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Steven Finally Meets His Match

Gazette Gains New Associate Editor

The day after Thanksgiving, 2007, while visiting her family in Portland, Oregon, Steven asked Christl Denecke, his girlfriend of two years, to marry him, and she accepted.

"It all started in July 2005, when she finagled us free lawn bowling lessons for our first date. Her charm, wit, and conversation skills won me over immediately," said Steven.

However, it took several months before they were officially dating. Christl has a biology degree from Princeton and a law degree from George Washington University, and works as a patent litigator for a law firm in Palo Alto, CA. "When we met, Christl was studying for the bar exam, and didn't have time for a relationship. However, I eventually convinced her she wasn't going to get away from me that easily."

Since then, Christl has become a fixture in Steven's social circles and at Ginzburg family events. "Every time I introduced Christl to a friend or family member, they

hit it off immediately. That was another strong sign that I'd found someone really special."

When asked about a wedding date, Christl flashes a wry smile and responds, "some time between two weeks and two years from now," but rumor has it the couple are targeting summer 2008 for their nuptials.



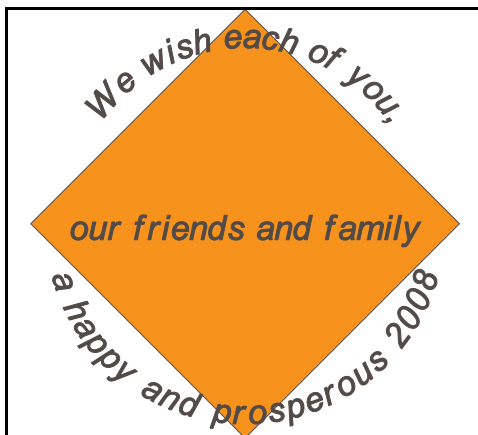
A Truly Engaging Gift



For several months before their engagement, Christl and Steven had been searching for a home in Silicon Valley to buy. Christl half-joked to Steven that instead of a traditional engagement ring, she wanted an "engagement house." (Given the price of Silicon Valley real estate, it was clear she knew how to take advantage of the situation!) Steven, unsure how to put an entire house on her finger, instead opted for a more

traditional piece of jewelry (which delighted Christl, despite the relatively small number of bedrooms.)

However, as luck would have it, a few weeks after their engagement became official, they found a lovely 3 bedroom house in Mountain View. The couple plan to move in this spring, after some minor renovations. "It's the best engagement gift ever," said Christl.



HAVE TICKETS, WILL TRAVEL

This was the year of the packed suitcases for Shirley and Allen. They toted duds for the tropics and for snowy slopes, jeans and formal wear. Thanks to the TSA, they flew with regulation clear plastic bags of three ounce or less liquids. They had this down pat.

They began with an impulsive cruise to Mexico with longtime friends Liane and Rich Enkelis. On shore treats included time at a remarkable cactus garden in Baja, browsing in local mercados, gasping at the spectacular views from the coastal hills of Manzanillo.

In May they headed to Chicago to play tourist, visit friends, cousins, and Shirley's childhood haunts. Sights included the Museum of Science and Industry [still wonderful] and the locations of Shirley's [former] family stores and homes. Much has changed, but that is another story. High points were tours of the Fermi and the Argonne National Laboratories, and seeing the new downtown public art displays. Less pleasant was navigating the construction clog on the Dan Ryan Freeway.

Erratic Comet Acts Up Again

In October, 2007, for the second time since 1893, Comet Holmes suddenly increased in brightness by a factor of nearly half a million times.

Holmes is a periodic comet, one that is in a stable, relatively short 6.9 year orbit never getting closer to the sun than about 2 times the earth's distance (about 190 million miles). Since it's normally very faint, Holmes wasn't even observed between 1896 and 1964 and rarely since then. It normally achieved a maximum brightness level of no more than about 14th magnitude, about as bright as the planet (er... ex planet) Pluto, requiring a relatively large telescope for observation.



Comet Holmes, October 25, 2007. Composite of 11 exposures totalling about 23 seconds taken with a Nikon D40 digital camera and Meade LX-200 10" telescope.

