

19 Dec 83

Dear Friends,

This is past due, of course, but I've decided to beat the February rush and get it out early. Since my review of this past year leaves me confused, it'll be a small miracle if you can figure it out. A month by month description is no good since I led three or four lives this last year.

My first priority is to say thank you to you all who put up with my appearing & disappearing act and my rather haphazard communications. At least you all deserve medals for tolerance! And now on to my story - it all overlaps:

Flying Tigers made it clear by their performance that I needed a back-up so after putting on my knee pads I got back into the Reserves in June. The C-141 is longer than I left it but after filling all the currency requirements (and after three years, there are a bunch!) I checked out as first pilot. I've even made the pilgrimage around the Pacific - a mission that hasn't changed much in the 12 years since I first flew one! So I'm back in the green bag.....

In May, a furloughed Tiger called me & actually caught me at home. He was working for Pacific East Air & said I should come down - they were hiring. I demurred, even left for the Bay Area but returned, had a five minute interview & went to class two days later. The result was being a DC-8 S/O flying LAX/SFO to Honolulu/Maui. Then London charters started & I got a week each month in London. Even squeezed in a trip to Salzburg & Vienna.

I was furloughed 30 Sep (they had neglected to pay their bills & an airplane was repossessed.) Recall was 1 Dec since we started LAX to JFK & Caribbean charters. Then I was furloughed again today when the charter business fell through. This is a strange business and may explain why "plan" has been removed from my vocabulary.

My Renaissance Handyman business also could take up all my time and has giving me an excuse to buy tools. But it isn't near as rewarding as just putting around friends' houses - you are all so daring. I guess I can tell you the answer to that burning question "where did you learn how to do this?" Your house, of course.

All this conspired to ruin my happily unemployed calendar, and it's particularly obvious when I realize how few of you I got to see. I only had the briefest of visits to Atlanta, St. Paul & the farm. Of course a lot of you can out here. Mitzie came out in March, leaving Roger with all the animals - she stayed five weeks! I bet Roger won't let that happen again!

With any luck, my furlough will last until May, and I can drop in out of the clear blue & see all of you. My friends are so special to me - my vicarious stability!