



# Seasoned Greetings



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

December, 2001

## Welcome

Welcome to this issue of Seasoned Greetings. We hope the season has been good for you, but realize there may be more of a somber or sad quality to this holiday season. There is for us. Recent events in our country have put a solemn tone on many of our activities. This year's Seasoned Greetings reflects that tone. In addition, we still feel (perhaps even more so lately) that we have too much to do, and too little time. Since "actions speak louder than words", not only did we get a late start on this issue, but have decided to keep it more basic, with less emphasis on layout and frills. Photos are not included with this mailing, but thanks to technology, for those of you that have internet access, you may look at some family pix at: (note: not "www") <http://homepage.mac.com/stevexr/seasonedgreetings/> and enter the password "red" (all case sensitive - all in lowercase).

Taking a cue from the computer industry, we have two "refurbished" articles, which had been letters to the editor of the Princeton Packet newspaper ("*September 11<sup>th</sup>*" & "*Thanksgiving*" which had also been part of our Thanksgiving slide show). Instead of our usual laundry list of this year's activities, "*A Significant Day*" & "*The End of Innocence*" are more reflective in nature. We still have to do our laundry though, so we aptly named our current laundry list "*Stuff We Did*". We took the classic "*'Twas the Night Before Christmas*" and added some personal sentimental reflections to come up with "*Two Nights Before Chanukah*".

So, even though this issue of Seasoned Greetings may address some more serious or somber issues, we hope you will still find it interesting, and more importantly fun. There may be disturbing changes in our lives, but perhaps, as our title suggests, these things can force us to think and feel more, adding some "seasoning" to our lives. In that spirit, we the Resnick Family, want to wish you hopes for a happy holiday season, and wishes for a happy, healthy, safe, and positive new year.

On the morning of December 2<sup>nd</sup>, Zoe and I went to the New York Deli Restaurant to have breakfast

### **A Significant Day**

together. She ordered pancakes (a short stack) and some milk. She later ordered some rye bread, but didn't eat any of it. I asked for a bran muffin, lightly toasted, and a cup of coffee, half regular, and half decaf. They were out of bran muffins, so I got a corn muffin.

Zoe and I talked a bit, she colored with crayons, and I worked on Seasoned Greetings, writing down some thoughts. I paid the bill, and as we walked out, she asked for her usual cookie by the cashier. We didn't see any, but the owner, who knows us well, filled the basket up and Zoe happily got her cookie.

Driving home, we passed a farm and Zoe saw a dead deer. We commented how that was sad. She noted that it was being eaten

by birds. Arriving home, Zoe wanted to relax and watch a video, I did some chores and wrote a bit for Seasoned Greetings. Joan did some chores too, and put on a Temptations CD.

This was a significant day. Yes, September 11<sup>th</sup>, George Harrison's passing, Birthdays and Holidays are significant as well. But these are exceptional days. Most of our lives are made up of the daily routines that we often don't appreciate. Little things can often be the most important. "Unspecial" days can be the most significant.

## September 11<sup>th</sup>

On Tuesday, September 11th, after the attack, a cloud of soot and dust enveloped lower Manhattan. Another cloud has enveloped the souls of Americans. It is a cloud of tragedy, and a cloud of questions. The cloud has obscured our vision of the future. Questions that were easy are now difficult: Where can we travel? Can our children walk home from

school? Who can we trust? Who do we love? Who do we hate? What do we do with our anger? These were always difficult questions, we just thought we knew the answers.

Most of us were not directly effected by the tragedy, but instead of a direct hit to the heart, there has been a subtle, but profound effect. As time went on after the attack, the cloud of dust and soot seeped

into every body part of those in lower Manhattan: the lungs, the mouth, the eyes, and every pore. Our own cloud pervades our entire lives and effects everything: How we look at the sky, how we hear a song, and how we hug our friends, family, and especially our children.

I have heard people say "Life goes on" or "We will get over this". Perhaps, but "Life" will never be the same for us.



## Thanksgiving

When we hear about terrible events occurring in the world....

