



News from Peef & Lo

Looking Back on the Year...

Sometimes you just have to STOP. Take a minute to reflect. Put down whatever it is that you're doing and concentrate on the moment at hand.

This is one of those times.

We thought it quite appropriate to STOP for a moment ourselves and take a bit of time to give credit to those people in our lives who make such a huge difference to us. The people without whom we could never be ourselves. (that would be you...) So, we dedicate this newsletter to you...

Friends are blessings.

Our friends know us, support us and understand us. Sweet and steady, with a friend we can be ourselves, share our thoughts, reveal our craziness, and build our dreams.

"In my friend, I find a second self," said writer Isabel Norton.

Having friends apparently also keeps you healthier. Studies have shown that

women with little social contact have higher blood pressure. And women with breast cancer live longer if they are part of a weekly support group. Another study proved that even healthy individuals with few friends had two to four times the risk of dying prematurely, regardless of age and other factors.

"A friend," said poet Henry Van Dyke, "is what the heart needs all the time."

Friends help you work through problems, they listen and give encouragement. There is nothing like the comfort of a close friend. Friends help you to grow and celebrate life.

As journalist Timothy White put it, "Like creativity, friendship is a sudden spark, appreciated and protected. Chance provides the opportunity; care preserves the light."

Oh, sure — friendships ebb and flow like waves on the seashore. Our relationships go through cycles, sometimes trailing off, sometimes

returning stronger than ever. But, friendships that last a lifetime are loving relationships. They are special gifts.

"Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born."

~ Anais Nin

We'd both like to extend our thanks to each one of you for the extraordinary gifts that you've given to us over the past year. We have been truly blessed. And we are pleased to have each one of you in our lives.

With that thought in mind, have a delightful holiday — and a very happy New Year!

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DID YOU KNOW?

The tradition of watching the illuminated ball drop on the Eve of the New Year began in 1908, a celebration that dramatically signals the end of one year and the beginning of the next.

Another New Year's tradition began in 1929 when Guy Lombardo and the Royal Canadians first sang their version of "Auld Lang Syne" over the radio. Until his death in 1977, Lombardo ushered in the New Year with that song 48 consecutive times.

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Our Amazing Journey through 2002

It's crazy how quickly the time goes. And it's even more amazing to take the time and reflect on how many changes have taken place in our lives over the past year or so. Since so many of you came to mind as we've been reflecting on 2002, we thought we'd share what we've learned with you.

Twelve things we remember about 2002:

1. We've just about mastered beginner-level yoga after practicing together for almost two years! :)
2. We've managed to clicker train at least one of our cats to do a variety of tricks.
3. We were blessed with the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to travel to the Promised Land (Fargo, ND) to visit good friends of ours over the Thanksgiving holiday.
4. We landed air-conditioning for our apartment — which many of you enjoyed when you visited us over the summer.
5. Our brother-in-law John managed to enjoy his first year in China so much that he decided to re-enlist for a second year of

teaching English in Beijing.

6. We brought in a gargantuan crop of tomatillos from our newly-renovated garden plot.
7. Lori recently finished up all of her coursework for WI state teaching certification.
8. Paul has taken a promotion of sorts with Schlage. Much to his delight, he will now be working more closely with the builders who install Schlage products.
9. Paul took a new position directing the Grade School Percussion Ensemble at Wisconsin Lutheran High School on Saturday mornings.
10. Lori took the time that Paul was gone on Saturdays to make phone calls welcoming the new members to St. John's Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa.
11. We've both been blessed with extraordinarily good health. (Paul got through the cold season without bronchitis now for the third year in a row).

12. Through good and bad, we've had the extraordinary opportunity to watch our lives grow and change over the past twelve months. What a wonderful year it's been!

Yes — plenty of good things have happened to us over the past year. We've been greatly blessed. And the best part is that 2003 seems as if it will be even more

interesting.

Lori won't be student teaching in spring as she planned. Rather, she'll be taking a promotion in the Education department at Marquette and hanging out here for a while longer.

Paul will be breaking in his second company car sometime early in the year, since he's already packed just about 50,000 miles on his car in less than two years.

Now that we're fairly sure we'll be remaining in the Milwaukee area and holding steady jobs, Paul and Lori will also begin the search for a new home in 2003. God-willing, we'll be moved into a new abode before NEXT Christmas. Stay tuned...



He'll Take a Snifter, Thank you...

I don't think either of us are particularly certain how this happened. Paul just woke up one day with a craving for a glass of bourbon.

Or something like that.

Paul used to be pretty strictly a gin & tonic kindofa guy. Sometimes he'd order a martini, but generally you'd find him with a nice rocks glass filled with a bit of ice, a lime and a nice dash of tonic.

