

# ANDY & HEATHER'S 2001 ROUND UP

Greetings all. Yet another year has rolled to an end in a whirlwind fashion. Below is a brief (ish) insight into our misadventures.

## JANUARY

The year began with a trip to Stanley Park to witness the Festival of Lights put on by the Vancouver Firefighters. A trip on the miniature



train furnished a *spectacular* view. The rest of the month continued relatively quietly with the usual rounds of ice hockey and curling.

## FEBRUARY

February was a busy month. Andy & Heather discovered the Vancouver Griffins ice hockey team and attended several of their games. This team has now entered the Women's National Hockey League and are very inspiring to see. Andy watched imagining that was how she looked and skated, but Heather brought her down to earth very rapidly by video-taping one of her games and showing her that there was still plenty of work to do! Andy & Heather also went to the Outdoor Adventure Show and had a fabulous time viewing stalls, exhibits, kayaking and dirt bike displays.



They splurged and got themselves an early anniversary present of a fabulous, new tent. The month also saw a lot of webcam use videoconferencing with family members back in Ontario and was rounded off with

Heather & Andy's first earthquake! Although it was centred in Washington State and caused devastation there, it was only Richter 4 in

Vancouver lasting about 30 seconds - a fascinating experience (since there was no damage in their area).

## MARCH

Sport dominated this month. Andy's hockey came to a frenetic finish as her team was eliminated mid way through the play-offs (much better than they had achieved the previous year). Heather & Andy also found a very nice badminton club that had players ranging in age from late 20's to early 70's & who have a great attitude.

Curling drew to a close at the end of this month with the season final being anxiously fought. One of the play-off teams was Heather's. Though they battled hard, Heather's team was beaten - by one point! At the post game celebrations Heather received her trophy for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, plus graciously accepted another trophy voted on by the club for "Most Improved Player".

## APRIL

April began with a transit strike across the entire Lower Mainland of BC. With predictions of impending chaos it was theorized that the strike would be settled within a week. In reality it ended up lasting 4 ½ months but most people managed to get around with little extra hassle (mainly because the buses weren't clogging up the roads). Andy and Heather celebrated their 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary by trying out their new tent. While



the overnight trip was relaxing and the tent excellent, it was *bloody* cold and they were glad to get home.

At the end of the month, after having suffered from a bad "cold" for 3 months (and much nagging from Heather), Andy finally *dragged* herself to a doctor and was diagnosed with an eye

and sinus infection. A brief course of antibiotics cleared it up while she wondered why she had taken so long in getting treatment.

### MAY

The biggest event in May was Heather starting school. She had enrolled in an *intensive* 6-month “Technology Support Professional” (computer) course that included an 8-week work placement. At the end of the course Heather would be a certified computer tech. One bonus of going to school at this time was that the transit strike included security staff for the Skytrain. This did not shut down the Skytrain, which Heather was riding to school, but *did* mean free rides! Students love *any* freebies!

May was also the month that Andy’s company (QuestAir) won the BC Technology Association’s Emerging Company of the Year Award.

### JUNE

June started off with an uproarious evening at a live presentation of “Whose Line Is It Anyway”. Greg, Colin, Ryan, Chip, Brad and more were incredibly funny.



The next day the girls walked the two blocks to their local stadium to watch the England B rugby squad trounce the Canada A team. The match had a bit of everything: some excellent tries, a bloody fist-fight, 3 sin bin sessions and a drop goal.



On the 17<sup>th</sup> Andy & Heather took a playful plunge by buying a motor scooter. They had been considering this for some time (remember the transit strike was still on) and were finally persuaded when they came across a seemingly great offer. They bought



a yellow and black Crono (a Japanese make that was trying to break into the Canadian market). Unfortunately, as they found out later, Crono, in Canada, consisted of 6 people - and the Japanese company wasn’t a transport manufacturer but a food processing company with some cash to burn. Out of the 33 days that they had “Flash” it worked for only 13 of them and thusly was renamed “Dud”. It was fixed 3 times (one time even having the whole engine, fuel system and battery replaced) but it continued to strand them. Fortunately, they had bought it from a Honda/Yamaha dealer and, with minimal difficulty, they managed to get it exchanged for a *super* little Yamaha (“Zuma”) that has proved very reliable.



June was rounded off with a camping trip over the long weekend where Heather studied in pleasant surroundings and Andy stomped through some trails.

### JULY

Heather squeezed in a whirlwind 36-hour trip back to Ontario to attend a pseudo-family member’s wedding. The setting, ceremony and evening’s festivities were all excellent and highly memorable.



Also in this short trip she managed to: fit in a visit with good buddies, surprise her grama, attend an early birthday party for her dad and brother, get sunburnt – and do 8 chapters of school work on the planes.

The following weekend the girls made their annual trip to the waterslides. Heather was attached to the ever-present text and note-books but Andy ran around like a little kid. Unfortunately the weather wasn’t at its best and the girls spent a fair proportion of their time in the hot tub warming up!

