

The shining highlight for our family year occurred on the sands of Tulum, Mexico, when son Aaron Lundy stuck the proverbial wedding ring on the hand of our beloved Amy. The ring is something Larry's 87-year-old mother had long lobbied for, so Mom takes complete credit.

The family made a big splash – literally. The beach wedding was followed by the spruced-up wedding party, including Amy in full wedding gown apparel, jumping into a crowded resort pool at the peak of sunbathing time. It's true, check out the pictures and the startled looks of other resort-goers at www.ganders.net.

Aaron and Amy retreated back to their Potterville, Michigan home where Amy continues to study nursing and Aaron pursues his storied career at the Air Lift Corporation.

The wedding, complete with its stocked pool bar and tasty restaurants, was a great distraction from our 10-month effort to sell the fabled Cougar Street residence. We finally closed the deal in October and are very grateful that we found a window amid economic conditions to end a long and painful period of double mortgage payments.

And we absolutely love our new home in the Evergreen Valley area in East Olympia. If you go to the end of our driveway and bend your neck just right, you can see the tip of Mount Rainier on a clear day. Our part of the subdivision has wetlands in the lot in front of us and forest greenbelt to the rear. It's like owning acreage. In addition, our home is the kind of place where elk or deer can show up on your doorstep on Christmas Day, where an owl's hooting will wake you up in the morning, and (not so hypothetically) where four coyotes greeted Robin in the driveway one evening last month.

The home is really shaping up. We spent the summer and fall staining our new backyard fence which will separate schnauzer Tuney Anderson from the coyotes and such. We've been planting backyard boulders (as well as shrubs) to complete the landscaping. The train room remains the last phase of the move-in. Larry has been consulting with carpenters and should be only a matter of weeks before his famous model trains will again be rolling down the tracks.

Cara Ganders continues to work at the Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Center in Seattle and loves her big city life in Wallingford. She did some moonlighting at the Pacific Science Center this year. Oddly, she lives just a block from the historic Dick's Hamburgers, yet has succeeded in dieting and exercising herself to great health. She's also coming a long way in cooking; apparently now including all of the necessary recipe ingredients (you may recall she was famous for her yeast-less breads and sugarless cookies.) She startled the family at

Thanksgiving with an outrageous pasta salad, an exotic pomegranate salsa, and seemingly-complete and very tasty pumpkin bread. We were pleased to have Grandpa Bud Boisen and Joan Munkers visit us for Thanksgiving from Hauser Lake, Idaho.

Tiffany continues as a dental assistant, community college student, occasional receptionist, and of course, roller derby babe. She now lives down the street from the roller arena, rooms with a derby girl, and lives the life of an athlete. The injuries that come with that role are somewhat concerning to her protective mother, Robin. But Robin has no trouble screaming on Tiffany's success at each bout. Tiffany sometimes goes on the road with her "Oly Rollers" team and recently won a tournament allowing them to claim "West Coast Champions" in the emerging sport.

Adam continues his studies at Washington State University, attempting to hone his undergraduate business degree into a master's degree in sports management. He was appointed to a graduate assistant position with the athletic department which has given him lots more experience in intercollegiate athletics that he loves so much. We tend to think of him as kind of a "big deal" in Pullman. That's been a big adjustment for Larry, who never quite rose to that level of fame in the Palouse. It's also a complication. Larry squired around a gubernatorial candidate during a recent football game, only to have that candidate tossed out of the stadium by son Adam for illegal campaigning. Yes, Adam did have his name tag on.

We are looking forward to having Aaron, Amy, and the rest of our children in Olympia for Christmas this year. It will be the very first time we've had all of our children in our new home.

We think there's no place like home for the holidays (isn't that a Christmas carol?) It's a place along Spurgeon Creek amidst Cedar, Doug Fir, and Alder. It's like the song goes, "Christmas in the Northwest, is a gift God wrapped in green."

Here's hoping your Holiday Season will move you closer to your family and the year to come brings you much happiness (as it did for us last month when the Cougs won their fourth Apple Cup in five years.)

Larry, Robin,

and "Tuney Anderson" Ganders

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* To view our family holiday album online, check the family web page out. <http://www.ganders.net>