

The Group Grope

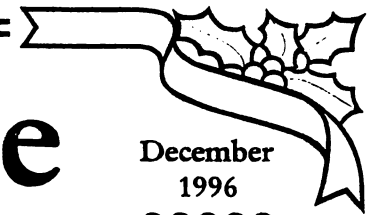


OK, I Love You, BaBye.

December
1996



Volume 1, Issue 12



There is a New Sheriff in Town

by John Morand

Bob Dylan once sang "Come writers and critics who prophesies with your pen, and keep your eyes wide, the chance may come again. . . The times they are a changin'." At least that's what I think he said. I mean he could be saying "Come Ryder's and Crickets who professionalize white European. . ." but that makes less sense than usual, even for a nasally, pot smokin', child o' the 60's. It would also make a lousy segue into the rest of the article.

In case you haven't heard, yours truly has assumed the awesome mantle of Editor of *The Grope*. Ellen and Christopher have set the bar so high, that I really have a lot to live up to. My goal is to make some of the layout and content different but there will be

no Holy Jihad of sweeping changes. This will not be a "New Coke" fiasco. I see it as more like having a new Darrin on Bewitched.

I will be putting out *The Grope* 6 times a year instead of the current number simply because I can't do 12 issues a year by myself. Now if someone else wants to pick up the slack every other month, then we're back to an every month publication. I am also being helped by a mystery publisher. I don't have easy access to a newsletter program, so one person has anonymously volunteered their time. It's much appreciated. I am inviting anyone who currently writes a column to feel free to continue and, rest assured, I will be coming
(Continued on page 2)

Final Note as Editor

by Christopher Ozdarski

As much as I hate all of the sappy shit common to award winners when accepting their trophies or mourners when eulogizing a close friend, I feel that I need to address two things. So let's just get it over with.

1. **Thank You.** During my tenure as editor, I have received many compliments (and a few gripes) regarding our little newsletter. They are all appreciated. But the credit (or blame) for our product does not belong to just one or two people. This publication would not have been as successful, and I consider it to have been a success in many ways, without contributions from many people. Thanks to all who helped

(Continued on page 4)

Christmas Decorating - The Recycling Method

by Dianne Lee

In this day of reuse and reduce, I have pondered on how to use normally disposable items around the house for your holiday decorating needs. The pioneers used to do it, why can't we? I hope that my ideas spur your own creative juices to top anything that the pretentious Martha Stewart could come up with.

The possibilities are endless when you have a theme in mind. There must be a theme in order to pull off the entire ecological look. Let's start with the tree.

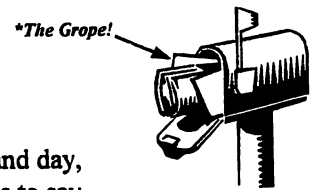
Tree Theme: Thanksgiving Leftovers. Save the turkey carcass and clean off all of the remaining animal flesh. Let it dry thoroughly for a few days, then weave gold ribbon through the rib bones. This will make a very festive tree topper. A decorative garland may be fashioned by stringing the whole cranberries that everyone picked out of Aunt Beulah's salad. Leftover green olives and pickles will add an excellent accent to the berries.



(Continued on page 4)

69 For 96

by Mary Ann Trapp



Guarding the mail box night and day,
to see what the newsletter has to say.
Reading the horoscopes with laughter and fun,
wondering what's up with November 3rd, 2001.
Opinions on self-actualization, and quite a few,
and let's not forget the ever popular Ozdarskist view.
Unyeilding faxes to *Brach's* to say
'who said you could make pink jelly beans taste that way?'
Printing of pristine prose and poetry,
and publishing Bob's first poem for all to see.
Graphing our tree, including every friend,
may it continue to grow and never end.
Recruiting new ideas and forcing us to think,
and allowing us in kind to respond in ink.
Outstanding writing from the columnist of Justinquery,
whose muttering never left us slack-jawed or weary.
Providing information on what's to do,
engagements, weddings, and birthday celebrations too.
Entertainment galore for only 69¢ an issue,
now let's turn to our editors to say *thank you*.

The Grope Lives !!!

(Continued from page 1)

after everybody else to contribute as well. I do have some early commitments from my high draft choices, and I think you will enjoy reading, if not agreeing with the new staff. I really want this to be more the product of the group as a whole, rather than of a few contributors. Why do I hear Ellen and Christopher chuckling in the background?

