

1982

Oh-Oh-Oh! (That's what Santa says as he goes back up the chimney.) Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah, and Police Novvydod to all of you once again from the Great Pacific Northwest (not to be confused with the Lesser Pacific Northwest).

We've now completed our first full year here in Portland, and are settled in quite nicely. At least, we've settled in nicely at home -- Steve is in his third office this year, and is preparing to move to a fourth the week after Christmas. Got to stay one step ahead of the revenooers . . .

We continue to discover important new things about Portland. For instance, we've finally discovered a place that makes New York-style pizza, The Big Tomato. (This may not sound important to some of you, but those of you who have Stalked the Perfect Pizza will understand its significance.) We've also discovered a place that sells all the Dungeons and Dragons paraphernalia that you can imagine (and probably some that you can't). There's no place like gnome.

Speaking of Dungeons and Dragons, it continues to thrive. The dungeon I opened here last year (Thunderball Fortress) now has characters as high as fourth level and rising (including Janet's monk Gemini). In addition, the gospel has spread: two players have opened their own dungeons (one of which includes Steve's own Clarissa Trueheart, fighter/cleric of Athena). The piece of the resistance, as T. Don would say, is the lunchtime dungeon that Steve is running two days a week at Intel. This group has only been in existence a couple of months and is exploring Stormkeep (Ah! the good old days). Keeping playing time down to lunch hour is always a challenge. However, it has led to the coining of a new word: Mondays and Thursdays are now "lungeon" time.

We've also had a bit of luck at indoor sports this year. (No, not that indoor sport!) Steve participated in two pencil-and-paper road rallies this year, improving to a 56th place finish in class B of the cross-country St. Valentine's Day Massacre (up from 131st in Class C last year), and missing only 4 questions in the round-the-world Great Maltese Circumglobal Trophy Dash. Although the scoring hasn't been completed yet, we hope that the latter is enough to finish "in the money" this year.

Seemingly endless entries to contests in the Four-Star Puzzler finally bore fruit this year as well. Our entry in the Uncle Max's Will contest won us a Rubik's World puzzle this summer (the winning answer: Surprise, Nebraska).

We've both been heavily into volleyball over the past year. Our coed team (the Owl Pharmacy Unfilled Prescriptions) actually won our local C League title, going undefeated in

the process. The trophy (which lives in Steve's office because Janet won't let it in the house) is a marvel of shiny plastic, simulated genuine wood, winged victories, leaping volleyballers, and other kitsch. Our summer coed team, the Nads, reminded many viewers of a cross between a Chinese fire drill and the Kilgore Rangerettes, and was not overly successful. (Why Nads? Think of the standard cheer -- Go never mind.) This fall, Janet's Generic Team (all-women) followed mostly in the Nad's footsteps, while Steve's team, the 1982 version of the Intel Rams, finished a respectable 5-4 (or was it 4-5?) in the Men's A League. Our new coed team, the Peter Denning Irregulars, has just begun practice for the season that starts in January, and we expect it to be a good one.

We managed to squeeze a summer's worth of softball in between all the volleyball this year. Our best position was "utility", but we had a lot of fun.

Well -- there are trees to trim, stockings to stuff, cookies to bake, and rubber chickens to buy, so we'd best get busy. Have yourselves a Merry Little Christmas.

With love,

Steve and Janet