

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year 2015

y Saludos de la Tierra Encontado

(Greetings from the land of enchantment)

About a month ago on a fine autumn day I wrote:

*Golden fall creeps on in its measured pace
From branch to branch, from tree to tree,
To the last fallen leaf, signifying repose.*



But before this stately march toward winter's sleep could be completed an Arctic deep freeze caught the lagging trees with their chlorophyll out. Now, after a brief preview of winter, including zero temperatures and four inches of snow we are back to a dull sepia fall with warm sunny days alternating with cold slate-gray days, little rain.

I sit here in Gallinas River Park on one of those warm days with blue sky above, a pair of Northern Flickers gleaning insects from the bare branches of the Bosque, a flask of coffee, pen and paper, and passing neighbors and dogs. "*Buenas dias vecino, ...Merry Christmas!*" Some still look for Willy, he's still here though in spirit laying beside me taking in all that passes, that always working nose capturing every faint scent. "Hello *Cuervo!*" GRRAAACK comes the reply, Raven has also found some tasty insects in a seemingly bare tree. Life in all its glory goes on.



After the passing of mom Wait, the progressive decline of mom Lenihan now residing in assisted living in Iowa,

The ever changing pool in the Gallinas , 12/1 where the remains of Hazel were scattered, now joined by those of Wells and Willy.

the departures of brothers Tom and John and family, cousins Grace and Jewel and family to their respective homes we were alone. Then the Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever took Willy and we were really alone, but as I always said to Willy on our mourning walks "Life is Beautiful!" and so it is and we find much to keep us connected to this Beautiful Life.

Though we never left the state and spent only one night away from home we managed to delight ourselves with outings to some of our favorite places such as Villanueva State Park on the Pecos River and the mountains on the way to Taos. We also found new places to delight us such as Las Golondrinas a rancho and history park on the the old Camino Real one day's journey from Santa Fe by wagon if you don't get a busted wheel. We saw three centuries of Hispanic life under three national flags with actual and reconstructed buildings, fields with plants and animals, crafts such as weaving and black smith, dancing and food.

On our second visit with Sally and Bill the history at las Golodrinas extended back to pre-columbian times when we saw *los Volanderos* [the Flying Ones] from near



Vera Cruz, Mexico. These *indios* dance out to and then climb a maybe 150 foot pole with a reel on top with four stout long ropes wound upon it. There four tie themselves to

the ends of the ropes while the fifth prays to the six cardinal directions of the universe with flute and rattle. Then the four throw themselves head first off into space. As the reel spins at the top of the pole, they fly in an ever increasing spiral around the pole till they deftly flip feet first to once more walk on mother earth.

We enjoyed the musical offerings in and around Las Vegas. This summer we attended two performances of Music at Angel Fire, one here and the other in Raton at the beautifully restored Schuler Theater on the eve of its 100th year anniversary. It has the most wonderful acoustics. That night after a more than sufficient Bar-B-Que was the only night we spent away from our own bed. The next day was spent wondering around old Raton and picnicking in Sugarite State Park, an old coal mining area where I photographed a few new-to-me plant species.



enjoying bar-b-que in Raton

NM Highlands University in conjunction with the Bach Society Orchestra and Chorale from Santa Fe presented **BACHFEST**2014 a three hour extravaganza which included a fascinating piano trio by W F Bach (J S's grandson) with three pianists at one piano, amazingly those six flashing arms never interfered with each other. There was much much more and the finale, the Magnificat in D with three combined choirs, five soloists and orchestra, more than a hundred performers all crammed onto the Ilfield stage filling the whole world with magnificent music. *Wunderbar! Bravo!*

Kathryn continues with her ceramics and painting with Five pieces in the Small



at home

Things Christmas show and sale. I continue to photograph the Universe as seen in Las Vegas and around New Mexico with plans for another website on a Raspberry Pi running WordPress with periodic letters, some of the old content and a catalog and photo gallery of all the bird and plant species I find here in our corner of the universe. We have both signed up for a class at NMHU, *Latin American History through Film* for this winter.

With all our Love and best wishes

Kathryn
& Pete