Two years away: a retrospective

Editors note: Pat Thompson was elected Managing Editor of The Tech before taking a two-year leave of absence from MIT.

Flash! Reader clue: the word "column" means that a river of pap runs under the headline. After all, an anagram to "column" is "no class", but that is another matter. Solnick: "Give me 25 inches on what you did while you were away and why you came back to MIT after a two-year absence." Bare Steve, Hi Mom. This may fill two inches. After the first waves, the pain of embarrassment fades.

This writing reminds me of writing on the first day back at school about what I did while on summer vacation.

Okay, I worked in construction and I worked in a bakery and I studied mathematics and films at Portland State University and believe me those two years were as boring as this paragraph.

Steve: "Give me 25 inches..."

Oh, I suppose that I had some fun in construction. There was the time that the loader operator backed into my car and pushed it over a cliff. The foot totaled it not; now, whenever rain falls, the trunk becomes a swimming pool.

I learned how to date. On a typical date (the type where the guy goes broke for the sake of a tight-lipped, one-second goodnight kiss) the guy, ever-chivalrous, ever-pained, ever-stupid, ever-whatever, is supposed to ask his tight-lipped gal out on another date. She responds either by cooing "oui" (if she's a hot babe) or making up a ridiculous excuse. If this poor simp (gad, wot's that smell, en?) knows not enough protocol to ask, she assumes that he is not interested in dating her again. My social life improved immensely when I learned this rule.

It came to me when a date I went out to see a movie — Animal House — she went out on a date — I told a friend who told his sister who worked at the bakery who told her friend who worked at the bakery who told me who worked at the bakery about it. Gee, Faulkner would take pride in that sentence.

The dating game is not pleasant; those are simply the rules. Neither women nor men fare well under them.

I made some — generously, now — films. On my last one, my first cast of actors quit because I tried to make them stand in the rain while I filmed. How does Kubrick do it?

My teeth firmly clenched as I recruited a new bunch of actors, reheated all my equipment reservations, and hit it again. I left my equipment in a safe spot while I chased after some stray actors.

I searched; they had gone on a field trip to parts unknown. Frustrated, I returned to my equipment. On the way into the building, I greeted a friendly-looking must comfortably awaiting his master. He wagged his tail.

Past the door; no equipment. My dad whoopied it up the corridor, down. No equipment. Oui! the door, fast. The mutt swiftly stalked up behind and bit of enough of my calf to feed Spielberg's great white for a week.