

# Merry Christmas 1997 (& 1996!)

## Special Notice to Loyal Readers

Management regrets that gross incompetence on the part of its editorial and production staff during negotiations for co-branding this erstwhile publication with Sunbeam resulted in temporary loss of a photograph that so bummed them out that they failed to publish in a timely fashion. This special keepsake issue covers two full years and will probably become a collector's item advertised nationally in supermarket flyers and tabloid magazines.

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## 1996 Was A Really Crazy Year!

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The year started with a February trip to Key West to thaw our bones from the Illinois cold. Having thawed, Ted decided that he really wanted to see what the ice in the St. Mary's River at Desbarats ON looked like in March. Gamely, Marcia slogged along with him for a quick trip North. Deep snow blocked the road to our cabin but we certainly saw ice! The US Immigration and Customs agent wasn't quite sure he wanted to let people who drive a thousand miles round-trip just to see ice back into the country!

In April we headed to Europe to visit Beth and Jeff at their home in Scheveningen, which is the seaside district of The Hague. On our way to the Netherlands we stopped in England to visit Ted's cousins Pamela and Tim Jones. They invited us to stay with them in their quarters in HM Tower of London where Tim is the Deputy Governor. Next, we went to stay with Maureen and Bill Jones (Tim's brother) at their home in Wales in the shadow of the Brecon Beacons. Bill, Ted and Marcia drove to Star in Pembrokeshire, Wales, to see from where the Jones family hails. The Welsh countryside is absolutely beautiful! Beth and Jeff took us to see the Keukenhof tulip show gardens at Lisse, Beth conducted us on a water tour of Amsterdam, and Jeff bicycled out to Delft to show us the New and Old Churches. [Click here to see Ted with Beth and Jeff on the seashore near Scheveningen](#). While there, we rented a car and drove to Winterswijk NL near the German border. This is the town where we believe Marcia's Oonk relatives lived before they came to the United States. We found birth and marriage records that seem to support this theory! After our visit with Beth and Jeff we entrained for Paris where our travel agent had obtained half-price reservations at the venerable Hotel George V. We walked our feet flat and visited the Louvre, Notre Dame, and Sacre Coeur where we observed a Mass. We also cruised the Seine on a delightfully touristy Bateau Mouche! [Click here to see us "Bateau Mouche-ing" on the Seine in Paris](#). The French were such good hosts that they even burned down the headquarters building of the Credit Lyonnaise for our entertainment.

When we came home we got a little carried away and started to remodel our master bath. If that were not headache enough, during the summer we decided to remodel our cabin in Desbarats! [Click here to see Desbarats in late fall!](#)

October saw us on our first visit to the wonders of South America. One evening early in the Spring we were out for dinner with our friends and back door neighbors, Judy and George Polk. They jokingly asked us if we'd like to tag along on the trip they were planning to South America in the Fall. Always the kidder, Ted immediately said "Sure"! So, on October 4 we flew to Miami on the first leg of our tour. We visited Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, the Falls of Iguazu), Argentina (Buenos Aires, San Carlos de Bariloche), Chile (Puerto Montt, Santiago de Chile) and Peru (Lima, Cuzco, and Machu Pichu). We did all the expected tourist things and had an absolute ball! [Click here to see us nearing the top of Cerro Campanaria, San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina](#). The falls were magnificent and we really liked Buenos Aires. On our way to Puerto Montt we traveled by "The Crossing of the Lakes" that is a day-long combination of three boats and a series of busses to cross the continental divide from Argentina to Chile. The incredible scenery included beautiful mountains and volcanoes in varying stages of extinction. Machu Pichu is a sight everyone should see! If we ever get to go back there we'll try to get reservations at the somewhat primitive but well-sited hotel just next to the ruins. Cuzco, the town at almost 13,000 feet from which one descends to Machu Pichu at 8,000 feet, is equally interesting as it was the capitol of the Inca Empire and was arguably the first capitol of Peru. Exhausted but satisfied, we made it home 18 days later. All in all, we found South America to be a lot more interesting in far more ways than we had thought before we went on this trip. We'll spare you any further details!

By Christmas the bath was done but the cabin was just being started! Ted celebrated the end of the year by leaving the [American Medical Association](#) after 22 years. A great experience but Ted felt the AMA had lost much of its focus over the years. The new generation of managers seemed far more interested in making money for themselves, as well as for the AMA, than in what the AMA was about and the resources held within the walls of its headquarters building. He does, however, miss the wonderful people he worked with over the years!

