

## Christmas, 2006

Merry Christmas, 2006! Hope you had a great year! We did! Let us tell you about it.

First, we started the year by getting the interior of our house painted. We had professionals do every room, including the ceilings. Through the rest of the year, John installed ceiling fans in the bedrooms, new light fixtures in other rooms and additional electrical outlets where needed. Improvements in the garage were also in order to increase our utility storage area.

In February, we threw the first annual Mardi gras party at our new house. We had a large turnout and everybody enjoyed themselves. Many of our new neighbors were introduced to Mardi gras traditions for the first time, including their first whole Cajun fried turkey.

In March, tired of the cold rainy Oregon Winter and wanting to get away, we took a vacation in Hawaii. We spent a week in Maui, and enjoyed every minute. We went whale watching, and while the boat was sitting still with the engines off and a hydrophone in the water so that we could hear humpback whale song, a mother and calf surfaced right next to the boat. I got a great video of her swimming away and then diving with her tail flukes arcing high in the air. You can see and more of our adventures on our web site.

In June, John's mom visited us for the first time in years. We enjoyed having her and shared some time sightseeing, picnicking and just visiting with her. Also in June, John hosted a barbeque for his coworkers, christening his new natural gas grill that he bought for the deck.

In August, we took our annual camping vacation the week before Labor Day. This year we spent a week at Lake Billy Chinook, in Oregon. We rented a boat one day, visited the John Day Fossil Beds and the painted hills, and climbed to the top of nearby Smith Rock, a Mecca for rock climbers worldwide.

In September, we heard the good news that Janet's sister Cheryl gave birth to a healthy set of twins, one girl and one boy. Also in September, Janet's employer, and builder of large seagoing barges, allowed us to ride on a huge barge named the Morro Bay as it was launched into the river. It was very cool!

One problem with having a yard with large trees; they sometimes fall. One large dead tree fell for no apparent reason one day in late summer just as we were leaving for a weekend camping trip. It knocked down another tree and took out part of a neighbor's fence. Then in October, another one broke off about 15 feet up and fell toward the house. Fortunately, another tree stopped it, but it was perched hanging over our deck at the back of the house. After many safety precautions, John managed to take it down without damage or incident.

Our whale watching video, vacation pictures, Christmas letter and various records of our adventures are all available on our web site, [www.majorspain.com](http://www.majorspain.com).

Here's wishing you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Please keep in touch.

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