, and not to be left out, Joan also got some stuff this year: a brand new garden hose nozzle, and a rake!

*"A ship in harbor is safe,
but that is not what ships are built for."*

- John A. Shedd

Plays were played, songs were sung, and shows were showed, and the Resnicks saw lots of them this year. Here is their itinerary of this year's journey through the performing arts, as well as some of their opinions (out of 5 stars):



Plays:

- Nutcracker, McCarter Theater, Princeton 12/99) ★★★
- Glengarry Glenn Ross, McCarter ★★
- The Cherry Orchard, McCarter 4/7 ★★★ 1/2
- Sesame Street Live "Disappointing" 4/13 ★★
- Night Governess, McCarter 5/18 ★★★
- Beauty and the Beast, Broadway 6/3, fun, great music, kids loved it ★★★★★
- Beauty and the Beast On Ice 10/15★★★
- Contact, Lincoln Center, Great music, dancing & acting. Fun & profound ★★★★★ 1/2
- Aida, Broadway, Elton John version 7/21 ★★★
- Rags, Walnut Street Theater, Phila, 9/9 ★★
- The Odyssey, McCarter, creative, good acting, but not cohesive ★★★
- In Search for Intelligent Life in the Universe, Lilly Tomlin, McCarter 11/3, funny and creative, but with depth, and moving ★★★★★
- Copenhagen, Broadway, 12/16, hypotheses about the meeting of 2 great atomic physicists, Neils Bohr & Werner Heisenberg, physics, politics, ethics, and relationships all explored with great acting and thought ★★★★★
- A Christmas Carol, McCarter 12/9, well acted, staging & effects were very good, and moving without being corny ★★★★★ 1/2
- Pending: Kiss Me Kate 12/9, Nutcracker 12/29

Music & Misc.:

- Tom Chapin, McCarter 3/18, as always, fun & a delight ★★★★★
- Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young 4/9/00, great tunes & memories, but lacked zest. Sort of a "we were great, so we don't have to try hard now" ★★★★★
- Sting, Garden State Arts Center, 6/27, still breaking new ground. old & new stuff both great ★★★★★
- Circus 8/19/00 sovereign bank arena

On a more mundane level, routine TV viewing has included:

The Simpsons, Southpark, King of the Hill (Steve), Ally Mcbeal (Joan, often accompanied by Steve), Sopranos, Arliss, Will & Grace, Friends, Just Shoot Me (both Steve & Joan), the News (both), and one of Joan's favorites: the Weather Channel.

THE PRACTICE:

Steve's Psychiatry practice has been going well. He's been keeping pretty busy, and likes the variety. The majority of his practice is medication management, but he also does individual therapy, and especially enjoys group therapy, currently running three groups.

This past year Steve's been attending a lot of dinner-lectures and has presented several himself. His taste buds, therefor, have been kept happy at all the restaurants. This is in addition to Joan's wonderful cooking, though she has recently supplemented that with take-out prepared food from the local Wegman's supermarket.

What else does a two income-ed, young children-ed, overbooked couple do?

In April Joan went with Steve to the American Psychiatric Assn. meeting in Chicago: three top restaurants, the Temptations, a gospel blues brunch (Steve got on stage), an architectural boat cruise, and a "Rockapella" concert, and, oh yes, Steve went to some lectures too!

Miscellaneous Stuff

The kids have had their assortment of activities. Claire is now in first grade and is getting to be a nice young girl. She's shown an interest in art, loves to draw, and is showing her softer side more. She was a Fairy Princess for Halloween, Zoe was Tinkerbell, and Steve went as the Tooth Fairy, completing the theme.

Claire broke her arm over the summer, and was in a school bus accident in the fall. She handled both very well. Though she has a wonderful imagination and is amazingly expressive, she gets shy performing in public. She was chosen to take the role of the school principle in her class play,

but even though she performed great at home, she didn't win any Tony awards, not even a nomination!

While Claire has been the artist and has softened up, Zoe has become musically inclined, taking a music class in the summer and a ballet and tap dance class along with Claire this fall. Though Zoe still has a prominent soft side, she's become more assertive. She is no longer "the quiet one". Summer camp for both, swimming for Claire, and the usual calendar filled with birthday parties adds up to a pretty busy schedule.

Claire got some special attention during her

designated "all star week" last spring in Kindergarten. Joan came to class with baked goods, Grandma Sylvia & Grandpa Sam came and read stories and told about special things from their travels. Steve performed magic and made animal balloons.

Joan enjoys her work in the High School Special Services department, and has been tossing around the idea of furthering her education. Steve has explored alternative potential income, though often unsuccessfully: he's continued playing the stock market (talk about bad timing), as well as the Princeton Poker game every three weeks.

A Parting Note

And so ends another issue of Seasoned Greetings. The first of the Millennium (Any decent publication is obligated to at least mention the Millennium). But as we enter 2001, we are left with some observations. Until now, we have been able to refer to eras as decades, such as the Hippies of "the Sixties" or the high tech "Nineties". But alas, "the Oh's" or "the Oughts" do not flow trippingly on the tongue. Perhaps it is an omen? A sign that we should free ourselves from labels, and focus on the journey, not the destination.

It is, after all, 2001, the year that is probably best know for the Space Odyssey. So let us all embark on our Odyssey: an adventure of travels, enjoying the scenery, and not worry too much about where we're going. Let's enjoy the parade, with the floats and music, but also the smiles of the children watching, and the fresh air, and the pride of the marchers. Let's not worry about where it's going; let's just enjoy the parade.

In the movie Citizen Kane, the most important thing to him was not his wealth, fame, nor power. It was his childhood sled. Let's remember to enjoy the ride, wherever it takes us.