"Hey John," I hear you say. "What's this rag gonna cost me?" After talking with the previous management, I have decided to charge \$10.00 for the year. Christopher and Ellen lost money at last year's low, low rate and I don't feel like being that generous. Yeah, yeah, I know. I'm charging more for fewer issues, but with the new writers I already have commitments from, each issue will be (should be) bigger, bolder and have more cleaning and brightening power than the other leading brands.

So, send in your check, cash, or chickens (Bartering is accepted) to me, fill out the sheet below, and right about the first week in January, expect a call from me asking for your poems of love, lust, slavish devotion, unrequited longing or plain old revulsion for the Big Valentines Day issue. Later.

Don't Delay. Sign up TODAY!

Yes John, I do want to avoid being ridiculed in *The Grope*, so here's my payment.

Yes John, I am naughty and deserve to be spanked for not renewing my subscription to *The Grope*.

Name: _____

E-Mail: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Do you want to write for *The Grope*? _____

Articles you'd like to see: _____

Please mail or deliver responses to: The Morand's

~~2121 E. University Ave.~~, Farmington Hills, MI 48336

Little Drunken Sex Things

For those of you who didn't make it to "Rick's Leaving Town" party on November 16th, here's a recap of a typical conversation held there among some *groper*s. All names have been withheld.

GROPER 1: Did you see the bozongas on her?

GROPER 2: Yeah. . . I sure would like to pour a beer over those and nurse for a while.

GROPER 1: Or how about pouring a shot on her stomach and acting like a thirsty labrador?

GROPER 2: Oooh yeah, that reminds me of what (*name protected*) did to (*name protected*) last month. Did you hear the story about. . .

GROPER 1: Yeah, I heard it, but let's talk about it again. And let's tell (*name protected*) about it. I don't think he's heard.

GROPER 2: Okay, let's meet at the keg, I need a beer. I'm going to drink so much tonite it's going to be like the time I. . .

GROPER 1: Yeah, that was great! You are such a DAN*. (*Drunken Amoral Nymphomaniac*)

GROPER 2: Chug another beer man. . . Have you decided if you are going to pass out nude tonite or puke in your socks and do the nasty with (*name protected*)?

GROPER 1: I think I'll do both. After all, I AM in *the group*.

--- Overheard by Rick Richard

Spam Haiku Items From Internet

found by Bridget Dunnigan, surfer at large

haiku (hi'koo) An unrhymed Japanese lyric poem having a fixed 3-line 17-syllable form.

Spam (spam) Undefined in Webster's. Possibly indefinable.

With that in mind:

Pink tender morsel,
Glistening with salty gel.
What the hell is it?

S P A M

Ears, snouts and innards,
A homogeneous mass.
Pass another slice.

S P A M

Cube of cold pinkness
Yellow specks of porcine fat.
Give me a spork please.

S P A M

Old man seeks doctor.
"I eat SPAM daily," he says.
Angioplasty.

S P A M

Parts of pigs o' plenty.
Sumptuous feet and tails,
Rub amber gel through hair.

S P A M

You don't want to know,
What they put in that tin can
It's scary to think.

S P A M

Drop a pig in a blender,
Add salt and dye:
The recipe for Spam.

S P A M

In the same manner as we,
lick envelopes to seal them,
cows lick Spam.

--- Author(s) unknown.

Editorial Note: No disrespect to the creators of Spam is intended by our reprint of these lyrical tid-bits. Indeed, our intentions are to honor their wonderful product. We like Spam. Really.

A Letter to the Editor,

Please Note: The original letter was hand written on real stationery.

Lauds and applause to last month's **Grope** entry by John Morand. I whole heartedly agree with his views.

I would not be of the same techno level of John's. In fact, I revel in my ownership of a non-cordless non-cellular princess phone, a single CD player and snail mail instead of e-mail at work. (My snail mail definition: e-mail that is only internal. No 'net' access.)

Do I feel out of touch with the human race? Not at all. Voice mail, call waiting, an answering machine and actual telephone conversations link me to those I want to communicate with.

I'll risk being labeled "artsy-fartsy" by Christopher when I admit that I enjoy reading H. H. Lawrence, Vonegut and Byron. The Detroit Institute of Arts still fascinates me, even on my 45th visit. Live theater has the power to stir my every emotion.

