

Davison

More news about us than you'd ever care to know. A thousand apologies.

WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST IN THE COMING YEAR!

Dear family and friends, despite our best intentions and illusions of newsletter grandeur, we were unable last year to get our Christmas letter out the door. Last year's loss is this year's gain (so to speak), as we give you two years worth of life for the price of one along with the earnest hope that we never have to do so again. ☺

JANUARY, 1999

Did 1999 prove to be a strange year for everybody else, too? After the normalcy of 1998, so many things happened this year that were wholly unexpected that Erin and I have yet to catch our collective breath. [As is obvious by this news reaching you a full year late!]

There was nothing particularly unusual about January. We spent New Year's in Pleasanton with our friends **Debi** and **Maurice**. After seven years of payments (and pre-payments), I discharged off the balance of my students loans from my University of Portland education. Debt-free living, finally! I was doing some part-time work for **Peterson Remodeling** and serving as the assistant coach for the boys' varsity soccer program at **St. Francis High School**.

Erin was in the midst of a stellar third year at St. Francis, this year as a religion teacher (Introduction to Catholic Christianity for freshman and New Testament for Sophomores). She was able to spend time changing existing assignments to make them more engaging and effective. I was taking occasional hikes and runs at Rancho San Antonio, a local open space nature preserve. Life was going along pretty much like 1998, which is to say quite well and certainly much better than 1997's herniated disc adventure (now fine, thank you very much).

FEBRUARY, 1999

February got off to a bang with our 1981 lowly Plymouth Champ failing the California emissions tests by a wide margin. Faced with prospect of driving this mediocre little car for several more years and throwing loads of fix-it money into it, we opted to buy a used 1986 Mazda 626 which is so much more fun to drive that words fail me. At the same time, the 626 has become something of an unfortunate sink hole for cash proving, I suppose, that no goodly amount of car research goes unpunished.

I turned 30 in February. This really wasn't that big a life-changing event. What was a life-changing event was the 26 percent rent increase our landlord hit us with that same day. A stellar high school soccer season (16-5-2) concluded with a 1-0 double overtime loss in the league championship. For the third anniversary of its inception, I revised my ever-expanding



NOT OUR HOUSE—One of many châteaux we visited during our Summer 2000 France trip. Our house in Salem is a little smaller. Yeah, this picture is a space-filler.

personal web site (<http://www.siterev.com/~davison>). It continues to bore an ever-widening array of visitors (including maybe you).

MARCH, 1999

I started off March with a trip to Oregon to sell off the Champ. I did a lot of Macintosh consulting and troubleshooting along the way, something I found extraordinarily fun. Upon my return, I did a few financial calculations factoring in our rent increase and saw the writing on the wall: I tendered my soccer coaching resignation after three fun years at St. Francis. I ended the month on a painful note, throwing out my back again (though not nearly as seriously as in 1997). Erin? Well, she was busy taking the St. Francis cheer leading squad to Nationals at Disneyland in her first year as coach.

Well, I guess it's a little late now to learn that starting a new business is a time-consuming, financially draining experience. ☺

All right, I admit it: I already knew all that. Truth is that I started a desktop publishing company called **Nire Communications** straight out of college. So I know what it's like to run a company (some would add "into the ground"—hehe).

My latest endeavor, **SiteRev.com**, is focused on providing small business with site design, web hosting and/or Macintosh computer support.

I started it in June 1999 when we moved back to Oregon, and it was kept alive summer of 2000 through the kind help of my friend Dave. (Client web site updates from France would've been tricky.)

