

HOLIDAY GREETINGS
from Don and Mary

December in Vermont is cold, snowy, and filled with wonderful light. Our lake is skimmed over with ice, and snow is on the ground. Birds are actively coming to the feeders, as are the squirrels. We walk each day, snow crunches under foot and we watch out for ice patches. Life is good.

We love retirement, as we enjoy travel, different life styles and friends across the country. We continue to spend almost six months a year at the lake in Vermont and over four months at our condo at Naples Bath & Tennis in Naples, FL...where Don gets his fill of tennis in the mornings and then plays duplicate bridge in the afternoons. Mary plays tennis and enjoys swimming, mahjong, bridge, exercising and friends. Mary writes grants to help rid the lake of noxious weeds, serves on the local Planning Board, and is a Lay Lake Monitor.

In February and March we had a super time in Europe: visiting German relatives and friends for 10 days, skiing in Garmisch, Innsbruck, and Cortina one week, and sightseeing in northern Italy a week. In Florence Don had some credit cards inside the breast pocket of his shirt under a sweater, and \$200 in his left hand in his left trousers pocket. No problem. He was asked what time it was. So, he carefully removed his left hand and left the money in the pocket and showed the questioner his left wrist. Upon returning his hand to his pocket there was no money. Don yelled at the top of his voice that the man was a thief and pointed at him. Don quickly got everyone's attention and although there was a denial, the "thief" said there is your money on the ground...you must have dropped it...and quickly disappeared.

In August we spent 10 days out west: Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park, and then Richard Joseph's wedding in Sun Valley. Jackson Lake Lodge and its vista of Jackson Lake and the Tetons deserves special mention. We had such wonderful walks.

Don flew from Idaho to Madison, WI to play in a bridge tournament for 5 days. He is trying to complete the requirements to be an ACBL Life Master. He subsequently entered tournaments in Ottawa, Quebec City, Cromwell, CT, Hartford, CT, Worcester, MA, Portland, ME, Fort Lauderdale, Vero Beach, Daytona Beach, Palm Beach, and St. Louis, MO. Mary says he is obsessed. She will be glad when he wins his last points: 3.25 gold and 6 silver. Don doesn't play golf, but thinks bridge is similar, although: not as expensive, even less exercise, with unspectacular scenery.

-Amy, Lou, and Aleksey Magno visited us in Florida in April...with Karla and David Principe a week later.

-Cindy Sondergeld, Eric's wife, was graduated from Law School in May, passed her bar exams, and is now a full fledged working lawyer.

-We celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary in August, highlighted by renting a double deck houseboat one day on Lake Champlain that accommodated our 5 children, their spouses, and 6 grandchildren.

-David, Shelley, Owen, and Kyle Sondergeld from SF visited us in Florida for 8 days over Thanksgiving.

-We learned our seventh grandchild, Zachary Towne Principe, is expected on or about February 21, 1998.

Merry Christmas 1997 and we wish you all a very Happy New Year.

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