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## 1997 Was Pretty Nutty, Too!

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We began 1997 with another February visit to Key West, this time to celebrate StepMom Kay Bennett's 75th birthday with Ted's brothers Rick and Dave and Dave's wife Susan and their two sons in attendance! Quite an affair! While there, we found time to relax. [Click here to see us warm and happy in Key West!](#) Marcia joined [Koenig & Strey](#) Realty, a well-respected regional firm. Katie went with us in March to St. Pete Beach for the long anticipated wedding of "cousin" Karl Siebrecht to Stacie Berger. They had dated since her freshman year at Duke! [Click here to see Katie in St. Pete Beach.](#)

Beth and Jeff returned from Holland to settle in Kent CT. Love must have been in the air because in May we went to Nassau for Ted's cousin Wendy Wood-Prince's wedding to Peter Sherman. The Desbarats cabin remodeling was finally completed in August when the new kitchen cabinets were installed. Also in August, Carolyn Duyckinck accepted an engagement ring from Tim; date TBA in a few years after he gets his career going! He gave her the ring during a dinner cruise on *The Spirit of Chicago*. While running to the boat they were drenched by a sudden downpour! Tim is slated to finish his Architecture bachelor's in December for a May graduation. [Click here to see the wet but happy couple!](#) Grandmother Millie Sekera celebrated her 85th birthday in fine style with lots of family in attendance. Why not [send Tim a note!](#)

After a fall colors trip to Desbarats in late September, we headed East on the Queen's Highway through Sudbury and down along the Ottawa river past Ottawa and the St. Lawrence past Montreal to North Hatley PQ. There, we stayed at the [Auberge Hatley](#), a real gem from the [Relais and Chateaux](#) group of hotels and restaurants. The food was superb and the view from our room of the lake below was fabulous! After two days of glorious, gleeful gluttony we headed South through Vermont and Massachusetts to visit Beth and Jeff at their new home in Warren CT just outside Kent CT. Beth's parents, Jim and Gini Blacketter hosted a wonderful, home-cooked Chinese dinner upon our arrival. Jeff is the Art Director at [Cyberian Outpost](#) in Kent, an internet-based store for computer books, hardware and software. Beth continues her career in gourmet cooking at a catering business in Kent. Why not [send Beth and Jeff a note](#) or [send Jeff a note at work!](#)

Later in October, Marcia and Ted [Amtrak](#)-ed to Scottsdale AZ via Flagstaff on the Southwest Chief to visit friends and neighbors to our West Diane and Jim Czech. We arrived 37 hours late after being snowed in at La Junta CO by an "El Nino" blizzard on the way! [Click here to see us when, finally, we were allowed off the train in La Junta!](#) Once we got moving, the train hit an errant cow on the tracks, knocking loose several air hoses. All of the wheels on the sleeping cars were flattened by the ensuing emergency stop. The snowplow (the thing formerly known as a cow-catcher) on the lead engine was severely damaged. It wasn't too good for the cow, either. [Click here to see snow piled alongside boxcars stranded in La Junta CO.](#) Diane took us on a super tour that included a lunch at Lake Saguaro. We were both amazed at the growth in the greater Phoenix area in the 30 or so years since either of us had been there! Jim and Ted snuck off to play golf -- the first time in 41 years for Ted. They laughed a lot! Ted felt he had walked at least ten miles on the five mile long course. And that was with a cart. Ted's 137 was pretty darn good for 36 holes -- too bad they only played 18. Ah, well, at least that leaves (a lot!) of room for improvement.

Katie is with Krull & Associates, a Chicago design studio, where her primary account is everyone's favorite: Radio Flyer! She's living in the Andersonville area of Chicago. Why not [send Katie a note!](#)

Chris successfully started his own company as an independent, "hired gun" computer programmer and analyst. He has spent much of the year working on the systems at a major Chicago private investment firm. He lives near downtown Chicago in the Presidential Towers. [Click here to see Chris at Christmas 1996.](#) Why not [send Chris a note!](#)

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We wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas! May the New Year bring you happiness in every aspect of your life!

Love, Marcia & Ted

Why not [send us a note!](#)