As for the familiarity breeding contempt slant on the Group, I have a different take. We are a bunch of late bloomers. The family of friends has provided a nest or cocoon of sorts that has protected those who wanted shelter from awkward social situations with strangers. Some have grown-up and ventured into adult relationships, developed individual tastes and talents and have chosen not to do this en masse.

This frightens people because the dynamics of the group has shifted. It is a healthy change. Infrequent gatherings have become mini reunions and a time to share new impacts on our lives instead of rehashing the same old gossip.

You are all my extended family. I wouldn't take back any of the experiences that I have shared over the past five years. Just like any family, there are favorites and pains. I cherish you all just the same.

--- Dianne Lee

Directory Updates

Differences: A Thanksgiving Afterthought

by Mary Beth Pauline-Morand

Think about how things would be if everyone agreed with you, if everyone was just like you. Think about it. . . if everyone here was as cool; as nice; as thoughtful and as fun as you are, wouldn't the world be a relaxing, fun and even perfect place? Oh, what's that? What's that you're saying now? You said. . . ? Oh, please say that one more time, and just a little bit louder. . . You said you are not perfect? Yeah, I know. You are imperfect and human. You knew that, I knew that. Everyone knows that!

We know that we are imperfect humans when we are quite young. It seems like such a simple thing. We are each lacking in some areas, adequate in others, and strong in many. Another part of being imperfect humans dictates that our strengths and weaknesses are not the same. So what does that mean. Yes, another simple concept; it means that we are all different.

No one is perfect. All of us are different. Sounds like your kindergarten or Sunday School teacher talking doesn't it? It's simple stuff, but as adults, it's the simple stuff we

often forget. I forget all the time, like when John talks about Gov. Engler being the best governor Michigan's had in a long time or when experiencing the old lady driving in front of me (The one with blue hair) at a turtles pace. With John I might feel offended, then frustrated, then pissed off. With the old lady I'm just plain pissed off.

But there's always a time, when I sit down, usually with a cup of tea, and thank God for the slow old lady who is probably a better driver than I; and for John who sometime drives me crazy, but who challenges me, and then agrees to disagree. So for anyone who was offended by my husband's article; or by any other **Grope** article; or by anything someone in the group did or said; or by what that parent said; or by what a co-worker did... I have this list of advise...

1. Get very pissed off.
2. Get the pissed off out of your system. (Punching bags; punching pillows; housecleaning work well.)

3. Calm down. I do it with a cup of tea, a deep breath or two, and sometimes my journal.
4. Then be thankful that you have friends, family, neighbors, etc. who make your life interesting, who make you think, who make you struggle, who challenge you.
5. Then come to your senses and celebrate your differences and your struggle. Be thankful again that you are not as stupid as the jackasses who have let a difference or two send them to prison; to lose their children; to lose their friends or even to lose their lives.
6. Then once you are rested, calm, and at peace, get ready because my husband is not the only one who can piss you off. Although I thought many of his statements were a bit strong, I agree with what he wrote.

Always remember that being pissed off is far better than being pissed on. Happy belated Thanksgiving to all.

Deck the Halls with Boughs of Dryer Lint

(Continued from page 1)

Mashed potatoes thrown randomly on the branches will give the illusion of snow dust. Gravy is not advised as it will make the snow appear muddy. *Advisement: A strong air freshener is recommended after the first week. Also, pet owners should be aware of potential tree mountings by dogs and cats.*

Outdoor Theme: Laundry Leavings.

We all dream of a white Christmas, yet Mother Nature doesn't always meet our expectations. A solution to this dilemma can be found right in your laundry room. Dryer Lint! Start collecting the downy fuzz from your lint trap each time that you do a load of wash. In order to cover a whole lawn, you may want to start your stash in July. People have a tendency to wear more white in the summer months and this will save you from spray painting the blue lint that is collected from your jeans. You will be the envy of all of your neighbors. At least until a good gust of wind comes along.

Gift Wrap Theme: Free for All.

Anything goes when it comes to wrapping your loved one's gifts. The understanding is that the materials used will again be used the next year. Hence the beauty of recycling. Cereal Boxes make superb blouse cartons. The colorful print of the featured food product needs only the accent of a bow fashioned from the liner bag to complete the look. The lucky recipient of this gift may also have the added bonus of cereal crumbs to eat while others open their presents.

