

December 20016
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Hi everyone, near and far.

We send our best wishes for Christmas and the coming year to you and yours.

Apart from that, things have gone on much as usual. Titan and Kaleigh continue much the same, though I note that last year's letter made no mention of Titan's "EPI" problem – which basically means he has to have his food semi pre-digested (by adding an enzyme powder) or he would die of starvation.

(<http://epi4dogs.com>) Kaleigh seemed to be on the way out for a while but then was diagnosed as having a thyroid deficiency and is now on a supplement and is back to the bumptious little fur ball we have gotten used to.

Sue went on both a Cherry Blossom visit to Kyoto and an autumn tour with the Pacific Horticulture Society. The last such trip – at least for now. She feels very privileged to have seen so much. But here are some highlights. Firstly a couple of views of cherry blossom viewing at Daigoji Temple Kyoto



Next, the immaculate modern garden around the Adachi Museum, and old farmhouses at Shirakawa World Heritage Site



And lastly, the leaves just starting to color at Matsue Castle !

Peter continues his work as a consultant on aviation software – but this has been thin on the ground this last year, so house painting etc. has taken a larger share. A couple of physically big projects on the home front he undertook were, further reinforcement of the end of the back yard where it merges into a ravine, and making a very nice fireplace surround using cherry wood that was donated by Shelley and John.



The picture shows this in its Christmas finery and one of Sue's kimonos.

We also dug up and replaced some concrete pathway in the backyard. No, not just for fun, there was some water pipe underneath feeding outlets for garden hoses, which decided to leak where some shut off valves were installed. (Yes, I did say these were under a concrete path!?!?) Another task was installing an AIS antenna (<http://www.marinetraffic.com>) which included trying to drive a ten foot lightning grounding rod into the ground – only to hit bedrock three feet down! Belonging to Rotary has also had some interest and Peter was

able to make a small contribution to a Rotary project to install Automatic Defibrillators around the island.

The grandchildren are all happy and flourishing. Our second eldest will be 21 next year, doesn't seem possible.

2016 was a turbulent year weather wise – so OK we all say that every year now! This was the second wettest Spring followed by a very short Summer. Our lawns dried up as usual, but most of our trees and shrubs flourished in the heat. Then it rained hard for weeks on end, sometimes with very high winds and short power outages. A couple of weeks ago we had a major snow storm – around eight inches - that damaged trees all over the island including ours. This magnolia is now three feet shorter.



Titan enjoyed the snow - but Kaleigh not so much

Then more snow came – but it's supposed to melt quite soon.



Looking back over 2016 we are very grateful for good health, many interests and wonderful family and friends. We send all our best wishes

Susan + Peter

Susan and Peter