Suddenly (in one day), as it had done 114 years ago, it's brightness increased by a factor of over 500,000 to magnitude 2.4, roughly equivalent to some of the brighter stars and easily visible to the naked eye, even in light polluted city skies.

Upon hearing the news of this rare event, Allen whipped out his 10" telescope and shot this photo of comet Holmes. It shows a bright, asymmetric nucleus and two surrounding halos: the inner dust cloud and outer layer of ionized gas. The object looks more like a planetary nebula than a comet because it is nearly spherical and not close enough to the sun to sport a significant tail.

When it first flared up in 1893 the director of an east coast observatory stated that "... it may be thought desirable to keep a watch [on it] for some period of time..." Who would have guessed that he was correct but it was to take over 100 years to prove him so.

Some of Allen's astro photos (including this one) can be seen on the Cabrillo College website at:

<http://www.cabrillo.edu/~rnolthenius/astro9/ay9images/AllenG/index.htm>

The following month they had a chance to explore Whistler, in Canada, site of the 2010 Winter Olympics. Debbie joined them for little hikes, the fabulous scenery from high atop a snow covered mountain, and good food. Low point was crawling in



Allen and Shirley enjoy a paddle boat ride on a lake in Acapulco on the Mexican Riviera. Note Allen's "nice legs".

traffic between Vancouver and Whistler, where around the clock workers were widening the main route to 4 lanes for the expected Olympic hoards.

Barely a month later Allen and Shirley were tourists again. Salt Lake City hosted the annual International Jewish Genealogy Conference where they presented their slide show & video from the Ukraine trip of 2004.

Wrapping up the year, they flew to Hawaii to supervise long overdue major renovations to their rental condo. Let's just say that they now know every aisle of Home Depot, Lowe's, and Wal-Mart on the Big Island. They sighed with relief when everything was finished, on time and under budget.

They celebrated Chanukah there with the small but enthusiastic Kona Jewish community. It was a 'first' to have fresh guavas served alongside the potato latkes. Kona is no longer the sleepy little town, and the road construction crews must have followed them there from the Mainland. The Big Island was followed by two days in Honolulu, catching up with Shirley's cousins. It was the 'real vacation'. Who cares that it poured rain for the whole two weeks they spent on the Islands?

New York Times Infested With Ants

Gazette Subscriptions Soar As Concerned Readers Switch To Rival Publication

On Monday, August 27, 2007, an as-yet unseen byline appeared next to the *New York Times* crossword puzzle: after more than a year of effort and half a dozen rejection letters, Steven finally hit the "big leagues" of crossword construction when the Times published an "ant"-themed puzzle that he created and submitted. This followed several appearances in other papers, including a TV Doctor themed puzzle coauthored with Debbie that appeared in *USA Today* two months before.

The puzzle had three long "theme" entries, each of which had the word "ANT" hidden in it twice: "ORGAN TRANSPLANT," "ANTIOXIDANT," and "ROMANTICFANTASY." As Steven submitted it, the puzzle had an additional theme entry: the clue was "How the critters hiding in [the other theme entries] are marching?", and the answer, crossing "ANTIOXIDANT" at the "X", was "TWO X TWO", a reference to the song "The Ants Go Marching Two By Two." However, Will Shortz, the *New York Times* Crossword editor, decided to make the puzzle a little more straightforward, inserting the word "ANTS" in the lower-right corner of the puzzle to tie the theme together.

Steven's *New York Times* debut was his 6th published puzzle in a major newspaper. As of this writing, Steven has published seven puzzles total, with two more slated for 2008: one in *USA Today* on March 11, and another in the *New York Times* (date TBD).



Life on the Outside

Editorial by Debbie Ginzburg

A title which naturally begs the question: "on the outside of what?" The outdoors is anywhere without walls and a ceiling, and that is somewhere I love to be [see pictorial on pg 4]. But living Outside is a matter of being in a place that is without boundaries; without the confines of self-consciousness, of stigma, of social expectations. I prefer an unpaved path. I think of my abilities – and sensibilities – as the four-wheel-drive that makes it possible to live this way. It's not what most would call a high class ride; it's more like a beat-up SUV covered in bumper stickers. But if all goes according to plan, those stickers will be souvenirs of the places I have been – not professing where I'd "rather be". My resolution for 2008 is to consciously continue living my life on the Outside: of buildings, of The Box, of my comfort zone.

