



Thirteenth Annual Granger Holiday Newsletter



CURRENTS

Belated holiday greetings from the Grangers! We hope that this season has been a happy one for you and yours, and that your new year is a bright and prosperous one. We don't write or call as often as we'd like to, but please know you are often in our thoughts...

2002 was kind of a mixed bag for us. Highlights included family visits, leisure travel, and new business ventures against the backdrop of a tepid economy, a lousy stock market, global terrorism, and the spectre of war. Throw in a plague of biblical proportions and it could've been a really good year for pessimists.

Since we last wrote to you, sister Alisa and husband John have two newly-minted daughters, Savannah (4) and Shannon (2). Savannah looks very much like her mother and Shannon is Daddy's girl. Nephew Garrett graduated with a degree in Psychology from UCSD Muir College in June, which happens to be my alma mater. If we didn't feel old before, we feel positively ancient now. He is recovering from ankle surgery and contemplating graduate studies at Columbia University in NYC.

Mother Patti now spends enough time on the Internet and using email to qualify for her nerd learner's permit. When her computer acts up, she can now hold her own with any help desk technician, including her son.

Sister Laurel is thriving as a bilingual elementary school teacher, living in Temecula. She has found a soul mate in new boyfriend Luis. They traveled to Mazatlan over the holidays.

Sister Carol is working at Guitar Center in Thousand Oaks, and son Dylan has grown into a fine lad of 10 years old. Like most kids his age, he is a wizard at video games and has mastered several gaming dialects (PlayStation 2, Game Cube, etc.) and routinely beats all adults - except in football.

Niece Mara has been attending The Groundlings School (www.groundlings.com), an incubator for budding standup comedians while continuing to work as a professional masseuse. Niece Lindy bought a house in Vista and is working as an executive secretary at Mossy Nissan. Nephew Gary works as a floor manager at the venerable Argyle Hotel on the Sunset Strip in Hollywood, routinely rubbing shoulders with the stars...

Several members of the family are considering a move "en

masse" to Murrieta in south Riverside County in 2003.

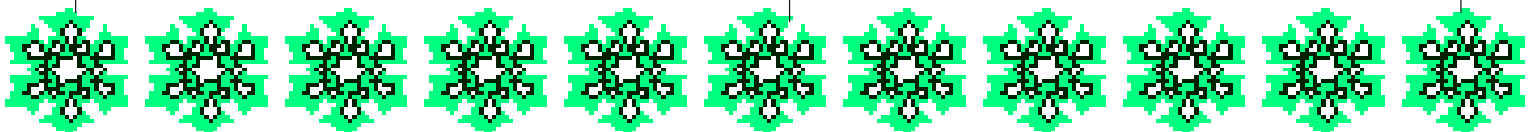
Karen's niece Lori wed Scott Ickes at the Bellagio in Las Vegas in April. Ma and Woody continue to enjoy their vagabond lifestyle, traveling the country visiting family and friends and national parks in their 5th wheeler. Now that's our idea of an ideal retirement! Sister Ruth Ann somehow manages to juggle work and raising four grandchildren, and we remain in awe of her abilities.

A tragedy occurred on Karen's side of the family in November when brother Ken's young grandson Jordan died suddenly due to a seizure. Words are entirely inadequate to express the depth of the family's sorrow in these circumstances, and our hearts go out to Ken, Barb, and Jordan's parents.

TRAVEL

In March we hit the slopes for a week at The Ridge, Lake Tahoe (www.ridge-tahoe.com). Nestled in the mountains above Stagecoach lift at Heavenly Ski Resort, our condo included a picture window that afforded spectacular views of the valley far below.

In November, we went on a camping adventure with our Action Ski Club buddies to Guadalupe Canyon (www.guadalupe-canyon.com), a remote oasis about 35 miles south of Mexicali in Baja. We left a rainy and cold San Diego on a Friday night, driving through Tecate then heading east through the windy mountain passes. Arriving on the desert floor, we were greeted by dry, balmy weather. Turning south, we drove our 4-wheel drive truck over a teeth-rattling washboard road for 75 minutes, occasionally becoming airborne when hitting dips and avoiding other "surprises" along the way. The last half-mile is over a road so narrow and rocky that it leaves you wondering if you made a wrong turn onto a goat path. Climbing the final boulder-studded hill into our campsite, we awoke the next morning to find ourselves in a desert Shangri-la. Each campsite comes complete with its own palapa (thatched hut), fire-place, table, and spa fed by pure, natural hot springs. You can hike to nearby waterfalls and explore Indian caves, or just soak in the hot tub and take in the gorgeous view. Best time to go is October-April before it gets too hot, and be sure to double up on transportation - you're a long way from AAA if your car breaks down.





We visited Kauai in December and discovered that they actually have snowmen there – they just don't last very long. When we first traveled to Kauai back in the go-go late '90's, we were seduced by the Garden Isle's natural beauty and laid-back lifestyle. The posted speed limits are 10 miles below "safe" and the locals drive 5 miles under the limit. You either go bonkers or learn to relax...

We bought a timeshare at Embassy Vacation Resort so now we HAVE TO go back every year. We look forward to scuba diving, snorkeling, hiking, and – when the muscles need TLC – a visit to Angeline's Lomi Lomi spa. Once you've been steamed, salted, and massaged simultaneously by two masseuses, you'll think you've died and gone to heaven. If you decide to go to Kauai, let us know; Embassy offers a special introductory offer of \$650 (70% discount) for a condo for one week for family and friends of existing owners. Jim Zangerle, are you listening?



