

The Holiday Herald

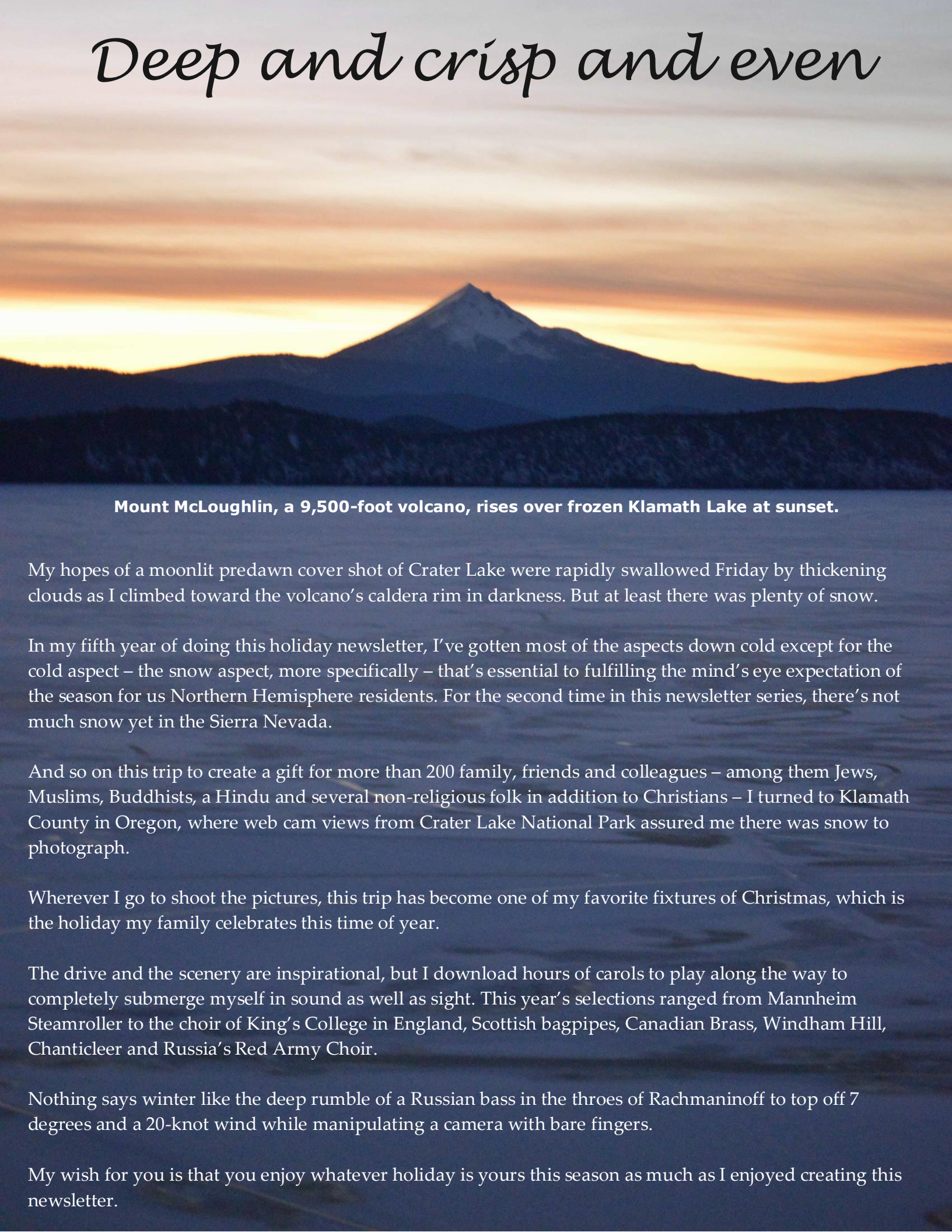
Klamath County, Oregon

December 21, 2013

*When the snow lay round about,
Deep and crisp and even*

A volcano within a volcano, Wizard Island pokes its head above the waters of Crater Lake, all that remains of Mount Mazama, which blew its top 8,000 years ago.

Deep and crisp and even



Mount McLoughlin, a 9,500-foot volcano, rises over frozen Klamath Lake at sunset.

My hopes of a moonlit predawn cover shot of Crater Lake were rapidly swallowed Friday by thickening clouds as I climbed toward the volcano's caldera rim in darkness. But at least there was plenty of snow.

In my fifth year of doing this holiday newsletter, I've gotten most of the aspects down cold except for the cold aspect – the snow aspect, more specifically – that's essential to fulfilling the mind's eye expectation of the season for us Northern Hemisphere residents. For the second time in this newsletter series, there's not much snow yet in the Sierra Nevada.

And so on this trip to create a gift for more than 200 family, friends and colleagues – among them Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, a Hindu and several non-religious folk in addition to Christians – I turned to Klamath County in Oregon, where web cam views from Crater Lake National Park assured me there was snow to photograph.

Wherever I go to shoot the pictures, this trip has become one of my favorite fixtures of Christmas, which is the holiday my family celebrates this time of year.

The drive and the scenery are inspirational, but I download hours of carols to play along the way to completely submerge myself in sound as well as sight. This year's selections ranged from Mannheim Steamroller to the choir of King's College in England, Scottish bagpipes, Canadian Brass, Windham Hill, Chanticleer and Russia's Red Army Choir.

Nothing says winter like the deep rumble of a Russian bass in the throes of Rachmaninoff to top off 7 degrees and a 20-knot wind while manipulating a camera with bare fingers.

My wish for you is that you enjoy whatever holiday is yours this season as much as I enjoyed creating this newsletter.



In the course of a normal winter the snow will reach the eaves of Crater Lake National Park's headquarters.



Crater Lake is circular, about 5 miles across and 1,000 feet below its rim. Its 2,000-foot depth makes it America's deepest lake. The surface elevation is 6,200 feet.



A new barn on Crooked Creek near Chiloquin.



Amtrak's northbound *Coast Starlight* has just left its morning stop at Klamath Falls and is following the shore of frozen Klamath Lake on its run from Los Angeles to Seattle.