Though it'll never be a multi-million dollar concern, we're accomplishing some good things for people—my clients include a human resources company, a realtor, and a rare coin dealer. I'm hoping to add a few more clients, but I don't ever picture growing too big. I want to be able on serving the clients I have to the best of my ability, and, just as importantly, I savor my free time. ☺

For now, I'm content to slowly grow the business and make sure it remains the fun, educational, rewarding endeavor it's been so far. Can't ask for too much more than that in sole proprietorship. ■

APRIL, 1999

April began for us just like March did for me: with a car trip to Oregon. This extended journey was our first in the Mazda 626, and let me tell you it was a lot of fun to finally drive a car capable of zooming up the mountains. Our Oregon Spring Break was another big Macintosh computer-centered trip for me, the centerpiece being a day at the Macintosh Business Expo at the Oregon Convention Center with my friend **Dave**. For Erin, it was a chance to line up summer employment via the Oregon Education Conference. Upon our return to California, we hopped a train the next morning with Erin's family and Amtrak-ed it to San Luis Obispo for Erin's cousin **Diana's** wedding.

On April 13, Erin and I made public our decision to return to Oregon. It wasn't when we had originally planned, but a variety of events (including a 26 percent rent increase!) conspired to accelerate our time line. In the end, we decided that we had accomplished everything we had set out to do in coming to Mountain View.

MAY, 1999

By mid-May, Erin had solidified a summer teaching position in Clackamas, Oregon. It was to be a series of high school English "credit recovery" courses—essentially, a last chance for a bunch of students to pass English since they'd flunked it during the regular academic year. In this summer school, Erin led a series of intensive writing workshops providing these previously unsuccessful students a chance to learn and succeed. It would prove to have its own set of challenges for Erin, requiring new teaching and discipline strategies, but it also was a great learning experience for those who chose to take advantage of the opportunity.

JUNE, 1999

In early June, Erin concluded three excellent years of teaching at St. Francis High School in Mountain View. The transition from newbie teacher to educational professional was hardly painless but growth rarely is. This third and final year was wonderful in a variety of ways, not the least of which were the

relationships Erin was able to forge with the students.

With the help of my friend **Dave** (who flew down from Eugene) and Erin's mom **Liz**, we packed up our belongings and hit the road for Clackamas. Simply put, 15 hours in a vehicle is too many, and if we ever have to do that again, well, I'd really rather not. Happily, when move-in time came, a wide variety of friends were there to help, and everything went smoothly. (Thank you all again!)

JULY, 1999

The big event of July was undoubtedly Erin acquiring full-time Fall employment. With our friend **Ginger**, another recent hire, putting in a good word, Erin interviewed at and was hired by **Sprague High School**, my alma mater, to teach French and English. On a lesser note, we also took in for the first time the film that gets my vote for movie of the year, *The Matrix*.

July also saw the release of *Scarlet Fever*, a CD by **loligo**, a band formed by my friend **Garr**. I also spent a fair amount of time putting together their web site (www.loligomusic.com).

We concluded the month by celebrating our five-year anniversary in a goofy, meandering drive along the Columbia River Gorge which ultimately ended up in a second-hand store in Umatilla. We stopped at the Stonehenge replica and toured The Dalles Dam along the way, but that was really all a sideshow to just having a free day to spend together.

AUGUST, 1999

With Erin's job at Sprague starting up, we moved from Clackamas to the Woodside Estates, a Battle Creek-area apartment complex in Salem. This event was made indescribably easier thanks to the help of our friends **Dennis, Dave, Missy, Garr, Carlotta, Mike, Joy, and Skylar**. Despite the niceties of the apartment, Erin and I began searching for a house—with the intent to buy—almost immediately. This process concluded rapidly, and with the help of Coldwell Banker realtor **Bob Van Deusen**, we located the house we were looking for in just over a week's time. (It's a 1953-built, 2500 square

foot split-level, and though it's not very modern, we're excited that we get to make it what we want.)

Other notable events of August included a 32-mile charity bike ride across the bridges of Portland with friends **Dennis, Joe, Ybeth, Miriam, John, Josh,** and **Susan**. I ended the month driving down to the Bay Area for the Seybold Publishing Expo in San Francisco. There I enjoyed the gracious hospitality of Erin's sister **Christine** and her husband **Mark**. I was also able to connect up with Erin's parents, **Bernard** and **Liz**, for what has become an incredibly long-running series of excellent dinners.

