



## 2010 – Getting Back to Basics

We weren't able to do any traveling again this year. So, we spent most of the year working on the house and garden and taking care of the animals, and of course, our client's projects.

In December, 2009, the gas boiler for our hot water and house heat gave out as the winter was getting colder. We looked into the same type replacement for it and found even getting it wholesale was way out of our budget. After doing a lot of research, we found many people use a much less expensive type of boiler that isn't really designed for house heating, but works fine with the addition of an extra control that we already had. The main drawback is it probably won't last 20 years like the old one. After hassling with shipping damage, we finally got a replacement installed and now have a nice warm house.

On February 11<sup>th</sup> our chickens turned 1 year old. For a chicken this is adulthood and they changed from being called pullets to hens. They're still happily digging up bugs and weeds in the part of the yard they're allowed in and are doing fine. They do make dandy alarm clocks if you want to wake up at dawn (even if you don't), since at sunrise they are bouncing around waiting to be let out of the run so they can go out to play in the yard.

Over the summer, we worked on our new outdoor kitchen area. Sharon built a nice counter for a stainless steel sink to go with our gas BBQ, and we also converted a table Sharon had built some time ago to hold a propane double burner camp stove and tank. We still have a few more stones to set for the floor and have to re-do the water and power in that area, but have already cooked a couple of meals out there.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we did our normal fireworks shows. Nothing really new there, all went well and the crowds enjoyed the shows.

In August, we decided to get another chest freezer to store the batches of food we get from harvests. We got a nice one on sale with free delivery.

In September, our hermit crab died, he was 15+ years old. This is the first time since we received a pair of hermit crabs for a wedding present that we haven't had one. We do still have the koi and other fish out in the pond.

We decided to try our luck at making cheese for the first time. It wasn't a super success, but the results were definitely edible. It came out a sort of ricotta-rella that freezes well and cooks well in pasta dishes and omelets. And, since we have a goodly quantity of fresh eggs, we decided to make our own pasta as well. It turned out to be

fairly easy and a great way to store excess eggs. Since we have a good dehydrator, Sharon made jerky for the first time. All she needed to do was thinly slice some steak, season it, and throw it in the dehydrator. It turned out a lot better than store bought.

As always, our pictures are at [www.interstellar.com/photos](http://www.interstellar.com/photos)

We wish you all the happiness of the Season  
And the best for the New Year.

***Jerry & Sharon***



behind the scenes