

Dear Friends and Family,



December 2010

*Greetings again from Austin. We hope all is well with you and wish you the very best in the new year. As this year comes to a close, Chad and I are happy to report we've had no major animal or farm accidents. Even better, we're moving forward with our retirement goals.*

*I've been certified by the National Wildlife Foundation as a Habitat Steward. The "Stewards" work at a grassroots level with individuals and groups on their properties to establish native plants and provide shelter, food, and water for migrating and nesting birds and critters. After many years as a bureaucrat, it's great fun to be outside working on projects I believe in, knowing I don't have to write a "position paper" on it. Chad has already cleared some of our property for habitat; the native grasses are coming back and the land looks much healthier.*

*My pet sitting business is doing really well, but I'll soon scale it back in favor of habitat work, wildlife rescue?, ...and riding! I'm working with instructors at the local Red Horse Ranch ([www.imagineahorse.com](http://www.imagineahorse.com)) to take my riding skills up a level. I originally stabled our horse Sunny Girl at the ranch so we could work together. Ms. Sunny decided she needed no skills improvement. She showed her displeasure about the move by, among other actions, taking out about 25' of the ranch owner's fence. Sunny spent a lot of time tied at the Serenity Tree to ponder the consequences of her actions. Unrelated to her accommodating personality, we found out Sunny has a bone alignment condition that makes her a poor candidate for the trail riding I had hoped we'd do. She's for now living the life of a lady of leisure with good horse friends in a pasture at the training ranch. So, Tio, a beautifully trained six-year old black and white spotted Appaloosa, has entered my life. He will be perfect for trail riding, and I'm hoping Chad will want to take to the trails with me some day (which will mean getting another horse, of course).*

*With many projects on our property completed (though I do have a LIST), Chad has started volunteer work. He helps elderly and low income folks prepare their tax returns during tax season through the AARP Tax Aide program. He also represents central Texas for the Missing in America Project ([www.miap.us](http://www.miap.us)), a national program to locate unclaimed cremated remains of Veterans and ensure they receive a proper interment with full honors. I'm proud of his tenacity and hard work on this worthy project.*

*Chad is still active in the neighborhood association. Folks think Chad is in charge of "fixing it" in the 'hood, whatever "it" may be. And he still maintains the [www.swedtex.info](http://www.swedtex.info) site he set up last year. He apologizes that, despite good intentions, he didn't spend the time he planned to update the site with additional photos of friends, family, travel, etc....he hopes to load them "soon." You can visit the site at your leisure if you wish.*

*It was a quiet year for traveling, though Chad was able to spend a week in May fishing in Ely, Minnesota with brother Gary and nephew Nathan, having so much fun that they plan to do it again next May with all the nephews and uncles. In July, Chad visited his sister Lu (& Gary) in California and spent a great day with nephew Doug (& Traci) to meet their beautiful daughter Lindsay. He ended the trip stopping off in LA on the way home to attend a Khmer (Cambodian) Air Force reunion, meeting friends he had worked with and not seen for 30 years.*

*My year's travel was light as well. I made two trips to Alabama, for happy and sad reasons. In July, I went to Gulf Shores for what's becoming an annual reunion with close friends from high school. It's great to reunite with friends as if no time has passed since we were ...younger. In November, my dear Aunt Marjorie died at age 96; her services were held near Montgomery.*

*Other notable events: We celebrated our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in November; spent the whole day in bed – with a miserable cold... Another beautiful niece was welcomed into the family and world in June, Liberty Ann, daughter of Nathan and Jacey...After several false starts, we made it to Arizona to see our dear friends and traveling companions at their gorgeous new hacienda...And last, never least, we had several special visits from family & friends. With every visit we find new places to enjoy along with old favorites. Join us anytime. We'll wander the hill country and rest on the porch with a margarita. Happiest Holidays!*

*Chad and Linda and all the Critters (Sunny, Tio, Baby Donkey, Maggie, Sandy, Cocoa, Buddy, Shiner, Fargo, Tequila, and Hannah!)*

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