

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS, 1990

Most of this year was spent at the home front which is one of our favorite places to be. We did get away for a little while, however, highlighting the year with a couple of weeks spent on the Mendocino coast where we rented a little house on a cliff, sipped wine, and watched the California Gray Whales spout.

In an effort to sell our house so that Barbara wouldn't have so far to commute, we ended up with many household improvements. There's fresh paint, a new garage roof, new furniture, and a lot less clutter. However, since the real estate market slump coincided with these efforts, we got her a job a bit closer to the house instead.

In September, Barbara became the Associate Director of the Astronomical Society. This new position puts her in charge of all business activities; it is much broader as she manages all aspects of the Society except the science. Founded in 1889, the Society is one of the few international scientific organizations to have both professionals as well as amateurs as members. It carries on an ambitious program which includes lectures, professional publications, awards, and educational outreach. It's funding is diverse, but includes a unique mail-order catalog which offers video and audio tapes, software that brings galaxies, etc. to the screens of desktop computers, special books for all ages, and slide sets, all keyed to the mystery of the cosmos. Barbara is currently busy planning two major events: the annual Society scientific meeting in June and the events surrounding the July 11 solar eclipse (the latter will occur with or without her). Don't miss the eclipse, but if you come to our house that day, we'll be watching it from Hawaii.

Mike finished up the USGS Wilderness Program and published 11 papers this year. He began a project as team leader that will develop a regional expertise in the resources of northern California. One of the side benefits of this project was participation in a field trip to hot-springs mineralization sites in southeastern Oregon and the Mt. Lassen area with a group of geologists from Bolivia, Chile, and Peru. The future of publications of the group will include digital maps produced with a geographic information system. If Mike didn't like computers before, he'd better get used to them, on the big screen and in color.

Chris became a senior at U.C. Santa Cruz this year. He finished up his last general-education requirement, Physical Anthropology, at De Anza College this past summer. Summer also saw him log quite a few miles on his yellow Datsun; an activity that led him to the four corners of the Bay Area from Berkeley to Cupertino. He is scheduled to graduate with his degree in Politics in December, 1991; but since he will only have three unfinished classes in June, he will go through the graduation ceremony then.

In the midst of all the work surrounding both the house and Barbara's job, she has gotten in great shape at the local Y aerobics classes. She was just starting her new job when it was time for the summer hike, so who went? - the two couch spuds, Chris and Mike. They went anyhow to see if youth and/or woods wisdom could overcome lack of fitness. They and two other climbers spent five days in the Sierra over Bishop Pass, a couple of knapsack passes, and into Dusy and Palisades Basins. Chris bagged his first peak, a 12,500-footer that still has the original register with Jules Eichorn's name (know your Trivial Pursuit mountaineers). Back in town we nursed sunburn, ate real food (as opposed to freeze-dried), soaked in Hot Creek, and headed home. Later in September, Mike entered the 20th Clam Beach Criterium bicycle race near Arcata, Calif. in which, keeping with the tradition he set at the 1st, he came in happy and last.

The dogs' latest claim to fame is the big red card in the sorting bin at the U.S. Post Office that accompanies the mail bundle for this house. Lest the Postperson discover the truth about the Odd Couple, the note they keep in our bin reads "VICIOUS DOG."

We wish you health and peace, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Love,
Barbara, Mike, Chris, Duffy (bark) and Dottie (woof)