

Christmas, 2008

Well, 2008 was a quiet year for us. We hope everything went well for you and your family as well.

In January, we returned from our Christmas trip back to Mississippi and Louisiana. We enjoyed seeing the family in Mississippi and our friends in New Orleans. Later that month Janet attended a conference on drug addiction.

In February, we had to cancel our annual Mardi Gras celebration. Janet's arm was still in a cast due to a fall in November, so getting ready for a big party was not possible.

In March, we took a camping trip in the Columbia River Gorge, and while there traveled to the Mary Hill Museum on the Washington side. In addition to a wonderful museum, they have a large outdoor replica of Stonehenge.

In April, we attended a fundraiser costume party for the local theater. The theme for the party was "Oklahoma" in celebration of their upcoming presentation of the play of the same name. We went as a farmer and his wife.

Much of our summer was taken up with landscaping around our home. John dug steps into the slopes around the back yard. Janet had a great idea; we bought odd lots of floor tiles, mostly from the Habitat for Humanity "re-store" outlet, and used them for steps. For locations where additional strength was needed, we used outdoor mortar to attach the tiles to concrete stepping stones. Since the plain stepping stones are available from home improvement stores in colors, we were able to match the tiles to the stepping stones for added beauty.

In June, our outdoor adventures lead us to a long weekend at Detroit Lake, Oregon, where we rented a boat one day and spent the day touring around the lake.

We celebrated the Fourth of July by attending a friends barbecue followed by a grand fireworks display.

In August, we took our annual vacation by loading up the motor home and spending a week around the Olympic National Park in Washington State. This is a beautiful national park surrounding the Olympic Mountain Range west of Seattle. There is a rainforest on the western side, and a much dryer area on the east side. We spent a couple of days in the rainforest, enjoying the massive trees (some nearly 300 feet tall) and snow-capped peaks. We spent the rest of the week in Port Angeles, from which we drove to the visitor's centers in the mountains for hiking and sightseeing.

In September, John decided to take an acting class, with a thought toward auditioning for a small part in the local theater. The weekly night class ran through the first Monday of November, and was great fun. He also made a few new friends.

In October, John had outpatient surgery to correct a problem with his septum (the tissue separating the nostrils in the nose). Recovery was more difficult than anticipated due to the fact that the splints that were implanted in the nose for 3 weeks made breathing through the nose all but impossible, which interfered with his sleep. Once the splints were removed, life returned more or less to normal.

We had a great Thanksgiving. We spent the week camping at Silver Falls State Park, which also has a conference center. We went hiking around the many beautiful waterfalls, and had our Thanksgiving dinner buffet at the conference center restaurant.

I forgot to mention in last years letter that a patent application John submitted in 2002 came to fruition in 2006 and was granted US patent number 7,058,811. This was a patent in applied cryptography.

Pictures of our adventures are on our web site, www.majorspain.com

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

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John and Janet at the Hillsboro Actors Reparatory Theater
"Oklahoma" fund raising costume party



Visitor Center at Olympic National Park



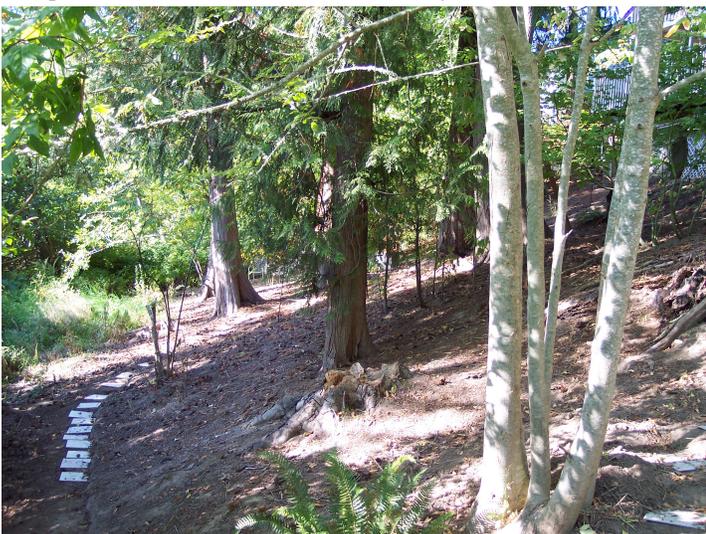
Janet in the boat on Detroit Lake



Sail boarders in the Columbia River Gorge



Our paths under construction in the back yard



A Squirrel works his way down the rope to our squirrel feeder



Janet & a 270' high Sitka Spruce tree @ Olympic National Forest John on the Columbia River at Memaloose State Park



John and Janet together at Olympic National Forest

