

January - February ~ 2008

During January and February 2009 we spent most of our time at the Viewpoint Resort in Mesa Arizona. There is so much to do there and we have made so many friends, that there is never a dull moment. We took golf lessons from Frank (the Director of Golf at V.P.) and although we still have a lot to learn, we definitely benefited from his guidance. There were BBQs, dances, dinners with friends, lots of visits to the dog park, the Country Store and of course many "happy hours" to keep us very busy.

Sometimes we team up with another couple to golf, and other times the girls and guys golf separately. The nine hole course is very narrow and often has houses on both sides, so it is a rather challenging course. Mike has many balls on the top of a certain flat roof. The funniest shot was when the guys were playing just ahead of the girls. CJ teed off and her ball went right between Mike's legs. She swears that she has never been able to hit that far before.

Mike Tees Off



George takes a shot



CJ makes an impressive swing and yells “4”



Maureen trying out her new driver

Beside the "Puppy park" there is a "People park" with a fire pit. Our neighbours Rod and Rosallee hosted a party there one beautiful evening in January. There was lots of food as well as plenty of drinking, singing, dancing and laughing. Mike got to join in on the entertainment by singing along with the guitar players. Percy enjoyed the party as well!



Wasn't that a Party!!!





Percy ~ The Party Animal!



**I thought I was singing
the Willie Nelson part!**



Here! Let me show you how!



In January we made two road trips. The first one was out to Apache Junction, just east of Mesa to see the Superstition Mountains up close. We enjoy the view of these mountains from our campsite every day, but decided that it was time to explore them up close.



It was a beautiful warm sunny day as we headed east on the Apache Trail. First stop was at the Superstition Mountain Museum where we took a short look at some of the artifacts.





Next we drove to the Lost Dutchman mine but decided not to take a tour as it was too hot to leave Percy in the truck.



Down the road a bit we came to the Lost Dutchman State Park.



After a picnic lunch and a look around the campground, we put on our hiking boots and headed for the hills.



After one hour we were only about half way up and looked back to survey the landscape



The incline was getting steeper, but we decided to keep on hiking.



Finally we reached the top end of the trail and took a break to sit on the bench and enjoy the view.

It was a lot easier walking down the trail.





More Cholla



Praying Hands



**Baby Saguaro &
Grandpa Saguaro**



More cacti



At the end of January we took a three day trip to Desert Hot Springs to see Maureen's brother Roy and his wife Gaylene. They visited us at New Years and brought us some Canadian Snow with a very tasty bottle of Ice Wine. Then they travelled to California where they are renting at a Caliente Springs Resort. When we saw the pictures Roy sent us we decided that it would be a great place to visit.



As the rental place did not allow dogs we left Percy with Rod and Rosalee, where he was well spoiled.

We drove west through the desert, into the mountains, through the valley and around Las Vegas.



Then it was a roller coaster ride down Dillon Road for the last leg of the trip.



We knew we were getting close when we saw the power windmills in the distance.



Finally after about 5 hours we arrived.





Roy and Gaylene met us at the gate and we followed them back to their place.



The units surround a beautiful par three course with plenty of water hazards. It was extremely windy, but after lunch we played golf. Maureen hit so many balls in the water that she wondered if she shouldn't call it fishing instead of golf.

Who gets the cushion?



After supper we went to the spa for a relaxing soak in the natural hot spring pools.



Here are some views from their deck.





We played another round of golf on the second morning. The wind and water made it very challenging but we all had lots of fun. Then we drove our carts across the street for soup at a neighbouring park.

In the afternoon it was off to Mission Hills to see Gaylene's Tennis pro play in a doubles match which he won hands down.





We then visited the Coachella Valley Preserve at 1000 Palms Canyon. The palms were amazingly large.





Maurteen! Where are you?



Right Here!!

Giant Broccoli?





Before heading back we stopped at a Dairy Queen for some ice cream where Roy and Mike helped out an elderly couple who could not get their car to start.

The windmills looked beautiful as the sun set behind them.



Thanks Roy and Gaylene for a wonderful time in California.

In February we made one short trip and one very long one.

About 30 miles outside of Mesa there is a huge fairground with permanent medieval structures where a Renaissance Festival has been held for the past twelve years. It runs every weekend for the months of February and March and is hugely popular with both the locals and the tourists. As well as the vendors and the entertainers, many of the people who attend dress up in period costume.



On a very warm Sunday afternoon we went with Joanne and George to check it out. We were not disappointed as there was so much to see and hear.

The very best entertainment was by the Mediaeval Babes. They sang and danced to madrigal music as well as more recent tunes. We liked them so much that we attended two shows.



Man, it's hot hot!!



We also watched a stuntman who wrapped himself in firecrackers and then had hundreds of people through water balloons at him.



We also saw some jousting and a birds of prey show





After the show we went out for Greek Food. All in all it was a wonderful day!

Our big trip was on February 26th when we flew to Detroit where Matt and Charlie picked us up and drove us to Sarnia where we will stay for a month at Mike's sister's place.



Percy and the rig will stay in Mesa and enjoy the warm weather while we try not to freeze during the last remnants of the Canadian winter. Mike is scheduled to see a surgeon next week and will probably be having cataract surgery mid month.

On April 2nd we plan to fly back to Mesa, stay for a few weeks and then make our way to the Good Sam's Rally in New Mexico before heading back to Ontario.