



January 1, 2008

“Happy New Year” to Friends and Family Everywhere,

Or, stated in more acceptable modern terms:

Please accept, with no obligation, implied or implicit, our best wishes for an environmentally conscious socially responsible, low stress, non-addictive, gender neutral, celebration of the winter solstice holiday, practiced within the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion or secular practices of your choice, with respect for the religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all...and a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2008, but not without due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make America great (*not to imply that America is necessarily greater than any other country or is the only "America" in the western hemisphere*), and without regard to the race, creed, color, age, physical ability, religious faith, choice of computer platform or sexual preference of the wishee.

(By accepting this greeting you are accepting these terms. This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal. It is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting. It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for her/himself or others, is void where prohibited by law, and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher. This wish is warranted to perform as expected within the usual application of good tidings for a period of one year or until the issuance of a subsequent holiday greeting, whichever comes first, and warranty is limited to replacement of this wish or issuance of a new wish at the sole discretion of the wisher).

We recently read that the traditional 4 stages of life (childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age) have now become six, with “odyssey” interspersed between adolescence and adulthood, and “active retirement” between adulthood and old age. As you’ll see, we think that the Harts are prime examples of these two new stages!

It is hard to believe that we have been retired for almost three years. Although work is becoming a distant memory for us, our schedules sometimes seem work-like. As with many of our retired friends, we don’t know how we ever had time to work!

We both spend several half days a month attending classes in our *Learning-in-Retirement* organization (<http://Omnilore.org>) plus additional time doing the common reading and preparing our own required presentations. Hal has continued in the Shakespeare group (one of his retirement goals being to read all of Shakespeare’s plays) and between us we have also taken classes this year in *Intelligence, Anti-Intellectualism in the US, the Federalist Papers, Feynman on Physical Law* (Ruth actually heard the lectures when originally delivered at Cornell in 1964 – not that she remembered anything about them, of course), *Women Who Dared*, and the *Evolution of Human Societies* (they read Pulitzer-winning *Guns, Germs, & Steel* by Jerod Diamond - not as good as his next book, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, in Hal’s opinion). Next up are classes on *Political Cartoonists* and the *Ten Great Ideas of Science*. Ruth is now firmly entrenched on Omnilore’s board and curriculum committee and we also run the scheduling program.

One of the highlights of Ruth’s year was the 50th reunion of her Hunter College Elementary School 6th grade graduating class in April. HCES is what we would now call a magnet school and, although many of the girls continued in the all-girls high school, most of us hadn’t seen each other in almost 50 years. We spent almost a year organizing the reunion, tracking down classmates (Ruth spent a lot of time on the Internet finding people – we worked from class pictures and other memories), picking a date when most people could attend, etc. but it was all worthwhile. About 40 of us (the vast majority of those we located) spent a fabulous 6 hours one Saturday night in April at a classmate’s apartment in NYC getting reacquainted and sharing old memories. We then continued the next morning at a brunch to which spouses were invited. It was amazing that the bonds that we formed as children remained so strong in late-adulthood and we have continued to stay in touch. Ruth also joined the League of Women Voters this year, becoming involved in their Immigration Study and Membership Building Initiative. She continues her yoga class and walks 4 miles 2-3 times a week, but, in general, her view of retirement is that she gets to do whatever she wants to do whenever she wants to do it. What could be better?

In 2007 Hal pushed most activities to the back burner as he was consumed by key organizing roles in two events that won’t happen every year. For his 40th Carleton Reunion in June, he was webmaster (*publicity vehicle*), organized a fixer-upper service project (*reliving our spirit of the 1960’s*), and was the volunteerism rep on a panel on *Life-After-60*. All the organizers’ efforts paid off as 101 of our 300-some classmates and 30-some family members made it to the reunion, and over a third signed up to arrive early for the successful service project. We always love renewing old acquaintances and visiting places holding fond memories from our youth! Simultaneously, Hal was drafted to be safety chief (*lotsa OSHA research & preps for safety inspections, training, etc.*) for the annual **Jimmy Carter Work Project** which our LA affiliate hosted Oct. 29 - Nov. 2, and we had to pre-build the 30 houses far enough to finish during blitz week. Most of my crew had fun during blitz week converting



