



# July 4<sup>th</sup> Greetings, 2011



Dear

5 July 2011

Greetings again from New Mexico. The year has been passing by rapidly. Time seems to go by so quickly these days. It seems as if Christmas were just here. See photo at right and below.

At the end of our Christmas letter we mentioned that Robert was going to have surgery to remove his cataracts.



Christmas Day 2010.

## ROBERT'S CATARACTS

He had the surgery on his right eye on 3 January, and on his left eye on 17 January. The eyes healed rather rapidly, and now Robert has clear vision and close to perfect focus at a distance. So he now wears glasses for minor distant focus correction and for close-up vision. (reading and computer.) It was a nice present for Robert as his birthday was between the surgeries. Here is a picture of us celebrating with friends and family and a platter of crab cakes.



Katie, Bill, Linda, James, and Norma Jean at Robert's Birthday party.

## NEW CAR

In January we also traded our 1993 Suzuki Sidekick in for a new 2011 Ford Fiesta.



New Ford Fiesta.

We still have our 2005 Suzuki Grand Vitara, and it is the car which is configured to tow behind our motor home. The Fiesta, however gets over 50% better gasoline mileage in town, and nearly twice as much on the highway.

## SPRING SPRUNG

Spring arrived with the usual windy weather. Even though it is now summer, we are still having strong winds. Our flowering pear tree bloomed in late March.



Spring blossoms.

## RALLY IN LAS CRUCES

Our chapter of the Family Motor Coach Association gathered in Las Cruces for a rally in April. We un-winterized our motor home and drove down to Las Cruces. We had a great time there with our friends.



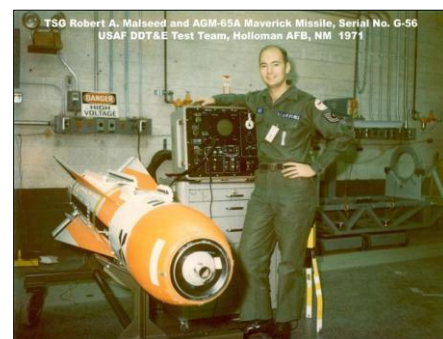
Some of our coaches lined up in Las Cruces.

After the Rally we drove over to Holloman AFB near Alamogordo and stayed at the family campground for a couple more days. Robert had been stationed at Holloman from 1969 to 1972. The base has changed a lot since then. Here is Robert in front of the barracks where he used to live.



Robert by his old barracks.

During his time at Holloman, Robert was a technician on the AGM-65A Maverick Missile development test and evaluation test team. It was one of the best and most enjoyable jobs he has ever had. At the same time, his cousin, Bill Erler, was also stationed there and was a radar navigator on the AGM-69 Short Range Attack Missile test team.



Robert on the test team in 1971.

We tried to find Bill's home in base housing, but it has been torn down and replaced by new family homes.

The base has hosted several different types of aircraft since Robert was stationed there. Here is Linda by one of the F-117 stealth fighters that had been at Holloman until they were retired.



Linda with F-117.

Adjacent to the base is the White Sands National Monument. We went to visit there one day at midday and returned at sunset. The "Sand" is actually gypsum crystals that cover



many square miles in a field of dunes. We had been to White Sands last October, but it was on a very windy day. Fortunately winds were calm this time, and Derry could enjoy it much more.



**Linda and Derry resting.**



**A yucca growing out of one of the dunes.**



**Linda walking Derry over the dunes.**

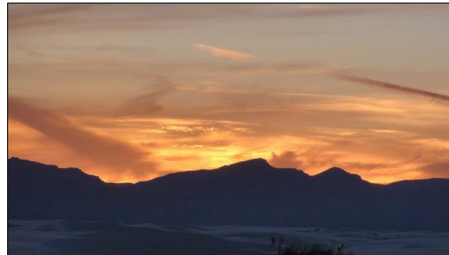
This was the first time we had gone to the monument at sunset.



**Sand ripples at sunset.**



**Another Yucca close to sunset.**



**Sunset sky.**

In addition to Holloman and White Sands, we also visited Alamogordo. And re-visited the NM Museum of Space History which overlooks the campus where Robert began his college studies.



**NM Museum of Space History.**



**Robert's missiles are museum items now.**

### **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TRIP**

We had not visited southern California in our motor home previously, so we went there in May. The first of May turned out to be a cold day when we departed Albuquerque. In fact, as we were driving past Laguna Pueblo, we were passing through snow showers. That night the temperature was below freezing at Meteor Crater, Arizona. Our next stop was at Needles Marina RV Park, California, where it was much warmer. The park has a beautiful location on the Colorado River.



**Linda and Derry cool their feet in the Colorado River.**

We reached the Pacific coast at Vandenberg Air Force Base. Robert had wanted to visit Bob Borowski who lived near there, but unfortunately he had died last September. We did however, spend a nice day with his widow, Joan. Bob had been Robert's boss at the Air Force missile shop in Duluth, Minnesota, in 1961 and 1962.



**Robert with Joan.**

She took us to see the old Purisima Concepcion Mission.



