

Thursday, November 19, 1998

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!*Have a real nice one*Dear *Donna,*

Writing to you is something I have wanted to do for a couple of weeks. Only now does time permit. I can't tell you how bowled over I was when Claire called and said, "at last, I've found you." I tried to assure her that I would have been willing to help her out if only I had known she was looking for me. I can well imagine that many of you had the same reaction. It's kind of exciting, isn't it?

I have truly been overwhelmed by the information I have learned from Claire (Brisebois) Starnes, Glenda Storni, Precilla (Landry) Wilkewitz, Donna Loring, and Sgt Crawford. So many of you have been involved in exciting new adventures since our VietNam days. Some of you are not well. Some are grandmothers. Some have become entrepreneurs. And, the list goes on. Alas! we lost Sgt Effie and Sgt Calico. I am so very, very pleased with what I have heard so far about some of you. It would delight me further to know something about each and everyone of you.

Perhaps you would be interested in knowing what I have been up to lol these many years. I resigned my commission when I left VietNam. I had planned on going directly to Florida to spend a few weeks with my Mom and get my car. I hadn't decided just exactly what I wanted to do now that I was a civilian. On my way to Florida, I decided to stop over and visit a friend in San Antonio. It was October, a delightful time in south central Texas; she took me down to the Riverwalk for dinner. I absolutely fell in love with the city, and decided to make it home.

For the past 15 years I have been a fine art photographer. I decided some 17 or so years ago that I wanted to get my master's degree; my undergraduate work was in sociology. The problem was I didn't really want to be a social worker, but I couldn't decide what would be a suitable alternative. Time and time again I perused the catalogs of colleges in this immediate area. Finally, one day the photography class at a community college jumped off the page. I thought, well, why not? Once I'm back in an academic setting, I'll be able to figure out what I want to do. I fell in love with it; and I found that I had some talent for it. I had longed for a creative release since I was in high school. I tried writing poetry, writing novels, playing the piano, playing the violin. I just didn't have it. It took me two and one-half years to take all the courses the school offered. I didn't have a clue if I'd make it as a self-employed photographer, but I was going to try. I filed an assumed name, DBA (doing business as) CHAPS Photo Art in 1983 and have been doing this ever since. I LOVE IT!

That's enough about me. What about you? I'd really enjoy hearing from you--a postcard, a letter, a phone call, an email (I hesitate to say fax 'cause I'm not sure I have that figured out yet. I know I can send them, but I don't know if I can receive them).

With fond regards,

*Joanne**you know all this, but you get the letter anyway!*