Somehow, we maintain the familiar rhythm of religious and secular holidays, beach walks and yoga, committee meetings, and weekly visits to Allen's father in San Francisco. We pause to reflect on the blessings of health, our supportive circle of friends and family, the constant inspiration of Nature around us. May each of you thrive as richly!

Gazette Crossword

By Steven Ginzburg

Across

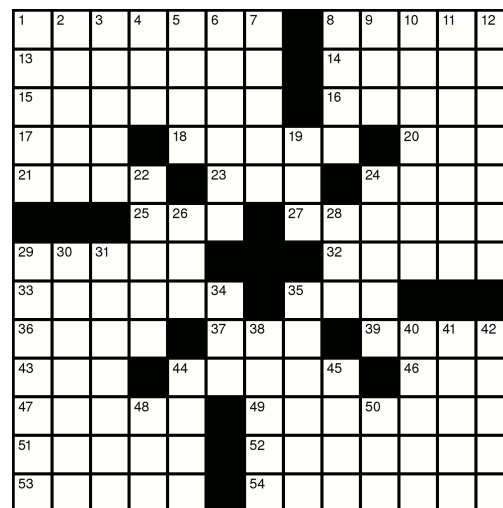
- 1 With 54-Across, the name of the Gazette's newest associate editor
- 8 Singer Fitzgerald, and others
- 13 Words said when tossing something overboard
- 14 Father's role in Little League, perhaps
- 15 Distinctive sock patterns
- 16 ___-frutti
- 17 Enemy
- 18 Mislead
- 20 Continent north of Afr.
- 21 Comes to a conclusion
- 23 ___: Miami (hit CBS show)
- 24 Inland "sea" that borders Uzbekistan
- 25 Election day, usually: abbr.
- 27 Pontius ___ (biblical figure)
- 29 Tops of some buildings
- 32 Narrow street
- 33 Not quite noon
- 35 Bill with Washington's picture
- 36 Digestive juice
- 37 Tidbit for a horse
- 39 Parent org. of JPL
- 43 Eggs, to a biologist
- 44 Manner of speaking
- 46 Pittsburgh Penguins org.
- 47 Some circuses have three of them

- 49 Schoolyard retort
- 51 Harp player, perhaps
- 52 Exhilarated state
- 53 Shoes that increase your height
- 54 See 1-Across

Down

- 1 Make sore by rubbing
- 2 Kind of wading bird
- 3 Went on a tirade
- 4 It's often seen climbing the walls?
- 5 Hawk a product
- 6 Break ___ (get a party going)
- 7 Misplaces
- 8 Prefix with "plasm" or "morph"
- 9 Costello (of Abbot & Costello fame)
- 10 To the side
- 11 Make happen
- 12 Ginzburg who sleeps under the stars
- 19 Protruding part
- 22 Ginzburg who most recently bought a house
- 24 Ginzburg who hangs out with the stars
- 26 Bring into play
- 28 Fleming, James Bond writer
- 29 Ginzburg who hails from Chicago
- 30 Greenish mineral

- 31 Mixture of this and that
- 34 Show agreement nonverbally
- 35 "Lawrence of Arabia" star, Peter
- 38 Helped out
- 40 Caper
- 41 Felt like an earthquake
- 42 Isolated
- 44 Oahu and Maui, for example: abbr.
- 45 Like a bully
- 48 Become solid
- 50 Sault ___ Marie



Living the Outdoor Life

Or, "Debbie and Doggie Do Dabble in Death Defying and enDearing Doings"



- (1) Climbing at Smith Rock, OR. YES, there IS a rope there!
- (2) Our snowy campsite in the Wallowa Mountains (Eastern OR), Memorial Day
- (3) Camping in Lovelock, NV, and (4) the rear-view somewhere in Idaho on an ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS September road trip
- (5) Labor Day on the beautiful Oregon coast (Cannon Beach)
- (6) My alter ego?
- (7) The work that made all this play possible...
- (8) Proof that we really do clean up nicely! :)