

Ho Ho Ho Burnhamish Holiday '95

Burnhamish purchased by extraterrestrials!

Actually, this isn't entirely true. In fact, it's wholly untrue. I really want to say "Merry Christmas (or 'Happy Solstice' for the secular crowd) and Happy New Year". This, however, is not a statement that would grab your attention like a headline featuring space aliens. Space aliens are trendy.

Unlike a Beatles recording, the headline above does not contain a hidden message when read backwards. Headlines can be misleading, however. They could be entirely false, or have ambiguous meanings. For example ("i.e." for Latin scholars), the headline above could mean *Burnhamish* is now being published off-planet (a widely held belief anyway), or that extraterrestrials pick up a copy of *Burnhamish* on their way to work. This is absurd, since *Burnhamish* is not sold at newsstands, it's free. Everyone knows that. I have never intentionally mislead anyone in *Burnhamish*. Most of what I write is accidental.



It seems like a year since I last put my thoughts (or "free associations" for the psychoanalytical crowd) on paper for *Burnhamish*. It has been a year, in fact. *Burnhamish* has experienced a doubling in staff and has acquired some modern publishing equipment as well as several large home appliances.

Taking over as CEO, CFO, and President-for-Life is Carolyn Gentry Burnham. Carolyn joined *Burnhamish* as a consultant in 1993 and through sheer cunning (and a short ladder) was able to climb to the top of the *Burnhamish* corporate structure. She replaces the founder (me) who will stay on as Creative Director. There have been rumors that I'm being kept employed solely because



Aliens may not stop at the newsstand on their way to work to pick up a *Burnhamish*, but they do like to mug for a camera.

I'm married to the new president. Hey, whatever works.



This is the section where I make excuses for the current issue.

"What a meaty *Burnhamish* this year," you probably are not thinking.

"I'm surprised he even got this thing out this year, and look how meaty it is not," you probably are thinking.

Heck, I'm lucky to be getting this issue out on even two pages (notice how large the title is). Ideally, I would start writing for the Holiday issue in the summer (when stores begin selling winter coats). This allows me to spend far too much time playing solitaire on my computer instead of thinking up

clever prose. If I'm going to stare at a computer screen not writing I might as well pass the time, right?

Most of the time my writing is a transcription of my stream of consciousness, usually late at night after a beer or two. There have been fewer of those nights since Carolyn and I got engaged (and subsequently married). This, however good for my health and well being, is detrimental to the quality of writing you have succumbed to in the last six years.



This is the part where I tell you I moved again. Take note of our new address:

See "Aliens" on page 2

Aliens from page 1

3510 David K. Drive
Waterford, MI 48329
Phone: 810 623 7442
E-mail: burnhamish@aol.com

Always remember to write down our address in pencil.

We moved simply to acquire more space. My apartment was at capacity with just me and my gadgets, and Carolyn would be adding to the collection. We found a house to rent with a basement and a garage. Now we can get even more stuff! It's a shame to waste good storage space.

I would like to use this space to bid a fond farewell to *Calvin and Hobbes*, whose creator, Bill Watterson, is retiring the strip to pursue other interests not bound by small spaces and deadlines. I remember the first appearance of *Calvin and Hobbes* in the *Chicago Tribune* in 1985 and thought it was the funniest thing since *Bloom County*. I give Bill Watterson credit for leaving with dignity. There are plenty of strips out there to fill the open space on the comics page, but none to fill the void.



In the next issue:

- 🔧 Space aliens in the mainstream
- 🔧 How to tell if you'd be better off in another career
- 🔧 Honeymoons and hurricanes
- 🔧 How to know when not to quit your day job
- 🔧 Original artwork
- 🔧 Less occurrences of the term *Burnhamish*

Wedding A Day in the Life...

"The ones with ribbons are for girls," bellowed George. "The ones without ribbons are for boys. It's perfectly clear. Now everything is ruined. I suppose it's too late to re-take the pictures."

