



Greetings to all our friends and family and our best wishes to you and your loved ones for a very merry holiday and a fabulous new year.

2007 was certainly a different year for us. Following Linda's lead, I retired from the county at the end of December 2006 - to a busy life at home catching up on many years of procrastinated projects - but at a "Gentleman's" pace. Major projects include clearing the land (a multi-year project) and remodeling my workroom as a home office for Linda (see below).



Altho Linda left the State in August 2006, she has yet to "retire". Her goal is habitat restoration & animal rescue but she first needs to fund it. Plan A was to work part time - it wasn't hard to find a job, but she didn't like working for someone else (5 days in one job, 5 weeks in 2nd). Plan B is a home on-line business. She started on eBay to learn the business and is now setting up her own "store", specializing in hand-crafted artisan goods from artisans country-wide. Hence the home office. Don't worry - she will reach out & "touch" everyone when the web site is up and running. This new venture is currently a full-time effort but Linda is still working toward the real goal, taking permaculture classes in January and starting a Texas Master Naturalist certification program in March - six weeks plus community service internship.



For both of us the career change has been fantastic - no second thoughts and full speed ahead (well, half speed for me).

Events of note: An ice storm in January followed by a major wind storm in June that decimated several of our beautiful oak trees. One toppled against the house, taking out some fencing but fortunately no real damage to the house. In April our "trusty old" Ford Explorer died literally seconds after completing its annual safety inspection, so we now have a new Chevy Equinox. In August we traveled to Naperville, Illinois for nephew Nathan's wedding to lovely Jacey. We took an extra 2 days in Chicago and saw the play "Wicked" which we greatly enjoyed. Painted the house and picket fence in September (paid to have it done - I'm retired, remember!) On Dec 22 we'll drive north to Temple, Texas to celebrate Christmas with family there - on the occasion of Linda's Mother's 101 birthday!



Sadly, weeks apart in October we lost our two old-timers to the ravages of old age and attendant terminal ailments. T.K., our Tonkinese cat, was 15 and Taco, our Chihuahua mix, was something over 15 - we don't know for sure as he was a rescue dog. Both had been such a factor in our lives and both are greatly missed. In March we "adopted", temporarily at least, our niece's dog, Buddy, while she spends two years with the Navy (Katie just deployed to the Persian Gulf aboard the carrier USS Truman). Buddy is a hound of the Heinz variety and at just over 100 pounds, a playful if overwhelming friend to Shiner, our 90 pound weakling of a lab mix. We still have and enjoy the company of our two cats, Tequila and Fargo; quarter horse Sunny Girl; miniature donkey Baby; and three goats: Maggie, and offspring Sandy and Cocoa. And we very much continue to enjoy the deer, birds, and other critters with whom we share our land.



Finally, we love sharing our blessings. We've had wonderful visits this year, including our very good friends and travel soulmates from Tucson; and we are looking forward to a Christmas visit by my sister Lu and husband Gary. Visitors are always welcome - and that's a HINT!



Wishing you health and happiness,
Chad & Linda

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