



"I'm in deep trouble," moaned Santa. "My sleigh is loaded with so many toys that I can't get it off the ground any more." "Hmrrrrrr", hmrrrrrr Wendell, Chief Elf in Charge of Sleigh Aeronautics. "Guess we'd better solve your problem. Maybe we need to add a pair of wings for lift." Santa looked doubtful. "But wings are usually made of metal, and that seems too down-to-earth for a sleigh that runs on fantasy. You need to use materials that would bring a smile to a child's face, like, umm, Oreos. And I kinda doubt that two wings will be enough." Wendell sighed. "Well, we could use more wings. And maybe we could take crushed Oreos and bind them with one of those new high-strength resins" Wendell's voice trailed off as he did some fast calculations on his laptop computer (very small indeed, given that he has an elf-sized lap); then he looked up excitedly. "That's it! That's the Key! Three Wings of Oreon Tar!"

Hey, don't look at us like that -- *somebody's* gotta write this stuff! And what better place for it than the 1990 Christmas Newsletter.

Things have been a little saner around here this year (relatively speaking, of course -- we're still us!). Janet is still a proto-CPA completing her first year at Talbot, Korvola & Warwick; she needs another nine months of experience before she's a full-fledged CPA. She likes both the company and the work, especially since she's getting to do lots of different things (audits, compilations, taxes, etc.). Steve is still with Intel in Software Technology Development; he's now co-managing the group with Don Dennis, an old friend from Purdue days. Intel calls this arrangement two-in-a-box. While we suspect parts of our management chain are trying to decide whether this particular box was once owned by Pandora, we are making progress toward convincing a hardware-oriented company that software is A Good and Noble Thing.

We've both traveled on company business this year. Steve has been to Washington, D.C.; Dallas; San Jose; Charlottesville, Virginia; and Las Vegas. Janet has been to The Dalles (population 11000) and Nestucca (population insignificant). Although she can't quite put her finger on why, Janet has a sneaking suspicion that she's getting the short end of the stick.

We also found time to spend a low-key week in Bermuda this summer. Besides visiting old forts and quaint villages (all of Bermuda looks like it should come in HO gauge), taking in a comedy club and steel band, lazing on the beach, and snorkeling a bit, we learned to appreciate the local delicacies: fish chowder with sherry peppers sauce and dark rum; rum swizzles; and Dark and Stormies (ginger beer with rum). Did we mention that they have rum in Bermuda?

Our enthusiasm for sports continues unabated. Steve plays basketball and Ultimate Frisbee; Janet dances (jazz, tap, and ballet); and we both play volleyball. Our coed softball team changed its name this summer to Who's On First? and started its season a month late because of continual rainouts. We won the sportsmanship award for our league (it's easy for people to like you when they're mostly beating the stuffing out of you), for which we received an amazingly large and gaudy trophy. Steve's volleyball team (still Red Bricks after all these years) finished in 2nd place in B league this fall, proving that old age and treachery can still overcome youth and skill.

Last February we had a new addition to the family. We're very fond of it although it makes messes and is still somewhat finicky and demanding and sometimes keeps us up late into the night. I'm speaking, of course, of our personal computer. While we both use it for Real Work (among

other things, Janet is the treasurer of our church community), we're not ashamed to admit that it's a pretty terrific toy, too. Janet, in fact, has become such a Tetris expert that the International Brotherhood of Bricklayers has offered her an honorary membership. We recently linked the PC to our (electric) piano; we can now compose/play/edit music at either keyboard (PC or piano) and then play it back. In fact, you can play duets with yourself!

Last summer Intel entered a float in the Portland Rose Festival Grand Floral parade. This is the second biggest floral parade in the country, right behind Pasadena's Tournament of Roses parade. Intel employees built the float, and Steve spent an afternoon pitching in. His true artistic talent was instantly recognized and he was swiftly consigned to gluing small bits of food (spray-painted rice and coconut) onto truly vast areas of papier-mache. Even this is a lot trickier than it sounds because most of the surfaces are vertical or worse. At least he escaped the Flower Clipping Brigade; there were people who spent four hours snipping petals off daisies and such with a pair of scissors, ending up with a single paper cupful!

One other honor came our way last year. Janet was the winner of the Sunday Competition in the 1989 Football Pool (the season ended after the 1989 newsletter went to press). The Pool consists of two separate competitions: the Monday Night Competition (where you have to pick the score of the Monday night game) and the Sunday Competition (where you pick the winners for all the rest of the games). This is a high-stakes affair; we compete fiercely all season long and when we go out for pizza at year's end, *the winners get their pizza free!* Most importantly, the winners get bragging rights for the next season. This year's pool is the tightest in history (and history goes back at least 13 years); with two weeks left in the season, Steve leads the Monday Night Competition by scant points and *five prognosticators* (including both Steve and Janet) are tied for the Sunday Competition lead. It's going to be some finish.

Right after Christmas, we're headed for a week in Miami to see Janet's Mom and assorted other family members. We'll be sure to think about you while we're enjoying the Florida sunshine. In any event, we wish you the Merriest of Christmases and the Happiest of New Years.

Stay healthy, happy, and in touch,

Steve and Janet