

Cep22-5

# Season's Greetings

25 December 1978

Dear *Don*:

Would you believe it--me with a commercial card, and even the standard holiday letterhead? But I'm in the mood for that this year, and just didn't have the ingenuity to work up something original. And maybe I'm also in the mood for something fancier this year, along with the house and new short curly hairdo. In any event, I hope you and yours are having a warm and happy holiday amidst the winter's snow and cold, and that you'll catch me up with your past year just as I will here.

Did you know that Idaho's enlightened citizens passed a 1% property tax limitation initiative this November, when we already have one of the lowest state education budgets in the country? As a consequence our University faculty is getting prepared for fairly drastic budget cuts and dismissals, and my non-tenured status doesn't give me much security. But somehow the past year has been so good, and the one ahead looks so exciting, that I'm just not going to worry about it--if jobs end, they end. And if they don't, I sometimes think that for now I have the best of all possible worlds. How many people get paid to spend months rafting the Middle Fork of the Salmon, camping out along the Lochsa River valley, looking for quarry sources along the Dolores River canyon, or watching the fall mist dissolve around yellow aspens on the Pend Oreille? And get to wander from Capitol Hill to Nogales to the Alberta Plains as part of the job? Sure does fit my likes, believe me.

So specifically what have I been doing this past year? Not spending a lot of time in that new house of mine; I figured I was travelling 40% of the time in 1978. As usual, the beginning and end of the year have been the calmest, while I wait out the winters with report writing. But 1978 wanderings began in earnest last February when I spent ten days at the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers in Washington DC. I am affiliated with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office as manager of the Northern Idaho Regional Archaeological Center, which maintains all state-held archaeological records and collections for the northern third of Idaho. Being in DC gave me opportunities to become more familiar with our Congressional delegation and their staff, and Federal agency officials (especially the Forest Service and the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service) who deal with archaeological management. As a member of the political action committees for both the Society of Professional Archaeologists and the American Society for Conservation Archaeology, I have spent a lot more time the past year dealing with all sorts of government matters--from review of proposed Federal regulations, to their enforcement on specific projects in Idaho, to lobbying for passage of archaeological bills in Congress. I am

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learning a lot, and am really enjoying it even if I never thought I would. I like DC for short spells--it certainly is a contrast with quiet, calm Moscow! Perhaps one of the better aspects of it is getting to a National NOW board meeting, and seeing old friends; I got to spend a half-day with Diane Peterson Peltz, who shared my growing up from 8 to 18, and saw several other friends who are important in my life and with whom I rarely get a chance to talk. I'd like to go back for more short stints, though it would be hard to consign myself to that eastern urban world for long periods.

From Washington I took some vacation time and flew to Las Vegas, then drove over to the California coast and played around--got in a day at Sea World and watched Shamu the Killer Whale (whee!), another at the San Diego Zoo, some beach wandering, and a night on the town in Las Vegas. It was a fine vacation, badly needed, but it sure was a shock to come back to Moscow and finish out the winter.

The spring was spent report writing to some degree, helping host the Northwest Anthropological Conference (that included an open house of our Laboratory), and then heading for Tucson for the Society for American Archaeology annual meeting. Tucson was marvelous--we passed a resolution to boycott states that had not ratified the ERA (archaeology is growing up!), and had a Pine Manor reunion of most of the WSU grad students from the late '60s. Would you believe we haven't matured much in ten years, when we are all together again in a late night bar? However, the topics of conversation certainly are different. Instead of worrying about term papers and prelims, we discuss Congressional lobbying, problems in contract management, and when we will be up for tenure. I even got in a jaunt to Nogales, and a good whiff of dry desert air before heading up to the woods for the summer.

From mid-May to mid-October, the world revolved around archaeological fieldwork. I haven't done so much in years. Bill Lipe from Washington State University and I have a reconnaissance project going on the Middle Fork of the Salmon, in the heart of the Idaho Primitive Area--we work our way down the river by whitewater raft, and occasionally fly in and out by small plane and bush pilot. The logistics of such a project are complicated, and we learned as much about that as about the archaeology of the Middle Fork. But we're going to try and work there again this coming year, and I really enjoyed being back on water after all those years away from the Boundary Waters canoe country. Bill also got me involved as a lithics consultant with the University of Colorado's Dolores River project in southwestern Colorado, and consequently I commuted between the Salmon country and Cortez and Dolores. I haven't been back around that Mesa Verde country since the early '60s, and have had a fine time getting reacquainted with old friends and haunts there. In addition the research is excellent, the colleagues are challenging and fun, and we are getting a good lithics analysis inserted into a general Anazasi investigation. Sure makes for variety, between the two rivers.

The fieldwork situation got even more complicated in the late summer and fall when we tested (1) a 7-8,000 year old Cascade site on the west side of the Bitterroots along the Lochsa, (2) an AD 1600 Nez Perce village on the Clearwater, and (3) a small site on the Pend Oreille up north. This all came between attending the RARE II Conference in Missoula, the AMQUA meeting in Edmonton, the Idaho Archaeological Society meeting in Boise, Dolores staff meetings, and the Plains Conference in Denver. Luckily I have a marvelous staff who keep things organized and productive while I am in and out, and we are really getting reports done. And in the midst of this I did get a special vacation in late September for elk hunting around Lolo Pass amidst clear fall weather and slightly fermented huckleberries. Sure do like northern Idaho!

So life is normally frantic around here--with time for a garden, sewing, a new elderberry liqueur, and Paleo-Designs stationery sales. Obviously, things have been going well this past year, and I hope yours was even better. Please let me know that you're doing, and have a happy holiday and a good 1979.

Love,  
Ruthless