

Arkansas Andes Annual Newsletter 2008

We are still in Fayetteville, after 4 and a half years.

Gene is working for Hoffman-LaRoche for the last 18 months or so, covering TX, OK and AR. A great job, although sometimes the travel is a bit much. It keeps him reading and learning, and he manages to visit the museums in all the major cities he calls upon.

Ellen is still at the Springdale Public Library accumulating librarian adventures for her novel. (if she ever dares to write it) It seems the typical public librarian deals with situations and personalities not usually encountered by the University librarian. And she knits as much as our cat will allow.

Tom got his MFA from San Francisco State and is staying with us for awhile, doing adjunct teaching and saving money for travel in the summer. He is writing a great deal and has had some stories published but finds the job market really tight, so he may head to Europe for a while to work and write there.

Rob finished his year as visiting professor at Arkansas Tech and is back in Fayetteville, teaching part time and painting full time. He is also job hunting and entering competitions to build the resume. He and Golsa are still seeing each other, and she finishes her MFA at the end of this year, so they are both job hunting.

Rich and Natalie are in Tulsa, having all the adventures that come with a first house. Now they understand why we kept telling them that renting is not a bad thing. Fortunately, they both have good jobs, so all the house repairs are getting done, but there are fewer toys in their lives right now.

Our latest mis-adventure is an art gallery here in Fayetteville. It is a real money loser, but a great way to meet folks and get involved with others who are working to re-energize the downtown. Hoping to make Fayetteville a "destination city" for art lovers and working to get things in place for the scheduled opening of nearby Crystal Bridges of American Art in 2010. That is Alice Walton's museum and should be quite a facility and will draw visitors from around the world. We hope they will bring money and a taste for contemporary art.

Fayetteville continues to be a convenient and pleasant place to live, but we miss the amenities of a larger city. The local symphony fell on hard times and cancelled this current season. It may make it back next year if they can get their finances straightened out. We certainly hope so. There are all the usual traveling shows coming through, so we get the Broadway stuff, and the University has a great music department, but we miss the symphony, opera, and dance. But there are advantages to a smaller city nonetheless; mostly the pace of life and the gentle good nature of folks around here.

It was around this time last year when Gene was diagnosed with prostate cancer. (What! That's a disease of old men!) Anyway, all is well, as it was caught early, and the surgery appears to have been curative. He had the new robotic procedure and was up and about and off to the local Barnes and Noble the morning after. It was a good pick up, based on a rise in PSA, still in normal range, and a biopsy despite a normal exam. Poster child for early detection – ok by me. And it was flattering when the urologist recommended the surgery because of "young age" and "good physical condition".

Holiday hugs all around. Gene and Ellen