**The old Spanish Mission.**



**Another Mission building.**

We drove down the coast, bypassing Los Angeles and stopped at Escondido, which is the home of the San Diego Zoo Safari Park. We had visited the park many years ago and wanted to go back. If you have ever been to our home and seen the hundreds of Giraffes around, you will know that a real treat for Linda was going out to meet and feed the Giraffes.





**Linda feeding a Giraffe.**



**Robert feeding a Giraffe.**



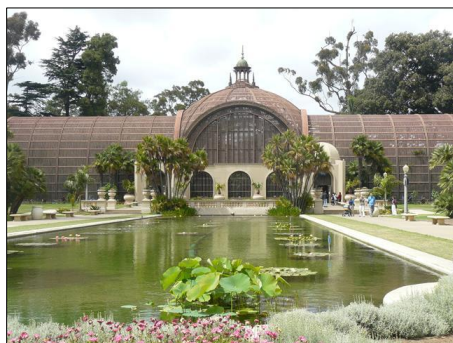
**We also fed the Rhinoceros.**

Here is a photo of Linda and Derry inside our motor home.



**Linda in the galley and Derry on the sofa.**

Our next stop, a short distance away, was San Diego. We stayed there for three full days. We spent the first day there in Balboa Park. We visited the San Diego Air and Space museum and the Natural History museum. The second day we spent at the Zoo.



**In Balboa Park.**

The Air and Space Museum had many things to see. Of course Robert is always interested in things he used to work on.



**AIM-9 Sidewinder and AIM-7 Sparrow missiles.  
More of Robert's past in a museum**



**Colorful Lizard at the Zoo.**

The third day we visited the aircraft carrier USS Midway museum.



**Ready to board the Midway.**



**On the flight deck.**

Robert saw some more missiles he had worked on in his Air Force career.



**Robert with some more AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles.**

On the hangar deck we found a TBM Avenger - the type of aircraft that Linda's uncle Fremont had flown in WWII. (Another notable TBM pilot was George H. W. Bush.)



**Linda with the TBM.**

When touring one of the pilots' ready rooms we met a docent whose father had also flown TBMs. In talking with him we discovered that his father and Uncle Fremont were in the same squadron on the USS Sangamon. The docent said he had a photo of the squadron pilots and took down our address. When we got home he had sent us a package that included this photo, among others. His father is behind the dog on the front row. Uncle Fremont is second from left on the back row.



**TBM pilots of VC-37, USS Sangamon.**

From San Diego we headed east to Yuma and then Phoenix, Arizona. Here is Derry eager to take over driving duty.

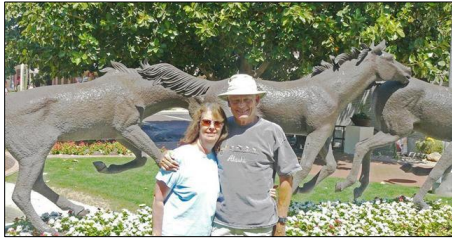


**Derry at the wheel.**

In complete contrast to the beginning of the trip, Phoenix was quite warm. Unfortunately we discovered that our dash air conditioning

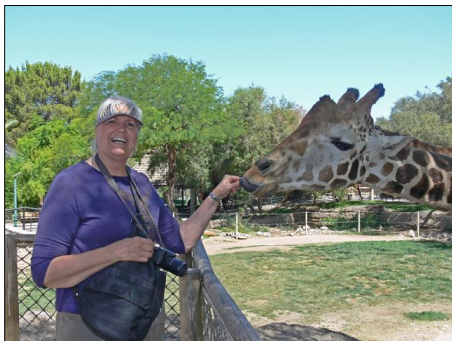


quit cooling just before we arrived in Phoenix. (It also did that last summer in Oregon.) We stayed a couple nights with our friends, Kent and Julie Thomas, in Phoenix.



**Kent and Julie show us Scottsdale.**

We next stopped in Tucson and visited Linda's cousin, Chris Greer, and his family. We also visited the zoo there and again fed a Giraffe.



**Linda feeds her favorite.**

On the way from Tucson to Deming, New Mexico, we made a rest stop where we could see the wildfire burning near Portal, Arizona.



**Fire near Portal, AZ.**

We had a very dry winter here in the southwest and the drought conditions have provided fuel for many forest fires. Another very large fire broke out in eastern Arizona that blanketed Albuquerque in smoke for a couple weeks. Smoky sunsets were common each evening.



**A smoky sunset caused by the Wallow fire in AZ.**

## HOME BETWEEN TRIPS

We arrived home on 18 May. Here is Derry, with a fresh bath and haircut, wanting to play in our dining room. On Memorial Day weekend we went to visit the National Cemetery in Santa Fe where friends and family are buried.



**Linda's parents' grave in foreground.**

## RALLY IN BAYFIELD

We were glad to get away from the forest fire smoke and drive to Bayfield, Colorado, on 13 June. We met up with 6 other couples and their motor homes and drove together. We all spent a week in Bayfield along with other friends and members of the Rocky Mountain Region of the Family Motor Coach Association. We stayed at a lovely park on the Pine River. The weather was clear and perfect. We had dinners together most of the week. Here are some views of activities.