It really did seem to happen



overnight. And it shocked me pretty good.

But there we were, sitting at the Milwaukee AleHouse on a slow Sunday night — and Paul suggested that we order a glass of Maker's Mark. I think I just about swallowed my tongue.

Wasn't it Paul who always gave me a hard time about my loyal affinity for a nice glass of BushMills?

And didn't he make extraordinary fun of me when I'd joke about having a nice slow slug of Wild Turkey (that old man's drink)?

Maybe it was the glass of cognac he enjoyed in the swanky atmosphere of EVE on his birthday. Or maybe it was a bizarre flip in the movement of the moon.

In any case, y'all know now what to order Paul when he bellies up to the bar. Give him a nice glass of Knob Creek.

Things are Cookin' in Our Kitchen? *(It's a strange affliction)*

Mmm... delicious smells are wafting in from the kitchen of Peef and Lo. And it's all due to a few new tools and a couple of handy-dandy new cookbooks.

This year, it seems, we've acquired more than our fair share of cookbooks. So many that we had to go down to IKEA to buy ourselves a new bookshelf for the kitchen! But the sacrifice was well worth the trouble. Our taste buds have become world travelers... and our tummies are happy campers as a result.

A few of our more recent favorites:

1. **LOCAL FLAVORS** by Deborah Madison
2. **RICK BAYLESS' MEXICAN KITCHEN: Recipes and Techniques of a World-Class Cuisine**
3. **THE WHOLEFOODS MARKET COOKBOOK**

Some of you might be amused to note that over the past few months, we've experimented with even more vegetarian-inspired recipes, including

a very impressive Pad-Thai and a tofu-mushroom stroganoff that is definite competition for the "real" thing. We've also reached our goal for the year and are eating greens (spinach, kale, chard) at least once or twice a week... and liking it.

On a less healthy note, in our search to discover the world's best chocolate chip cookie, we regret to admit that Martha Stewart's recipe is currently winning. She gets five-stars for the chewy-but-crisp cookies taken from her *COMFORT FOODS* cookbook. That woman makes a darned good cookie for a soon-to-be ex-convict.

To take things a few steps OUT of the kitchen, our newest discovery is the Trader Joe's grocery chain in Illinois. This incredible gourmet grocery store features more than 2000 unique grocery items at prices everyone can afford (no, they are not

receiving proceeds from this newsletter). Even with the Illinois state taxes added on, this place is amazing. We've been making monthly pilgrimages there to stock up on necessary goodies (like frozen artichoke hearts and lump crab meat) for a few months now. And I think we're addicted.

Also — we mustn't forget to mention how excited we are to be the caretakers of a delicious jar of ancient sourdough starter from our dear friends in Fargo. Over the next few months (probably after the acquisition of another good book or two), Peef and Lo are also planning to exercise their skills in bread-baking.

Currently, we're busily planning our annual New Year's Eve feast — which is sure to be jolly fun again this year.

So, stay tuned for the adventure. And, as always, remember: You're always welcome in our kitchen :)



Jingle Heads, Jingle Heads, Jingle....

In truth, we've been running a bit behind this year. Somehow Christmas snuck up on us, and we haven't quite caught our breath. We'll be going this weekend to pick out our tree, so the decorations will be up a good week before the actual holiday. And hopefully, we'll get a bit of baking done. But I doubt we'll get to wrapping our gifts until somewhere around December 20th or so — and that's when the real adventure begins

That's when the kittens rediscover the joys of wrapping paper and ribbons. It's when Elmo raises his little Jewish eyebrows at our terribly Gentile notions. This year we're doubly cursed as Hanukah snuck up on

us as well (so very early this year) and we neglected to buy Elmo his annual dreidel. He's been sulking around the house ever since, and we can't seem to appease him. So, we're sure he'll have more than one extra trick up his sleeve for us this year.

On the other hand, Zoë has grown in both stature and maturity — so we have great expectations for her behavior. We're just hoping to keep her from sinking her little fangs into every last cardboard box that we leave laying about (she seems to have developed a cardboard-chewing fetish).

In some ways, having cats around during the holidays is an amusing



event. They're adorable to watch chasing tissue paper around the living room — just as long as it's not attached to a gift. And it's incredible to watch their reaction when you bring a big green TREE into the house and then start hanging all sorts of sparkly things on it. It's also pretty cool to turn both cats into "jingle heads" for a few short weeks by attaching jingle bells to their collars.

So, if you're in need of a few laughs, just come on over to our house in the next few weeks. We'll be juggling a

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Amore Sitis Unit!