Let us be thankful that we have the privilege of free press.

When we are upset that our kids are too demanding...

Let us be thankful for our children's independence.

When we complain about our troubles, worries, and aggravations...

Let's be happy we have someone to listen to our complaints.

When we see horrible scenes on TV....

Let us be thankful that we can see.

When we complain about paying a lot in taxes...

We should be glad we made enough to get taxed so much.

When we have to drive long distances, or get stuck in traffic...

Let us be grateful that we can travel freely, as we desire.

When we have family or friends that annoy us...

Let us be thankful that we have family, and people we can call friends.

When we feel bloated and regret having eaten too much...

Let us be thankful for the abundance of food....  
And for adjustable belts!

When we feel cramped at the dinner table,  
With elbows knocking into each other....

Let us appreciate the fact that we have so many friends.

## The End of Innocence

Growth can be painful. We complain about how hard it is to learn something, but later we are thankful for our new knowledge. Running a race or learning a sport are rewarding, yet leave us with aches & pains reminding us of the efforts we made. "Growth" has two parts: there are outside factors such as time, which combine with our own efforts. When children grow, it is both time passing, as well as efforts they make to mature.

I have seen my children grow. Time has made them taller and stronger. Their efforts have made them more athletic, artistic and smarter. These are of course wonderful things to see in Claire and Zoe, but there is also a loss. I miss the times when they were younger. I miss their being so small I could throw them into the air without worrying about straining

my back. I miss their needing me to explain everything to them, such as who the Beatles were, instead of them telling me the names of the Backstreet Boys. I don't want to give the wrong impression though. I delight in their newfound knowledge. I love sharing their excitement at new skills at drawing, singing, soccer and spelling. I just miss some of the innocence. They now know friends can be mean. They know parents can make mistakes (extremely rarely of course). They know the world can be dangerous.

As I sit here at my computer, I wonder what may happen between the time I write this and when it is read. Will there be more terrorist acts? Will there be more casualties? More heroes? I know our country has grown. Our country has lost its

innocence. We can't keep thinking that we are all safe. We can't keep believing we are loved by everyone. We can no longer assume we are right in all we do. We can't be as self-centered anymore.

September 11<sup>th</sup> was a terrible day. But, like seeing the growth of our children, at the expense of losing their innocence, our nation will hopefully grow with the tragic loss of our innocence. We have learned that we, as a nation, are not isolated and safe. But that means we are not alone. We have enemies, but we have friends. Like children, it is now up to us to learn how to make new friends.

Kennedy, King, Lennon, Harrison and others. Pearl Harbor and September 11<sup>th</sup>. I like growing, I love seeing my kids grow, but I miss the innocence.

Zoe had her birthday in July at a children's gym. Overall it was a big year for her, with a lot of growth. She graduated Pre-School, started full time Kindergarten, is doing very well socially and academically, and is enjoying it a lot.

Claire's Birthday Party was in October, and we had a more "traditional" party at home. We approached the day with a lot of trepidation, but it turned out fabulously, and everyone had a great time. There were 14 girls, we colored our own T-shirts and caps, played Limbo and Tug-Of-War, and did the Hokey Pokey. We approached Thanksgiving with similar trepidation. It was the first time we had Thanksgiving at our house, and there were 27 people. Luckily it had a similar outcome to the birthday party. We didn't do the Hokey Pokey, but there was a sentimental and humorous slide show on the TV, and I believe everyone had a great time.

We had an assortment of entertainment this year, including the drama series at McCarter Theater, and some plays in the city. With increased demands on our time and decreased stamina though,

we have been to fewer movies, and more videotaped TV for me, with "live" watching for Joan. Two Circuses (Barnum &

household chores in between. She is currently in negotiations to arrange to increase the hours available in a day to at least 30.

