

is anxious to publish a two-volume publication on our Aztec project to be titled, "The One Reed Year". Scott and I are far from being ready to do this project inspite of the pressure from the editors of UT Press.

I'm sending you a copy of our bird book contract with UT Press that I promised to send some months ago. I was wondering if the basic terms of this contract will be adequate for future agreements? And what about acquiring ownership of a book once it goes out of print? I really have not given thought to any of these questions.

Scott and I hope everything is well with you. Nancy and I recently returned from a quickie trip to Florence and Rome, my first time to Europe! Can you believe it?

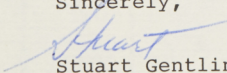
Also, last August Scott, Nancy and I were invited to Crawford, Texas to visit the president and first lady at their ranch. The president wanted to see Scott's recently completed portrait of him as governor. What followed was one of the most unusual afternoons of our lives. We literally had Mr. and Mrs. Bush all to ourselves! After viewing his portrait - which he loved - the president asked Scott to paint him for the White House, and Laura Bush for the White House as well!

He then invited us on a three hour tour of the ranch. The president drove us in his white pickup followed, of course, by a truck with the Secret Service at a discreet distance. We all hiked up into the cedar breaks and sat around "chewing the fat". It was all so "normal" that I had to stop every now and then to make myself realize that Scott and Nancy and I were sitting in a dry creekbed, in the middle of nowhere with the President of the United States, the most powerful man in the world. He was excellent company, witty and even self-deprecating.

Oh, by the way, I have been invited to give a reading or a lecture at the Texas Book Festival in Austin on Novemebr 18th. I'm told that it is an honor. Later that afternoon, I will be signing books at the Austin Museum of Art in honor of the Laura Bush endowment fund there. Mrs. Bush asked me to do it about a year ago, just before the election. I know that she was planning to attend, but now with the terrorism scares of recent weeks, I'm not sure. She didn't mention it to me when I was at the Crawford ranch and I for some reason was reluctant to ask.

She did ask me if I was going to participate in the Book Festival, and was pleased when I told her that I was. It was Laura Bush who started the Festival about six years ago. It's a fairly big deal with lots of famous authors and about 25,000 attendees.

Sincerely,


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