



# July 4<sup>th</sup> Greetings, 2006



Dear

27 June 2006

Greetings again from New Mexico. It has been a very dry year. Through spring, Albuquerque has only had 0.31 inches (7.9 mm) of rain since the end of 2005. Wild fires have been a problem here in New Mexico. Several days of high winds have also made the situation worse.

## WINTER AND SPRING TRAVEL

Unlike last year, when we spent a month in Australia, we have done little travel this year. As the year began, our motor home was in the repair shop waiting on a new engine. After we did get it back home, we were able to take a one-week trip to test it. Later we took a shorter trip to test it further before we launch out on our big journey of the year in July and August.

## BOSQUE DEL APACHE

In February, we once again joined friends from church in a one-day trip to the Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Preserve. Every winter the preserve is visited by tens of thousands of birds who have flown down from the north. (Mostly geese and Sandhill Cranes).



Flying in to the preserve.

## RESERVE, MOGOLLON, & SILVER CITY

In the last week of April we took a short trip to Southwest New Mexico. Our first destination was near Reserve, NM, where we would meet Sandi and Dave – friends from church. On the way we stopped for rest at the Very Large Array (VLA). (An array of radio telescopes on the Plains of San Agustin - west of Socorro, NM.)



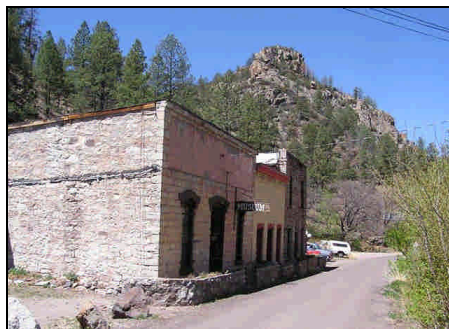
Some of the dishes of the VLA.



We stayed in an Apache National Forest camp ground for three nights. During the two days we spent time with Dave and Sandi. Among the things we did was to visit the old mining town of Mogollon. (Pronounced muggy-own.)



Mogollon Store.



Mogollon Museum.



Mogollon Theatre.

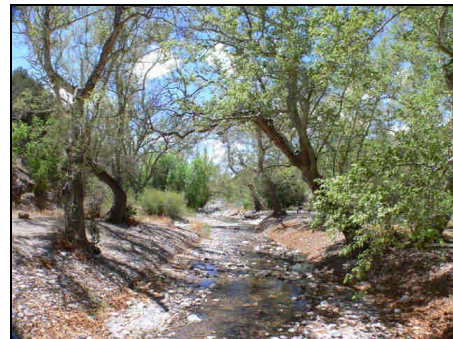


Waiting for cheap gasoline.



Dave, Sandi, and Linda with tailgate lunch.

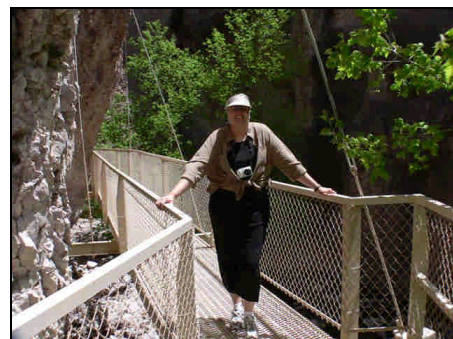
We drove from Reserve down to Silver City, but stopped on the way to see the Catwalk. Mining activities required creek water that was piped down the canyon on a suspended catwalk. The old piping is gone, but the catwalk has been improved for recreational use.



The creek.



Up the canyon.



Linda on part of the catwalk.

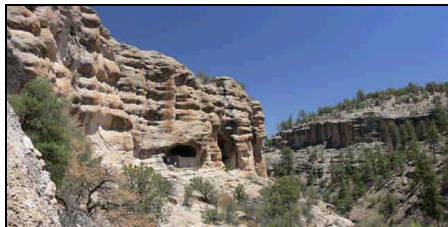
While hiking up the canyon we saw this fault. Notice the vertical displacement.



