

Tepid XMAS News Flash

DEAN SENDS X-MAS GREETINGS

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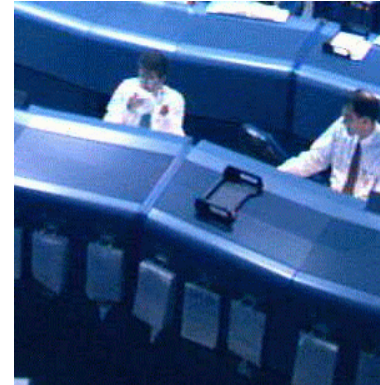
erry Christmas to you and yours. I hope this holiday season finds everyone happy and healthy.

With Christmas day fast approaching it's time for merry thoughts of Christmas cards that are already late, what to buy for that special someone on your list who is nearly impossible to shop for, and the fact that if you hear a muzak version of *Little Drummer Boy* one more time, you may well run amuck! Well, that's how my thoughts run anyway. Yours could very well be different (and I certainly hope they are) so on with the merriment!

Nothing much new to tell everyone again this year. I still work at the same job here in Houston. I've hit the big time though and am now a front room operator (see photo at right). In this particular riveting scene (reminiscent I feel of some of Bob Redford's earlier work), I am sitting at my console, ignoring the shuttle data on the screens in front of me, and reading something off of a laptop computer. That's not all I do of course. I sometimes ignore my data and eat instead. And all this without a script! It's all ad-libbed (impromptu if you prefer).

Last year in this spot I waxed poetically for several sentences about the joys of owning a new computer. Since it's no longer new, I don't suppose I can just repeat that paragraph (as I have done with all the preceding material) and will instead just ramble on pointlessly for a few more lines. I mean hey, without wife and kids, how much material do you expect me to come up with? Just cut me a little slack. That's all I ask. Spirit of the season and all that, you know?

How is life treating you and yours? I sincerely hope that I will soon be receiving Christmas cards that revel in the good cheer and happiness that you are



DEAN HARD AT WORK. I AM THE BALD GUY ON THE RIGHT, NOT THE ONE EATING.

experiencing in your lives. Alas, one of the cards I've received thus far dealt primarily with the tragic demise of a duck shaped cookie jar. Alas poor Donald, I hardly knew ye. Such a tale of woe can't be repeated here for it wouldn't be in keeping with the spirit of the season, but was it really suicide? Hmmm.

As far as vacation plans go, I will be traveling home for the holidays so I can once again appreciate just how cold it can get. Nothing like leaving the airport and once again experiencing the thrill of sub-zero weather. Save some snow in the driveway for me! If I didn't get to shovel at least once a year I'd probably forget just how horrible of a task it is.

The amount of space in this letter grows ever shorter and there's still so much to tell! How can I possibly tell you of all that needs to be told in the short space I have remaining? To give something too little attention would be a grave injustice to both you, the reader and to me, the writer (just wanted to make sure you had those roles straight). Oh well, it looks as though I've rambled enough to fill this space. {Your Ad could appear here! Call me Now!}

I hope this Christmas note hasn't put you off the spirit of the season entirely. I really do wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See ya soon. Dean