

1-2-18

Hi Everybody

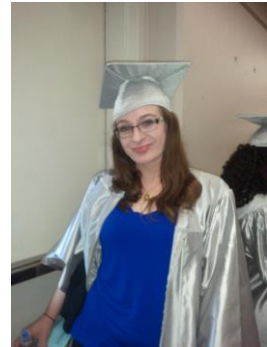
This was I suppose one of our busiest years, but then it seems every year is busy around this place. Especially as I get older.



Val got a little black “Saipan Boonie” named Smokey in January; these animals are descended from the dogs that were left there after the war. They eventually developed a distinctive breed that possessed a number of hunting and working skills. Our new dog grew into a very gentle 50 pounder. He was soon joined in April by our little white 20 pound collie mix that we call Sophie. I wanted to call her Bandit. (get it) but was overruled. So now we have the three dogs along with Fiona’s little bug-eyed Chihuahua and occasionally four.

Fiona graduated majoring in early childhood development. She loves dealing with kids but will never get rich with that degree. But what the hell. She’s happy and loves it.

Cyn had her foot fixed. She got a torn ligament from speed walking so had to hobble around in a boot for the longest time. When she was speed walking nothing could keep up with her, especially me. Her mom died in March so we took care of her estate. Don’t have to go back to Montana anymore but it is a beautiful place. Everybody has a gun.



Val’s old car finally broke down. It was the only one he ever had. I was happy because it was such a wreck and really hard to maintain. I got him a nice Dodge Dakota. He put one of those big subs in it and it really rides nice. Speaking of cars, Gabe was due to graduate so we also got him a new (almost) ford escort titanium with the SYNC hands free system and a bunch of other electronic stuff, too crazy to understand. It also does auto parallel parking and has a back up TV. Sun roof and a bunch of other cool stuff.



This year was my ultimate experience because of the eclipse. Our site choice was Lime, OR. just south of Baker City, mainly because it had the highest probability of clear weather and the longest totality. We made reservations at Kennewick, WA. which required a additional 200 mile drive

to Lime. On Sept 21<sup>st</sup> we left Kennewick at 4 a.m. for the 200 mile drive. It went

without a single slowdown but we decided to stop at the Weatherby Rest Stop along I-84 about 25 miles south of Baker Or., which gave us about 5 seconds less totality than Lime. We got there 2 hours before eclipse. The skies were totally clear and the day was perfect. The eclipse was absolutely heavenly, but we had a very hard time getting back home.

Except for one very bad case of flu, I have been doing quite well and nothing has broken down. I recovered quickly from the hernia operation last year but I still can't gain weight. Cyn has me taking all these polls.



Our family wishes you and yours a very happy 2018 and beyond. May God smile upon your every wish and action.

Dominic, Cynthia, Fiona, Valentin, Gabriel, and dogs (Sophie, Smokie and Sugar)