## STUFF WE DID

Bailey, and Cirque de Soleil), Washington DC for a long weekend, Ellis Island, the Nevele in the Catskills (Claire's first time riding a horse), and Club Med, Punta Cana, were some high points. Joan spent some quality time with her sister for several days at an arts and performance retreat in Chataqua, NY. Well, I guess even though we've seen fewer movies, it doesn't really mean we've slowed down. Also: three Bat Mitzvahs, a wedding, street fairs, a graduation from NYU, Claire's class play which she performed in "sheepishly", a family weekend with some old friends in a state park, and later a similar weekend with "just the guys".

Joan's still at the High School, and has a second job as a chauffeur. Kids are now shuttled to their various activities, as she tries to squeeze in her shopping, health club, kids homework, and

Steve's Psychiatry practice is going well, with both therapy and medication management, only uses his Princeton office, no

longer running between several locations. He is still a Macintosh devotee, and helped out at the Princeton Macintosh Users Group booth at the MacWorld convention.

Claire has been playing soccer (with Steve co-coaching), an art class, Hebrew School, and mime, and did some dance in the Spring. Zoe is now in Ballet, and Soccer as well.

Rampant redecorating and rotating revived the Resnicks. We bought a new couch and chairs for the family room, from which the fold out couch went into Joan's study. The day bed from Joan's study went to Zoe's room. Zoe's day bed went to Claire's room, and we attached that to a matching wall unit, which had been in our basement. Steve got new carpeting at his office in town. Now, the Resnick redecorating resulted in revived rest requirements!

## Two Nights Before Chanukah

'Twas two nights before  
Chanukah,  
And Joan was not home,  
Just Steve and the kids,  
All sitting alone.

Board game? Video?  
What should we do?  
Then the idea came to Steve,  
Right out of the blue:

He had planned to surprise the  
kids,  
This time of year,  
With his childhood electric  
trains,  
Which he had held so dear.

"All aboard, all aboard!"  
The conductor would cry,  
Steve's childhood memories,  
Brought a tear to his eye.

"I know, I know,  
I know what we'll do!  
We'll set up a train set!  
How's that sound to you?"

At first no reaction,  
To what they did hear,  
But then one at a time,  
They smiled, ear to ear!

Like Sugarplum Fairies,  
That dance in the night,  
Would the train set be special?  
Would the magic be right?

Steve started to worry,  
Would they think it was cool?  
Long ago it was special,  
But now hi-tech rules.

Could a train set with a  
transformer,  
And wires connected with clips,  
Compete with computers,  
And dolls with memory chips?

He decided to try it,  
"Nothing ventured, nothing  
gained"  
So he went down to the  
basement,  
Worried, just the same.

He brought up a box,  
All covered with dust,  
With the trains and the tracks,  
Mostly with rust.

So Steve and his elves,  
(One left-, one right-handed),  
Used elbow grease,  
As they rubbed and they sanded.

"Gosh these are old!"  
Claire said (with respect),  
"Probably one thousand years!"  
She started to reflect.

The initial fear had passed,  
The trains would be fun,  
But now a new fear presented:  
Would they work? Would they  
run?

Wire strippers, voltmeter,  
And many sorts of his tools,  
Were all used by Steve,  
As he remembered electrical  
rules.

Electricity meant batteries,  
(At least to Claire it sure did)  
So in response she asked Dad:

"They had batteries when you  
were a kid?"

The tracks and the wires,  
The engine on top,  
The Moment of Truth!  
Alas, was a flop!

No movement, no nothing,  
Steve felt like crying,  
But they all persevered,  
"We must keep on trying!"

Then just like the light,  
On the wand of Tinkerbelle,  
They saw a spark,  
And their hearts started to swell.

A click, a grunt,  
The train light started to glow!  
And in a magical moment,  
The Engine started to go!

All good things must pass,  
And the day must end.  
Mr. Sandman must come.  
As our dreams he will send.

But after we sleep,  
A new day will come,  
And maybe new magic,  
And maybe new fun.

So, "Up Zoe, Up Claire,  
It's late as you know,  
So upstairs to your bedrooms,  
To bed you must go."

And with Discipline & Love,  
In a mix that was just right,  
Steve said to his children:  
"I love you, Good-night!"