



Cover: Bitterroot River, looking north from Hamilton's Main St. Bridge, Nov. 2005.
Inset: Bitterroot wild turkeys who survived Thanksgiving, Nov. 2005.

Here's Another Letter. Enjoy it. We only send one a year.

The temperature's dropped, the season is here.
So sit back, get comfy, and lend us your ear.
We'll dazzle you with wit and charm and good cheer
And tell you what we have been up to this year...

A visit to our garage may leave you in the dark
Room where Dominik haunts, preparing his stark
Black and white photos of Cambodian faces -
But be careful, it's also one of our few storage spaces,
And it seems every time that Val turns around
There's a new camera or lens that Dominik has found.

Believe it or not, and perhaps you'll ask why,
But Dom's taking lessons to learn how to fly.
After months of excuses, he got off his ass.
Now if only he'd land without hitting the grass...

As a symbol of research into the fierce prion battle,
A photo of Val fiddling to bewildered cattle
Was featured on her sponsor's calendar cover
(If you want a copy, just ask Val's mother).

But seriously now, she did publish one paper,
As co-author yes, but the journal was Nature.
Her studies have led to a few interviews
Some of which you may have seen on the news.

Val has been fiddling quite a bit.
"The Crested Hens" have been a big hit.
They've done radio and made the local front page,
And have played on the Performing Arts Center stage
As the opening act for a touring band.
The crowds really love them; they get a big hand.
She plays with the Missoula Symphony a bunch
And she joined a quartet for the summer wedding crunch.

Speaking of weddings, there were two that we saw,
One was in Calgary, the other in Ottawa.
The former was Karen (Val's sis) ensnaring Andy
(And despite initial chaos, it turned out just dandy).
Of course, Andy thinks things are as good as they can get,
But his in-laws haven't dragged him out curling yet...

Val's conferences took place in many locations,
Meaning we both had a chance for several vacations.
From skiing in Salt Lake, to the cliffs of Zion,
We made it down to the impressive Grand Canyon,
Monument Valley and Arches National Park.
We lingered so long, we got home after dark
- as in 4am!

Cheddar, Leicester, Wensleydale, Gloucester;
A trip to England will certainly foster
A taste for cheeses. A chance to see
Old friends and new relatives filled Dom with glee.
He checked out the Lakes and York in the North
Before meeting up with Valerie in Duesseldorf.

For Dom, conference hopping can be quite a ball
Especially without going to lectures and all.
While Val listened to the Dalai Lama's talks,
Dom saw the Smithsonian and went for some walks.
The opera was great - we saw "Porgy and Bess"
But as for Greek pillars, Washington could do with less.

We camped beside geysers and petrified trees,
Went up the Space Needle, and saw friends in B.C.
We felt the earth move, and while Dom tries to take
Credit, it turns out it was really an earthquake*.

So, all in all, our year in Montana
Was a lot of fun, but few people wanna
Come visit us way out here in the booneys
Where nary a soul can tell loonies from twonies.
But really, we think that all of our friends should
Come down here to see us, while the exchange rate is good!

Merry Non-denominational Holiday!
Enjoy your turkeys... but remember...
You are what you eat!



* A 5.6 magnitude earthquake occurred at 22:08:35 MDT, 25th of July, 2005, with an epicentre at 45.411°N, 112.596°W - 153 km southeast of our house.