

TWO thousand eleven will be marked as the year of pairings.

Like Noah's creatures or the proverbial turtle doves, the Ganders will march into the New Year ... two by two.

Topping the long coupling list was Adam marrying Pastry Chef Hannah Finkas July 23rd. The two were wed on a ledge overlooking Idaho's Lake Coeur d' Alene. Adam's marriage now legally moves the famous Finkas fruit cobbler into our family, where it will continue to get the utmost respect. (Hint...Hint, bring some for Christmas, maybe two?) The newlyweds live in Pullman. Adam received a promotion this year to manager of ticket operations for Washington State University Athletics and is looking forward to more of a winning-style season with Coach Mike Leach. Hannah is the manager of one of the Palouse's best restaurants, the South Fork Public House.

Cara's boyfriend, Tom Jenkins, returned from his Air Force assignment in Iraq via Texas last month. Tom surprised Cara during her routine shopping trip to Safeway. We're not sure if the homecoming occurred between the corn flakes and cranberry juice on aisle two, but the patch of retail space where the reunion occurred will probably be sacred to them. They are now living together in the Greenwood neighborhood of Seattle and continuing to patronize the same Safeway store. Tom has impressed the family, but there is another development that makes them the perfect pairing: Tom, who received special Air Force recognition for his work in improving weather forecasting for war missions, has been accepted to UW next quarter. We like him anyway.

Our Michigan pair, Amy and Aaron Lundy, is our Cabela's poster children couple. They hunt and eat deer, are quite knowledgeable about antlers and such, plant trees on their new acreage, do lots of camping, and other outdoorsy "Last Man Standing" stuff. Aaron posed for a photo with his prize buck in front of a "Quality Deer Management Association poster." If you look closely in the right hand corner of such posters, the contact is listed as no other than "Aaron Lundy," the vice president of the Eaton County QDMA branch. Poster child, indeed. Amy recently won the deer management auction of a model log cabin complete with opening roof, a stone fireplace, "miniature moose and deer mounts" and "qdma signs on the front porch." Sounds more macho than her childhood dollhouse.

Tiffany and Dylan Sordahl are thriving near Boston Harbor in the Olympia area. As she promised on stage in Hawaii last Christmas Eve, Tiffany is pursuing an education in radiology. Among other things, she says this hi-tech medical education will give her the opportunity to "squish boobs." We are quite proud of her. She has pursued her education while working as a receptionist for Providence and as a dental assistant. She still straps on a pair of skates and coaches roller derby. Oh yes, she also does automobile and laundry appliance repair in her spare time.

Our niece, Anna Yoshida married Lt. Chris Souza Oct. 15 at Manito Presbyterian Church in Spokane. It was an elegant and touching ceremony in the same church where Anna's parents were married. Her mother and Larry's sister Lisa Yoshida, purchased a new home in Spokane. Anna and Chris live in Fort Collins, CO, where Chris is stationed at a U.S. Air Force missile installation.

Another niece, Lisa Johnson, married Matt Neel in a beautiful ceremony on a cliff overlooking the ocean near Newport, Ore. The morning started as foggy, cleared for the wedding, and provided an astonishing sunset. It was just a week before Matt's father died in a tragic accident involving his motor scooter and a police car in Lakewood. Lisa is the daughter of Linda and Paul Johnson. Linda is also Larry's sister.

Larry and Robin had great fun pairing with Ryan and Marianne Fraunfelder for a Maryhill RV camping trip and a visit to the Bickleton Pioneer Picnic. We all rode the early 1900s merry-go-round that was brought to the picnic grounds by a committee headed by Larry's grandfather, Sam Ganders, in 1929. Antique carousels notwithstanding, Robin and Marianne thought the highlights of the trip were the many tastings at the Maryhill Winery. Let's just say they each had more than a pair of drinks.

Grandpa Bud Boisen and Joan Munkers continue to be a formidable pair. Bud, still an active cattleman in Hauser Lake, Idaho, celebrated his 90th birthday at a surprise party surrounded by longtime friends and family. The event was orchestrated by Joan at the Longhorn Barbecue in Spokane.

We're looking forward to being home for Christmas this year. No surprise, Larry has a train running around the Christmas tree (and many more trains on a make-shift carpet layout upstairs.) The stockings are all hung by the chimney with care, in hopes that our family soon will be there.

Here's wishing you get paired with your loved ones this Christmas and there's no paring back on the yule spirits. So no matter how you slice it or match it, we're wishing you this pair of greetings:

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

In fact, double it – from the two of us:

Robin & Larry... and our schnauzer, Tuney Anderson Ganders

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To view our family holiday album online, check the family web page and links to Larry's Christmas train pages, wedding pictures, plus Ganders and Fraunfelder history web sites:

<http://www.ganders.net>