## AUGUST

The girls took their second short holiday at the beginning of August, camping at Cultus Lake Provincial Park. Sadly, the weather was less than stellar and they spent most of the time sheltering under tarps and sucking back numerous hot chocolates. During the rare appearance of the sun they did venture to the small town of Cultus Lake to take in some beautiful views and a couple of rounds of crazy/mini golf.

The following weekend had fabulous weather for the annual Air Show. There were spectacular air and ground displays made all the more enjoyable by the clear blue sky and heat to warm through to your bones!



August was also the month when Andy took a week off work and started volunteering at Habitat for Humanity. This is an organisation that builds homes for low-income families using donated materials and volunteers. Andy got sucked right in and was soon *leading* mini crews putting up the outside insulation, tar paper and siding.

Andy would continue to try to put in 16 hours at the build site per month and loves finding out how wooden homes are constructed.

Heather and Andy rounded off the month with their annual trip to the Pacific National Exhibition, which has exhibits, agricultural displays, fair ground rides and live shows. Andy was astounded to learn of the RCMP Musical Ride and made Heather watch.



## SEPTEMBER

Over the bank/long holiday weekend Andy went with a few of Heather's school mates to climb one of the local mountains, The Chief.



The following day

the girls made their first trip to the Vancouver Zoo and were very impressed at the variety of animals. Andy was amazed at the up close tiger feeding.



Heather finished her in-class work and started her work placement at QuestAir. She joined the 2-man "Information Services" department where she fit right in. It wasn't long before she was dashing around as frantically as everyone else at QuestAir. This work placement gave Heather great exposure to lots of different computer problems & equipment, and also had the additional bonus of giving her insight into why Andy loves QuestAir so much despite the long hours. The girls also managed to team up with a very nice couple (Crystal and Caitlin) who have *many* similar interests. The two couples have become firm friends and spend a lot of time together.

September was theatre month with Heather and Andy seeing the Agatha Christie play, "And Then There Was One", quickly followed by a couple of local productions during the Vancouver Fringe Festival.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, two of the girl's good friends from Toronto, Steven and Victor, passed through town for a visit on the way to catch their cruise ship in Seattle. Andy and Heather hadn't been to Seattle yet so offered to chauffeur the boys (only a 2 ½ hour drive). The weather was wonderful, the company great and the drive very pleasant. Expected delays at the border due to September

11<sup>th</sup> were minimal as the group had all of their papers ready for inspection. They did, however, witness other vehicles so thoroughly inspected that inside spare tire compartments and under bonnets/hoods were examined, and suitcases were removed & opened right out on the roadway.



The four stayed at a motel just a couple of blocks from the Space Needle and, on Saturday, enjoyed touring the downtown and waterfront areas. Seattle is a terrific city and will be visited again.

On the Sunday the girls visited the renowned Seattle Flight Museum on Boeing Field and spent several hours taking in the history of flight, the most modern planes, NASA exhibits and a tour around the retired, original Air Force One.



## OCTOBER

Heather started October by completing her industry computer exams and becoming “A+ Certified” (an essential in getting a job). After some careful consideration and seeing an absolute bargain, Andy and Heather decided that their Christmas present to themselves and from everybody else would be a 27” TV, DVD player, Surround Sound system and a swish entertainment unit to house it all. Due to the special offer, they took early delivery of their Christmas present and soon had the place rocking with surround sound. They were and continue to be extremely pleased (it’s bloody awesome!!! – even does surround sound for just TV!)

Curling started and Andy & Heather even managed to drag their new friends along. Ice Hockey also started up with Andy moving to a new team that had just been created. As usual,

Andy took charge and even so, was unanimously voted Captain.



With Halloween fast approaching Heather, Andy, and their buddies went to the Pumpkin Patch, picked out their pumpkins and had a mammoth carving session later that weekend.

QuestAir held a costume contest on Halloween and Andy tied for first place, winning a gift certificate for Best Costume *and* being brave enough to wear it *all* day.



## NOVEMBER

Heather treated Andy on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Canadians do not celebrate Bonfire Night and it is one of the few times of the year that Andy gets homesick. Heather surprised Andy with a “Guy” made from newspaper and they ceremoniously burned him in the BBQ. Andy got covered in smoke & ashes and *loved* it.

Heather officially finished her work term at QuestAir and the company was upset at having to let her leave due to a hiring freeze. She continued to volunteer at QuestAir four mornings a week to keep her skills sharp while she looked for a permanent job. The girls took in several ice hockey games including the Canucks (NHL) and the Griffins (WNHL) teams.

## DECEMBER

December saw work at QuestAir step up as the company has some critical milestones to reach. Heather had some major success by managing to get a couple job interviews in the depressed job market. The round of Christmas parties has started with QuestAir’s being particularly good. Andy & Heather are looking forward to spending the Christmas season with friends and videoconferencing with family. Cheers all!