

## IT'S NEW YEARS DAY, ONCE AGAIN, AND I HAVE REVIEWED THE YEAR AND COME UP SHORT"

2025 had me turning 80 years old! I can't believe it, but the calendar doesn't lie, does it? Jim took me to San Francisco, the city of my birth, to which I had never returned since WWII was over! It's a truly interesting and beautiful city, even with me not there! After we saw it, I came back for cataract surgery in May...do you think I missed something in SF? We came home and had Jim's Volvo checked out, and I bought one myself since I already knew the computer stuff for it. I also sold the jeep, so I needed a car that would like the snow since I had sold just everything else fall of 2024 except the SSR (which is NOT a snow loving vehicle). In June I missed having animals to cuddle with, so adopted two 10-year-old cats from the local shelter. They're now happily part of the family, and even Jim has grown to enjoy their antics. I figure both cats and I will make another 7 or 8 years, so cats won't have to go back to a shelter hopefully.

I had many home improvements this year including refinishing 30-year-old furniture, rehangng light fixtures, repairing floor tiles, roof tiles and replacing heat tape, and I removed the garage floor tiles and had the floor epoxied. We also hired a snowplow company for the first time in the 20 years I've lived at this location, and relieved Jim (at 82) of snow blowing the driveway after every snow. He seems a bit happier to know It's going to snow now.

I left Jim home with the kitties, and on September 30 I went to Alberobello, Italy, where another bike ride with our fabulous European guide, Tami, would begin 4 days later. Jim opted not to come as he doesn't prefer hotel to hotel bike trips. I arrived in a cold rain storm and was happy to find the hotel manager, a youngish woman, was not averse to helping me with the luggage up ¼ mile to my room straight up a very steep busy pedestrian street. I never would have found it without this wonderful person, AND she lent me an umbrella for the whole stay. It rained and was 40-50 degrees all 4 days before the ride started. I toured the town the first day, bought a sweatshirt the next day, and mostly read in the room and coaxed the local cats in to get warm the rest of the time. My roommate, Franca, the 79-year-old mother of the guide, whom I had met the previous year, arrived just before we took off on bikes the 5<sup>th</sup> day. We travelled 30-50 miles a day to all the small towns of Puglia, essentially the heel of the boot of Italy, stopping occasionally to swim in the Ionic Sea, or another time in the Adriatic Sea. A magical trip once again. At the end of the tour, I flew to London and stayed with cousins in their fabulous new home and attended the London film festival with them, seeing 7-8 shows in a mere 4 days. It doesn't quite add up to the Breckenridge Film Festival, of course, but it was pretty spectacular anyway! I came home October 21<sup>st</sup>, feeling to 3 weeks without Jim was too much.

November had us meeting my brother and his family (Linda, Ariel and Jay, Jessica with Eliza, Zeke and Braden in tow along with two of kid's friends) in Crested Butte, where cousin Richard Weekley had very generously us lent his home. There was NO snow in Colorado yet, so the kids were a bit disappointed not to get to snowboard, but we enjoyed family time together playing games, putting together puzzles and sharing meals. I don't get to see these people much, so it was very special to have everyone in one place.

In December we went again to Cabo San Lucas to the time share we purchased some years ago, only to discover the resort has been sold to a larger complex and we will probably not be number 1 on the list anymore. We declined to join the new complex for an additional \$15,000, but with so many more members, I expect we won't be able to get a room every other year as we have been doing for the last 10 years. It's a huge disenchantment for sure. The condition of the cart path at one of the courses is so bad, they had to invest in heavy duty jeep-like carts with oversized back country wheels to be able to navigate it. The trip is so rugged that it contorted my back such that we only played 9 holes, and cancelled the 2<sup>nd</sup> round at that course later in the week. The other course they have now secured one day for home owners only...not available to time share owners on Fridays. Kind of makes our "investment" now worth almost nothing.

Anyway, hope your 2025 did not provide any unwelcome surprises and that this finds you all in good health and good spirits.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Penny and Jim

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