



Carol Relocated

As of our last edition, Carol was working as an SAP programmer for a medical device company and living in Somerville, MA. As of close of press, Carol was still working as an SAP programmer, but somehow doing so for a TIMET, a titanium manufacturer in Denver. As has been the case before, this change came about through Todd's inability to hold a job.

It all happened quite quickly. She went to work one day in early May, crawling through 19 miles of congested highway to her job in Natick, and was soon deep into the mechanics of an SAP program. Then her husband called and asked her what she thought about moving to Denver.

She began helping him sort, stack, fold, and pack in that way people do when faced with the prospect of squeezing several months worth of essentials into a 1992 Mazda 626. She did this for a good week until he was gone.

According to the plan, Carol would work through the summer, fly to Denver in September and find work upon arrival. But after Todd drove off, she kept sorting, stacking, folding and packing—evening after evening, day after day—until all that was left unpacked in

CO Discoveries

When you bring a bag of Planter's Trail Mix you bought on Cape Cod to the top of 14,000-foot Mt. Evans, it inflates itself like a little high-fiber balloon.



Carol, relocated

the dark little apartment was a set or two of silverware and a plate to eat on. Between boxes, she'd also managed to find herself a job in Denver.

Carol arrived in Denver the last Saturday in June and immediately said "I like it better here," which she still repeats quite often.

Dog Kills Chicken, Badly Hurts Duckie



Dog crushes Duckie's head

A standard poodle rampaged through Denver over Thanksgiving, killing Chicken and crushing Duckie's head.

Corrections

In our last edition, a table titled "Todd's Millennial Jobs" on p. 2 omitted a week of work editing the Bain & Co. Web site in July 2000. Also, in "An Interesting Haircut Story" on p. 2, an old man identified as Mr. Dente was in fact not Mr. Dente, who apparently died some years back.

DENVER, HO!

In a rather sudden turn of events triggered by Todd's April 2001 layoff from a Boston-area dot-com consultancy, Carol and Todd Neff have moved to Denver, Colorado, USA. Sources say the pair views the move as a welcome change for both from career as well as personal perspectives, though they do miss friends and, in particular, family in greater Boston.

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Todd (Re)Employed

Todd now works as a staff writer for a weekly newspaper called Front Range TechBiz in Denver, which launched a weekly print edition in late July 2001. He usually writes about five hard-hitting stories (see p. 2, Table 1) a week.

He learned that Denver is a fair distance from Boston or even Detroit in late May, when he drove the whole stretch. He stopped at Niagara Falls and in Dearborn to see his folks and grandmothers along the way, and also in Nebraska. Todd highly recommends Nebraska.

The move all came about through a rare combination of fortuitousness and luck. Todd had written briefly for Mass High Tech before taking a consulting job in Boston late last year. When he was laid off, he decided he would go back into journalism.

The timing was not good; publications were folding like paper in an origami class. But fueled by a great well of false optimism, naiveté and ignorance, he prepared a resume and sent out a couple of e-mails asking former bosses for reference letters.

One was to Mark Pillsbury, longtime Mass High



Todd employed, wearing \$8 Wal-Mart shades

Tech editor who had accepted the charge of launching a sister publication in Denver. Mark replied with a short mail. It said, in effect, "Why don't you come write for me in Denver?"

Within about three weeks, Todd was sleeping in a spare room kindly offered by his friend and grad-school colleague Bob Goldstein, who had recently made the trip west and had space until the arrival of his family. Since then, Todd has been TechBiz-ing along the Front Range and spending an inordinate amount of weekend time taking drives into the mountains with his wife, both which he finds beautiful.

REMEMBER THE NEEDIEST!



Vinegar (L) and Vinaigrette Pigeon

Plucky Pigeons Rule the Roost

After returning home from two weeks away (see related travel article), the couple found that a pigeon had taken up residence on the apartment balcony and laid a pair of eggs. The human residents gave up use of the balcony, but took ownership of the pigeon, naming her Penelope.

Penelope hatched two chicks that grew very quickly and soon loaded the entire balcony with what is euphemistically called guano.

These pigeons also became pets, and received the names Vinegar (pronounced Vine-gar, like a viking) and Vinaigrette.

Todd has always wanted to name his first-born son Vinegar; Carol refuses, but allowed the pet pigeon to be so named.

Six weeks hence, the birds had grown and gone.



Don't Mention the Movers

The topic of Advanced Moving Systems of Florida is a sensitive one for the couple. This outfit took 10 weeks to deliver from Boston to Denver, roughly the pace of a brisk walk. Judging by the state of their belongings upon arrival, they had been dragged much of the way.

Though the experience highlighted the relative unimportance of worldly goods, the couple is peeved. Todd has invested in the domain name www.advancedmovesucks.com. There, he will exact a retribution quite out of keeping with the Holiday Spirit.

**YOUR AD
HERE**

Travel Report

This summer, the couple traveled to Park City for the superb Amy Murow/Chris Neff wedding weekend, enjoying time with family and friends and, in Todd's case, helping get Chris drunk.

Carol and Todd's new employers showed great generosity in allowing both to take a full two weeks off in August, just two months into their respective tenures. The trip was to Europe, the triggering event the marriage of Rainer and Zlatka Romeis in the verdant mountains of Slovenia.

Our German friends were there in numbers, and with them we traveled to the northwest corner of the former Yugoslav republic, to a lake called Bohinj for a few fine days with friends who, other than Sophie Macha, we've known for many years. But we and Sophie got to know one another very well on the trip, in the back of a white Volkswagen station wagon named "Vermessung."



Todd, Carol, Sophie in Vermessung, Slovenia

The first week of the trip, equally magic, was spent in Hungary, where Patrick "P. Body" Egan and his wife Klara have lived since graduating from Fletcher. Vacation pleasures included quality time in Budapest, a night at a country vineyard, and a rousing game of aquatic crab soccer in the beautiful Lake Balaton.

A Lesson re. Birds

Until days got too short, Todd jogged in the evenings along the top of a dam near the couple's apartment complex. The dam forms a crescent between what was until 1994 Lowry Air Base and a marshland several acres in size. With autumn's gradual ripening, swarms of little black birds streamed from parts north as the sun set over the mountains. The dam being five stories high, Todd could hear wings slice through the air above and the chatter of hundreds of thousands of these birds as they crowded the marsh. Todd told Carol, "The birds sleep in the marsh at night."

A week later, Todd took Carol to the top of the dam to watch the birds, there seemed to be fewer of them flying overhead, though there were many in the marsh. "They must be coming in earlier now that it's getting cooler," Todd said.

Two weeks after that, Todd's parents visited Denver and he brought them to look at the birds, too. By then, the marsh's reeds had gone brown. There were few birds. Todd said, "I don't know where all the birds are. They sleep here."

Todd's mom had a hood on because it was cold. "They appear to be starlings," she said. "Most have probably already migrated through."

Todd thought: Migrated?



TABLE 1 (from page 1)

Sample Hard-Hitting Stories

- ¶ Man builds gladiatorial robots in garage
- ¶ Software executives race go-karts in Westin parking lot
- ¶ Entrepreneurs play ping-pong outdoors
- ¶ Woman had brain tumor the size of a baseball
- ¶ White-bearded professor demonstrates a yo-yo he invented