

A Hillside Christmas **Carroll**

(Christmas 2002)

Just recently, we caught Martha's brother Jake in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.
Hear our tale of the year in the spirit of this classic story.

Ghost of Christmas Past

Martha spent the first half of the year completing an internship with the Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati. Though she spent many a 12 hour day at the theatre, an understudy performance and a final intern project were her opportunities to shine. Her understudy performance was a show called Syncopation – a story of dance partners falling in love. Martha was in heaven with all the dancing in her costar role. Their final intern project summed up their experience when they brought to stage *Heaven and Hell on Earth* and *The Seven Deadly Sins*.

Through the theatre, Martha also had the opportunity to teach two semesters of drama to fifth-graders in an underprivileged school in northern Kentucky. Through improvisation, students were led through the process of writing and performing their own play.

With Martha working long weeks, I filled my evening hours with sports and school. My fellow “Proctoids” and I relieved stress by participating in P&G coed volleyball and coed softball leagues. This year, I handed over my softball captain position and took over as the new league commissioner. I spent a couple more nights per week continuing work on my MBA at the University of Cincinnati.

One of the highlights of my year was the farewell softball game at Cinergy Field. A team of Reds greats including Rose, Bench, Morgan, Perez, Griffey and others slugged it out against a team of major league greats such as Garvey, Carter, and Schmidt. Not only did I get to enjoy a great game, but a couple of weeks (and some killer lines) later I got to take home some seats – 5 red and 4 blue.

Ghost of Christmas Present

With the help of family and recently married friends, Martha and I continue to plan our wedding. Wow, how quickly the past 18 months of our engagement has passed. By the time our June wedding rolls around, we should be well prepared.

My job with Procter & Gamble keeps me busy and challenged. Every time I get comfortable, I get additional responsibilities. I am currently responsible for supporting six different computer applications. In addition to daily support, I am also managing a \$25,000 upgrade to one of the applications.

As I transitioned to my second year in UC's MBA program (go Bearcats!), Martha started back to school – this time at the College of Mount St. Joseph, pursuing a degree in Art Education. Although she was thinking she might want to teach high school, her practicum experience in the first grade has encouraged her to keep her options open.

Ghost of Christmas Future

Although Martha and I will take a break from school this summer for the wedding, my only break before then will be a week of international study in South Africa (if you call a seven day crash course in international business a break). However, we will take a day here and a day there to enjoy our share of some Reds season tickets, as well as a trip to see the Broadway production of the *Lion King*, which comes to Cincinnati in April. After returning from our honeymoon in Kauai, we'll be on the road again for friends' weddings – three in six weeks. What an exciting year it will be. We hope that yours is exciting too.