



**"I am a miser of my memories of you, and will not spend them."** ~Witter Bynner, "Coins"

**I LOVE The Sun!**  
It is a ray of  
sunshine to me!!!!  
Alissa Florio, BROOKLYN, NY

# dear SUN

I just wanted to write you a quick thank you note for always brightening the darkest days.

I have every issue saved in a box under my bed that I pull out every time I need a little cheering up.

From one "Sun" lover, to another .. thank you!

I live in Brooklyn, New York but my family has been vacationing in Wildwood for over 50 years. My Grandma found Wildwood by reading an ad in our local paper about the curing qualities of the salt water and thought the beach would cure my Dad's pneumonia. My Grandfather drove the family to Wildwood for the first time in the 1950s. Needless to say, they loved it and have returned every summer since!

You could say that I was born into Wildwood summers and hope to someday, some way, own a home there.

So thanks again for including me in The Sun-by-the-Sea! It really is a ray of sunshine to me!!!!

Best,  
Alissa Florio, January, 2009



Alissa Florio and Thomas Trask  
~ Summer 2008



### Summer sisters!

Alissa Florio and Lisa Cuzzocrea met at the Carriage Stop Hotel in Wildwood Crest. For YEARS, Alissa's family stayed in room # 6 and Lisa's family stayed in room #7. They became pen pals in 1987 and wrote each other letters and met every summer until the late 90s when their families began vacationing at different times. Their friendship continues as they call themselves the summer sisters.



A day at the beach in the 1980s with the Florio family: Donna, Nathan, Alissa and Carl



Grandparents Carl Sr. and Nancy Florio who discovered what became a family tradition for over 50 years ~ a Wildwood Vacation.

## Why We Keep the Sand In Our Shoes

by Alissa for my family- especially Nate, Andy, Neil, Jordan, Dana and Lisa (my summer sister):

It starts on the Garden State Parkway, somewhere around exit 28, when we are so overcome with excitement that we turn off the radio, put in the cd and begin to sing "You looked so very pretty when we met in ocean city..."

It's scanning the horizon for the big ferris wheel, the one we've all ridden like some kind of "rite of passage," and breathing a sigh of relief to see that even though it has changed- it's still there.

It's reminiscing about how every summer used to start with the family special at Surfside Restaurant and a lollipop from Tomi John.

It's driving by a lifetime of motels and summer rentals-- the one we grew up in, the one we met our life long best friend in, the first one we stayed in without our parents, the one we fled to when our heart was broken, the one that broke our heart when it got knocked down.

It's being experienced enough to wear our bathing suit under our clothes so that we can go directly to the beach and not get suckered into going shopping with our parents.

(It's being experienced enough to know that if we're the ones at the beach, we won't be the ones unpacking the car.)

It's not worrying about what we forgot to pack because, unless it's our wallet, we're sure we can buy it at Sun Crest.

It's the impatient kid inside of us that makes us think that we can sustain hot beach sand without shoes, sun with out sun screen and the waves without a practical bathing suit because we can't wait one more second to get on the beach.

It's knowing proper beach etiquette: don't feed the seagulls, clean up after yourself, respect other sunbathers' space, consider where the waves will hit at high tide and NEVER shake your towel upwind.

It's not just learning how to ride the waves- it's learning how to be tolerant of people who don't know how to ride waves.

It's wondering why we bother discussing where to go for dinner when "dinner" is just the distraction between the beach and a Duffer's ice cream sundae.

It's realistically pointing out that if we are having sundae's for "dinner" we are totally justified in having a couple of scoops of Sea Shell's for lunch.

It's knowing that life can be a lot like the boardwalk ride Chaos- it can be scary at times but we know that we'll get through it, especially if we have someone's hand to hold.

It's hearing "Watch the Tram Car, Please" in our sleep...and kind of (sort of) liking it.

It's walking home from the boardwalk because no matter how late it is or how tired we are, there is always room for a piece of Vanilla Marshmallow fudge from Douglass Fudge on Wildwood Ave. and the fun is not over yet.

It's staying up late and reminiscing about how much the boards have changed and listening to stories about our dad carrying his cousin through the door of the Starlight Ballroom to see Chubby Checker perform the twist and blah...blah...blah... Just Kidding! We like it.

It's waking up early and walking all the way from the Crest to the boardwalk because there are just some times in our lives when we need to walk that far to get away from everything else.

It's knowing that shells are more than treasures- they are the ocean's gift back to us.....

It's believing that the salt water heals more than our skin- it also heals our heart, our soul and our mind.....

It's reminding ourselves that even though we're leaving- we're never really gone because at the end of every summer when we take our last walk on the beach-- we never empty out the sand in our shoes. We keep it as a reminder of the place we know we will always come back to...even though we don't own houses- it always feels like home to us.

May you always have a sea shell in your pocket and beach sand in your shoes. . .