

Goerwitz Greetings

According to last November's issue of *Money Magazine*, Providence, Rhode Island is now the best place to live in the East. The three of us, Richard III, Amy, and Richard IV, have been here since '96 now and, the well-publicized corruption in city government aside, we can't find much to disagree with here. It is from this recently accoladed Providence area (in fact, from a desktop computer at Brown University) that we offer you this year-2000 edition of *Goerwitz Greetings*.

Tabernacle Debacle

Amy, who still works for Brown University's alumni office, began the year with a business trip to Salt Lake City to introduce Brown's president to the Utah alumni. Two years before, Brown had welcomed a new president, Gordon Gee, who was expected to bring about exciting new changes. Part of Amy's job was to introduce him to alumni around the country. The Salt Lake



Amy, IV atop Mt. Monadnock

City event was, in fact, the last stop of a twenty-six-city "Meet the President" intro tour, and was being held in Utah, Gee's home state, at his own special request. Forty people (a good number for a state with only a few alumni) had signed up to attend, and some of the president's family was also expected to show. Amy was looking forward to meeting all these people and having the chance to look around Salt Lake

City, maybe even to visit the famed Mormon Tabernacle.

Early on the morning of the event, while sitting bleary eyed on her recently departed westbound flight, Amy's eyes fell on a story in the local newspaper predicting that Brown's president would announce that day that he was accepting the chancellorship of another university, Vanderbilt. Too cheap to use the onboard phone to confirm the news, and thinking the whole thing just too bizarre to be true, Amy sat and idly wondered.



Goerwitzes and Balls

When she landed to make a connection in Denver she attempted to call her office, but nobody was answering their phones (she later found out they were all in an emergency meeting). Trying every university number she knew, she finally reached someone in another office who could fill in the details. It turned out that the newspaper article was right on the money: The president had snuck down to Nashville, where he was getting ready for a press conference. Amy was going to get left holding the bag with a presidentless "Meet the President" event.

Fortunately, at the last minute, one of our Brown VPs flew out and worked the Utah crowd in Gee's place. He actually performed pretty well before the understandably jilted audience. And ultimately Amy did find a few minutes to visit the famed Mormon Tabernacle. So the trip didn't end up a dead loss. (Yes, though, the whole scene was overall quite a debacle. Gee did end up announcing that day that he had jumped ship and was going to Vanderbilt. The Brown community was outraged; students protested by throwing coins into hastily constructed Gee effigy; Gee himself was later practically run out of town. Brown, in the end, suffered a black eye for overreacting to a move that was, in fact, the best thing for everyone.)

Restless Richard

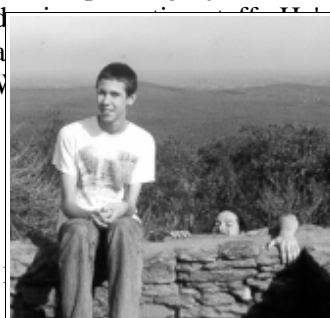
As for Richard III, whose life has been a bit more staid this year, the job transition that started around Christmas time

last year has run its course. You may recall that, after jumping from language work into computer information systems in '96, Richard III spent four years with Brown's Scholarly Technology Group. By '99 he had grown pretty restless again. And, after briefly toying with a local e-commerce opportunity, Richard ended up taking a job in late '99 on Brown's central aca-



Apple Picking

demic department. He is now firmly ensconced there, figuring software, mainly university-wide.



Richard IV, with III (almost), atop Mt. Wachusett

Richard likes the increased exposure he gets, and he likes his new management. He sometimes jokes,

though, that the systems people (the guys who have to install and maintain the software he writes) are going to come and kill him in his sleep some day. He also chafes about Brown's sluggish information-systems bureaucracy. So when recruiters call, or when really interesting jobs come up in his field elsewhere, he rarely takes a pass. So far this year he's seriously entertained job possibilities in San Diego, Denver, and Reston (Virginia). Hey, if anybody reading this knows of any interesting Web or information-systems jobs, give him a call!

Restless Amy

One wildcard that's turned up in the draw is the adoption process, which we are now in the midst of. In past letters we've chronicled our battles with secondary infertility. Amy has grown increasingly restless at our lack of progress and has finally settled on adoption as the best way, at this point, to expand our family. She and Richard III have basically spent the last three months filling out paperwork, ordering documents, talking to social workers, and generally dotting i's and crossing t's. Our plan is to finish getting state and federal seals placed on our dossier within a few weeks, and to have a stack of paperwork in the hands of our overseas adoption agency, Holt, by the first of the new year. Some time in the next year we'll probably get a call about an available child, and a few months after that we'll end up on a plane to Thailand (yup, that's right, Thailand), where we hope to meet the newest member of our family.

Restless Richard (IV)

Richard IV, who is now fifteen, and just starting the best years of his life, is becoming more and more independent and interesting. This last summer he decided to spend a week at a camp run by his dad's old high school (the Academy of the New Church). He then went directly to Georgia, where he set out on a two-week camping escapade that took him through South Carolina into North Carolina and Tennessee. The trip included rafting, rock climbing, camping, and hiking. He saw things most kids only see on TV and came back with a vast store of new knowledge about the climate and terrain of the southern Appalachian range. Coming home, though, was a bit of a bummer for him because it meant leaving a pretty exciting group of kids, and, by implication, re-entering a social world dominated by school, TV, video games, and general teenage angst.

Richard IV is now in high school here in East Providence, where the teaching quality varies widely, but where (after a tough adjustment period) he is now doing pretty well. Richard is still a big-time gardener and outdoor lover, and he plans most of our family outdoor excursions (see, e.g., the

photo of us atop Mt. Wachusett). He's also led our charge into at least partial vegetarianism. We eat some fish and chicken now, but are, by and large, meatless. Ironically his dad, Richard III, seems to have benefitted the most from the new diet, dropping both a few pounds and a few millimeters of mercury on the blood pressure guage. Richard IV himself seems none the worse for wear, remaining healthy, agile, and (as always) pencil-thin.

Jellystone, Delaware, and Kittens

Although we haven't done anything truly remarkable this year, we've had some fun times visiting with friends and relatives. Anne Ball (Richard III's sister), Steve (her husband), and all their kids came up to RI. As usual, we spent a long weekend with Amy's family at the Warrens, Wisconsin Jellystone Park; and we spent the usual week living communally near Cape Henlopen, Delaware with Richard's family. We also had a litter of kittens (or at least our cat did), which proved messy, but fun, and resulted in Anne, Richard's aforementioned sister, taking on a new family member, Ellsee.



IV with Cally and Mango

We wish you all the very best for the holiday season,

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