A geologic fault showing displacement.



We spent three nights in Silver City. That is where Linda went to college, so we visited Western New Mexico University. We also went to see the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument. The Cliff Dwellings offer a glimpse of the homes and lives of the people of the Mogollon culture who lived in the Gila Wilderness from the 1280s through the early 1300s. The Gila was our nation's first designated wilderness area.



The dwellings are in the caves.



Closeup of one of the caves.

#### BLACKWATER DRAW

We have wanted to visit the Blackwater Draw Archaeological Site for many years. It is between Clovis and Portales on the Llano Estacado, in the eastern plains of New Mexico. Thousands of years ago the site was a water hole for the animals that roamed there including mammoths. Archaeologists discovered mammoth bones at the site along with fluted stone points that became known as the "Clovis point". The ancient culture is known as the Clovis culture. Later cultures hunted Bison there after the mammoth became extinct. We also saw the oldest known well in North America.



Blackwater Draw today.



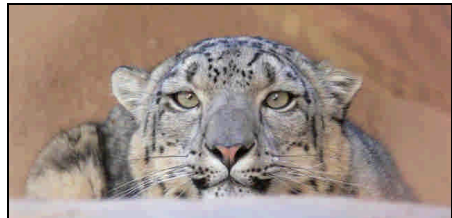
Juvenile Mammoth feet.



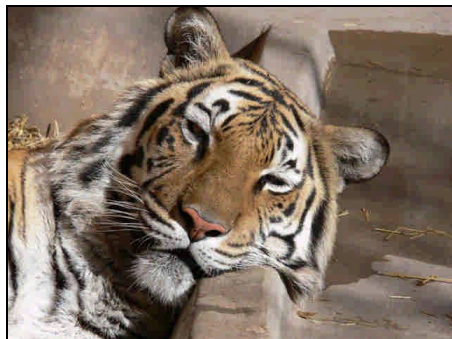
Excavating Bison bones.

#### ZOO VISIT

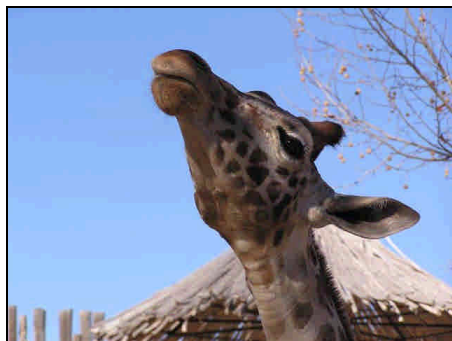
Last year at the Zoo Parents reunion, we won a free behind-the-scenes tour of the Albuquerque Zoo. We were finally able to take the tour in February and take two friends with us. It was quite enjoyable.



Big cats watched us carefully.



Or just slept.



Linda's favorite watched cautiously.

#### EASTER

We were home for Easter this year, and we enjoyed singing the special music that our choir presented on Palm Sunday and on Easter Sunday.

#### GRADUATIONS

The family had three graduations at the end of May. Linda's niece, Stacy, and her step-brother, Chris, graduated from high school. Linda's brother, Jim Baxter, received his master's degree as well.



Chris and families.



Chris, Norma Jean, James, and Stacy.

#### COUSIN VISIT

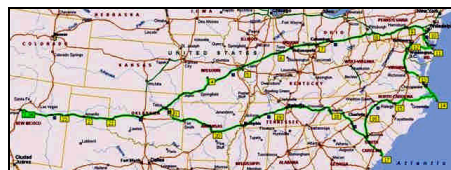
We were pleased to have Robert's third cousin, Robert Howard, visit us with his wife and two grandsons. They were on a camping trip out west from their home in Belleville, Illinois.



Robert with Cousin Robert.

#### SUMMER TRIP PLANS

We will leave on 5 July for an eight-week trip to the east coast.



Planned trip in green.

#### THE BOTTOM LINE

We continue to be thankful for the Lord's provision for us. We trust in Him, and pray that you will do likewise and enjoy a wonderful summer of 2006.

Love,

*Robert + Linda*

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