

14 Nov 90

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L6L2L9

Dear « 1 »,

This last year has been one of harder ones, though without out and out disasters, and with many bright spots. So we thought we would try to put the year in perspective for you (and us), so here goes.

The weather has been real weird this year. The coldest December (89) for 130 years was followed by a January that was very warm (for January). Spring arrived in March, and we had the air conditioning on. The Summer was not as hot as usual (for which much thanks). Sue has been for lunchtime walks most days, which would not have been possible in previous summers. There has been more rain than usual, but it has not been all that much. Sorry to hear you have had near drought conditions. This month we have had an early, though small, snowfall, but the forecast for next weekend is for record highs!

We completed the second washroom a few weeks ago, so the big bulk jobs on the house are done. Still much remains on the slightly smaller scale. A new kitchen floor, windows that go up and down, and fresh paint will go a long way to smarten things up.

Have done still more tree lopping this Autumn, on the 'back door neighbour' this time. Had to get a new 32 ft. ladder to get up far enough. The theory that tree lopping would get more sun and water onto the back lawn seemed to work, but the lawn is still very tatty and thin. Oh well - still more fertiliser next year?

Much of our energy in the early part of this year went into fixing cars and coping with Sue's job. To put the cars in perspective, I will just list the things that have been fixed this year, mostly by me! Replace: carburetter, water pump, cylinder head gasket, cam shaft, silencer, voltage regulator, brake disks and pads, oil seal, timing belt adjuster, fan belt, valve lifter, tail light. Repair: fan. In all, its cost us well over \$1000 in parts, and would have cost \$1500 +++ in labour if the work had been done by garages. The enormous exhaust manifold on the Ford has two holes in it, and I don't know how much longer I can keep this going! Don't let anyone kid you US cars are reliable. On my experience, it just ain't so!

Despite all this, Wendy and John have bought themselves cars! Wendy's total outgoing was about \$4000, what with insurance (about the same per year as the car cost), certification, plates, and some immediately required replacements. She tried to borrow this from her bank, but they would "only" let her have \$3,500! John paid for his out of his earnings (congratulations John!) All he has to do now is to learn how to drive before the weather gets to bad to use his scooter! Wendy had a tyre blow out on her holiday, but that was on outback roads, so it could have been worse. Still it must have been a bit of a shock to find the spare wheel did not fit.

John has moved from the gas station to Lancing Buildall. This is a bit like Kennedy's. He is working in the customer collection area in the yard at the back. Handing out wallboard, plywood, cement etc.. He is working 20 hours a week whilst at school, and around 45 hours during the Summer. Much of his time is spent in charge of a large gas fork lift truck, on which he manoeuvres immense loads with great aplomb. His skill and application seem to have made him

well regarded, though that is perhaps less obvious now he is back at school and working fewer hours. Meanwhile, at school, John's talent for Drama seems equalled only by his distaste for maths! Still, on the whole he is on course to graduate in the same time Wendy did.

Wendy is taking University entrance very seriously. She certainly intends to spend a year at work saving, before going to University, as many here do. John still has a couple of years to go before things have to be taken this seriously.

Wendy has moved to "Price Club", for about double the money she got at ToysRUs. This is an immense warehouse stacked with large piles of whatever they have got, bread, tires, fridges, . . . All at "discount" prices. Membership is restricted to people with their own businesses, employees, and people who work for Pratt and Whitney! She has made a number of new friends, and reinforced previous friendships. All in all, it seems to have been a very good move. The 'no Sunday shopping' law has been declared unconstitutional or something, so Sundays are shopping days now. Weg works Sunday, and has Monday off.

Wendy has an engagement ring now, from the same guy - Dave Wilson - that she has had all year. He still has a year of school to go, so they are planning a five year engagement, one to finish school and four for University. These arrangements seem quite common, and normally last about three or four years, so we have not actually ordered a cake yet!

Sue has been at Litton Industries for three and a half years now. The department that she was working for was closed down in March. The department was called "Test", and their job was to see if there were errors in the work of the development department. Unfortunately, there were errors, so Test got closed down. Don't expect that to make sense, this is Litton we are talking about. Sue is now working in Configuration Management. The personal relationships are better there, and the work practices are getting straightened out.

Litton have already lost a lot of people. If the Personnel Dept. is to be believed, then by Christmas, there will have been a 40% reduction over an 18 month period. So Sue has finally decided that enough is enough, and there is no point in staying with a dead project! So the search for another job has been on these last months. It is not easy because there is a very limited market in reasonable travelling distance, for Sues experience and skills, particularly in a recession. However Sue is seriously considering an offer that materialised in the last few days. The pay and conditions are very attractive, and the Company seems better. However it will be over two hours driving a day, from where we live now.

PS. Since the last was written Sue has got more details, and things look even better, so she has accepted the offer. The company is Spar Aerospace. You may possibly have seen the "space arm" fitted to the Space Shuttle. That is Spar's best known product, and is also what Sue will be working on.

