

December 2018

Dear family and friends,

this year we mourn the passing of Jutta's mother. She died peacefully at home, as was her wish, holding a dear friend's hand. We were in Reno, arranged the funeral, and flew to Germany the following day. Several of our relatives and friends could join us for the funeral and it was great to have their support.

Ben and Ruth visited us a couple times this year, but due to a sad occasion. The mother of one of their closest friends, who lived in Reno, passed suddenly. Ben and Ruth helped with their little daughters, when they were here in Reno.

And we visited Ruth and Ben several times in the Bay Area. Their house is remodeled and lovely. The kitchen is great, and Ben is such a good cook, I should just watch, and ask him to fix me my omelet...

Johannes, Diether's nephew visited us with Jasmine and we had few nice days with them around Reno and Fallon. And of course we visited Lake Tahoe. We then drove them to the cousins'. We had a great time vacationing with them.

Thanksgiving was at Ruth's parents house and "Friends-giving" at April's, followed by Bob's surprise birthday party with their extended family. It is good to visit every so and often to see you in person. And the babies grow so fast, you turn around and they are 5 years old....

We did 3 trips to Europe this year:

- The traditional Spring School in Ettal. We saw a cousin and her family in Munich. Their baby daughter goes to school now... and of course we visited Jutta's mother and Diether's family.
- We visited again at the end of August, and Diether spoke at a workshop in Amsterdam. We enjoyed walking the old city and taking pictures of bicycles. My mother was still OK, but quite weak.
- And then in October the funeral of my mother.

We try to walk at least a mile a day, weather permitting. Sometimes we drive to town and walk along the river, others we drive to the park downhill from our house, or we drive to the Lake and walk to Jutta's favorite beach, where we sometimes even swim, or up to Donner Pass off the old highway, or to Lake Lahontan, where we can spend a whole day swimming, walking and picnicking.

And when we got cold last February, we drove to St. George Utah, our closest destination in the Southwest, with its red sandstone mesas. We went for short hikes in surrounding state parks, favorite being Snow Canyon. We liked it so much, we went back end of April. We left a day early to make room for Iron-man and explored the desert around Alamo.

Later in summer we escaped the heat and vacationed in Great Basin, for some hiking above 10000ft.

And since we enjoyed that, we attempted Brianhead, after stays in Panaca and Zion. But staying overnight at those altitudes is not good for our systems and we cut this vacation short. What we learned, even coming from 5000 feet, 10 000 feet is too high for extended stays. We'll go walking up there, but stay at lower elevations.

Several friends including our local ones visited us in Reno, and it is so good to see one another in person. Let us plan for the next visits sooner.

We hope to see many of you in the not too distant future and wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!