Yes, considering the ceremony was beginning in ten minutes. George is not a happy florist. Tough cookies, I thought, next time label the corsage boxes "boys" and "girls" or provide written instructions. I refrain from expressing these thoughts aloud and, gesturing toward a pew, urge him to take a seat.

I thought today would never arrive. I proposed to Carolyn in January (almost six months after I had moved 350 miles away from her to take a job in Detroit). My new job was going to be a long term situation for me, and Carolyn was willing to move to Detroit if she could find a good enough job. If she was willing to follow me to Detroit of all places, she might go so far as to marry me, I reasoned.

Three weeks after Christmas I fabricated an excuse to visit her in Illinois. I presented her with a gift- a new pair of gloves to go with her ski parka. On the ring finger of the bottom glove was the engagement ring. Carolyn was so thrilled she broke out in hives. Thankfully, she was reacting to some new medication and not to the thought of marrying me.

Carolyn is somewhat cold weather intolerant, so a winter wedding was out of the question. Spring of '95 was too early to plan a traditional ceremony, but we didn't want to wait until Spring of '96. Ultimately, the date was determined by the availability of a reception hall. August 19, 1995 was the date.

The weather is cooperating with us today- temperatures only in the lower 90's. I'm not sure if I'm sweating from being nervous or from the heat, but at least everyone else is sweating, so I don't stand out. Carolyn might actually be perspiring, too. This is a rare occurrence.

The ceremony is going well, I think. I'm not used to being so close to the center of attention. Carolyn makes a valiant effort to get my ring over the abnormally large knuckle on my left ring finger. I manage to jam it on the rest of the way when I think

people aren't looking. The ring won't easily come off, I notice.

We step out of the church and into the *Lawrence Welk Show*. Bubbles everywhere. We dodge and parry and barely make it into the limousine alive. So many bubbles. At least we aren't pelted with rocks and garbage.

"What's that smell?" Carolyn asks as we speed north to the reception. "It's like road kill being boiled in antifreeze."

"I'm surprised you would know what that smells like," I reply. I note that we're currently passing through Machesney Park.

"That would explain it," she says, squinching her face in agreement.

We discover bubbles cannot survive at 45 miles per hour. This is because of their low terminal velocity, which is less than 45 miles per hour.

We must be in the mountains now, as we seem to be passing through a cloud. I didn't think it even got hilly until Wisconsin. Clouds are not as cold and icy as I thought, and they smell remarkably like antifreeze. The limo slows to a halt and the driver quickly ushers us out at the entrance to the reception hall.

"We blew a radiator hose back at the church," he announces.

"That was twenty miles ago!" I exclaim.

"I didn't want to alarm you," he says as he rips off his shirt to take off the radiator cap.

"You want a Diet Coke or something?" Carolyn asks the driver. I drag her inside.

The reception is a frenzy of food, drink, dancing, drink, laughter and merriment, not necessarily in that order. There was much rejoicing.

As Carolyn and I retire to our secret hotel room, we note that nothing is wrong. The beds aren't short-sheeted, there are no inflated prophylactics strewn about the room, there's no peanut butter on the phone receiver. Hmmmm...

Nothing is still wrong in the morning until we step outside. The car is exactly the way I did not leave it last night. At least, I don't remember shoe-polishing the windows and encasing it in plastic wrap.

Have I got you hooked? Are you still there? Next issue we'll take you to the U.S. Virgin Islands (pre-hurricane). Smile, mon!

Burnhamish is distributed by Bynight Flights, a subsidiary of the Funky Onion division of Disembodied Heads Floating in Space Publishing. DHFISP also publishes *The Fish Free Press*, but seems to have misplaced it somewhere. *Burnhamish* is published sporadically or around the winter solstice, whichever comes first. Four out of five dentists recommend *Burnhamish* for their patients who chew gum. The articles herein are of questionable origin and contain much that is apocryphal. Void where prohibited by law. Your results may vary.