

CHRISTMAS 2018

Online Xmas Letter

If you are connected to the Internet, I urge you to browse the online version of my Christmas Letter. It has much more news than I can squeeze onto this page, and has links, photos & video! The *link is at top of this page*.

Technology

I have a new Samsung 40" 4k TV connected to my Mac Pro desktop computer, making it much easier to edit the high-resolution videos I'm now shooting.

I'm running my astronomy photo processing on a new, high-end Dell laptop, which I'm liking very much. I continue to use an Apple Mac Pro desktop computer for most of my day, and I take my Apple MacBook Pro when I travel.

Speaking of Apple, I upgraded to the latest iPhone XS and Apple Watch Series 4 when they were released this year. The new screens and processing power is awesome, and I love how well they work



Travel

Southern Arizona

In February, I once again took advantage of the dark skies at my friend's beautiful observatory located southeast of Tucson. I stayed for a week, and then explored the Tucson area for a few more days before returning home. I had planned to see Sedona and the Grand Canyon, however the weather turned bad.

My Tesla Model S rental worked out great. I really enjoyed touring southern Arizona in style! I'm very happy with the astronomy photos I captured from the observatory. Our group had fun touring around the area during the day when we weren't looking up at the night sky.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Around Home

My coffee habit is being well-served with a new Breville espresso machine, replacing my previous Saeco machine, which I'm keeping as a backup.

We added a second heat pump to supplement the one installed last year, since we were finding some cold spots in the house. Now we're toasty and warm in the winter, and nice and cool in the summer!

My cholesterol is now completely under control using a mega-dose of Niacin, instead of the statin I was previously having serious side effects from. I've managed to keep the weight off I lost last year, and I finally had to get prescription eyeglasses this year. So I guess things are looking up with my personal health.

Our cat Coda scooted out the front door again, and managed to elude us for a month! Our other cat Mello went through some dental work this year. Rolly and Tanner, our Jack Russell Terriers are both hail and hearty, and always ready to rock and roll - despite the resting photo below!



Road trip to Calgary

In addition to attending an astronomy conference in Calgary, I went on several local excursions in southern Alberta to sample the fascinating geology all the way from the Rockies to the prairie and valleys. We even got up close to the fossilized dinosaurs in the Royal Tyrrell Museum. On the return trip, I reconnected with an old school friend in the Okanagan Valley, and continued with my trip's astronomy theme by visiting a nearby radio observatory.

Borneo

In April I joined a tour group in Los Angeles bound for Malaysia, Indonesia & Brunei. Our main destination was the island of Borneo, where we experienced lots of interesting locations and people in Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak. We had some wonderful opportunities to observe wildlife, including Orangutans, Proboscis monkeys, Sun bears, and many other fascinating animals and birds, many of which are only found in remote areas of Borneo. We also experienced the cultures of the diverse people in the area. It was a most enjoyable tour!