By now, I know that you have crafty thoughts filling your head and that you can't wait to begin your own ecologically responsible decorating for the holidays. You may even come up with gift ideas utilizing materials found in your home. Remember the ever popular macaroni and spaghetti pictures that we made as kids? Your parents would still love to receive anything that you made especially for them with your own two hands.

Editor Bye, Bye

(Continued from page 1)

make the 1996 *Group Gropes* a reality. (Even those of you who were too lazy to contribute but who occasionally offered compliments or constructive criticism.)

2. **Good Luck.** It seems that some brave souls have decided to keep *The Grope* alive. I wish them luck in their endeavors and hope that they are able to take our little creation to new heights. I also hope that they know what they are in for. I didn't.

Okay. I'm done. I was going to whine (possibly for a full page in small print) about the problems I've had with this newsletter over the last year and offer apologies to those I've hurt or offended. But hey... *water under the bridge, move on, let's all be friends, yada, yada, yada.* . . .

Overall, I'm glad I was a part of *The Group Grope - Year 1* and I look forward to seeing what the *new year* brings. By the way, speaking of the *new year*. . . (gratuitous plug time). . . I hope to see all of you at my New Year's Eve Party. Unless, of course, you have something better planned. (Like skiing in Vermont or an appointment with your pedicurist.)

Submission for *The Grope*

by Bob Sherman

So . . . on October 5, 1996, at 11:37 p.m., I agreed to perform a task which is proving to be very difficult for me. So I will use this forum to express my difficulties.

To set the stage, the first weekend in October Christopher O., Matthew Buenconsejo and I decided to go up North to fish and to experience the fall colors. After a productive day of fishing, Matt, Chris and I decided to visit a local tavern for some nourishment and liquid refreshments. Later in the evening, after my liquid intake had exceeded the solid intake and I had become loud and friendly to everyone in the bar, a question was presented to me. No, the question wasn't whether I preferred fractions over decimals. Chris asked me if I would write something for the December *Grope*. At the time, December seemed like a long way off. . . and how hard is it to write an article anyway. Well you see, I have sat down in front of my computer on multiple occasions, scratching my ever increasing follicularly challenged scalp, in a quandary as to what to write. Some of the ideas and my reactions were, but are not limited to the following:

- My hectic travel schedule: Who wants to listen to me whine about work?
- A recent business trip to Mexico: Getting searched at customs is not story worthy, but being propositioned and not knowing it could be.
- The cricket story (trip from hell): The story has been told too many times.

- A mountain bike adventure story: Too situational and only a few people would be interested.
- Comment on a recent article in the Grope: Take a deep breath and let it go.
- The Lake Geneva Airport Story: Too close to home. I Need more time to let that one settle.
- Home improvement tips from Bob: Do as little as possible. Well actually, I am getting new carpeting on 12/2. This is a historic event because money is leaving my hands and it is not going on a bike or into a financial institution. I think I'm starting to nest. (No, not that.)
- How to be a food slut / Food Slutting 101: Hell no. I don't want to give my secrets a way.
- How to blow an effective snot rocket without using your hand: uh-mmmmm.
- Why to avoid poison ivy: It's itchy.
- How much I miss my nieces: Unquantifiable captain. I love those little kids.
- How much I will miss Christopher and Ellen as editors of *The Grope*: You guys did an excellent job and should be commended.

Well, it's 2:12 a.m. and time to turn the Stanley Clarke off and go to bed. The problem of what to write about will remain unsolved.

Holiday Gifts for My "FRIENDS"

by Justin Smith

Almost a year has gone, almost a year has passed.
Why has Justin been missing? you might have "axed."
 So here's an appearance from an AWOL poetry pope,
 better known to the masses as the "Group Dope."
 Insults abound, I know everyone has missed.
 Hence a few parting shots for y'all to get pissed.

There's a blondie I know who calls herself a mystic.
 God forbid she hold the editor's hand in public - he'll go ballistic.

Not forgetting north-bound Rick, the guy I call "The Closer."
 Keeping it in his pants at last urges this confused poseur.

In remembering the Indian chick with booze up her sleeve,
 she should be bonded with chains on each New Year's Eve.