At the Spouting Horn in Poipu Point, Kauai

We always dreamed of owning a cabin in the San Bernardino mountains, but were never sure we would get enough use of it. When sister Ruth Ann offered us a half-interest in her cabin near Lake Arrowhead back in 2000, we jumped for joy. Less than a 2-hour drive from San Diego, our little 2BR cabin is a perfect weekend getaway. It's like camping out with all the creature comforts. On warm summer nights we can sleep out on the sundeck and listen to the wind in the trees.



Our gingerbread cabin near Lake Arrowhead

S P O R T S

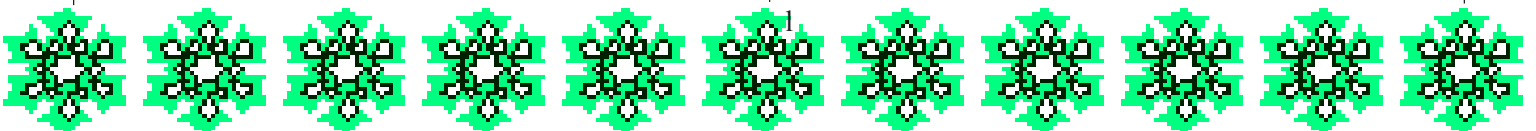
Charg-ers! Char-gers! Char-gers!

Pablo Nogatoches, renowned sports cynic and prognosticator, correctly called the Chargers season from the beginning. The Chargers' playoff scenario would inevitably come down to the final home game of the season against Seattle, whereupon the Chargers would once again rip the hearts from the expectant breasts of their fans. If that sounds vaguely vulgar, then consider the plight of Charger masochists everywhere in the wake of yet another late season swoon (sigh). Nonetheless, it's hard to recall a more exciting season since 1995 when our beloved Bolts went to the Superbowl. After going 5-3 at Qualcomm this year and winning 3 overtime games, not a fingernail was left unbitten in the stadium.

B U S I N E S S

John left Stellcom in July 2001 after 5 ½ rewarding years. The company was hit hard when the technology boom ran out of steam, downsizing from 450 to about 150 employees. Shortly after leaving Stellcom, John was searching for networking opportunities when he found a Web site called "The Layoff Lounge" (www.layofflounge.com). The Layoff Lounge was founded in 2000 by two guys who wanted to help their laid-off friends find work.

Based on the fact that over 75% of jobs are obtained through networking, the Layoff Lounge provides a forum for meeting with other professionals while providing guidance and job





***Work is the meat of life, pleasure
the dessert...-Bertie Charles Forbes***

search tools. Within a few months, the Layoff Lounge was operating in over 18 cities nationwide. When he found out that Layoff Lounge was not operating in San Diego, John contacted the founders and offered to start a local chapter. John and partner Don Them launched Layoff Lounge in San Diego in October 2001 to a standing room only crowd of 185. Helping people in their job search was extremely satisfying. John & Don continued to operate Layoff Lounge through July 2002, and it continues today under the guidance of Ted and Danielle Haberfield.

In October 2001 John joined a small startup company called TeraCenter (www.teracenter.com). The company provides a much needed service for small businesses, offering an economical IT solution that includes hardware, software, and secure network services and allows businesses to share data quickly and securely on their networks and over the Internet. The company has over 20 clients, a great team, and all the ingredients for success, but like most startups requires funding in order to build infrastructure and grow. TeraCenter applied for a loan from an investment bank, and was approved last spring despite the current tight-money economy. Unfortunately, the funding event that was supposed to occur back in July has been continuously delayed, and the bank's ability to deliver on the loan has become highly questionable. While the business makes enough to cover costs of service to customers, the limitations on growth due to lack of funding dictate that we pursue other sources of income.

On the career front, 2003 promises to be eventful. John recently completed a Professional Certification in Business Management at UCSD Extension, in addition to professional certs in Business Computing Applications, Web Design, and HVAC Design & Control. We understand the job market well enough to know that you make your own luck, and that opportunities come to those who are well prepared.

Karen retired from 24-Hr Fitness in 2000 and continued to consult with them through 2001. She has spent the past year contemplating possible new career and life directions. More to follow in the December 2003 newsletter...

PERSONALS

When big changes happen in life, you are often forced to confront and re-evaluate your values. Having gone through this roundabout, circum-spect process, one may find that the most valuable things are those that have been cherished all along. In fact, it is not "things" at all, but you – family and friends – that matter most.

And now for a little ditty that we know everyone who uses credit cards will appreciate...

THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Twas the day after Christmas,
and all through the house,
Every creature was hurting, even the mouse
The toys were all broken, their batteries dead;
Santa passed out, with some ice on his head.

Wrapping and ribbons just covered the floor,
while Upstairs the family continued to snore.
And I in my T-shirt, new Reeboks and jeans,
Went into the kitchen and started to clean.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the sink to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the curtains, and threw up the sash.

When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a white little truck, with an oversized mirror.

The driver was smiling, so lively and grand;
The patch on his jacket said U.S. POSTMAN.
With a handful of bills, he grinned like a fox
Then quickly he stuffed them into our mailbox.

Bill after bill, after bill, they still came.
Whistling and shouting he called them by name:

Now Dillard, now Broadway, now Pennys and Kmart,
Here's Robinson's, Levis and Target and Wal-Mart.
To the tip of your limit, every store, every mall,
Now chargeaway-chargeaway-chargeaway all!

He whooped and he whistled as he finished his work.
He filled up the box, and then turned with a jerk.
He sprang to his truck and he drove down the road,
Driving much faster with just half a load.

Then I heard him exclaim with great holiday cheer,
ENJOY WHAT YOU GOT
YOU'LL BE PAYING ALL YEAR!

Internet Addresses

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