

TORTILLA VILLE TRIVIA



DECEMBER 2009

RIBERAS DEL PILAR, JALISCO, MX

Riberas del Pilar - As has been the custom for the past 25+ years, the writing of the annual news letter begins late - and this year is no exception - so;

Max the WeatherCat and I send muy especial Christmas season greetings from deep in the mountains of Mexico, saludos y Feliz Navidad.

The year has zipped by more quickly than the last and it seems the older we get we somehow defy the natural laws of physics - time moves faster? - how is that possible? - but, stuff happens?

From a high level it doesn't seem much has changed, we're healthy & happy and we've been here for two years now, so much of the "adventure" of living in MX has become more a daily "challenge" of stuff to be tolerated or patiently endured - but fun.

Take for instance the big storm in July that toppled a 60' tree across the street onto the casita and front gate, taking out the power pole in the process. It took about 7 days to get the CFE (electric company) to come out and remove power so the tree could be cut up and removed and when they finally hooked power back up they tied it to a tree limb? - eventually I fixed it as with many things here, you learn to just DIY.

Rebuilding the gate was an exercise in "MX project management" as you have to stay close to the work and channel it's progress, but the end result is good, the paint is almost finished, I should do the main gate mañana or maybe next week, yes, I've gone Mexican. The entire story is in the blog at www.oneblueflower.com along with other foibles of the year.

Techie Project: In July, La Casa Nostra, the old folks home next door, moved so I elected to put in a security system, something I've never had before so that was a whole new research, acquisition and installation project spanning several months. It's really great, very sophisticated, now I can wake up people 3 blocks away when I forget to turn it off before going outside? - they love gringos.

Security really isn't much of a concern but the "teckie" part was fun, I miss those kinds of things.

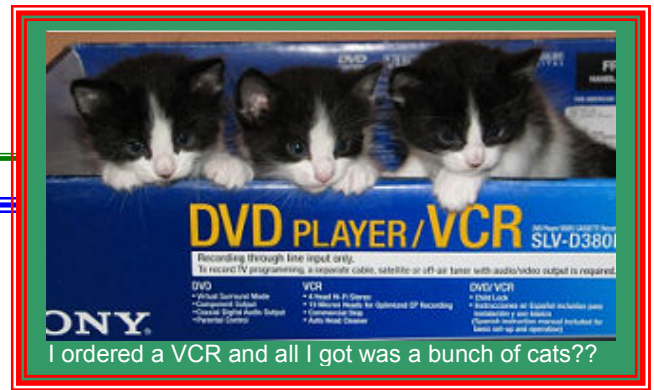


My neighbor: who rents the casita returned to Canada in mid April and tests indicated she needed to see a cardiologist for blockages. The first appt available was Nov 13th, yes, the CA healthcare system is a jewel. But, when the tests were finally conducted the news was good and the problem does not require surgery, so she jumped the first flight back down to sunny MX and escaped the frozen North.

Only one problem, apparently someone stole her passport in MX City as she changed planes. She is currently dealing with the bureaucracy of the Canadian Consulate, the Mexican Ministerio Publico, the lawyer etc. to get an emergency 2 day, 1 way passport to get her back to Toronto for Christmas where she can apply for a new passport. But as I said earlier, life in MX is about "challenges"? - well, the MX legal system is also a study in human nature and what happens when you give someone a tiny bit of authority, they become megalomaniac control freaks - she says Florida is looking better for next year, but this too will pass as do all things here under the sun.



Peace
For
Earth



Annual Trip NOB: On Oct 5th, exactly 2 years from the day I pulled in the gate I headed out for TX on my annual "home" trip. Due to the near impossibility of shipping to/from MX we "mule" things across the border by friend or anyone that will take pity on our predicament, for instance, my friends Neil and Kathy came to visit in August and brought the security system and other stuff to me, so I'd been ordering more stuff and shipping it to friend George in Austin. Somewhere along the line I agreed to haul some things from here to Austin for a lady artist I inadvertently "met". That's a whole other story, but it's said she paints with her eyes closed and then takes, or puts, them in the shower? - yes, I know, I know, waaay too much information - trust me.

I dropped off the stuff in TX and headed to CO to visit Mom for 3 days as well as friends. Mom will be 95 in Jan and keeps going and going just like the Energizer Bunny - well, not quite as zippy, but still sharp. We had a good time and talked and of course I brought pictures of her new first great great grand daughter.

(See Big Event) A GGG daughter? - Oh, guess I forgot to mention the big event for the year, in April I became a "bisabuelo", a great grandfather? - boy, talk about time zipping along, it was only a little while ago my daughter Keisha was born and now she's a grandmother - yes, she is taking it all in stride, but not all that excited about being a grandmother I don't think.

Peyton, the new arrival makes it 5 generations now from Mom at 94 to her at about 8 months and naturally she's incredibly cute.

Things with Keisha and family are going ok although her job ended mid summer, but she's found a new one that is somewhat comparable and Nick, the new father, is working again, so in these troubled times those are all blessings from above for sure. And my second Gson Wil is doing great in school and Lacey my Gdaughter is doing great and always has fun (a lot like her Mom I think).

Let's see, back to CO, I spent time with friends Julie & Mike and Norm & Dee and we went to my favorite spaghetti place.