A moratorium on talk of sex, booze, but not Ayn Rand.
 As deep as the ocean is the hypocrisy from Johnny Morand.

The fresh Bordo mobile is adorned with hue kiwi.
 Such is a requisite for the lifetime Skiwi.

Opinionated editor he is, that demon of the debit.
 Once you're in a relationship, like clockwork, he'll take credit.

Thoughts of Ellen over lemon-drops or over a beer,
 and wishing that the book Guinness had a classification for brassiere.

Pinkos has had card parties on Friday, just for a lark.
 This when he's not portraying the villain in "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

No one I'd rather seek of advice than Dianne Lee.
 After I get done relieving, do I tap one, two or three?

Then just down the road, a guy with income from fencing.
 Check back in a year, empty bottles and cans he'll be dispensing.

Presenting Bob, a friend you can be assured won't quit.
 Never has there been a greater mis-nomer than "piece of shit."

We all know Kry's and Jeff, they've made it thus far.
 Saw them shopping for whips and chains at a store name Noir.

Where's the fashionable Italian? Way off in Jackson.
 For my wishes this January 1st, I pray him more action.

A Nutt she's not - at parties she'll hang with you.
 She's good for a snide comment and a lighter "Q."

The poem's end with a guy of level head,
 but force him alcohol or personal subject and his face flushes red.

So that's all for now; Excuse my mood switches.
 This holiday I have a round receptacle for all of you bitches.

What is Wrong With You People !?!

by Barb O. (a.k.a. Christopher's Mom)

I recently came into possession of several back issues of your less-than-constructive periodical and I am appalled!

When my son told me that he and his friends had a monthly newsletter I thought "how nice. . . they can share interesting stories from their vacations and let each other know about upcoming church socials." I was astonished when I read the horoscopes and detected the definite preoccupation with sex. A theme which I later noticed was not confined to the Astrological Connection. The title itself fosters images of licentious sexual revelry. If I didn't know better (and I hope this isn't the case), I would think that your whole focus was on planning the next orgy. I found myself looking for a *who-slept-with-who* chart. . . color coded to indicate how much alcohol was involved.

And what is up with this Justin character? I read his poem "exiled" from earlier this year and I was ready to donate a few bucks toward his therapy. When is the telethon? I hope that his level of dysfunctionality isn't as common among you as it appears from the trash in your publication. If it is, you should consider getting together for a group rate with someone like Dr. Fraser Crane. (Or Niles.)

Sex, Q's (beer?), and general debauchery are not healthy topics for a printed forum. Why don't you concentrate on more constructive topics? Exchange recipes, share tax planning tips, discuss possible ideas for making the world a better place. . . These are the types of things I'd expect you to be printing for all to see.

Come on people. . . get your minds out of the gutter! Straighten up, because you are going to be raising the adults of the future and we certainly don't want them turning out like most of you have. While you're at it. . . stop using all of those filthy, disgusting cuss words. It sounds like fucking hell. And if you aren't going to change the format for your quaint little tabloid then make sure I'm on the mailing list. That way I can live vicariously through you unstable degenerates.

Words of Wisdom

a note from Christopher

The other day, this guy who shares office space in our suite offered the following snippet of wisdom:

*Don't go around just looking at the ground.
 Go up to people and meet them.
 Every person you meet is a potential client.
 Or lay.*

He later offered the following:

You have to eat it, to appreciate it. © G.G.

His name is Gregg and, yes ladies, he's single! Hopefully we can all learn from his sage observations.

The Astrological Connection

by *Mary Ann the Mystic*
December 1996

ARIES (March 21 - April 19) While praying to the goddess of love, an anarchist nun recommended that you and sweetheart should love one another like energizer bunnies. This will really show your holiday cheer. Best sex: When you keep going and going.

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20) The flaming radical in you has been exaggerating your minor flaws and thus overcompensating. There is nothing wrong with you that a little juicy, sizzling, witty teasing and temptation would not fix. New Year's Eve would be perfect for this new strategy. Best Sex : When your buns are sizzling.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 21) This month you will have an attention span of a 9 year-old who missed several Ritalin dosages. You will shift through more moods in an hour than most people do in a week. I urge you to rebel against this and focus on all the splendor this Kwanzaa season brings. Best Sex: When you give attention to every nook and cranny.

