

Seasons Greetings,

Rob and Ann's lives became much more hectic this year, so they left it up to me to write the Christmas letter. My name is Stain, the Damsel fish that Rob and Ann have owned for two years. I've been here the longest and have seen eight other fish come and go in this tank, but that doesn't hold a candle to what I've seen going on around the house. Rob and Ann think they watch me, but in fact, my tank buddies (Gizmo & Ringo) and I watch them!

The funniest thing I saw this year was Rob and Ann trying to assemble furniture. It took them 3 evenings to get Ann's computer stand built, and two evenings for the TV entertainment center. There were a lot of broken fingernails and sprained wrists trying to move all that wood. Rob thought it was a bad sign when the computer stand came in three boxes and they said some assembly required! It was almost as bad as Rob clearing out his magazine collection trying to fit them into his new bookcase.

Speaking of Rob, he is still at Picker. It has taken three years, but he claims to have the network well under control. Picker just started a new "Image Management" department that may offer new challenges.

Ann is still baby-sitting and started working at Multiverse in January. She has been doing a great job. I guess the books were a real mess before she got there. She even found some high cap customers that weren't even being billed! Well, you know it takes a woman's touch to straighten out a man's mess. Multiverse is well on its way to seeing some good black ink.

There was a raffle at the local fish store for a 250 gallon tank. The odds were looking good for me because they only sold 300 tickets. I was getting excited about my new home, but alas, even with those wonderful odds we didn't win. At least the water quality has been better this year.

Ann got a new Cyrix 686 computer at home to print Multiverse's invoices. It looks great in her new computer stand, but I don't think Rob was excited about losing a whole corner of "his" computer room.

It's amazing that Ann has 45,000 miles on her new van. At least she has a CD player in it now. Speaking of cars, I guess the mighty Eagle Talon needed another clutch...geez, will those two ever learn to retire something when it's dead? It's bad enough to be swimming around, only to go behind a rock and see the remains of some fish they thought would look good in here.

While Rob and Ann were buying new furniture, they felt the need to purchase a VCR. Rob was distraught that the only station that decided not to produce any sound was the Discovery Channel. God forbid he should miss a documentary on airplanes. After much research, countless questions to sales people and a little yelling, they decided on a nifty machine. The gadget that most attracted Ann was the "Commercial Advance Skip" feature. This fast forwards through the commercials automatically so she can do domestic chores, like ironing, while watching her soaps. Ah, the wonderful world of technology!

Finally, Rob got his pilots license. It is to fly by sight, and now he is working on his license to fly by instrument. He still has the lawn chair with wings, but hardly flies it anymore. I guess he considers ultralights too dangerous, (it can't be as bad as living in this tank). He has been flying with his partner's Grumman Tiger, 4-seat, low wing airplane, but he needs to check the weather more often. He took his sister, Harriett, to a college reunion in Allentown, PA and made it back just 30 minutes before the largest winter storm to hit Cleveland came cruising through. We lost power for 14 hours and it got quite chilly in the tank waiting for the pumps and heaters to come back on.

Ann had some fillings replaced this spring, which was a long drawn out process. Rob says she is much nicer now that she can chew on both sides of her mouth. It's amazing how a little dental work can cause a personality change.

Ann, Jo, Talia and Talia's baby sister, Olivia went vacationing again over the summer. Their travels took them to New Jersey, New York City, Massachusetts, Chicago and Washington, DC.

Well, Rob and Ann just got home with the Christmas tree. I'm sure it was another year of dragging Rob all over and ending up at the first lot to buy the tree. I hope your tree shopping went smoother!

Happy Holiday to all!