

Dear Special Friends and Relatives,

2002 Holiday Greetings! We hope to hear back from you, about all that has been important in your lives this year. Although it is a busy time of year, we really look forward to these EMail and letters.

During these early retirement years, we have decided to do as many of the things as possible to build good memories. Right at the top, of course, is family: we are pleased and lucky that all of our kids live in this metro area. The grandchildren will be 11, 10, 9, and 6 soon. We so hope to make a positive influence on their lives, just as our grandparents did for us. In a way, grandparenting has been a way to "make up" for our sometimes inadequate parenting of our young years when we were a little more ignorant...not that we are all knowing yet!

Having the advantage of many relatives, both of us enjoy the times we have had with siblings, step-siblings, nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, uncles, etc. Weddings, graduations, special birthdays, and other get-togethers provide many celebrations. Most years there are about a half dozen of these big events. Next year will be no exception. Additionally, our nieces and nephews are welcoming new babies pretty often, making the wonderful cycle of life a never-ending phenomenon.

Between events, we communicate with Email...those of you who do not have it are missing out! No "bothering" somebody on the telephone, no postage stamps to buy, just quick and "instant". Please look into one of the cheaper options to get started. The only installation can be plugging into a phone jack. Radio Shack, Best Buy, etc. can fix you up with a very basic EMail system for well under \$100.00...but we warn you...soon you will be hooked and will want to upgrade. You will wonder how you got along without it! And we would love the chance to include you in our family banter.

Probably second on our list of early retirement opportunities is our several trips during 2002. They literally wear us out, and even though we come home exhausted, they have all been worth it. Some of these were: a very special trip to Portland, for this year's barbershop International convention. After the contest, we met old friends from San Diego, the Rague's, and went to Tillamook, at the seaside. It was therapeutic, as we waited our turn with Theresa's surgeon for a 5th cancer (3rd surgery) in 5 years. Alaska was totally awesome and very spectacular; and Branson was a pleasant trip to the beautiful Ozark hill-and-lake country, with several of Theresa's siblings and cousins. We saw many (almost Las Vegas-like) shows including our personal favorites, the Rockettes and Shoji Tabuchi, the violinist.

And did we say that we are considering maybe a late winter cruise. (At least it would be somewhere warm, and we would not have to change hotels every day!)