CANCER (June 22 - July 21) You're about to get laid... and laid... and laid. There is almost no chance you can screw this up. As you can see, this is the best time of the year to ring in the season of cheer with your dear. Best Sex: 12/31-1/1 (Hell of a night.) Unless, of course, your name is Bob. Then it is November 3, 2001.

LEO (July 22 - Aug. 22) December is your month for change. Consider a move to a warmer climate or, for those struggling with something that just won't work, just move on. You may even want to rethink your views regarding Gov. Engler's political prowess. If you aren't ready for these types of changes, look between the couch cushions. You may find a bit of 'change' there. Best Sex : After a change in position.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22) It is time to let that someone special in your life know that you are in need of more intimacy. Leave a sexy message on their machine or tape a message to their windshield like " 'Tis the season to be sexy, fa-la-la-la-la la-la-la-la." Best Sex: When the mistletoe starts you off, finish in the bedroom.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 23) The romantic Venus has saved the best for last. New Year's Eve festivities climax with a clinch on top of the mountain. Only when you reach the top will you realize the ecstasy you've been missing. Best Sex: When you are on top.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 21) Lately you have been trying to channel Lucille Ball but all you have been getting Lenny Bruce. So quit channeling and use those supernatural powers of concentration and stamina in the bedroom. Best Sex: Wonder twins activate in the shape of ecstasy.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21) Your sexy, mischievous spirit dares you to whisper sweet nothings in the ears of someone who needs it and say "Corrupt me, quench my ever-deepening thirst." Be careful what you wish for. Best Sex: When your wishes come true.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19) This month your fun filled merriment will be enjoyed by all you come in contact with. Do something for that special someone, like draw a nice hot bubble bath and hand feed your lover fresh strawberries as they bathe. Best Sex: When the tub's a rockin' don't come a knockin'.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18) You are feeling very feisty and festive this month. Put that to good use. Try dressing up in a Santa suit and see where your reindeer leads you. Best Sex: When you are naughty rather than nice.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20) This month you are thinking about teaching a class at your local Y. And I don't mean at the Men's Christian Association either. For further explanation see GG's second quote in this month's *Grope*. Remember, the holidays bring many tasty treats. Best Sex: When you savor every morsel.

As a final note: I have really enjoyed writing the Astrological Connection this year. Earlier this Fall I did inform Ellen and Christopher that I would probably not be able to continue to write the horoscopes the same way next year. As you may imagine, it is difficult at times to create 12 different new ideas each and every month that relate to members of the group. I hope you have all enjoyed my writings. As you know, they were strictly meant to be used for entertainment purposes only. For those of you who mortgaged your house based on my predictions, well um. . . well ummm. . . Anyway, I bid you all a wonderful and joyous holiday season and a new year where all of your dreams come true.

Give me a reason to buy new furniture

Is anyone interested in buying my couch and love seat? Perfect for a basement or recroom. Call with offers, but please note. . .

You have to move it and *I'm* not helping.

--- Dianne Lee (810-██████)





The Group Grope

Editorial and publication headquarters was Christopher's house for 1996.
It was published monthly for 69¢ an issue.

Republication of news dispatches originated by *The Group Grope* is encouraged.
All other republication rights are reserved.

If you have any questions, comments, or complaints. . . tough.

December 1996 Groping Opportunities

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 Hanukkah Begins 	7 Jeanne Braman's Holiday Open House
8	9	10	11	12 Guadalupe Day	13 Hanukkah Ends	14
15	16	17 Craig Mitchell's Birthday (1960)	18	19	20	21 Party @ Dave Messina's Winter Solstice 
22 Paul Carolyn's Birthday (1965)	23	24 Full Moon	25 Christmas 	26 Boxing Day Kwanzaa Begins	27	28 John Morand's Birthday (1965)
29	30 Ron & Linda Dimmer Wedding Anniversary	31 Christopher's New Year's Eve Party 	Jan. 1	Jan. 2	Jan. 3 Kwanzaa Ends	Jan. 4



Event Information

Saturday, December 7, 7:30 p.m.: Jeanne Braman requests the pleasure of our company to assist her with trimming her tree and kicking off the holiday season. If you are too lazy to help with the tree, feel free to come and watch everyone else waste their time with all the decoration crap. Contact Jeanne at 810-~~442-6666~~ for more information.

