

Wishing All a Merry and Festive Christmas in 2019...

Our winter was mild wet and we did not have to shovel a lot of snow. The spring was as usual dry, there were little in the way of fresh greens but the fruit crop was prodigious, cherries plums peaches seemed to be unlimited and were breaking their trees. We are currently burning the second stem of our tree of large peaches, but a new tree is now producing the same small 'winter peaches' as the other old tree which we lost last year.

We again attended the New Year's Eve concert rehearsal in Santa Fe and through the year many performances in Vegas including at the Plaza a trio, an Irani *Santour* player, Spanish Zarzuela arias; at the Ilfield the Madrigal choir, *A Winter's Tale* as well as a few movies in the new theater (*Pavoratti* tonight). We are not hurting for culture here in Las Vegas, better than in that NV upstart.

In July we decided to visit the Silver City area where we had first searched in New Mexico for our retirement dream and almost found it, but luckily we persisted 'till in 2005 we found Vegas! After spending a night and morning enjoying Silver City we headed for *Casitas de Gila*, at the confluence of the Gila River and Bear Creek in the Chihuahua desert.



Turtle Rock, green belt behind BBQ is creek-side bosque, Gila Wilderness back-ground

Our *casita* over looking Bear Creek far below and Turtle Rock had all the standard amenities plus a shaded *portal* looking upon a large juniper and a hummingbird feeder, constantly humming from dawn to dusk with a numerous fractious swarm of hummingbirds and other fauna. We could sit there with or without book or camera soaking up the ambiance and peace? Well, peace for us, the hummers were a very anxious about their necessary carbs. Peter donned his desert shirt and straw hat to roam some of the numerous trails, getting acquainted with some of the Chihuahua desert flora and fauna. During the second night we experienced the Milky Way, no city lights in the desert.



After just a short three nights and two days stay it was time to head for home through the Plains of San Agustin a lot of beef and wind generators, and as a bonus the VLA (Very Large Array of radio telescopes 9/row, 3rows in 'Y' on RR) and to our worried cats (*when will they get back ? We'll starve ? we want our well trained big-guys*) **'Twas a real vacation for us!**

...and a Happy, Joyful New Year in 2020 to All

This year the Wild Garden was dominated by one large ten foot many branched Prairie Sunflower which grew right next to the concrete walk requiring guying back the main stem and trimming many lateral branches allowing the postman and guest entry. Just that one sunflower was for Peter a fascinating lesson in ecological interdependence, he spent much time photographing many of the bugs interacting with that one flower including 16 minutes for a wasp digging out a fat moth caterpillar.



For Peter's B'day Kathryn bought tickets to a benefit performance by Buffy Sainte-Marie for Indigenous Solutions, Tewa Women's Union. He had seen her just once before during the '67 Expo on the Montreal waterfront upon being drawn by an announcement scrawled in chalk into a hazy smoke filled café (it was the Beat days) there illuminated under a single spot she was hunched over her guitar singing her songs. He remembers only two other scenes from Montreal; the Trinidad & Tobago's steel orchestra served with rum drinks and walking through the Indians of Canada's hall of broken treaties. Buffy is the same age as we but looks and moves twenty years younger, she is not now hunched over her guitar but constantly moving, dancing, changing instruments. We stayed over, visited sister Sally and Bill, and thoroughly enjoy ourselves.



Junco in Wild Garden, 11/29

We all thought that summer would last forever, the trees were all caught with their chlorophyll out when multiple hard frost struck in mid October, no colorful fall, most trees went from bright green to dull dead green-gray. Then the snows came in late Oct and November along with the Juncos from the mountains. Winter is here, with our wood stove warming our little mud house 'twix mountain and prairie we are snug with a cat on lap, books, PBS concerts and an occasional netflix. Kathryn has her art: ceramics and also now she is doing collage.

Peter has his walks with nature, photography and the web: kayakpeter.net

Here's Looking at you, With all our Love and Best Wishes,



at Casitas de Gila

Kathryn
≠ *Peter*



in Desert Shirt