

Happy Holidays!

Mike & Jane's Annual Report: December 25, 1992

"Well, it's Christmas time, pretty baby, and the snow is falling on the ground... You be a real good little baby, 'cause Santa Claus is back in town." Yep, it is that time of year when we all await the arrival of the King. So Mike has been wearing his Elvis tie all month. Yet another year of marital bliss has meandered on down the river, and we find ourselves pretty much in the same spots as we were last year, with a few exceptions.

The only notable occurrence in the month of January was that Jane turned 30 years of age. This is ordinarily a time of great rejoicing and giving of tasteless gifts in her family, so when Mike only came through with a nice dinner at Cafe Pacific on her birthday, Jane's lower lip dragged the pavement most of the evening. Seeing as how her birthday came on a Wednesday night, you would think that Jane might suspect something was afoot for that Friday night, but you would be wrong. Jane was caught completely by surprise by the party held at Mike's parents' house, and eventually decided to let Mike sleep in the same bedroom with her again.

Spring Rugby season came and went, with Mike's team missing out on a State championship due to Mike's getting tripped up by an outstretched hand, for God's sake, while playing against Houston R.F.C.. The Good Guys in Red lost by four points.

Soon thereafter, Jane discovered that she had to eat, sleep, and breathe automobile batteries in preparation for her company's bi-annual convention, which did not do much for her health. Interstate Batteries's convention was in Hawaii, and Jane was looking forward to a couple of weeks on Waikiki Beach to restore her rosy cheeks. However,

she wound up staring at a video screen for the bulk of the festivities, while the high Interstate mucky-mucks did nothing but play golf and make speeches. Sometimes they would even do these at the same time, which disturbed the natives trying to putt through the windmill or get a loop-the-loop through a spare tire. By the time Mike showed up, Jane looked like she had been wearing 200-grade sunscreen for the whole week. We did manage a few two-hour excursions in a rented convertible, which were precisely timed to coincide with the frequent rainstorms. Jane also managed nearly fifteen seconds of snorkeling at the beach until she lost her mask. We did wind up with a pretty keen Hawaiian god for our world-renowned Ugly Sculpture Exhibit, an Elvis clock for the kitchen which has to be seen to be believed, and a wrist-watch for Jane sporting a hologram of John-Paul II (or George-Ringo I. Whatever.). Mike figures the watch is bound to be the only one in the world that *infallibly* tells the correct time. Or is that just some Papal Bull?

Returning from Hawaii with no tan, but plenty of tacky junk, to show for it, Jane was then tabbed to ride on the tenth or eleventh annual Interstate Batteries Great American Race, which, as described in previous letters, involves a bunch of old rustbuckets wheezing their way across America in a single-handed attempt to revive America's flagging automotive-repair industry. Jane wore out her last reserves of perkiness and enthusiasm by the time she rolled in to Dallas, but soon recovered after emergency transfusions of picante sauce.

We celebrated our third wedding anniversary on July 1st by going to the French Room at the Adolphus Hotel, which is the

only restaurant we have ever attended which sends thank-you cards. We also got a Christmas card from them, just today. This makes us wonder what they would have done if we had ordered something other than the \$5.95 all-you-can-eat fried chicken special.

August came and went, with a surprise party for Mike's Dad, who turned 60 on the eleventh and built a deck about the size of the U.S.S. Saratoga in the back to celebrate. Actually, we think he pounded about five nails, all told, but supervised up a storm. We occupied most of that month by planning a real vacation. Though we had popped out of town on occasion for a long weekend, we had not had an honest to goodness Get-Away-From-It-All-And-Leave-Brains-Home since our honeymoon, and decided we might as well go abroad, as it would probably be our last chance for about another twenty years.

On September 3, we flew from DFW Airport directly into Frankfurt, Germany, and set out for an overnight stay in Viernheim. This was our only hotel reservation until the last night of our vacation in Munich, some eleven days later. In between, we roared around that area of the continent in our powerful Volkswagen Polo, seeking out new and strange little towns in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, and generally having an enormous time. We learned that it is definitely not true that "everyone speaks English" over there. And Berchtesgaden is probably the prettiest place in the world. And various other things, too numerous to put in this short letter. For a full account, just ask.

Frankly, we had kind of hoped to bring back an extra person from Germany, albeit one maybe a quarter-inch long. But it turns out that Jane actually did not get pregnant until maybe two weeks after we came back. We out this out only about five weeks ago. Mike would have been more excited about this if it were not for that secret vasectomy he had last year. Our first little rug-rat is due

around July 1 of next year. On odd days, we call it "Thor", and on even days, "Imelda". Jane recently got a sonogram, which led Mike to suspect that she really was knocked up by a space alien, maybe because Thor (or Imelda) had a glowing index finger and kept mouthing the words "E.T. Phone Home." So there is not much else to go into on that subject, as you will all be reading about it in the Weekly World News shortly.

We had also talked about selling Jane's aging auto to Mike's sister, and maybe replacing it with something practical, like a Ford Explorer. We spent quite a lot of time test-driving everything in sight, and Jane finally settled on a car appropriate to her personality: a Honda Civic del Sol. Upon finding out about Jane's bun-in-the-oven-ness, Mike promptly called up his auto broker and ordered one for her, which was probably overdoing it a bit, since Jane would have settled for flowers. Anyway, the car was to arrive in about three weeks, which we both spent in breathless anticipation. The whole deal promptly fell through. So while Jane was out walking the streets (actually, manning a float in the Jingle Bell Run for Interstate), Mike went to a couple of dealerships and spent the whole night haggling to buy a car. He picked it up last Thursday, and stuck it in the garage for a surprise. Of course, Jane got home an hour early, but fortunately was too preoccupied with browsing through the seventeen Christmas catalogs we get every day to even look in the garage. Anyway, Jane's new buzz bomb is cuter than a speckled pup [mandatory Texas-style simile], and Jane has been racing around in forty-degree weather with the top down. She now has been diagnosed as having a terminal case of chapped lips.

So, we are now eagerly awaiting the arrival of Imelda (or Thor), and hope all of you have similarly happy news. The Merriest of Christmases, Chappiest of Chanukahs, Koollest of Kwanzaas, and, uh... Soulfulest of Winter Solstices to all!