

CHRISTMAS

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Arizona Astronomy

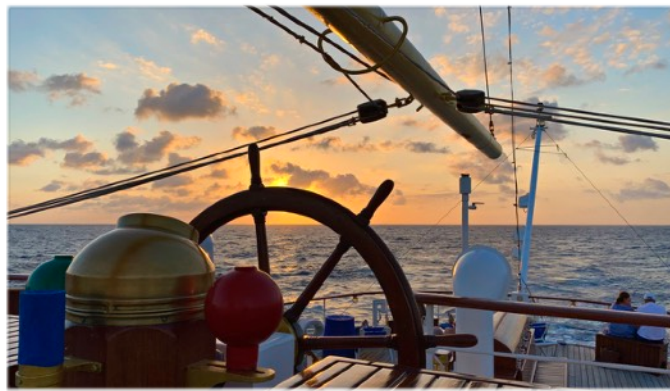
My friends and I spent a glorious week in the southern Arizona ranch land observing the night sky in March. I rented a Tesla Model 3, so we explored the area in luxury!

Island Star Party

More astronomy...this time only an hour from home in the beautiful Cowichan Valley. We caught a few glimpses of stars, but basically we were skunked! Oh well, I had fun anyway exploring where I was raised and reconnecting with childhood friends. I stayed in a lovely Cowichan Bay guest house, so it was a nice, summertime *stay-cation*.

Around the Horn in 2020!

My next big trip is sailing from Buenos Aires to Fort Lauderdale the hard way - around Cape Horn! It will be a fascinating 30-day cruise aboard the *Zaandam*. Lots of ports: Uruguay, Falkland Islands, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Panama, Aruba, Bahamas.



Sailing the Caribbean

Some friends and I sailed from Jamaica to Barbados in December 2018 aboard the *Royal Clipper*, a 5-masted sailing ship. A new kind of cruising for me, and one I'll very likely repeat. We spent 11 days hopping from island to island, swimming, snorkelling, climbing the mast to the crows nest, and just lazing on tropical beaches while being spoiled rotten. I spent a few extra days on Barbados (my favourite Caribbean island) soaking up that lovely tropical heat before returning home to the cold and grey just in time to celebrate Christmas with the family.





Robert William Carr (1930-2019)

My last paternal cousin Bob Carr died on March 5th at age 89, leaving his wife Jean and two sons Kevin and Rodney. Lots of good memories from years past, and his family remembers him on an online memorial I host for them - video, photos and words.

Around home

Our Jack Russell Terriers Rolly and Tanner are now 8 years old, but still act like puppies. Rolly had to have 5 teeth extracted this year, but we are all otherwise healthy. Kirk and I had to find a new doctor this year - always stressful, but things turned out fine.



I'm enjoying my cappuccino daily ritual at home, thanks to a new source of espresso beans from Kicking Horse Coffee Co., from Invermere, BC. *Keeps me going.*

Happy & Joyous Holidays!

Astronomy

In addition to my astronomical travels, I also did well observing from home this year. We had a beautiful Total Lunar Eclipse on Jan 20th, and miraculously, the skies were clear! My local astronomy buddies in the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada made good use of our observatory, where we have some pretty nice telescopes to observe with and take photographs through. I also coordinated a 2-day workshop so we could learn about a new astronomy imaging software package *PixInsight*, which promises to give us amateur astronomers some new tools to create beautiful photos of the night sky.



Photography & video

I went a bit crazy this year acquiring new cameras, lenses, and other photography gear. I now have *both* Canon's and Sony's latest mirrorless cameras. I'm learning how to get the most out of them for conventional photography, astro-photos, and video. I'm also enjoying using my drone to take aerial photos and video - I have my new drone Pilot's Certificate from Transport Canada!

Joe & Kirk & our fur babies

All the best for the New Year