

December 1997

Hello from Mark and Sally

All here is well. It was a year like most years. Sally and I went to Sedona AZ in April. Sedona is the new-age capital. We spent time hiking and driving. Sedona used to be a small town but no longer. Its claim to fame are its 'vortexes' where spiritual powers are concentrated. We stayed in a real nice B&B. The highlight of the trip, as far as Mark was concerned was a 4-wheel drive trip to the middle of nowhere.

This trip was Sally's birthday trip at the end of tax season. As a CPA, she doesn't get to do much from Feb to April 15th.

In October, we went to Yosemite. It was the first time for Mark. The bears were out in full force each night fattening up for hibernation. They ate about a dozen cars each night. One night, they ate the car parked next to ours and we could see bear drool on our truck. Actually they didn't really eat the car but they have an extremely good sense of smell and have learned that food often comes inside those neat metal containers. They usually put their claws between the door jam and the roof and just peel the top of the door down. The window usually shatters and they easily get into the vehicle. One night, we talked to a couple that had stopped at McDonald's for lunch and they figured the bear could smell the odor from the day before. The tiny town just outside Yosemite has three auto body shops.

We did have fun though, we hiked to Vernal Falls and Nevada Falls. The falls in the park were not in their glory, this being the end of the dry season, but then again, the crowds (4 x 10<sup>6</sup> visitors a year) were not either.

In November, Mark took his yearly desert hike to view the largest wooden railroad trestle in the world. Its on the no longer operating San Diego and Arizona Railroad.. November in the desert is the perfect time - temperatures are usually in the 70's during the day.

Otherwise both of us are still working hard in our own businesses. Sally moved her office to a nicer, bigger place closer to home in September.

We are spending Christmas here in San Diego with Sally's family and on the 28<sup>th</sup> we are headed to Pittsburgh to spend the beginning of the new year with Mark's parents.

**Happy Holidays to all!**