

Merry Christmas!

Mike & Jane's Annual Report: December 25, 1994

"Deck the halls with Boston Charlie / Walla, Walla Wash an' Kalamazoo / Nora's freezing on the trolley / Boola boola Pensacoola hullabaloo!" 1994 has been a year of confusion, to be sure. Our first full year with a little rugrat around the house started off by failing to have the traditional New Year's Eve party, and staying at home with Maggie. We always thought it was law school that made one boring, but it turns out having children does the trick just as well. But mainly it was because Mike was not feeling quite up to snuff. Soon thereafter he came down with bouts of fever and chills and the world's ultimate sore throat, and then lost 20 pounds in three weeks. Doctors consulted were typically helpful: "It's a viral infection; you can't do anything about it. Fifty dollars, please." After missing three full weeks of work, he was able to totter in to the office, but took another three weeks to recover fully. He went a little overboard on gaining the weight back, though. At least it improves his earning capacity, as he is in high demand for playing Santa around this time of year.

The same month, Maggie came home with spots all over. As neither Jane nor Mike has any Dalmatians in their ancestry, we soon figured it was chicken pox. Against her better judgment, Jane stuck around with the two Typhoid Marys, but started talking to herself a lot and hanging around biker bars.

Jane's semi-annual Interstate Batteries convention rolled into town by April or so, meaning for the two months prior she pretty much slept at the office and Mike had to remind Maggie what Jane looked like via

pantomime and hand puppets. Mike's sister Trisha then got married to a guy she had been dating for eight years, in a last-ditch effort to add excitement to their relationship. They promptly moved to Anchorage, Alaska, which struck us as a rather melodramatic reaction to sweating out Dallas summers.

Jane rode along for the first half of the Interstate Batteries Great American Race in June, and decided that trekking cross country in seventy-year-old rattletraps is an overrated way to get a tan. She did get to see some friends up in Minnesota and Wisconsin, who came out to gape at the unusual sight of vehicles without snow plows welded on. Jane then cudged her brain to figure out a way to avoid the cross-country trek next year. She first thought of quitting her job, shaving her head, and joining a commune in Oregon, but decided that was insufficiently drastic. So...

In July, Jane got pregnant again. Hmm. One day we are going to figure out what is causing this. The new addition (whom we call Günter on odd days, Helga on even days) is due in mid-March. We figure the kid will emerge bearing three sixes, or perhaps horns, on his or her forehead, considering how lucky we were with the first one. We suppose we can always combine the baptism with an exorcism, as the Catholic Church is running a 2-for-1 special in April. We hear that if you throw in a fish fry, the priest works for beer.

In November, Jane and Maggie went down to San Antonio with some friends for your basic weekend-long pajama party. She

decided that the next time they all get together they would leave the kids with their Dads, as all of them were under two years old, and schemed to cause a ruckus in relays.

Naturally, the whole year has seen our eighteen-month-old Maggie get cuter and sillier every day. Seems like she is into everything; just last week she hot-wired Mom's car and called for gas money from Waco. Little dickens. She is severely addicted to Winnie the Pooh videos and every book within reach in the house, though she thought Joyce's *Ulysses* was a bit dry. Maggie is a bright little girl, and has already composed her first opera and made several important scientific breakthroughs. By the time she gets potty trained, we will really have something special.

In preparation for this holiday season, we got exceedingly industrious and shopped our little brains out, completing almost all of it before December and buying presents for people we never even heard of for good measure. This meant we could use our copious December free time to do all the domestic and traditional things, like bake Christmas cookies, go caroling, make a whole Christmas tree out of shredded newspaper, change the oil in our cars, etcetera. Of course December has blown by and we have accomplished none of this.

On the rugby-related front, though Mike finally is healthy this season, the weather this Fall has matched Burma during the monsoon season. The Texas Rugby Union even relaxed its strict no-equipment rules to allow snorkels on the field. He cannot remember the last dry game he played in, and is hoping to get in a few of them before age and fatherhood conspire to force retirement.

Jane is still working out feverishly at the health club, but has discovered to her cha-

grin that no amount of aerobicizing will keep her svelte waistline in shape while pregnant. She feels this is grossly unfair.

Jane has been doing well at work, though she spends most of her time reading travel brochures and gazing at the poster of Bavaria Mike got her for her birthday. Mike's law practice has been going reasonably well, although he holds the distinction of being the only lawyer in the country not consulted by O.J.'s defense team. He has branched out professionally, and now can add Calligrapher Laureate for Interstate Batteries to his resume. Think of him next time you look under your hood.

We miss our friends and family, especially this time of year, and hope to hear from all a bit more often. Mike, ever the computer nerd, has been burning up the hours on America Online, and wasting way too much time on the computer. None of this has much relevance to his profession, but he is hoping Microsoft might offer him a job when Bill Gates retires. Mike hopes to get a lively e-mail correspondence going with those of our friends who have access to computers and a modem. This saves licking stamps, and further exacerbates the decline in Mike's handwriting. Anyway, all are encouraged to drop Mike and/or Jane a line at MKoenecke@aol.com.

Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah (a bit late for that), Happy New Year, and all that. Cheers for a delightful 1995!

Mike & Jane