



2005: Wind, Rain, Lightening, Snow, and Mountains

February saw us attending our second Western Winter Blast pyrotechnics convention in Arizona. Jerry had a last minute idea for an odd type of rocket so we borrowed some manufacturing space from a friend to build some test rockets. While not very powerful, they performed as hoped. There were off on thunder storms during the convention and on the last night dusk greeted us with the most severe. The downpour caused most of the participants to huddle together in the sales tent. There were several comments about standing in a metal-framed tent full of explosives during a lightening storm with rivers of water flowing around our ankles. The vendors were scrabbling to get their products off the wet floor while a few brave people were still outside firing salutes, which only caused it to rain harder. The rain continued through the night's public show and subsided just as the finale began. Afterwards many of us huddled in the hospitality tent around a propane heater as clouds of steam rose from soaked pyros.



On our way home, the storms continued the length of California with a huge and very dramatic lightening storm at one point.



March found us in Toronto, Ontario for the USITT Stage Expo. This was only the second show where we displayed our lighting products. There was a lot of interest, but not enough sales to make it worth the cost. We did meet a lot of the people we've only known from the Stagecraft Mailing List, and made a few valuable contacts, so the trip was still interesting.

We returned to Kaua'i in April and hiked up a couple of mountains that we hadn't visited for some time.

In May we took Alison and her son to an open house at our local dump. Dumps sure have changed; it's more recycling center than anything else. There are still literal mountains being made from the trash that isn't recycled, but old lumber is turned into mulch, yard waste into compost, even concrete is ground up to use in new construction. We enjoyed the free food, exhibits, tour, and free bags of compost for our gardens.



July 3rd and 4th found us blowing things up in San Mateo and Hollister again this year, always nice to hear the crowds cheer after a good show.

Over the summer, Sharon built a lot more furniture for the back yard. Everybody is impressed with the sturdiness of it since it's all made from recycled wood.

The end of September we visited Sandra & Andra in Oregon and spent a week in Radium Hot Springs, BC, Canada. We drove around the back country quite a bit and were impressed by how wild this part of Canada still is, much more than any other place we've ever been. We also got an unexpected opportunity to visit a glacier up close and that was really cool! We also visited Crater Lake on the way home, there was already quite a bit of snow there.

**Wishing all of you the happiest of holidays,
Jerry & Sharon Durand**

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