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BURNHAMISH

HOLIDAY TWO THOUSAND TEN

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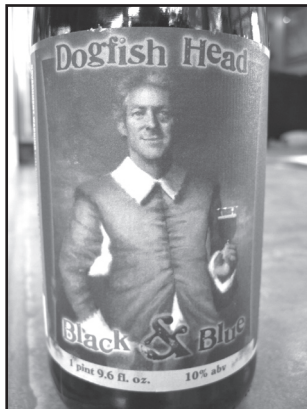
Local Man Trapped Inside Bottle and Forced to Wear Silly Suit

Supposes this is what a genie feels like

Before you ask: yes, I did, and yes, we are. I suppose the rest of what we did in 2010 is pretty much non-news, but I'll try to spice it up a little.

Carolyn and I began 2010 the same way we ended 2009- I was *still* working for DENSO and she was *still* unemployed. I was, of course, *grateful* I was still employed, and I went right on doing what I had been doing for fifteen years. Carolyn decided to do something about her situation and trained to become a professional organizer. Apparently, you can make a living at it. I suppose if anyone is going to make a living out of it, it's Carolyn. She even says I could contribute to the business! In spite of my cluttered desk and messy workshop, there is an underlying structure to the way I do things. I am kind of a closet organizer. Get it? *A closet organizer?* You know, the shelves and clothes rods in a closet- and I'm secretly- oh, never mind. So, Carolyn started a business called Aria Organizing and Consulting. She'll straighten you out, reduce your carbon footprint, and bake you a loaf of focaccia bread all before lunch.

In our endless pursuit of athletic activities our kids will stick with, we enrolled Shae in soccer last spring. It didn't stick enough for her to return in the fall, but she did try a basketball clinic. Not a spark of interest. Lauren tried Jiu Jitsu, which was (much to her dismay) more *wrestling* with boys than it was *punching and kicking* them. There is one activity, however, guaranteed to keep a Burnham engaged: hurtling yourself down a snow-covered hill with two boards clamped to your feet. It is also guaranteed to drain the activity fund for the year, if not more. I'd better get a promotion! I took Lauren and Shae skiing for the first time last week, and they not only loved it, they were pretty good at it for their first time on skis. True Burnhams.



"It's nothing like *I Dream of Jeannie* in here, that's for sure," quips John Burnham, after losing a bet with an unidentified blue-skinned man wearing parachute pants.

BURNHAMISH ∞ HOLIDAY TWO THOUSAND TEN

Speaking of expensive activities, John did RAGBRAI again in July, while Carolyn and the girls visited her parents and attended family reunions in Wisconsin. Since John was allowed to have fun pedaling his butt across Northern Iowa, Carolyn and the girls went to the Wisconsin Dells, doing all the things you do when you visit the Wisconsin Dells, which involves a lot of water and large ducks.

In an effort to further decrease what little free time she had left after household duties and professional organizer training, Carolyn took on the role of PTA Secretary in September. I, on the other hand, accomplished the same thing simply working longer hours at DENSO doing things called “temperature control” and “air distribution” development. These are important tasks, but doing them for nine months straight leads to “exhaustion” and “burnout.” A fulfilling exhaustion and burnout, of course.

Many of you know my secret desire to return to the Chicago Area. Sure, the cost of living is higher, the traffic is more dense, and the politicians more corrupt. Well, maybe it’s a wash on corruption (Google “Kwame Kilpatrick” for more on that). Housing is more expensive. Higher sales tax. It’s not as dark at night, especially closer to the city. Why do I want to move back, again?

Would you believe we want to be closer to family and friends? No? Why not? We LOVE you guys! I am totally willing to endure traffic snarls and expensive housing just to be able to have lunch with my sister, to be able to ride mass transportation into the city, and to be able to visit my In-laws without having to spend the weekend. I mean that in a good way.

So, here’s the poop: Yes, I have officially accepted a job offer with Navistar (manufacturer of medium & heavy duty trucks and diesel engines). I am currently waiting for them to officially accept back, once they determine I am neither a criminal nor a drug addict. I expect this to happen following the holidays. Navistar is based in Warrenville, IL, and is building a new technical center in neighboring Lisle (at the old Alcatel/Lucent campus). As an engineering manager, I will be involved more with product development than just testing. After sixteen years in the Detroit area with DENSO, I am ready to come home.

Yes, we are moving back to the Chicago Area. While Navistar transitions their Fort Wayne operations to the new facility, and we try to sell our house, I will be playing “road warrior” between Lisle, Waterford, and Fort Wayne. This conjures up visions of post-apocalyptic Australia, Mel Gibson, and the “last of the V8 Interceptors” for a few of you, I’m sure. Oy.

2010 was marginally better than 2009, and I have a good feeling 2011 will be even better than 2010. I predict we will even see the return of the full-size, full-color *Burnhamish*, missing since 2005 (has it been that long?). The world ends in December 2012, so I’m probably only good for two more *Burnhamishes* at most before the end of b’ak’tun, anyway. Happy Days!