

The Bainbridge Blabber

Holiday Edition

December 1999



Christmas Greetings!

Once again it is time to update our friends and family on our comings and goings.



Season's Greetings to all of our friends and family whom we hold dear. As we reflect upon the past year, there were times of adventure, joy, sadness, and personal growth for both Bob and Sandy as we expanded our friends, business contacts and activities. We will try not to bore or brag too much—and we hope that you will enjoy reading our letter as much as we enjoy reading similar letters from all of you.

Another Dam Vacation

Last February, Bob decided that we should take a long weekend and go on a mini vacation. “Where would you like to go?” he asked. Being that it was the dead of winter, and the idea is to go someplace warm, Sandy put on her thinking cap. It rather quickly occurred to her that she was probably one of only a dozen people in the whole USA who had never been to Las Vegas. We searched the paper for a deal and were on our way. We had a great time—Sandy played the slots a bit and more or less broke even. Bob engaged in people watching. As we stood in the observation deck at the top of the stratosphere and looked out over the city and surrounding desert in every direction, it occurred to us that this place has no reason to exist other than as an entertainment area with the sole purpose of separating people from their money. Anyway, we saw all of the big casinos, ate at some good and some average buffets, and took in many of the non-gaming attractions. Highlights included Bob’s ride on a large roller coaster that goes on the roof and over some buildings on the “New York, New York” casino (Sandy was too chicken), an Antique car exhibit, and a couple of IMAX rides. Of course, for engineer types like us, no trip to Vegas would be complete without a hard hat tour of Hoover Dam. Now we can add that to our Dam collection! We have visited several across the US and intend to see them all some day.

Zucchini Anyone?

Being that our house remodeling was finished last year, the next item on the agenda was to put in a vegetable garden. Bob, being part farmer, part logger, cleared out a nice sunny spot near the lake, and brought in some good black dirt with lot of fresh manure mixed in. (A little too fresh for Sandy!). Anyway, not wishing to share all of the harvest with our four legged neighbors, we put up a six foot fence all around. While the deer didn’t get in, a fawn and two does would come down every day to inspect the garden, drink and lick on the salt block nearby. The fawns decided that the garden made a great race track and they would race around and around the fence with great enthusiasm. Not knowing the degree of success to expect out of this new garden, Sandy planted 6 zucchini plants and 16 tomato plants along with winter squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, various peppers, peas, beans and eggplant. Cool weather caused Bob and Sandy to wring their hands about early results. However, in time everything started growing like crazy. The garden was very productive, but thankfully it was late enough in the year that the quantity of produce was held down. We still had plenty of zucchini and eggplants to eat, freeze, give away, and use for self defense. Next year, we won’t plant as much (ha ha—we say that every year !)



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Deer - 8 Sandy – 0

In all of the years we've been coming up to the lake, we never had trouble with animals eating the flowers Sandy planted. Now that we're here full time, Sandy planted more flowers and the place looked great. Well, word must have gotten around that if you like to eat flowers, this place has a great buffet. It started in the spring when the tulips mysteriously got their heads nipped off. Later when the Impatiens's and Petunia beds were in full bloom, Sandy would come out to find the whole bed eaten off. The deer did leave the buds, however, to ensure another meal in the future. Sandy and the deer matched wits all summer but she was outwitted every time. Suggestions from neighbors included blood meal, Zest soap, human hair, fishing line or coyote urine (just try asking for that at your neighborhood grocer)! The best plan appears to be planting flowers that the deer just don't like. Too bad they don't make marigolds in pink!



Grandson Bags Doe and Buck on First Hunt

Grandpa Bob was busting his buttons when grandson Loren shot both a doe and a buck on his first deer hunt. Loren, 13, previously completed the required firearms safety course before going duck hunting with friends this fall and then deer hunting with Bob in November. Loren spent three weekends with us prior to hunting season to study deer signs with Bob and get familiar with the trails and terrain of the woods. Loren promised Grandma Sandy that he would look for the deer with flower petals hanging from their mouths. On the afternoon of opening day, he made two clean shots—one to a doe on his permit, and one to a buck for Bob's permit. Unfortunately, the weather was so warm that the carcasses couldn't hang outside to age, but needed to go to the processor right away. The experience netted some of the most tender, tasty deer we have ever eaten (must be the impatiens) along with great pictures and memories for Bob and Loren.

Bob - 6 Squirrels – 0



Last year, we reported that the squirrels had won the initial 'battle of the bird feeder' with Bob. Well, with the simple application of about a yard of concrete, special welded foundation devices and specially designed support mechanisms Bob seems to have won this year's rematch. Bob has no humor about this topic, especially when chided about his seeming over use of brute force and technology!

Address Update

Last year's edition reported that we would be getting a new address as part of the national 911 initiative. The addresses were due out March 31st this past year. Needless to say, we still don't have our new address. We are now scheduled to receive our new address in February 2000. We will make an effort to get our cards out early next year to notify you of the new address. In the meantime, the old one is still good for a year.

Family Update

Bob's mother turned 95 this year and is still in a nursing home. She has lost weight and doesn't seem to have much of an appetite. About a month ago she fell and broke her collar bone. Otherwise she seems to be in good spirits. Sandy's folks are still living in their home in Golden Valley. They seem to be doing OK. Sandy goes to visit them every two to three weeks. Bob's aunt LaVon, who lives here in Brainerd is just amazing. She just celebrated a milestone birthday (she won't let us tell you which one), but still drives and is very active. She also announced that she has signed up for a computer class at the seniors apartments where she lives and intends to get a computer for something to keep her interest into the next millennium!!! Grandson Loren is 13 and in the 8th grade; Granddaughter Taylor is 5 and entered Kindergarten this year. Daughter Carla enjoys continued success at her job.

Personal Update

Our consulting business is doing well and we are reaching out into the community to expand our network of friends and business contacts. This year we joined the Brainerd Chamber of Commerce which has helped us get to know many people in the business community. In addition, Bob regularly attends Township board meetings, and is a member of the Minnesota Public Radio Regional Advisory Board. Sandy is joining a church in Crosslake and is a member of the local chapter of Zonta—a service group which works to advance the status of women.



***May all of you have a wonderful Christmas with the blessings of home, family and friends.
And may the New Year bring happiness, health and prosperity to all.***