It was distinctly cooler in Denver and the first time I'd worn long pants since March. I had intended to have lunch with Mom on Saturday and then head south to NM for the night. But, Saturday morning brought 19 degrees and snow/ice. Of course I don't have a scraper or brush, so did the old credit card trick to chip out a peep hole as you careen along hoping for the defroster to kick in.

The Jeep wasn't real happy about the cold as I doubt it's ever seen freezing. About mid morning it wasn't looking much better so I decided to hit the road a bit early.



Merry Christmas
From
South of the Border

Steve & Max the Cat



The driving wasn't too bad, but sloppy at times and I needed the windshield washers. Of course being from MX, where they've never heard of washer anti-freeze solution, mine froze solid and didn't thaw until somewhere in NM. (*Now I remember why I live here in the land of eternal Spring*)

Back in TX I spent 3 days in storage and shopping and checking the technology stuff that George was storing. Even there the weather wasn't all the great, rather cool and rainy. Actually out of the 13 days I was gone, only 2 were what you'd call descent.

It was great spending time with George & Karen but, unfortunately my friend Marge across the street was in S Padre all week, so we didn't get to spend time this year. On the way back to the border I had lunch with my "little sister" Vicki in San Antonio who is doing great and has found home in Texas as Chris & I did so many years ago.

One of the new "toys" was a GPS my neighbor bought, it did fairly well although it totally mangles MX street names – even worse than me? 4,700 miles later I was back in Tortillaville. It was a good trip, but for a week after, every time I sat down in my recliner my hands automatically reached out as if to grip the steering wheel?



Mailing address:
5802 Bob Bullock C1
#328C-125
Laredo, TX 78041
Blog: www.oneblueflower.com
Weather: www.chapalaweather.net



Animal Stories Returns

This feature returns this year, in lieu of a recipe (as I don't cook much) I always knew Chris had "sucker" tattooed on her forehead, I guess mine reads "el dumo".

So, the collection of gatos (cats) has been growing and of course my feeding them probably has something to do with it. In the Spring Mamasita brought two kittens when their home across the street was torn down. The female is jet black long haired with just the tip of her back toes white. She schmoozed up to me fairly quickly even though a wild cat, so of course I treated her special.

I've always had cats, but I had no idea they could get pregnant so young? – Midnight was just a kitten, but started getting a major bulge, so our baby was going to have babies?

The Friday after I returned from TX we took her to the storage area and she had 4 sizable kittens and she's still very small herself. One didn't make it, but all the natural instincts kicked in and she's a very good mother. We decided to keep her in the casita and so my neighbor is stuck with a herd of cats that are incredibly cute as you can see by their picture.

We decided it was time to shut down the cat machine and started with Shorty the father of this bunch. I got him into the carrier fairly easy without incident and so he's now shooting blanks and is real laid back.

I tried the same trick with Mamasita – I'll have scars, but they're healing nicely. Turns out we were too late with her anyway, she's PG again. In the interim she had brought two more in from the wild, Sweet & Sour (old hiss & spit).

One night recently, Sweet came in through the upper deck door and after running him around the house about 3 times, he followed Max up the chimney to Max's hidie hole beyond my reach. After calming down a bit, I took a screen door off and used it to block off the room and went to bed. The next morning Sweet was ready to leave by the nearest exit. That's always a challenge with an open door, keeping Max in, the other cats out and herding the errant feline out.

I do learn from negative experiences, so I got out the "Chicago" gloves that are heavy leather with knit liners that go up under the sleeve and a sweat shirt and managed to stuff Sweet in the carrier with only minor damage to one arm, so he's "mellowed out" considerably.

Sour was next for the vet and I thought it was a female (with its bad temper etc.) and it was smaller. This time I put on a long sleeve teeshirt, a heavy sweat shirt, the gloves and duct taped the right glove to the sleeve and prepared for the capture and ensuing battle – I wasn't disappointed, hiss & spit and a major panic with claws & fangs everywhere.

Google says a normal cat has 18 claws – turns out Sour is the cat from Hell, even though only half grown it is incredibly fast & strong, has at least 20-30 razor sharp claws and sunk it's teeth into the leather gloves so deep I could feel it's teeth and it did manage to get one back claw into the under side of my arm – add that to my display of "feline war wounds".

Turns out Sour "was" a boy – that little trip to the vet should take a bit of starch out of his sails.

Finally, Max is Max: He's everybody's friend, he plays with everyone and isn't at all territorial and we've been together 5 years now, so we pretty much know what to expect from each other and I'm blessed that he takes care of me.

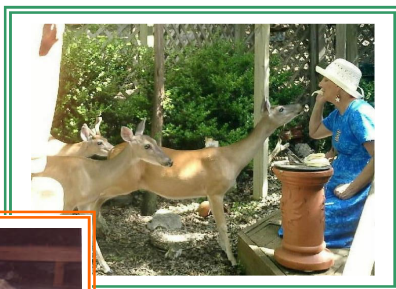
So, from Max, Shorty, Midnight, Tic, Tac & Toe, Mamasita, Sweet & Sour and even Gray -

Merry Merry Christmas to all

The Great Healthcare Debate Solved by Me and the Cats!



Of course we can't close without remembering Chris and how much fun she always had, and would have with Max & me in this place we now live.



Blessings to One and All from Mexico

