



# THE DEAR IA REVIEW

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My longest contract to date, at “Neutron Technologies,” ended in August. The machine I’d documented for nearly two years finally shipped to Japan. I left around the same time.<sup>1</sup>

The job allowed me to do things in a big way. For instance, I bought a new car this summer. My previous car of seven years had accumulated more than 100,000 miles. I used my connections to get a black sedan, similar to the previous make and model, at close to dealer invoice cost. That, plus an ample down payment means I might hold the note by next year.<sup>2</sup>

Also, the end of the Neutron contract opened my schedule for some medical and travel obligations. In mid-September, I attended the folks’ 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary at my sister’s house. In exchange for lodging and transportation, I helped her and her husband as they prepared for the occasion in a “hot snit,” including making even sauces and dips from scratch. The help mostly meant keeping a third pair of eyes on Nicholas, age 16 months, and Natalie, age 5 going on 13, according to her alternately bemused and exasperated parents.<sup>3</sup>

Several days after I returned, I submitted to preventive dental surgery. After all these years, my regular dentist finally gave me a good reason to have my wisdom teeth removed. I interpreted his previous vague recommendations as an attempt to recoup the cost of new equipment purchases. “If I agreed to do it, it’d have to be cheap, quick and painless,” I said.

The dentist paused. “In that case, you’ll want to call—.” He named a medical research lab, which shall remain nameless, since I signed a confidentiality agreement. Afterward, with my tongue and teeth numb, I could still think and speak clearly, albeit out the side of my mouth, read a couple of books, and even crack jokes.<sup>4</sup>

In the neighborhood, The Domain shopping mall, Austin’s answer to the upscale malls in Houston and Dallas, opened, after several years of wrangling, and tax breaks from the City. For all the hue and cry from people who have the clout about not wanting Austin to look like Los Angeles, The Domain looks remarkably Southern Californian, especially at sunset.<sup>5</sup>

I finally read a book by Beltway journalist Kim Isaac Eisler. He might be a long-lost relative, but neither of us had enough genealogical evidence to prove it when I saw his byline and e-mailed him a few years ago.<sup>6</sup> Anyway, “Revenge of the Pequots,” about a small Indian tribe in Connecticut that now runs a big casino, is a suitably bemused tale of greed, backbiting, and pious rhetoric masking base motives. In short, what Dad calls “humans in action.”<sup>7</sup>

On the brighter side, I’m working a new, short contract at a major corporation, at my highest rate ever. Similarly, I wish you all the best in the coming year.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Dan



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> AD No. 101 (Oct. 7, 2007); <sup>2</sup> AD No. 97 (Mar. 13, 2007); AD No. 98 (June 11, 2007); <sup>3</sup> AD No. 37 (Apr. 25, 2002); AD No. 59 (Dec. 2, 2003); AD No. 92 (Sep. 27, 2006); <sup>4</sup> AD No. 101, op. cit.; <sup>5</sup> AD No. 97, op. cit.; <sup>6</sup> Eisler, Dan. “Family Connection?” E-mail to Kim Isaac Eisler, 1 Mar. 2001; K.I. Eisler. “Re: Family Connection?” E-mail to D. Eisler, 2 Mar. 2001; <sup>7</sup> D. Eisler. Letter to Tim Kiser, 2 Nov. 2007.