



*Happy Holidays!*

Since I do not stay in contact with many of you throughout the year, I have taken this opportunity to write a short letter to share my adventures and other doings. The highlights of my year have mostly consisted of moving to California. Please note my new address on the envelope.

In January, I interviewed for a job in Santa Rosa with Agilent, the company that I have been with for 15 years. It was a promotional opportunity for me and I accepted the offer. I sold my house in Spokane and Agilent packed me up and shipped me out. I arrived in Santa Rosa in May and stayed in an apartment for the first 3 months. During this time, I bought a house and the moving company unloaded my worldly possessions at my new place. I have a 2 story, 3-bedroom house in the middle of suburbia. If you would like to see some pictures of my house, I have a few on my web page at [www.sonic.net/~tmills](http://www.sonic.net/~tmills). Also, my new email address is: [tmills@sonic.net](mailto:tmills@sonic.net).

I have spent the subsequent months learning about the area and exploring. I have met many nice people and have established several friendships. Here is a brief overview of why I moved. There are many places to visit near here. In an hour, I can visit San Francisco. There are a number of beaches along the coast to explore within 45 minutes. (One of my favorite activities is to fly very large kites at the beach. A friend has introduced me to his 15 foot by 4-foot kite. It will lift me off the ground in a 10-15 mile and hour wind!) I can visit several redwood forests- one is only 20 minutes from my house. There are at least 4 state parks to hike within an hour drive. If you like wine, there are over 400 wineries in the area. The wineries vary in size from a Mom and Pop shop to places like Beringer that sell thousands of cases a year. If I want to get away, Lake Tahoe and the ski resort is a 3-hour drive. Best of all, the weather here is very mild. It is still in the 60s in December and has lots of sunshine. I have connected with a volleyball crowd here and will be playing on a USAVB men's team which I have not done for several years.

Although most of my year has been filled with relocating, I had enough time for a few trips this year. One of my favorite trips is the annual Mexico trip with my volleyball friends. This year there were 20 of us and we went to Cabo San Lucas. Cabo is a beautiful location where the Sea of Cortez meets the Pacific Ocean. At one point, I had a foot in the Pacific and one in the Sea of Cortez. Some of us went SCUBA diving while others went 3 wheeling in the dunes. The biggest surprise of the trip happened when Shawn and Heather announced that they were getting married while we were in Mexico! They had a beautiful ceremony on the beach. It was truly a special moment.

I also visited with my Dad, Valerie and her boyfriend Jon in Port Townsend. We went crabbing and caught enough for dinner. My Dad made some excellent crab cakes. We also caught the largest starfish I have ever seen. It had 22 arms! Later, my Dad came and visited my new home. I was happy to share it with him.

My final trip this year was back to Stillwater for my 20<sup>th</sup> high school reunion. (I can't believe that I am this old!) I saw many old friends and made some new ones. I am very impressed with how well everyone is doing.

I hope all is well with you and your family during the holiday season and in the coming year. Best wishes,

