

TORTILLA VILLE TRIVIA



DECEMBER 2010

RIBERAS DEL PILAR, JALISCO, MX

Riberas del Pilar:

Wow, another year is toast, I burned through this one like there was no tomorrow? But, I'm happy to report that all is well here in Tortillaville and Max and I are just fine as frog's hair (yep, that's pretty fine).

I know you all read and hear about how bad it is down here and we read some of the same things, but here in the State of Jalisco things are generally better, far from perfect, but really not to a high level of concern yet. The primary thing to know is that the violence and killings are drug related to the cartels and their crimes. Sadly they are destroying MX in so many ways.

The cartels have so much money, and generally the population and law enforcement are so poor that it's easy to intimidate and buy off local police and even judges and if they don't cooperate, they just kill them.

They really don't care about old gringos, we aren't worth bothering with, kidnapping isn't an option because how much ransom is an old gringo worth? – I mean really, it would cost more to feed me than I'd bring in pesos. Yes, you can be at the wrong place at the wrong time, but that can be said of any place we drive. Generally the problems are more N along the border and you must remember we're 700 miles from there, 700 long, boring, tiring miles to drive from Laredo, I know, I just returned from my annual pilgrimage to the home land Nov 2nd and made the drive with no problems what-so-ever.

This year has been uneventful and I guess that's a good thing when you're retired, life is supposed to be quiet and peaceful. Now, the locals don't always follow that theory, Mexicans love to party and make noise, I swear they're born firmly clutching a noisemaker in their little hand. But the local police usually take the noise level down around 10:30pm and I've learned to ignore the sounds of some drunk fool howling at the moon at 3am over in the park.

My neighbor: Returned in Oct. for another year, she goes home in April as do all transient Canucks, they follow the call of the wild goose or some such nonsense and return to the great frozen north for the few months while it thaws and the bears come out of hibernation – wow, what fun?

The big news this year was her raising the kittens pictured on last year's newsletter and finally having to take them to the shelter for adoption. Actually I had to take them because she had grown too attached to them. She went to visit them often and get her dose of "kitty love" as she calls it. The two brothers were adopted to good homes, but Toe, the little sister remained and so fate & providence began to take their toll as the great wheels of the universe turned to create an interesting ending.

Margaret returned to Canuckland in April, then in June it looked like the casita was going to be used by the young

Peace
On
Earth



Denver 2010

builder, and his new wife for the summer. That meant clearing out some things, so Margaret flew back down in June and decided to take Toe back to Canada with her. That was a whole funny episode in the blog at www.oneblueflower.com (for those of you not yet following the adventures in MX). All went well - eventually, other than the cat, stoned on tranquilizers, got patted down in Mexico City by our version of the TSA, "why grandma, is this the old exploding cat trick?" I'm waiting to hear how the cat wintered in the great frozen north – ha, surprise surprise surprise!



Annual Trip NOB: This year I decided to fly to see Mom primarily because last year I got caught in the snow storm leaving CO and this year's trip was at the end of Oct. Mexicana had a heck of a deal on a ticket to Denver, so I bought it in probably late July – and they promptly declared bankruptcy in about Sept? – no wonder it was so cheap, it doesn't cost much to "not" fly people nowhere!

Of course I got my money back, but all the other airlines jacked their prices up and so I decided to run the gauntlet and drive to TX and fly from there, still expecting snow.

In the interim both my sisters Kathy and Mary decided to meet me there, I didn't tell Mom they were coming just in case weather prevailed.



Merry Christmas
From
South of the Border

Steve & Max the Cat





I headed out of the gate down here on Friday Oct 22nd and drove to Laredo in one day as usual, it's only 700 miles of boring nothingness across MX. From there I took a day to visit Uvalde and Leakey TX where friend George thinks I should move? Then on up to Fredericksburg, a wonderful German town west of Austin, Chris & I loved to go there. I took lots of pics and then had a wonderful German dinner, after 3 years of tortillas, I needed some sauerbraten.



On to storage in Marble Falls and sure enough, all my junk was just where I left it – no, I have no idea why I am keeping all of it – after 3 years here, it's sure not essential.

I spent time with George & Karen who graciously run my "receiving warehouse" for stuff I buy and sneak back across the border and this year I was also able to have a nice dinner and evening with Marge, our neighbor in Lakeway who is still doing fine.

I flew to Denver on Tuesday evening. Mom and I spent Weds and Thurs talking and enjoying the days, the weather was wonderful – shoot, I could have driven? I picked up Mary at the airport Thurs afternoon and Kathy drove in that night from Gunnison.

Friday morning after breakfast my sisters showed up to surprise Mom and we all went out to Fort Logan to visit my Father's grave and then to take Mom to an early 96th Bday lunch – are you crazy? – we're not going back to CO in January when her actual Bday is! It was great to see my sisters again, it's been 6 years since we were all together.

This was the 50th year of my high school graduation, I passed on going to the hooaha, too many old folks, but have been in touch with a lady from my class. We didn't know each other back then, but now are good friends via email. I went up to meet her Friday, long time no see? - and had a great time sharing stories etc., I promised to go to the 55th reunion? – wow, that's approaching ancient!

Friday evening I coerced friends Norm & Dee into the annual spaghetti dinner at the Blue Parrot, I've been going there for about 49 years now and it's never better, but I'll tell you what, I sure can't eat nearly as much as I used to?

I headed back to Austin on Sat and took another day of "vacation" and went to the 50th annual Wurstfest in New Brunfels on Sunday, again, a favorite for Chris and me.

Monday I loaded the car with junk, stopped in San Antonio to have a lovely lunch with my "little sister" Vicki and then on to Laredo to get new plates for the Jeep.

Finally on Tuesday I crossed into cartel country and cruised back home to Tortillaville. A tiring, but fun 12 days and according to my accounting I must have really really had a lot of fun?

The mail address remains the same this year:

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Keisha & Family:

This Fall saw a new job for Keisha, the other one was "no bueno" but this one is a staff position in PR for a tech company dealing with real estate, it's good money, benefits, no OT etc. so she's excited (as am I). Wil & Lacey are doing great in school and Nick and Peyton (my GGdaughter) are all fine, so the blessings of family are all around us.



Animal Stories Continues:

As noted last year we had 3 beautiful kittens in Oct – but Mamasita also sneaked in another 4 in December, so at one time we had 12 cats – a "cat-tastrophe" to be sure. The final 4 were found in the dog house up by the casita. We cleaned out the house so they could be comfortable, but their mother, the old hag, moved them next door, finally bringing them back to grow up here. 3 ended up going to the shelter and one little female remains here, I thought it was a boy so I called it Punk, turned out to be a "Punkin" – so much for my animal husbandry skills?

A major campaign to snip 'n clip has assured no further surprises this year and everyone has settled into the life of ease. Sadly, Midnight, the little mother of the 3 kittens went out one day and didn't return, we miss her still, but she left Toe, now in Canada for Margaret to love, but bringing her back down this winter wasn't even considered.

Finally, Max is Max: As always, he's everybody's friend, he plays with everyone and isn't at all territorial and we've been together 6 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, Punkin, Mamasita, Sweet & Sour and even old Gray -

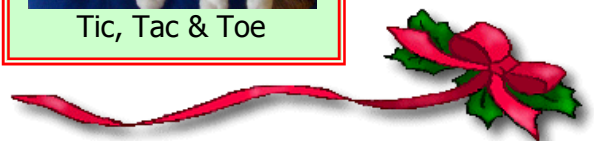
Feliz Navidad to all



Tic, Tac & Toe



Punkin



Blessings to One and All from Mexico