

To \_\_\_\_\_



University of Idaho

Inter-Office Memorandum

From \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Date 17 Oct 91

Jess;

Sometimes I get a bit smart-alecky, but I don't mean anything by it. My comments on the reading material was just running at the mouth. I certainly am not a literary snob. I have to keep a dictionary close at hand to read (or write) the most ordinary things. My favorite books are special to me - I sure wouldn't leave them here. I imagine you feel the same way. There's nothing wrong with the paperbacks here - I have read many of them. I apologize for any wrong impressions. As far as the job list goes, I am down to cleaning the shop, which can easily take weeks to accomplish, and oiling the buildings, which I'm waiting to talk to you. I can always round up more wood, or put another coat of oil on the Deekens, which drink the stuff. At first look, there doesn't seem to be much leather on those things, but with all the nooks and crannies, and straps, it takes me 3 hours to oil one. I hear critters crawling around in the ceiling of the Conyer cabin and the lab building. In the duplex, besides running in the ceiling, they are pulling insulation out of the chinking, and tearing up any paper they can find. I guess I'll try that love-a-hant trap you have in the wood shed, though I don't know what I will do with anything I catch. From the news I hear, plus a note I received from Larry, it sounds as if my crew has been out continuously since the day I left. It's really eating me up. It has nothing to do with money, and I sure don't hope for Sires. It's just hard not to be with my crew when they are out. Oh well, other years I have been unemployed by now. I'm happy to have this job. I took an all day hike a few days back to get a really good look at the fire. Despite the smoke, I feel there is no way the Sire will get here, even without any moisture.

I think it would have taken cataclysmic weather conditions for the fire to have ever reached here in a manner which would have been detrimental to the ranch. If those conditions would have occurred, I think a burn out would have been impossible, and as a ~~the~~ holding force, the best we could have done was an initial soaming, turn the sprinklers on, and head down the creek to get out of the smoke. Its hard to admit we were useless, and probably would have been useless in almost any eventuality. I can say this as a ground pounder. If I was fire overhead, I guess that would be a no no.

Oct 23. Theres a nice coating of snow on the hills this morning. I'm sorry I couldn't tell you the actual whereabouts of the fire. I didnt think of bringing a map until I was already there. I'm not sure I could have told you much anyway, the way the smoke was sitting in the bottoms. I hope you don't think I'm anxious to get out or anything. It would make sense, though to come out on the same flight Ray is coming in on, money and resounce wise. I see Nov 1 is a Friday. My plan is to come straight to Moscow and tie in with you. I would be reluctant to bother you at home, but if the airplane isn't here right away, I may have no choice, other than to wait until Monday. I guess we'll cross that bridge when we come to it.

John

and to keep them together and bring them out to me.

OCT 16 91

Jess;

I don't have much news for you today.

I'm not sure if I've seen the lamb's eye again.

There were eleven sheep on the hill the other day,

but they were around the corner before I could

tell if any were collared. It is the first time

I have seen sheep. I guess they knew it was the

last day of sheep season. The pronghorn in

eastern Montana are like that. I am anxious

to see what kind of junk mail will come today.

So far there are 5 of the same LL Bean catalogs

here. Maybe I'll write them a letter. There are

many children-oriented catalogs addressed to

Jette Morache. Is that your wife? I will be

glad to keep them together and bring them out with me.

~~They~~ They are all small children's catalogs. I think

you said your boy is 10, so these maybe are of no

interest. The temperatures are still unseasonably warm,

though I have a gut feeling that is about to change.

Sometimes I can smell smoke first thing in the

morning (and the valley is smoky until about noon), so

more than once I have hightailed up a peak in case

there is an unattended or improperly extinguished hunters

fire taking off. So far it has just been the Rush

creek fire acting up. It is still producing a lot of smoke.

I'm plugging along, getting things done, but plugging

is the operative word. The pile of bags I brought in

here was not an all season's wardrobe. I brought every

book I had (1/2 seabag's worth) in Helena that I hadn't read yet,

with the thought that Ray Guse might back out and I would

be here for 6 months. Obviously that is not going to

3  
happen. Now I need to put the books aside so I  
give you your money's worth. Between scrambling  
after imaginary fires, looking for sheep and "just one  
more chapter", I haven't accomplished much this past  
week. My arrangement with the F.S. is that

this is my one month break in service that all  
seasonals are required to have in a year's time.

I'm not sure why Larry is worried about it. I will  
undoubtedly be laid off most of the winter. After  
Nov 1, they will work me intermittently, if they  
have work. With this weather, I would probably be  
on Sires now. If Ray Guse is ready to come in,  
especially if he is currently without work, I would be  
more than happy to step aside and let him take

over. However, I would like to be allowed to stay from a few days to a week, to ~~be~~ finish anything I started.

I would do this with the understanding that as soon as

Ray arrived, my pay and per diem would cease. I

would have no problem with that. Also, I would send

my bags out with whichever carrier brings him in,

but I plan to walk out to Big Creek, catch a

ride in to McCall, and then pick up my bags (in McCall

or Cascade). You can let me know what you think. Of course

I'm still interested if Ray wants to back out altogether, or if

he needs some relief time sometime this winter. At first

I thought this job would be better for a couple, but after thinking

about it, I think a couple would have to be in love and

good friends, and have a good bedroom situation, and have

a few separate hobbies to spend a winter here without the risk

of fractures (in the relationship and each others bones). Here comes

the plane.

John