

2009 Annual Report: Are We There Yet?

Revisiting **The Second Coming** by Yeats, also used in 2004.
For more news of the year, see www.hargrove.org.

Jim and Linda

We did a lot of traveling this year. Three trips to California:



one a quick trip for Kiera's first birthday, and one a long car trip with stops in New Mexico and Arizona for birding arriving in El Cerrito for Kai's birthday, then finally in June to take care of the grandkids while Charles and Amy went scuba diving. We plan to spend Christmas in California this year.

In August, we spent several weeks in Uganda, where we saw the famous mountain Gorillas, Chimpanzees, Leopards. It total, we saw 455 species of birds, 37 mammals, and 6 reptiles. A complete report is on the web site.

Linda is retiring as a Nurse Practitioner on the installment plan. First, she dropped to four days per week, then two days, and finally toward the end of the year to one day of house calls. She is quitting for good in January. The four birding trips we have planned for 2010 may have had something to do with it. She continues to enjoy her weekly Lost Creek "book club" meetings, which have gone on for 27 years. She recommends **Infidel**, by Ayaan Hirsi Ali and **Stones into Schools**, by Greg Mortenson, author of **Three cups of Tea**, and the delightful *novel* **A Guide to the Birds of East Africa**, by Nicholas Drayson.



Meanwhile, Jim has switched from claiming his occupation as homemaker to simply retired. He celebrated his 65th birthday with a "finally eligible for Medicare" party. Thanks to our Senate, it appears that most of the country will have to wait for health insurance.

The exceptional drought in Austin finally broke this fall, without the usual flood. The fall colors were better than usual this year, and the creek behind our house filled up nicely.

Our adventure in remodeling came to an abrupt end in 2009 with the continued stagnation in housing.

Charles, Amy, Kai and Kiera



Charles continues to work as an archivist/librarian for the National Center for Science Education (NCSE), a group that fights the Discovery Institute and others who don't want evolution taught in public schools. Amy has a very demanding job as a nurse midwife and women's health care nurse practitioner.

Kai is now three and a half, a dynamo. He has transferred his main affection from **Thomas the Train** to **Bob the Builder**, and remains fascinated by all sorts of *dump tractors* (road building equipment.) He discovered iBird Pro on Linda's iPhone and latched onto it. He loves to play the birdcalls, especially the American Flamingo.

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

—W.B. Yeats: **The Second Coming**



Kiera has a definite mind of her own. She now walks everywhere and grabs the finger of the nearest adult to go with her. She steadfastly refuses to talk, although she understands everything we say to her. Our cats fascinated her, and she was gentle with them, but they didn't reciprocate the affection.

The family managed two trips to Austin this year: once in August, when Charles attended an archivist convention, and again for Thanksgiving and Jim's week-long birthday celebration.

Claire (and Ron!)

Claire, as is her wont, traveled extensively this year: Snowboarding near Lake Tahoe; Blue Grass Festival in Telluride; Philadelphia; New York City; weddings in North Carolina and Los Angeles; as well as two trips to Austin. Just before Thanksgiving, she and Ron Ricci, whom she met playing softball, announced plans to marry! We are delighted. Ron is an excellent cook and gardener, as well as a sports fan. He works for Advent Software, which provides products for institutional investors. Claire tacked on a quick trip to Houston during Thanksgiving to introduce Ron to the main trunk of the Hargrove clan. She and Ron plan to ring in the New Year in New Orleans. When not traveling, Claire continues as a Pediatric Anesthesiologist at Children's Hospital, Oakland.



Memorials

We held a memorial service for Lil, Linda's mom, in Austin in January. In August, following her wishes, we scattered her ashes on Lake Nokomis in Minneapolis at dusk with a beautiful sunset in the background. We also caught up with friends and family in Minnesota. We continue to mourn Lil's passing.



Pets and Other Comensal Animals

Queenie, the crazy old aunt in the attic cat, wasted away and died.

Skinny Minny, reluctant to cede her place at the top of the pyramid, is perpetually miffed, and stays with us only for food and shelter.

Cash and Cary, our niece Panika's black twin cats, just ignore The Min. They know who's in charge, and Cash really knows how to demand attention.

Chipper is still pretty much the same, exuberant. He loves to chase and catch the Frisbee, for which he expects a treat. Check out the video on the web site.

Nina (technically Panika's dog) is all right, but had her left front leg amputated due to cancer. She's a bit slower now, but gets around pretty well, particularly when food is involved.

Raccoons, Deer, Etc., are still abundant. And, of course, we still have birds at the feeder.



Best wishes to all for 2010. Let us hear from you.