

Moose Notes 2010 (Highlights of the Year)



As some of you know, in August of last year (2009) I was told that the company that I've worked for these past 21 years would be going out of business, and I'd be out of a job. But the client I was on assignment with at the time ran into problems (not of my doing!), and they extended my contract another two weeks. And then another month. And another. And another. And so it went, through June of this year! And the work became more pressured, as deadlines passed.

So I kept putting off things I needed to do – seeing doctors, doing yard work, cleaning house – since it was always just another month, and then I'd have lots of time to catch up. Now I've been catching up since July, and there's still more to do. I enjoy having more time for myself, and I have not been actively looking for work. That's also because I can't work full time, and in this climate jobs for part time programmers are scarce. Also, no one is eager to hire a 67-year-old in a rapidly changing technology field. At this point, I consider myself retired, though with a slightly smaller nest egg than I'd planned before the stock market crash.



Jean, meanwhile, is still industriously looking for work. For a couple of months in the spring she worked for the US Census, as an enumerator, knocking on the doors of those who hadn't sent in their census forms. But she hasn't found anything since then, and is making do with unemployment insurance. It's a really tough job market.

This year's trip was to Yosemite Valley. Jean had never been to the Valley, so this was all new for her. I'd been there multiple times. But this time the falls were exceptional – they'd had 40% more snow the previous winter, and we were there during the first hot spell, when a lot of the snow was melting. We did several day hikes, the longest being the Panorama Trail, about 9 miles of breathtaking scenery. I've put some photos from the trip on my web site (www.pmansbach.com). Two of them are on this year's holiday card, and one more appears here:



Last April my previous cell phone died, and I upgraded to a smartphone, a Droid. It's pretty amazing, how far the technology has come. My little cell phone is far more powerful than my first computer was, less than 20 years ago! And it is connected to the entire internet. I can look things up away from home. I can check congestion on the highways, and view a weather forecast. I can listen to music in the doctor's waiting room. What I can't do, however, is talk on the phone while driving. I'm just not coordinated that way.

Meanwhile, I had a new tooth implanted. From the time the old one broke until the new one was in place was 14 months! A long time to be chewing on one side of the mouth.

Jean's grandchildren are growing fast, as children seem inclined to do. Here are photos taken at Thanksgiving:



Braden (8)



Connor (10)



Emmett (3½)

That's all for now.

Have a happy holiday season!