

7 Harbor Road
Morganville, NJ 07751-2622
18 December 2014

2014 Seasons Greetings from Suzanne and Rod:

This year saw us sticking closer to home than 2013. Rod continues to wring the last bit of use from a couple of decade old PCs, but a winter storm and subsequent melting finally pushed him into starting a home improvement phase of his own when water started dripping on one of them. Suzanne hoped that this would be sufficient to get Rod to buy a new PC with Windows 8 so she would not have to listen to him extol the virtues of Ubuntu continuously. Rod of course pointed out that the solution to the dripping problem was actually replacing windows, not the PC, so in a rare consensus, a 2014 construction project was born. Mission creep led to multiple window replacement as well as most of the siding on the older part of the house, as well as the front steps.

A 50 year reunion of the 1964 graduating class of Lafayette High School was used as an excuse to visit relatives in Louisiana at the end of March. The weather was not great but we managed to walk on a few new rail trails along the way and do some beach combing on the Gulf with Suzanne's brother Don.

Suzanne so enjoyed the days in the car to and from Louisiana that, within a week of our return, she was back in the car again with a friend for another road trip to Syracuse, New York. Tales of drunken revelry.

As weather improved in the spring, both of us attempted to ride the bicycles enough to get in shape for a guided tour of Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard in early June. It was the closest to home, flattest terrain tour Rod could find, with bicycles supplied and van support for the potentially less than enthusiastic bicyclist. The tour company was excellent, but the conclusion was that both of us were spoiled by riding on rail trails, so sharing the street with cars was not so much fun. Suzanne discovered an excellent bus system on the island and enjoyed her days sight seeing and photographing while Rod attempted to follow the bike route of up to 30 miles per day. Neither even attempted the extra credit add-on mileages on each day. Suzanne would often arrange to join the group for lunch as in the sculpture garden where she captured several interesting poses.



Repair work on the house was due to begin construction "no earlier than" mid July, so Suzanne waited until just before that date and left the state to help a friend decorate her new house in Florida. Rod was stuck with the house and whatever last minute furniture moving would be required to give workers access from inside to the 9 windows to be replaced. It should be noted that whenever moving to Florida is raised by Rod in conversations, the phrase "its too hot" inevitably arises in Suzanne's responses. Apparently Florida in July isn't precluded if it means avoidance of furniture moving.



Suzanne's art projects continue and expand. Gourds are a major theme in 2014, with lots of new shapes and colors. Some interesting projects combine gourds with pine needle basket weaving techniques. Cleaning and carving the gourds is an outside activity requiring a respirator to avoid something called "gourd flu" so with cold weather arriving the neighbors may have a respite from the strange insect making humming and whining noises on the back deck. Beading has not been sidelined however, with some commissions and other new creations.

Due to a slow start of the work on the house, both Rod and Suzanne were able to make the trip to Indianapolis in mid September to the annual NAWBO convention there. Suzanne had a booth, selling her jewelry and gourd art, while Rod acted as gofer and checked out the downtown area's trail system and restaurants. Since this was a road trip from NJ, we managed to stop and say hello to one of Suzanne's cousins in PA, but the true highlight of the trip was a stop at the gate of a gourd farm in Ohio. No, they were not "pearly gates", but you would have thought they were if you had seen the disappointment when Suzanne couldn't get in.

While health hasn't been an issue this year, health insurance changes in Rod's retiree benefits from AT&T have immersed us in Medigap and Medicare Part D policies for the first time. The process is inordinately complex, but we feel compelled to rebut the opinions of many that it has been a recent burden added by the current administration. The federal government has done much over the years to improve the health of its citizens, as in the cautionary labeling required on cigarettes. What few realize is the extent to which this cautionary labeling is required. For an example, see the phrase added to the back of the jacket when the purchaser was identified at point of purchase many years ago.



Suzanne did chip a tooth late in the year. Thankfully she had just received a box of items collected by her brother Don in Alaska, so was prepared when a visit to the dentist was required. The dentist wasn't particularly interested in wearing the

walrus tooth fetish she had beaded onto a thong, in spite of a story about it being a traditional Alaskan dental practice. Providing the proper spiritual support by having the hygienist beat one of Suzanne's gourd drums during the procedure wasn't appreciated either. She is now maintaining that the poor fit of the first attempt at producing the crown was due to reliance on the more traditional paleface dental practices.

Being unable to use the AK artifacts in health care, Suzanne has decided that combining them with her gourds is the next best solution. We now have gourds with caribou and deer antlers, somewhat reminiscent of the Jackalope taxidermy seen in every roadside tourist trap in the southwest. The walrus parts not used in beading may explain other strange figures now lurking in the shadows at 7 Harbor Road.

The beginning of 2015 will see the end of Suzanne's official board duties in the Greater Monmouth Chamber of Commerce. She is now soliciting suggestions for alternative meetings to attend to avoid having to go "cold turkey" on Jan 1. Another situation that 46+ years of marriage hasn't helped Rod understand.

We wish you a happy and prosperous 2015.

Suzanne and Rod

web pages:

Rod's personal home page at www.rodpease.com

Suzanne's art home page at www.suzannepease.com

Suzanne's graphic design home page at www.ampersandgraphics.com

Kevin's business home page at www.ceruleanstimuli.com or www.cerulean.st

email:

Rod's email: rodpease@rodpease.com

Suzanne's email: spease@ampersandgraphics.com

Kevin's email: kwpease@comcast.net