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Wednesday, October 26, 2005 c:/wklyltr5.5wc32

2005 NHN&WR letter/story #18)

**Passports.**

With no plans to inflict international air travel on ourselves, Canada excluded, we never thought we would need to have passports. Our Canadian/US border crossing site is bucolic to say the least. Approaching it there is a Canadian cornfield on one side of the road and a U.S. pasture on the other side. No fence, ... no signs, ... no nothing. However, the U.S. Government in all its infinite wisdom has decreed that passports will be required for entrance at U.S. custom points. The passport requirement is already in effect for air travel between these countries. For those visiting Ottawa sans passport, we provide a four hour auto shuttle service between Ottawa and Burlington VT.

(Our thoughts:

\* Businesses on both sides of the border are just going to love this. Right.

\* North Hero/Ottawa travel time will be increased by an average 30 minutes.

\* Good time to buy stock in a Company which forges passports.

\* If terrorists start using suicide dogs will canine passports come into vogue? As far as this one is concerned, with practice, we could probably ‘profile’ Muslim Mutts.

\* Good Grief, ... another *‘Convict Type’* photo ID to go along with the drivers licenses and the Veterans Administration card.

\* Hopefully no visas.)

Oh well. What’s a law abiding citizen to do? Right, ... get passports. Lucile, being Canadian secured hers in Ottawa with help from her daughter Linda and her banker Wendy Tatro. Actually she was afraid she’d get into the States and not be able to get back in Canada. Ken started negotiations when he got to North Hero in the spring.

To apply for a U.S. passport one needs: a filled out form, two passport photos, a birth certificate and seventy dollars. Once you have these in hand you go to your County Court House to consummate the transaction. The County Court House for Grand Isle County is in the metropolis of North Hero, Shiretown of Grand Isle County, population 842. We’ve got to set the scene here for you. Picture a quaint, small, New England village. A cluster of well kept houses, Inn, Country Store, two churches all nestled along a bay by Lake Champlain. The main road in town is Route 2. No traffic lights and not much traffic. All peace and tranquillity. Love it. We drive into greater downtown North Hero, (35mph), and pull into the Court House parking lot, ... the third car in the lot. Clutching our passport package we enter the front door. We don’t see a soul, and then ... a guard.

**"*HALT*!"**

(We nearly dropped our passport package.)

***"Put your package on the desk! Empty your pockets"***

(Am I in North Hero?)

***"Walk through the metal detector."***

(No, ... I must have entered ... the twilight zone.)

Ken walks through the metal detector. The alarm goes off.

***"Stop! What are you carrying?"***

*"Nothing, I have a fake hip."*

(Ken has never been able to pronounce prosthesis.)

Guard picks up a wand.

***"Which side, right or left?"***

*"Left."*

Ken is wand-waved. Guard seems satisfied.

*"Okay, pick up your stuff. Why are you here?"*

*"I want to apply for a passport."*

*"Right through there, desk is to the left."*

*"Thanks. Did I miss it when North Hero was declared a terrorist target?"*

*"Hey, ...It’s just my job fella."*

(Suddenly, North Hero seems different.)

The clerk at the desk checked the form, birth certificate and photos politely and very efficiently. The clerk at the desk took the $70 very politely and efficiently. It would take six weeks for the passport to be received in the mail. Ken exited the County Court House. Thankfully, outside, Greater Down Town North Hero looked exactly the same.

Both Lucile and Ken have received their passports. They just have one passport problem remaining. When the deadline for use arrives, ... will they remember where they put them.

From North Hero, VT

Lucile & Ken.

2005 Recipients.

*NHN&WR* is now available to 62 readers @ 22 E-mail (\*) & 5 Snail-mail addresses.

\* Raleigh Armstrongs. 3 Carol, Bruce & Mackenzie, business & nursery cohorts from Atlanta days.

\* Charlie Bennett 1 Cousin of Ken.

\* Gerry Bennett & Carol 2 Son of Lucile & spouse.

\* Marc Bennett, Michelle Burke 2 Son of Lucile & spouse.

\* Beth Brock 1 Sister of Ken

\* Jeff Brocks 5 Son of Beth, spouse Susan, Elizabeth, Gracie & Taylor

\* Gene & Marilyn Cotton 2 Georgia Squires.

\* Ann & Keith Dawson 2 Ottawa friends

Louise Gaspe & Jean 2 Cousin of Lucile & partner

Atlanta Jeffersons 3 Sons of Ken: Greg, Mike, Phil.

Pittsford, VT Jeffersons 4 Matt, son of Ken, Spouse Heidi, daughter Morgaen & son Marz.

Clara Jefferson 1 Spouse of Ken’s Uncle Ted

\* Erhart & Nancy Demand 2 North Hero neighbors.

\* Glastonbury Jeffersons 3 David, brother of Ken, spouse Nancy & Son Bill.

\* Linda Jefferson,Kelly Hoffpair 4 Linda is David & Nancy’s daughter, spouse & children, Sara and Nick.

\* Looloolabas 2 Australians Andrew & Mark.

\* Lucile & Ken 2 .

\* Myr, John & Willow Klein 3 Myr is Heidi Jefferson’s daughter.

\* Sue McCleskey 1 Daughter of Ken

\* Frank & Etta McDevitt 2 Linda McD in-laws.

\* Linda & Norman McDevitt 2 Daughter of Lucile and spouse

\* North Carolina Pecks 4 Sara, daughter of Ken, Bill Peck Jr., Dan & Colin

\* Jane & Bob Perry 2 North Hero neighbors

Gladys & ‘Pete’ Peterson 2 Vermont friends of Lucile & Ken. ‘Pete’ is grade school chum of Ken.

\* Jean Snow 1 Florida friend of Charlie Bennett.

\* Moira & Eric St. John. 2 North Hero neighbors.

27 \* Art & Addie Ward. 2 Pennsylvania friends of Lucile & Ken.