

A Retirement Thank-You

By Lois Walker

My librarian sister retired at the end of the school year. Of course, co-workers and staff sent her off in fine fashion. Afterwards, she went out, bought thank-you cards, and was truly planning to address and mail them immediately. However, life intervened, the summer wore on, and she never tended to the cards.

When the new school year rolled around again, she decided to forget about the cards, and find another way to express her thanks. So, on the first day teachers and staff came back to school in the fall, she hosted a combination "Welcome Back and Thank-You Party" in the school's staff room. She filled the room with fresh home-baked goodies!

Following is the poem she printed and gave to each of the guests. If you are a retired teacher and want to use this idea and the poem that goes with it, please do. And, best wishes for a healthy and happy retirement!

Upon retirement

One major requirement

Was to thank all co-workers and staffs

For the kindness they'd showed,

The gifts they'd bestowed,

The love, the support, and the laughs.

These I couldn't ignore,
So I marched to the store
And bought thank-you cards by the ton.
I planned to snail-mail them,
Address and detail them,
Sincerely thank all – and be done!

But these “best-laid plans”
Somehow ran through my hands
When other tasks just couldn't wait!
They threw me off guard,
So I packed up each card,
And stuck them away in a crate.

I'd mail those cards later,
(Though I felt like a traitor,
With the cards in the crate combination).
Yes, I was remiss,
But listen to this...
I soon packed up went on vacation!

Well it is quite sad

There's "no rest for the bad!"

So I must be *wicked* – it's true.

It's really a bummer

How I wasted the summer

And mailed not one card off to you.

And now it's too late

For those cards in the crate.

Their shelf life has come to an end.

The cards are now history!

But there is no mystery

About what to do for my friends.

So, instead of cards

I am sending regards

By sifting and stirring and baking.

Don't mean to be rude,

But *this group* likes sweet FOOD!

And so this is what I've been making.

Made whatever it takes,
Be it cookies or cakes,
Homemade pies or thick chocolate brownies.
I've brought them all here,
(These foods we hold dear)
For all of you (town or city name) townies!

And my message, in part,
Is the same since the start,
(You'd know from the cards, if I'd mailed them).
But since nothin' says "lovin'"
Like things from the oven,
Please do dig right in and inhale them!

Each bite is a "thank-you,"
A "thanks" with each chew,
For all the things mentioned above.
The things you have done,
The kindness, the fun,
The ways I've been treated with love.

But wait! I'm not through!

Something more I must do.

I have one more thought to impart.

As I leave through these hallways,

I'll treasure you always,

My "thank-yous" come straight from the heart!