from a passive safety-monitor role into **Scaffolds-R-Us** (*fixing, erecting & re-securing scaffolding for reaching roofs & 2nd-floor siding*) as all other safety risks were managed by then. *Success: zero serious injuries!* I was impressed with Jimmy's craftsman skills and his stamina, but of course he's been doing this much longer than I. (*That's Hal kneeling, next to Jimmy & Rosalynn.*) I'll sign up for the reunion organizing again in 2012 (& 2017...), but Habitat won't become a sustained unpaid half-time job ever again. Oh yes, my TRW softball team in its 31st year won the "B" championship (*I hit .563!*), and I broke 40 for nine holes of golf once (then shot 57 on the back side).



We didn't let up on travel this year. Our biggee was 17 days in Greece (*Delphi at left*) — 12 on the mainland and a 5-day cruise to several of the Greek islands in the Aegean; we'd reverse that next time. This was our first time with a guided tour group, and it worked very well in what was a new country for us. We also took a 10-day vacation around Phoenix & Sedona, Arizona (*including visiting grad school friends Dave & Mary Browning*), a two-week+ driving trip to the

Canadian Rockies (*Banff*) and Montana (*Glacier Nat. Park + grad school friends Lee & Mary Jane Tangedahl*), an 8-day cruise to the southern Mexican Riviera (*ship at right*), plus short trips to the reunions, 2 family weddings, and Providence in May. Whew! 2008's planned travel so far includes a New York wedding in January, Costa Rica and Guatemala for much of March, the rest TBD.



Erika (age 29) and Alison (age 26) are still both living in Providence, Rhode Island, although that might not last much longer. Unfortunately, Tazz Networks, the software start-up where Erika has worked since graduating from college 6 years ago, was not bought as had been hoped, and announced that they were going out of business last August. Fortunately, she's still being paid, as they kept a couple of people on to work on upgrading the software should anyone express interest in buying the product. However, after February, she'll be on the job market, and will have to make some big decisions about whether to come back to California or stay on the East Coast. If anyone knows of a job for a talented software engineer with 6+ years of good networking experience, let us know! She is fortunate to have bought her own home in 2002, where she lives with her two cats, Mouschke and Josh. Hal visited 4 times to help with house fix-ups, anticipating a possible sale if her next job forces a move.

Alison is still working on completing her Masters degree in Public Policy at Brown. She has developed an interest in urban policy and is interning at the Urban League, where she will be monitoring the Rhode Island Legislature. She'll be hitting the job market as well later this year; a change in Administration in Washington will hopefully provide lots of opportunities. Her two cats, S'More and Drew, both Tuxedos, keep her company, along with new boyfriend Jay.

Both our mothers hung in there this year. Helen (Ruth's mother) had a mini stroke in September. Fortunately it impacted only one leg, and she's pretty much back to normal, that is to say in the upper 1% of the universe of 87 year olds. She and her 94-year-old husband Dave are still living independently in the apartment Ruth grew up in! Vivian (Hal's mother) is a real trooper at 91, and enjoys going out to dinner with her three kids, all of whom live about an hour away. Our own health is good and our weight down; you don't see us in those NutriSystem ads, but you could. Although we like to think we're holding back the aging process, we still accept Hal's new Social Security checks.

No change in our feline children: 3 residents (*Bullwinkle, Boris, & Baby*) and 2 neighboring interlopers (*Rambo & Shadow*) — all but orange Bullwinkle being some variant of a Siamese breed (*3 long-hairs, all maybe Ragdolls*).

Saturday, **February 16, 2008**, is **St. Harts Day XL**. Everyone's invited! We still draw close to 100 friends and neighbors for this, our one social hosting of the year. Your **St. ♥s Day invitation** is, as always, linked from <http://hart-site.net>, our family website. And please send us your email addresses and/or url's for any of you with your own websites — by email, of course.

*And remember our new motto: **retired doesn't mean old.***



Ruth & Hal at the Temple of Poseidon near Athens, in September

Hal, Ruth, Erika, & Alison Hart

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