



Dear Joan and Bob,

Thank you so much for the Christmas card. You have always been so good to do that. I truly do appreciate it. I would like to be so organized with that sort of thing!!! It's a busy life here, but it's good. I am still substitute teaching, but high school only for the last couple of years. High school students have asked me to be there for them whenever I can...so I am there and I love being there for them.

All of our children are long ago on their own. Our youngest is 20 and living on a ranch 200 miles from here. He is one of 2 maintenance men there. He started out as a fencer...there are miles of fence yet to be put up from what I understand. It's not a small ranch. Our only daughter was married about a year and a half ago and became the mother to a beautiful little girl 3 months ago. Our 3rd son works for one of the top chemists in the country and eloped about 2 weeks ago with a lovely Hawaiian girl. They have known each other for 4 years before being married. Our 2nd son will become a father for the first time next March. The baby, by ultrasound, is expected to be a little girl. That will make 4 granddaughters for us. The two oldest are already 17 and 15 years old. They are our oldest son's daughters. He is engaged to remarry soon. He works for a Canadian oil company in Oklahoma, he also inspects for OSHA. I guess that's a pretty brief synopsis regarding our kids and grandkids.

I recently adopted a dog from the animal shelter and boy has she ever perked things up around here...oh my!! She's got a spunky, loving personality and several rather humorous personality quirks that leave us laughing often. I almost did not go to see if I could find a dog I would like...I would have missed out on a lot if I had not done so. Elle is a joy.

Our 3rd son, Levi, asked me to design trademarks/logos for some product lines the chemist he works for has created, so that has been a bit of fun for me to do a bit of research and designing for that. So far I have done 3 with one to go of what was requested. I am more excited to see it on packaging!! Now, that will be rewarding and fun. Yes, I will be paid. It's good all the way around!

Regarding things at school...it's not always hunky-dory. Today I had a student removed from the classroom by staff. I have had to do that before, so it was not anything new. It is just part of the job. Last week a boy refused to comply with instructions to leave wiring and cables to PC's in a computer lab alone,... and he destroyed 2 PC's. Now his parents have to foot the bill for that. He fried the motherboard in one and the entire interior had to be replaced. I don't exactly know how he did that, I just know what TECH staff told me. He could not seem to leave anything alone. He screwed up 4 computers before he was done, destroying 2 of the 4. The teacher I was subbing for has 2 monitors on his desk. One is rather oversized and effectively blocks the view of the area where this problem took place. He has a program that allows you to see what kids are doing on all of the computers in the room at one time, that is how they are to be monitored and that is what I was expected to be doing...so it was no surprise that I did not know this kid was still ruining PC's long after he had agreed to leave wires and cables alone. Other kids that knew what he was doing never said a thing to me about it until the class was overwith. then they came telling me all about it. All I could do was to write the kid up on a behavior referral to the principal and get TECH up there to deal with the damage.





Had the kids told me what that kid was doing, while it was taking place...he would have been removed from the classroom by staff. As it is, his parents will be paying for his stupidity and willful wrongdoing. Most of the freshman class this year are wilder than march hares. Too many don't seem to have the sense of a doorknob. I was told by a staff member that this year they are seeing more and more parents cowering to the demands of belligerent, disrespectful kids and doing for them what they, by all that is right, should be doing for themselves. The kids think they are entitled to everything without any responsibility or effort on their part. Won't real life be a heck of a wake up call? I hope most of them figure things out before it gets down to that, though.

I love the seniors, they are a hoot. They get their work done, they make me laugh, they don't make a mess of the classroom, they are a lot of fun to work with. All in all, I do love the kids, even the frustrating ones. But, I feel allegiance to the teachers, too. I represent them in their absence and feel the responsibility to do a good job for them. I guess I have what it takes to do what I do...I haven't lost my sanity ...yet.

A note of humor before I close and get this ready to send. I have these little Japanese chickens I acquired a year ago from a bird auction. I put an old worn out, cracked up dog dish in their little pen for the hens to sit in. Its a small dog dish...but I discovered two darling little hens sitting on 2 eggs in the one dog dish. Talk about cute...and funny! They were so comfy and happy in there and the wee little rooster was pacing back and forth in front of them very expectantly! You know, they used to run in fear of me, but now I am about as scary to them as a wet noodle! I love them too.

I love our 3 crazy turkeys, too. Someone threw them over our fence over a year ago. Now we live with the antics of Cleopatra, Mark Anthony and Julius Ceasar!! Now being full grown and very gentle, we sure enjoy them. The boys make their turkey call every time I talk to them, then they strut and make a show of their tails and wings (they drag their wings on the ground as part of their display). Such flirty boys!!! Ha, ha!! Cleopatra likes to get on the roof of the chicken house and make a lot of noise which stirs up all the chickens and eventually just about every critter out here!

I hope all of you have a grand and joyous Christmas season! We will do likewise.  
May God bless all of you,

*Kim R. Suzanne Dixon*