

BEST GIFTS EVER?



mr. emptywheel and I have been meaning to get a print for our bathroom for years now—since we refinished it. I had intended to get an early patent drawing of a toilet, but never found anything I really liked.

So, when xkcd announced they were making signed prints available this year, mr. ew decided he was going to get the most incisive observation of online discussion, evah, and frame it for me for Christmas.

The comic, perhaps appropriately, is named "Duty Calls."

For some reason mr. ew figured it was an appropriate gift for me. We don't usually exchange Christmas gifts (preferring to buy gifts when we find them), but when he learned he was getting a beer-making set, he decided to reciprocate.

So what did Santa (or the gods of Festivus, Kwanzaa, or Hannakuh) bring you this year?

One of the best Christmas gifts I ever gave was actually a stocking stuffer (well, sort of). I was about 14, and my father, who was always prone to big statements, decided he deserved a 3-foot Christmas stocking. I took it upon myself to respond appropriately.

I filled the bulk of the stocking with a dozen grapefruit, which filled it up nicely. Then, just before the rest of the family came down on Christmas morning (I always got up several hours before my family and just hung out by the tree with the lights on), I went to the fridge where we had hidden the secret last stocking stuffer, and put it on top of all the grapefruit.

There we were hanging out quietly before opening presents, drinking coffee, when the stocking started moving. My Dad went to figure out what was going on, stuck his hand in the stocking,

and the flung the ... live lobster clear across the room.

(Yes, the rubber bands were still on the claws).

I confess it was inhumane to the poor lobster (though I couldn't have predicted the distance my Dad got on that lobster). By the end of the day we very humanely put it head first into boiling water and enjoyed the best stocking stuffer ever as an hors d'oeuvres.

(Someday, if the news ever gets boring, I'll tell you what happened when I got my upstairs neighbor in college a live pig for his birthday.)

So what are the best gifts you've ever given?