

Christmas, 2014

2014 is almost gone, so here I am once again killing a few trees trying to make our boring lives sound interesting ☺ We hope everybody had a wonderful year.

In late January, John was finishing up his radiation treatment for prostate cancer. However, during that time he started experiencing chest pains when exercising, so his doctor ordered a stress test. The results showed significant blockage in one artery, so surgery was scheduled very quickly. Fortunately, everything went well and only one stent was needed, so they did not have to open up his chest, just place the stent through his femoral artery. He has been declared cancer free, and no more treatments of any kind are required for either condition. He just needs to have regular follow-ups with his doctor.

Much of the spring was spent planning for our remodel efforts for the kitchen, family room, dining room and laundry room. This was probably the single largest remodeling effort we have undertaken at one time. This started with re-flooring the entire downstairs area (except for two bedrooms) with tile to match the downstairs bathroom we remodeled last year. Then we had custom cabinets installed in the kitchen, and a matching buffet in the dining room. The kitchen remodel required new appliances, so we replaced the old electric stove with a gas stove, and the microwave with a convection / microwave oven. Janet loves the new dishwasher also, as it is very quiet and effective.

In April we enjoyed an Easter brunch in downtown Portland with our friends Judi and Scott. Excellent food and company.

In June, our niece Susan Spain visited for a short while. We had a great time driving the coast highway from central Oregon to the Columbia River with Susan. We stayed overnight in Manzanita at our friend's house, and continued to Fort Stevens State Park, the site of a fort dating from the Civil War and in use through WWII, giving Susan a chance to view Oregon coast beauty and experience a little local history.

At the end of the summer, John had a 40 foot metal shelter erected to cover the motor home pad to replace the temporary fabric shelter we erected a few years ago, so now our motor home sits safely out of the rain and the neighbor's overhanging cherry tree.

At the end of August we took a week long camping vacation to Wallowa Lake, Oregon. This is a beautiful area in eastern Oregon near the Snake River Canyon. We spent time in the nearby artist's colony town of Joseph, filled with some of the best examples of bronze artwork anywhere. Every corner in town had bronze art on display, and the town was filled with art galleries full of excellent bronze sculptures. We took a tram to the top of nearby Mount Howard and spent the day, and spent another day taking a jetboat trip down the Snake River, the deepest river gorge in America.

At the end of November, we boarded a plane and headed back to Jackson to spend Thanksgiving with John's family. We had a great family gathering at his sister Sudie's house for Thanksgiving. Afterwards, we drove to Memphis to spend some time with John's older brother David and his family and then drove to Clarksdale Mississippi to enjoy a night of blues music at the Ground Zero Blues Club. The next day we drove to Tupelo to visit John's older sister Nancy and her son and grandson for a couple of days. We finished our trip by spending a few days with friends in the New Orleans area before returning to Jackson to catch the flight home.

Pictures of our adventures are on our web site, www.majorspain.com.

Here's wishing you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Please keep in touch.

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John and Janet Spain

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Public bronze artwork in Joseph Oregon



Wallowa Lake in Eastern Oregon from near Joseph



John and Janet atop Mount Howard near Wallowa Lake



On the jet boat contemplating the Snake River rapids ahead



John at the memorial to Chief Joseph



Janet at the restaurant / tramway landing on Mount Howard

