

BELATED XMAS NEWS FLASH

DEAN SENDS X-MAS GREETINGS

It's still December as I finally write this!

Merry Christmas to you and yours. I hope this holiday season found everyone to be happy and healthy.

Christmas, like it often does, snuck up on me this year like a black-clad ninja stealing stealthily through the night, and after killing or disabling the defenses that I had in place to keep me forewarned of its presence, let me have it between the eyes with a shuriken, er, I mean was upon me so suddenly that it caught me with my newsletter unwritten!

I could offer a variety of excuses as to why this was the case. A space shuttle mission that spanned the last several weekends leading up to the holiday surely deserves some blame. And my laziness. Let us not forget that my innate laziness requires overflowing flagons of inspiration to get me started on this thing. But as reasonable as these excuses might seem, they are not the true root cause of why this newsletter is so late. No, I just wanted to see who among you out there waited until you got a card from me before sending me one, and the list is considerably shorter than I thought it would be. So shame on me for testing you!

Once again work figured prominently in to my activities for the year. It seemed like not a day would go by without having to go in to the office and either spend the day at my desk or in the mission control center. And this continues to happen day after day! Oh sure, I expected something like this for the first ten or fifteen years after college, but it still continues to happen year after year! Surely someone should have warned us about this either back in high school or perhaps college. Why if I'd known work was going to take up so much of my time I would have instead tried to become independently wealthy right out of college rather than working for a living. Perhaps there's someone I can sue? As an American there must be someone else that's at fault!

But getting back to reality, I did actually travel a little bit this year and my girlfriend and I made it up to Minnesota for Geoff's high school graduation and a whirlwind tour of the greater metro area. But perhaps whirlwind isn't the right term to use. Tornado-like would probably capture things a



WHILE THIS NEWSLETTER MIGHT BE BETTER THAN A POKE IN THE EYE WITH A SHARP STICK, A SPINAL ADJUSTMENT HAS BEEN SHOWN TO BE ABOUT EQUALLY PAINFUL.

a bit more accurately as we spun wildly from location to location, leaving a path of unrivaled devastation in our wake. We're sincerely sorry about that.

I also somehow got talked in to making a trip to Manhattan in the fall. I'd like to tell you about the sites, the sounds, the sheer spectacle of it all, but alas, such is not to be. I'm still actively blocking the trip out of my mind as I don't want to recall any of the horrific cab rides that we were subjected to. But even with that, I recommend a visit to New York. The people were far friendlier and swear far less than rumor would leave you to believe.

And despite the glacial pace at which updates are made, you can still learn something of what I've been up to by visiting my web page at:

http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Dean_Lenort/homepage.htm

As I look back on the newsletter I've just written, it's worth noting that many noted authors (to the best of my knowledge anyway) never bothered to write Christmas Newsletters! And while I'd like to ramble on for a while about how this puts me ahead of them in one aspect of the writing genre, space is running short so instead I'll wrap this up in the usual manner. I hope this holiday season was full of fun and cheer and here's hoping the next one is as well. So here's a very early Merry Christmas for '07!

Dean