Last year we wrote "It looks like other aeroplane companies will also have to buy our (Pratt and Whitney) engine, just to keep up with Bae!" Well we now have four other customers signed up, so that was one prediction that came true. The future looks bright for this engine, and since it broadens our product range should be a good hedge against troubled waters to come. Still Pratts is suffering like most others these days, and a 9% redundancy is expected very early next year. So far it looks like Petes position is secure, in fact in a shortage area. So we still look forward to the future on a personal basis, whilst pondering on the future for colleagues.

Snippets -

Sue is still "Anglican baby" visiting at the Hospital.

The fancy printer this is printed on allows weird things like -

$e=mc^2\sqrt{\frac{c}{w}} \cdot \sum \delta \zeta x1$ to be displayed - should we ever want to.

Our parish church has taken up remand home visiting, Sue goes when she can find time.

The budgie and one cat (Carbenal) died, but Skipper lives on, and we now have a kitten and two finches!

Sue was been proposed as Treasurer for the Mother's Union but was 'opposed' by inner circle member. Still nice to be proposed.

We had a very nice break last April in Florida (its where Canadians live in the Winter). We were lent an apartment by a friend of Sues who bought it as a retirement home. A very pleasant few days. Nice and warm, without being too hot - at that time of year. Nice to just wander around without any overdrive activity. Though it's an odd looking area (to our eyes) in one way, everything seems either new or dilapidated, and all mixed up. Still nice beaches and boats, and cheap food, can't be bad.

Sue also got a few days in Ottawa, driving there and back with stops en route. She met old friends, liked Ottawa, saw some beautiful scenery there and on the journey, and had an adventure doing it all.

Talking of boats, they are now the "official dream." We are thinking that when the mortgage is paid, or thereabouts, in around four or five years, we might get a cruising sailboat. Say a 30 ft loa, 10 year old, for \$30k. In the mean time having a dream helps select books from the library, and gives something to think about. We may even go to the boat show next year.

Well I think that about covers where we are at these days, so will close with love. Please let us know how you are whenever you can.

Peter, Sue, Weg, & John

PS. We listed what needed doing to get last Christmas Dinner ready, and thought you just might like to see all that we do written down!!

MERRY XMAS DAY

08.00 Check slow cooker contains enough water, Xmas pudding, and is plugged in, is switched to auto, and is hot!

Remove bread rolls from downstairs freezer, and loosely wrap in foil, place on plate, and leave on side upstairs.

Stuff turkey neck with veal and lemon stuffing.

Make chestnut stuffing. Place 1/2 in turkey cavity. Rest in white souffle dish.

08.30 Brush turkey with melted butter, put turkey in large roasting pan breast down, add one inch (2.5 cm) water and place assembly in oven at 325 degF.

Lay table, green cloth, white centre cloth, best cutlery and glasses, crackers.

08.45 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

09.00 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

09.15 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

09.30 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

09.45 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

10.00 Invert turkey, -> breast up! Brush turkey with melted butter. Lay sheet of foil loosely over breast.

TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

10.15 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

10.30 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

10.45 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

11.00 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

11.15 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

11.30 Brush turkey with melted butter. TOP UP WATER TO ONE INCH LEVEL

11.45 Place potatoes (in dish in downstairs fridge) on top shelf in oven, retaining foil in place. Increase temperature to 350 degF. Place parsnips (from upstairs fridge) around turkey.

12.00 Prepare broccoli for microwave cooking, by cutting stem into coins, cutting florets into quarters. Put into glass bowl, one inch water, cover with tight cling film. Put in microwave.

12.30 Put prepared stuffing casserole in oven.

Remove foil from potatoes, invert parsnips. Prepare bacon rolls, stretch, half, roll, put on baking sheet, roll end down.

12.50 Bacon roll sheet to oven.

13.00 Roasting pan + turkey out oven, turkey to side on spiked dish (cover foil + towel), roast pan separately to side. Reduce heat to 300 degF, place plates (including one for pudding) and bowls in oven to warm. Transfer parsnips to bacon roll sheet in oven.

Make gravy in roasting pan, by mashing liver from fridge into roasting pan, and adding gravy from upstairs fridge.

Turn on microwave to "cook warm", "vegetables firm".

Place first course (salad in upstairs fridge) on plates in kitchen.

Put prepared bread roll plate in oven.

13.15 Put salad and rolls from oven on table, pour wine.

13.18 Read collect.

13.20 Eat first course (everybody).

Clear first course away.

Drain broccoli water into roast pan, add drainings from turkey on spiked dish, stir, pour into gravy boat, and place boat in oven.

Put broccoli into vegetable dish and put in oven.

Add bacon rolls and parsnips to spiked dish.

Put cranberry sauce from upstairs fridge on table.

Serve middle course as follows, turkey dish, veal and lemon stuffing, chestnut stuffing from casserole, potatoes, broccoli, gravy, and hot plates.

Clear middle course.

Place brandy butter and creme from downstairs fridge on table. Move candies from downstairs fridge to upstairs fridge.

Remove Xmas pudding from slow cooker to warm plate, flame with brandy and serve. John has shortbread from red tin in Ercol.

Clear desert.

Serve cheese, biscuits, and port, and candies from fridge.

Clear all.