Thursday, February 01, 2007 c:/wklylt7.7wc01

 (2007 NHN&WR letter/story/poem/card #01)

**Resolutions**.

 Ah, … another year, … another bunch of resolutions. We don’t do too well on these, but anyhow., let’s go on record with 2007’s best intentions. We may get a little wordy, but there is no imbedded response requirement nor quiz so feel free to skip whatever bores you.

 Leading off alphabetically, is a resolution we do very well with. We are four weeks into our ***Abstinence***discipline. Annual brewski consumption has fallen to just about zilch, but brandy, gin and wine are apt to reach a level of concern. To combat thoughts of, *“Are we drinking too much”,* we stop drinking at all from January 1st to March 21st. Weight situation benefits doubly, Lucile gains, Ken loses and we can feel very superior to others who say, *“Oh, I can stop drinking anytime I want”* but never do so. Side benefits: we’ve inspired a handful of NHN&WR’ers to join with us and then of course the wild party on the first day of Spring.

 A definite weak point in the last few years has been ***art*** output. We have two outstanding ‘watercolor debts’ haunting us. Plus it would be nice to have a group of 4 or 5 on hand that we could display in local Vermont art shows. If we don’t do anything else, we should do this.

 Ensconced by the Ottawa fireplace is a set of the ‘Harvard ***Classics’***, (Dr. Eliot’s Five Foot Shelf of Books). There are fifty volumes. Had we ever read any of them? No. We have started. We are on #5, “Essays and English Traits” by R. W. Emerson. The subject matter of the early volumes is really amazing when viewed in light of today’s problems. Socrates, who was born in 469 B.C., was executed by the authorities in Greece for his ‘offbeat’ religious views. (‘Offbeat’ being anything other than mine.) Good Grief, … the harbinger of: Inquisition Victims, Salem Witches Salmon Ruskies et al!

 We recently were Emailed (NHN&WR’er Hoffpair) a dissertation re, *“Do You Think English is Easy?*” It was about the confusing use and multiple meanings of English words depending on how they were pronounced or used. There were fifty examples. #1 was: *“The bandage was wound around the wound.”*  (Our favorite in this area has always been: *“We park our cars on the driveway and drive our cars on the parkway.”*) Well anyway, it brought crossword puzzles to our mind. ***Crosswords*** are a wonderful mental exercise. Our resolve, one a day keeps Alzheimer’s away.

The connection here? A clue in a recent puzzle was, ‘North of Virginia’ (six letters). Maryland, Delaware , Vermont? Too many. Maine? Not enough.

The answer? Oliver. Crosswords are wonderful for thinking outside the box.

 Crosswords for the mind, ***exercise*** for the body. Our resolve, during inactive winter months, stick to our workout routine. Pretty much whipping a dead horse here. We’ve offered our proven exercise program in the past, free of charge. No one ever asked for it. Oh well, … go to pot couch potatoes, not our problem. ‘Pot’ quite apt here huh?

 ***Letters*** should not pose a problem. Over the course of a year we should be able to come up with 12 weird topics to write about. Well, make that 11, we’re almost through with this one.

 ***Music*** means piano. Still hanging in there on this one. We recently purchased a book of nine Beethoven pieces at the music store. Glued inside the back cover was a CD with an accomplished artist playing all nine. Wonderful idea! Intimidating? Definitely. One (back in the dark ages) used to be able to play 33, 45, & 78 records at the wrong speed. Bing Crosby could be made to sound like the Chipmunks. We need the reverse option here for our ‘hunt & plink’ pianist.

 We have resolved to try one new ***recipe*** per month in 2007. Depending on how we like them we may institute a Recipe of the Month release. January’s recipe is ‘Pappardelle with Vegetable Bolognese’. February report pending.

 First batch of 2007 ***wine*** is perking away in the must bucket. Resolve is to keep the wine cellar stocked to about 150-200 bottles. Inventory currently stands at 151, of which 26 are archived. (We have saved 2 bottles of each batch we have made in order to make ‘aging’ tests.)

Should have a little over 220 by March 21st, but then there will be a big hit, the Neighborhood Party. We are inviting only those who can walk to the party site. Incidentally, the wine cellar survived the renters and the bottles were impervious to the infestations of mice which will be dealt with in a future letter.

 Hey, … you all have a wonderful 2007.

 Lucile, Bailey & Ken.

 Ottawa, ON Canada.