

DECEMBER 25, 1991

## Howdy and Ho-Ho-Ho, Y'all!

1991 kicked off with a bang to a hallowed family tradition: the New Year's Day hangover. This follows naturally from an equally hallowed tradition: the New Year's Eve Party at home. Considering what has happened in past parties, so long as nobody puts the dogs in the dishwasher, breaks ornaments, or tosses their cookies on our bed, we figure the party went over pretty well.

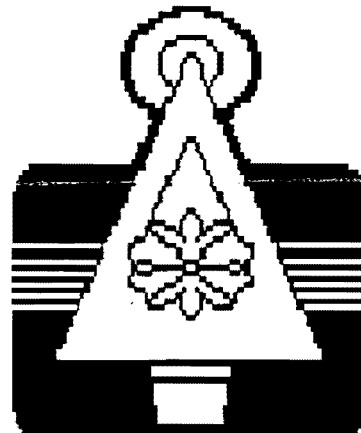
Of course, 1991 has been quite a year on the international scene, what with the Russkies finally getting access to Levi's, Paul McCartney and whatnot. The Persian Gulf war had us a little edgy for a while, since Mike's brother-in-law Cary was tearing around over there in his F-18, but he showed back up in the States safe and sound. He brought us his squadron videotape, which mainly consisted of footage of about four million trucks exploding. We'll never need to go see a Chuck Norris movie again.

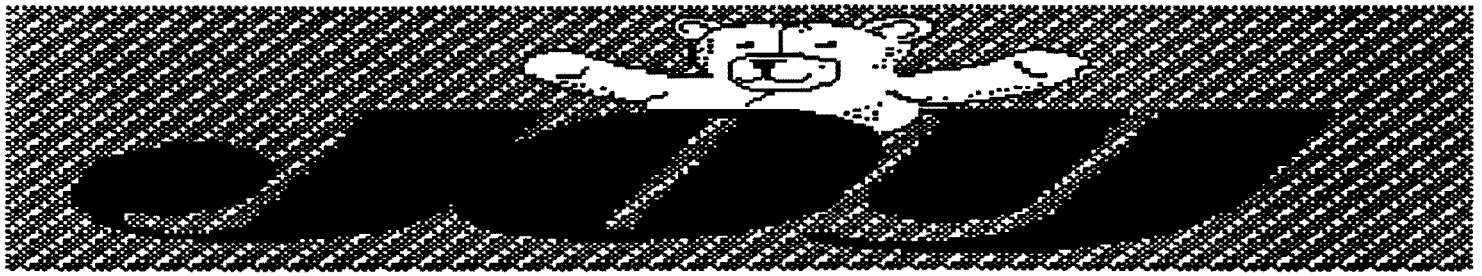
We did a little running around of our own, though not in an F-18. In May we flew out to Philadelphia for Mike's 10-year college reunion at Haverford. We had

dinner with friends at Vic's Cafe, where waiters sing opera to drown out the gunfire in the streets, and spent some time at famous college hangouts like Roache's Bar. This felt just like home to Jane. Come to think of it, *any* bar feels like home to Jane...

From there, we were off to New York, to visit Jane's brother Joe. It seemed like we walked from one end of Manhattan to the other and back again about six times, and wore out three pairs of shoes apiece. We really enjoyed spending the time with Joe, but were a little relieved to get back to Texas, where a "long hike" means you have to walk all the way out back to get to the garage.

In June, Jane had to head out on the Interstate Batteries Great American Race for a few weeks, which involved cruising across country, enjoying the scenery in a brand new Park Avenue. Also she had to hang out with the drivers and navigators of over a hundred vintage (pre-1936) cars, and schmooze with the local media. They actually *pay* her to do this stuff. She actually wasn't all that thrilled about being away for so long, especially because she





celebrated our wedding anniversary away up in the Northwest somewhere. We couldn't even talk much that day, since Twin Falls, Idaho isn't due to have phone lines put in until 1993.

July we mostly rested.

Jane decided Mike needed a break in August, and dragged him off to Granbury, Texas, for a bed-and-breakfast. We got to see several interesting shops, which all sold antiques, pot-pourri, or sometimes antique potpourri. We also attended the world-renowned Granbury Opera House, and suffered through what was perhaps the most

Godawful stage production ever attempted in Western Civilization. This was enjoyed immensely by the rest of the crowd, who had an average age of 82 1/2. We wound up very grateful for the one bar in town. We had a great time discussing weighty matters like possible names for children. (If it's a boy, "Thor." If it's a girl, "Imelda." What do you think?)

No, Jane's not pregnant.

We were planning to go to Germany in October, but figured that Waupaca, Wisconsin would be a more authentic experience. Besides, Jane's brother, Pat, and new sister-in-law, Julie, got married there that month. Since Mike finally sold

the red Starion of evil repute, replaced by a new Pontiac sedan in July, we made the mistake of driving all the way up. What we remember of the wedding was all sorts of fun. On the way back we went through Eau Claire, and Mike finally had to stick Jane

in the trunk because she kept jumping out of the car every time we passed a bar. Jane was let out of the trunk when we stopped at Mike's grandmother's house in St. Peter, Minnesota, where we got the grand tour of the city in three

and a half minutes, then spent several more weeks there in the next day and a half.

To wrap up the traveling, Mike flew up to Kansas City later on in October for a rugby tournament. The team had about as much fun as you can expect, playing in 20 degree weather amid dust bowls and goose droppings, but came in second.

Soon thereafter, holiday season was upon us with a vengeance, as well as a large metaphorical snowfall of work, in both our professions. As everybody seems to say, time has seemed to fly by. Still, 1991 has been a pretty decent ride.

**The merriest of Christmases to all, and to all a wonderful 1992. For the local and the brave: see y'all New Year's Eve!**