**Dinner the first evening.**



**Gathering at Ron and Rhoda's motor home.**



**Linda cleans our car windows at our campsite.**



**Another supper together.**



**Meeting shelter in the park.**



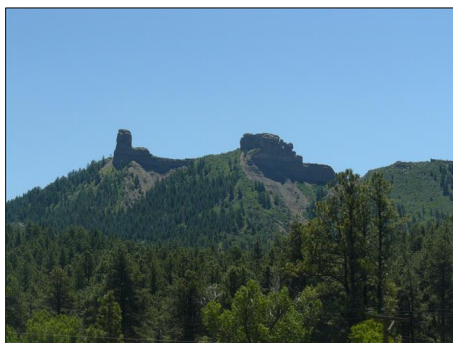
**A scene in the RV Park.**



**Flowers were throughout the park.**

In addition to enjoying the park, we did some local sightseeing that included Vallecito Reservoir, and the towns of Durango, Pagosa Springs, and Silverton.





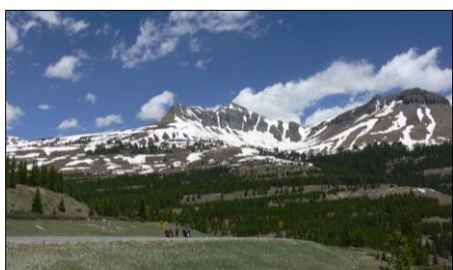
**Chimney Rock near Pagosa Springs.**



**The hot springs at Pagosa Springs.**



**Pagosa Springs.**



**Molas Pass on the way to Silverton, elevation 10,910 feet (3,325 meters).**



**Molas Pass.**



**Silverton nestled among the mountain peaks.**



**Silverton. The County courthouse.**



**Silverton. We ate lunch here.**

We got to eat just before the first rain arrived with tourists from Durango. Three old narrow gauge steam engine trains were running daily between Durango and Silverton.



**Train arrives in Silverton.**



**Engine 481 of the Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge railroad.**



**Silverton Main Street.**



**Blue Lupine on way back to Durango.**



**Our coach in Bayfield RV Park.**



**Curtis and Sybil Brown's Safari Panther coach and our Safari Trek compare murals.**





**Some more dinners together.**

On Thursday evening Linda had a nosebleed just before 10:30. By 11:20 it had not stopped bleeding profusely, so Robert took her to the emergency room at the regional medical center between Bayfield and Durango. We were there until 2:00 AM. The doctor had to cauterize and plug Linda's nose.



**Curtis Brown with Linda and her new facial fashion.** The packing stayed in for 3 days while Linda had the inflation tube taped to the side of her face.



**Now it was time for the ice cream social.**



**Ted got a really big bowl. (Thanks to Photoshop.)**



**Finally, the steak dinner.**

Fortunately the Wallow fire smoke blew away from Albuquerque the day we returned home. However, we now had to contend with some New Mexico fires.

### HOME AGAIN

Linda's nose packing was removed the morning of 20 June and we drove home. She has seen our doctor and has been doing well since then, but has another appointment with a specialist in mid-July.

Robert graduated from Auburn University in 1977. Auburn's current president, Jay Gogue, was visiting New Mexico last month so we went up to Santa Fe for a dinner meeting with other Auburn Alumni. Here is Robert with two other Aerospace Engineering graduates.



**Meeting other alumni.**

On the way to Santa Fe we had a good view of the Pacheco Fire burning north of the town.



**Santa Fe Forest fire.**

The day after our meeting in Santa Fe, a fire broke out near Los Alamos and it has become the largest fire in New Mexico's recorded history. At this time we are hoping for our rainy season to begin and help put out the many fires burning in our drought-ridden state.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

We are also busy with other activities. Our choir has the summer off now. We will start Christmas rehearsals in September.

Robert has begun another year as AIAA Albuquerque Section treasurer, and Linda is our Chaparral Chapter FMCA treasurer.

We continue our family history research, and Robert is sometimes very busy answering Malseed genealogical queries.

We have a small collection of firearms most of which we have had for decades, but have not fired for a very long time. In March Robert cleaned Linda's old Winchester model 37 12-gauge shotgun, and used it in our church's skeet shoot. In June Robert took a CCW licensing class (Linda will attend it later this month), so we have been taking our hand guns (.22, .380, 9mm, .45) to the range lately.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

We continue to be thankful for the Lord's provision for us. (And we are especially thankful that Robert's cousins in Joplin, MO, were spared from the devastating tornado, even if all their homes were not.) We trust in Him, and pray that you will do likewise and enjoy a wonderful summer of 2011.



Love,

*Robert & Linda*

and Derry



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We are now planning a trip that will take us through parts of the following 26 states: CO, WY, SD, IA, WI, IL, IN, MI, ON, NY, VT, NH, ME, MA, RI, CN, NJ, PA, DE, MD, VA, WV, KY, MO, OK, TX. The trip should last from about 28 July to 23 September.