



Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year to One & All

It hardly seems possible that another year has gone by since we wrote last year's Christmas letter. I swear each year passes faster and faster.

Despite the turbulent times that 2008 brought, Martin and I continue to count our blessings at being able to work from home and spend so much time together. We also appreciate the wonderful neighborhood and joined in a progressive dinner with 20 others couples this fall.

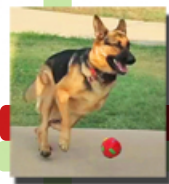
The entertainment business has certainly been affected by the economic downturn this year - entertainment is one of the first things that companies and organizations cut from their budget. However, things started to pick up a little in October and we're hoping that 2010 will see a resurgence. (Chris with David Perloff - right)

Martin continues to be busy with the University of Texas Center for Disability Studies. He produced three DVDs back in early Spring and it seems he was always under the gun with tight deadlines. This spring we will be working with the Texas Center to produce videos of Ft. Hood families who have children with disabilities. Martin has experienced a slow down in non UT work and taken advantage of the time to produce a DVD documenting our vintage recording collection which will be released in the new year. He now has 14 web sites that he developed & hosts for clients and rides his Yamaha cycle as often as possible.

In April we celebrated Martin's birthday with a train trip from Austin to El Paso, with a couple of days stop-over in Alpine. It was great fun. We were able to reserve a family suite, so had windows on both sides of the train, bunk beds (that was fun trying to roll into the top bunk) and we were at the back of the train, so were able to take pictures from three sides. The trip took 18 hours to Alpine (which is a 6 or 7 hour trip by car). Martin used to travel on the train between Alpine and El Paso when he was little and wanted to re-live the experience. We also visited Martin's niece Karen and her family in Ft. Davis, as well as Donna & Dee who met us for supper in Marfa.

In May we had a visit from Anthony, Sharon and Julius (who turned three on Halloween). He is a delight and so very, very smart. He can even say the alphabet backwards - how many of you can do that? Jules got to ride on my tractor and loved helping with the horses, etc. We visited them in Ohio in Sept and took the opportunity to catch up with Martin's Aunt Sally and Uncle Don in Cincinnati.





Anthony and Sharon will be having a baby brother for Julius at the end of this month, so needless to say, they will not be coming for the Holidays. They are still in Worthington, Ohio. Anthony continues to be extremely busy as the Creative Director for Fitch, an international design company and Sharon has been very involved doing consulting work with several clients in Worthington, also organizing the farmers market and a food festival last month. We Skype with them as often as possible and have had a couple of Skype sessions with my sister Sheila and Michael in the UK.

Ken is still here in Austin. Like the entertainment business, things have been rather slow for the gaming industry this year, but he continues to do animation and gaming artwork, as it is available. I get to meet him for lunch most times when I am in Austin. Ken helps us with various jobs around the barn and property. Hopefully he will be able to join us for Christmas Day this year.

In August, Troubadour our five year old German Shepherd got very sick and after numerous vet and vet hospital visits they couldn't find out what was wrong. We finally took him to A&M Vet Hospital Neurology Dept. where he had an MRI and was diagnosed with Encephalitis (a brain lesion). We are very happy to report that he is currently doing great. He is still on several medications, but we have been able to wean him off some of the pills gradually and we have our sweet, ball playing dog back. We're hoping that he continues to do well. Bracken has finally grown up and has turned out to be a lovely girl. She is very affectionate (too much some times) and we get compliments on her looks all the time. Still no puppies, so we think we'll give up on the idea.

I continue to ride at least once a week. I have been riding KD for the past few months and he is doing very well and is becoming a good trail horse. One of the neighbors and I go pretty regularly to McKinney Roughs (a 700 acre area of trails) which is only a ten minute drive from home. At 26 Dancer has more or less retired, but she is doing well and spends her days grazing and her nights in her stable laying in pine shavings with a warm rug on.

Please feel free to visit our scrapbook. Martin does a great job of keeping things up-to-date and posts lots of pictures.

The link is: <http://phantomprod.com/sc2009.html>

We hope this finds everyone well and happy.

Much love, Martin and Chris