Saturday, December 21: Dave Messina is encouraging folks to head out his way for a holiday sleep over. If you are a Jackson local, feel free to just show up for the food. Remember... Dave's was the site of 1995's 'grope of the year,' so try not to miss this year's fun. Contact Dave at 517-~~442-6666~~ for the scoop.

Tuesday, December 31: New Year's Eve at Christopher's. No writing on walls or people this year... just good clean fun to ring in the new year. Show up... you probably won't regret it. (No guarantee of your lack of regret should be presumed to be expressed or implied. It's basically up to you. But it's likely to be more fun than sitting home by yourself and picking your nose while watching Dick Clark on the boob tube.)

Chicken or Egg of the Keypads - - - Which Came First?

by Christopher Ozdarski

Have you ever spent several hours adding up numbers on a calculator or entering numbers onto a computer spreadsheet using the numerical keypad off to the right? (By the way, I wish they had a keyboard model with the number pad on the left. But that's not what I'm whining about today.) And after hours of type, type, type did you ever try to make a phone call? Suddenly 555-1212 becomes 555-7878. I hate that.

Who screwed up? The calculator people or the phone people? The answer is obvious. . . Ma Bell.

Now there may be those who disagree with me because telephones have been around longer than calculators. But I'd be willing to bet a dollar or two that the original 10-key predates touch tone service. That means their layout came first because, before touch tone, telephones had that stupid circle thing that made it hard to dial numbers like 9 and zero.

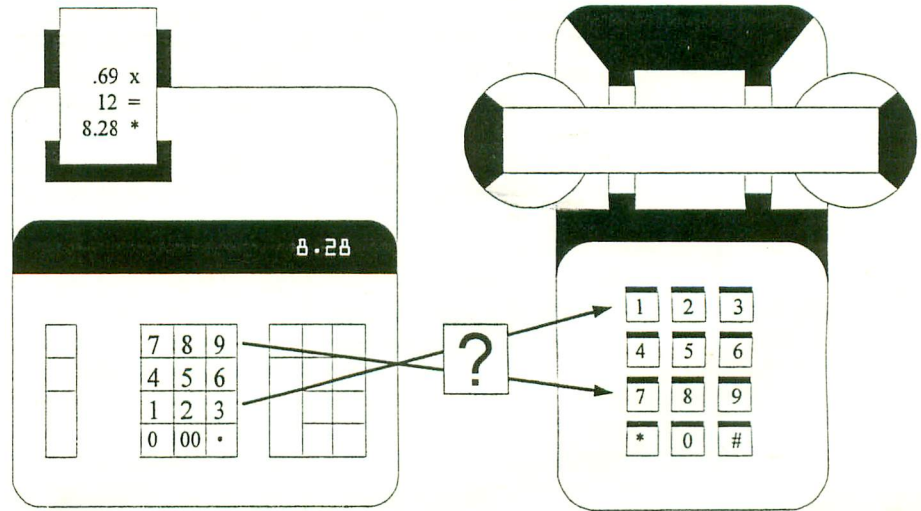
Besides, there is the whole ergonomics thing. I'm sure that the designers of the

10-key did many time and motion studies to determine the best layout, just like the typewriter people did. Then some telephone yahoo comes along and throws common sense out the window. Loser.

Oh well, I guess there isn't much we can do about it now. It's too late to correct the

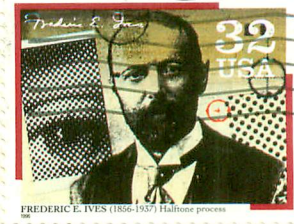
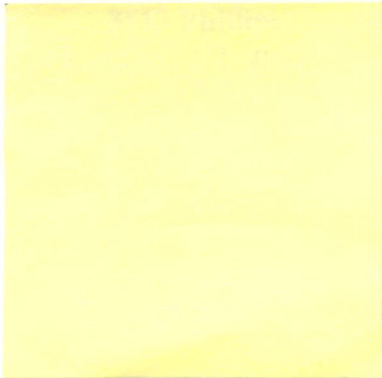
problem. Americans are too lazy to learn something new. It would be just like that whole metric fiasco. C'est la vie.

(How many kilometers to grandmother's house? How about if I go over the river and through the woods? Damn, I'm out of gas. How many liters will fit in my 14 gallon tank? Oh, never mind.)



The Group Grope

c/o Christopher Ozdarski



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