SEPTEMBER, 1999

Erin began her year at Sprague High School in September, noting very quickly the appreciative nature of the students and the quick support from the faculty and the administration. Like all the high schools in the Salem-Keizer School District, Sprague is overcrowded and lacks funds, making teaching in this public school something of a leap from the sheltered, affluent nature of St. Francis High School in Mountain View. The Sprague challenges—not seen at St. Francis at these levels—include truancy, low motivation, behavior issues, low self-esteem and so on. At the same time, her work has a vitality and necessity that perhaps it did not have before.

Erin taught four different preparations for 1999-2000: French I and II, Freshman English Skills, and Junior American Literature Survey. In the French classes, she really enjoyed teaching about the culture by way of francophone music, artists, and biographies.

Though I had begun my web design/computer consulting company, **SiteRev.com**, in June, it didn't really begin to flourish until September. Of course most everything in September really pales in comparison to the birth of our nephew, **Jared Roger Peterson**. Congratulations one more time to **Mark** and **Christine**!

OCTOBER, 1999

We formally moved into our new house in October. And we owe another

round of applause to our friends who once again came to help us move. (We promise we won't move again for a very long time.) The older nature of the home meant a lot of fix-it jobs (water heater, shower, shut-off valve, etc.) upon move-in. Fortunately **Liz**, Erin's mom, paid us a visit and helped continue the fixing and organizing after Erin and I had become exhausted with the process.

October saw some school dress-up days during homecoming week and on Halloween. Erin and fellow teacher **Megan Trow** caught the attention of Sprague with their matching gold-lamé jumpsuits, teased hair, and dance moves to KC and the Sunshine Band. Most recently Erin donned a cheer leading outfit for a football rally.

NOVEMBER, 1999

Around Thanksgiving, we were lucky to be visited by our friends from Alaska **Dave** and **Sue** who had come down to celebrate the holiday with Dave's family. Our own Thanksgiving celebration took place at my parents' (**Ed** and **Carole**'s) here in Salem. My grandma **Norma** and my brother **Bret** were also present, and the lot of us stuffed ourselves (as usual) and took turns napping and playing board games.

DECEMBER, 1999

December featured a marvelous Bay Area Christmas break trip which allowed us to see family and friends. This included our first face-to-face time with our nephew **Jared**.

Some years you go into with eyes wide open and despite the best efforts of foresight and planning, the year just turns out to be nothing like what was expected. That's not to say that 1999 was a bad year for us—far from it. But it wasn't even close to what we anticipated, and if there isn't a life lesson about preparedness in there somewhere, I've clearly not been paying enough attention.

In sum, then, 1999 proved one of the more eventful years in recent memory. With all the unexpected turns, Erin and I remain ever more grateful for our family and friends. Your support and love mean more to us than we can express. Thank you.

CLASSIFIED ADS

REAL ESTATE— HOUSES

4 BR/2BA—Build in 1953. South Salem. 2500 sq. ft. 7 acre park in back yard. Remodel house, make it your own, dream the dream.

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

WOODSIDE ESTATES—Large 2BR, w/d hookups. Quiet wooded location in South Salem. No amenities. Theoretically no security deposit, but this will change after you've started to move in. Fitness room not a plus.

SQUIRE'S COURT—Bring your party to the pool! (And no residency required.) Large 2 BR, w/d in apt. Act fast, parking is limited. Very limited. Excellent fitness room; perfect for use as childcare area for working parents.

MOUNTAIN VIEW—Small 2 BR, 1 bath in Mountain View, CA. Just over 600 poorly used sq. ft. High ceilings. Birthday special: 26% rent increase. Close to downtown. Free tree sap available above vehicle parking.

AUTOS— USED DOMESTIC

1981 PLYMOUTH CHAMP—Runs straight but couldn't pass California emissions without divine intervention. High miles, low power. Climbing hills, acceleration an interesting experience. Not recommended for those with lower back problems. \$100.