

December 2012

Dear family & friends,

With Facebook, email and texting, many of you will know much of what is in this letter. We enjoy looking over our last year, and we hope you will find something new!

Sally: After 20 years of “tax seasons,” I vowed that when I retired I would plan a BIG trip in MARCH! (The heart of “tax season.”) I took off on my own on March 17th for 3 weeks of volunteer work in Lima, Peru with an organization called “Cross Cultural Solutions.” I didn’t find out my assignment until I got there. I ended up working most of my time in a government-run daycare center in a poor section of Lima. I was assigned to the one-year-olds. The work was hard, but the children stole my heart. The last two days of my time there, I worked in a “daycare” for senior citizens. One of the days happened to be “Good Friday,” and I witnessed them going through the “14 stations of the cross.” (It was a Catholic run center.) They were all very loving and welcoming.



When my volunteer time was up, Mark flew down and joined me in Lima. We joined a Road Scholar tour, and I experienced the other side of Peru, the affluent side. We toured Lima, Chiclayo, Trujillo, Cuzco, and, of course,

Machu Picchu. We were fed the best food, stayed in the nicest places, had wonderful tour guides, and came home very acquainted with Peru, its history, culture and its people. Machu Picchu truly is one of the wonders of the world and very worth the trip there!



Here is a link to our complete Peru trip report with slides and commentary!
<http://www.sillogic.com/2012%20Peru/index.html>

Mark: After our flood of 2010, the last step to help prevent a reoccurrence was to get rain gutters installed. We did that in January. Sadly, this past winter was very dry and we did not get a good test of the retaining wall repairs or the new gutters.



Sally: At the end of June, I took my 11-year-old granddaughter, Ashlee, on her “trip with Grandma.” We went on a Grand Canyon adventure that included a challenge course (Ashlee was VERY brave), Bearizona, slow-rafting down the Colorado River, and a train ride ending at the Grand Canyon. Next year I’ll be taking my first grandson (Austin) on a “trip with Grandma.”

Mark: Star parties at schools and libraries in Temecula and Murietta continue to use up some of my evenings. I do this as member of the Temecula Valley Astronomers. My picture even made it into the local newspapers a few times. This year we had both a partial eclipse of the Sun and a Venus transit of the Sun (right).



I am studying to become a docent at the Palomar Mountain Observatory. Docents lead tours and give talks about the Observatory. Hopefully I will be leading my first tour this coming season. (The tours are suspended over the winter - too much snow!)

I continue my genealogy research based on the hometowns of my parents in Italy. Instead of only finding dead ancestors, I’m finding live cousins :-).

My train layout in the garage is growing (right). Most of the track is now laid and this coming year will be focused on scenery. The portable layout is still going to train shows (below).



Sally: When I am home I am busy with my volunteer work. This was my 6th year teaching English-as-a-Second Language. I also added teaching a Citizenship Class at the local library. That has been very rewarding as the “new citizens” come back to share with the class their experience in their interview/exam. It is so fun to share in their excitement!

I can't totally get away from my accounting. I am treasurer for Laubach Literacy Council of San Diego County and for my church, Hilltop Center for Spiritual Living. It does keep me on my toes!

Mark and I traveled to Kevin & Anastasia's home in Arizona for our granddaughter, Anabella's 1st birthday. She is such a sweet, active, loving child and she gives great hugs!



Mark and I get out every Friday morning for a walk or hike. We started out hiking in the nearby parks and preserves, but we have shifted over to neighborhoods. We've explored quite a bit of Temecula and Murrieta and our own area, Rainbow.

That sums up our year! We look forward to hearing from YOU and we send our wishes for a wonderful Christmas season!

With love,

Mark & Sally DiVecchio

markd@sillogic.com

sadi@sillogic.com