



Happy Holidays 2009 from Leslie Turek

I'm getting this out late, as usual, but this year I have a good excuse. Last week I helped train 14 people to be leaders in the Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults program. As much as I've been enjoying retirement, I somehow agreed to become a part-time Coordinator of Healthy Aging Programs for Springwell, the non-profit elder services agency I've been volunteering with for the past few years.

Springwell had been running the Healthy Aging program on a small scale for several years, and I was one of their trained lay leaders. But starting in September, I came on board as Coordinator and have been helping gear up the program to conduct many more sessions throughout our 8-town service area next year. In addition to Healthy Eating, we are also offering a second evidence-based program called My Life, My Health, which teaches self-management techniques for people with chronic conditions, and next year we may also offer a diabetes self-management course.

So my retirement hasn't been quite as restful in the last few months as I'd become accustomed to. But it feels good to be accomplishing something useful.

I continued with other volunteering activities as well. During the summer I got involved in helping with a gardening activity at the Watertown Middle School and worked with a great group of kids to plant an ornamental garden in the school courtyard. Some of them are continuing in a garden club and in the spring we will be planting a vegetable garden.



And of course I am still a guide at Garden in the Woods, which is a paradise every May. This year I expanded my repertoire and learned to do children's tours and also how to drive the electric cart to give tours to seniors and the disabled who can't walk our rather steep paths. I had some wonderful experiences giving people who otherwise don't get out much a chance to get out and enjoy nature.

Travel

The photos on page 1 are from my trip to Quebec in September, following the annual World Science Fiction Convention in Montreal. Alexis Layton and I enjoyed a trip that involved driving rather than airplanes, which gave us the chance to wander around a bit and find some nice out-of-the way places to visit on the way to our main destinations, including Lake Champlain islands in Vermont, Trois-Rivieres Ontario, and Jackson Maine.

Other trips this year included a trip to Orlando, where we made the mistake of trying to go to Disney World during spring break. We quickly regrouped and spent more of our time away from the parks, taking some lovely boat rides that let us view birds, crocodiles, and other wildlife.

We also went to Austin in December for the annual Smofcon sf-con-runners convention. Austin was having an unusual cold snap, and the bats were wintering in Mexico, but it was still great to see the sun and leaves on the trees, and enjoy that great Texas hospitality.

Miscellaneous

There's not a lot much else to report. My health continues good, Machinka is well, and I'm enjoying my suddenly-a-bit-more busy retirement. The house is holding up with a new heating/ac system installed this spring. It was a bad year for gardening, with nearly constant rain for all of June, but hopefully next year will be better.

I continue to be reachable at leslie.turek@gmail.com, and I've finally gotten around to joining Facebook so you can find me there. I love the way Facebook links all of my various social networks, from my science fiction fan friends, to far-flung family, even including some of my cousins in Slovakia.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy 2010!

