

Hargrove Annual Report for 2016

In Memoriam, Marion Smith Hargrove September 16, 1922 — June 24, 2016

Granny



Jim's Mother (Marion, Granny, Mama) died suddenly and completely unexpectedly on the day of the Brexit Vote. We had plans for her: Claire and Ron were going to visit the following week, and we were including her in our Thanksgiving trip to Mexico. She had complained of pain in her jaw, which Linda and Claire recognized as signs of an incipient cardio vascular event. After eating dinner with Flo, they parted at the door of Marion's condo. Flo said in parting, "I'll talk to you tomorrow." The reply "If I'm still here," was not unprecedented, but was prescient on this occasion.

Flo found her the next morning when no one answered the phone. Everyone agreed that this was just the way she would have wanted to go. She had a good run.

We were not surprised, but were very gratified, to find that everyone spoke well of her. She was loved and admired by all. We will miss her very much.

Jim and Linda **Reach Some Important Milestones**

Jim and Linda continue trying to make up for lost time, crisscrossing the planet in their goal of seeing at least 50% of the bird species of the world. This year, when both passed [really interesting](#) birthdays, they kept up the pace, with three foreign trips and more in the USA:

- [A marathon trip around the Caribbean \(Report online\)](#)
- [A trip to the part of Japan most people skip \(Report online\)](#)
- [A Family Birthday Celebration in Mexico](#)
- [Our 50th Rice Reunion in Houston, as well as some trips to Austin.](#)



Jim and Linda by *Spirit of the Forest*

All this left our intrepid birders close to the goal, with something over 5000 species.

Claire and Ron: Still More Adventures: Remodeling, Gardening



Claire and Ron's remodeling of *Rancho Relaxo*, their weekend place near Philo in Mendocino County, to have bedrooms and a bath on the second floor is finally finished worth the wait. Of course, that was the incentive for yet another remodeling: adding a dining room by enclosing the back porch. That was finished just in time to count in this year's report.

Claire and Ron are both taking a year off from work, with plans to ski quite a bit. Nico is hoping to be ready for lessons. Scarlet says that she already knows how and just wants to do it more. They also have some trip plans.

Nico, Ron, Scarlet, Claire Playa del Carmen

Now that the house is big enough to hold everyone, they have moved to Philo as a semi-permanent residence. The older condo on Clayton has been sold for a nice profit. The newer condo on Texas St. is rented, but not on a long term lease, keeping the option of moving back in after the end of the year.



New Dining Room with some stuff from Granny's Condo

Meanwhile, the garden responded to loving care with a bumper crop of everything this year, but especially tomatoes. Ron canned dozens, which are perfect for soups. Nico and Scarlet helped in the garden a lot.

Charles and Amy



Charles and Kiera

Charles amuses children as a librarian, at the [Rio Vista Public library](#), with a schedule that no one else can figure out. It is a long commute, though not by Bay Area standards, but against the grain, leaving plenty of time for podcasts.

Amy continues working as a midwife for Kaiser, with a killing schedule that involves commuting to various locations.

For the n^{th} ($n > 10$, but...) year in California, Charles and Amy hosted the annual Iron Chef party. They assign each couple an ingredient, supposedly selected randomly. This year, we

got *port* and made a nice mulled port suited to the season. The other port entry blitzed us with individual chocolate pots-de-creme with a port and pomegranate reduction. This year, 23 people (more or less) competed for prizes in different categories, such as "most daring," "best use of ingredient," and the coveted "best in show." We failed to place again, but at least we got votes this time, after Jim started voting for himself. The winning entry was an incredible Lemon Ginger Cake decorated with **many** items.



Charles and Amy at our 50th Anniversary Dinner

Grandchildren

Scarlet and Nico



The young pair has changed markedly this year, as you can well imagine. Scarlet has overcome her initial language issues and now talks a blue streak. She is learning to read, write and do some arithmetic, with some help from the older generation. She has her mother's knack for knowing when a camera is pointed in her direction.

Nico has turned into a *real* boy, with all that implies. He has a stubborn streak that is a family genetic trait. He tries to run as fast as Scarlet, but cannot quite do it yet. Soon, though. He loves gardening, especially when it gives him as chance to move dirt with his toy dump truck.



Kai and Kiera



Our two oldest grandchildren are still both are in school at nearby Harding Elementary, a short walk from home. [The school](#) has a lot of activities for parents as well as children. El Cerrito has its own set of activities, including **baseball**, where Kai showed some promise. Note that something has been added since last year. We expect his improved vision to translate into more success at the plate to complement his great catch and throw prowess. Both kids are taking music lessons, Kai on the piano and Kiera, violin. We had a chance to hear them play a duet together at the annual concert.



Two cute black kittens have joined the family: Lorelei and Snookie.. Kiera is following her grandmother and mother, learning to sew.