

Happy 2014 Thanksgiving!

As promised, I have the pictures of our finished kitchen in this years newsletter, but first, a brief recap of the major events.

We lost two wonderful pets this year:

My little black and tan Dachshund, Myrrh, who moved with me from St. Louis, born October 19, 1995, and passed away at home on March 28, 2014. We buried Myrrh in a marked grave in our pet cemetery, next to Mimsy (April 2, 1988-February 25, 2005), and Chelsea (November 21, 1990-June 18, 2007).

Our miracle pooch. A Beagle we named Lacie, found barely alive in the snow on December 14, 2003, when only six to eight weeks old. We nursed her back to health, and she became the joy of our household, and a companion to Debi's mother Ruth who just lost her husband a few weeks prior. We estimated Lacie's age and celebrated her birthday October 22, she passed away on November 4, 2014. Due to my health and the freezing cold temperatures, we had Lacie cremated. She will join our other critters in our pet cemetery when it warms up in the spring.

The rescue we named Boonleigh, whom we call Boon for short, had surgery on his ear. We thought perhaps Moky a new rescue puppy may have nipped his ear, but the vet said he saw no external damage which could have caused the broken blood vessels. Pawing his own ear is the likely cause.

Around the property, one of the old Pine trees died and we had it taken down and removed. On this hill, wet blacktop was often slick, so we had the driveway resurfaced with an anti-slip sealer. No sooner than I paid for the driveway work, I ordered a shipment of bottles and caps for my AZ-NO3 product. As normally happens when the Hip National Bank is heavily drained, along comes another major expense. The flex-clutch went out on Debi's Blazer.

When it rains it pours! The day after we brought her car home from the shop, we had a horrific storm on August 20th. The main lightning strike hit a tree outside my office window, and a step-leader hit the bundle of cables which run from my office in the garage to the house.

The lightning destroyed four computers, including my two newest, and completely fried our fairly new 2-terabyte NAS (Network Attached Storage). Both of the Routers, two LAN Switches, and several other electronic items in our home.

Before I could ascertain how much damage we suffered, the Routers needed replaced first. Rather than use two routers as before, I purchased a multi-port hard-wired and wireless router and LAN switch. Got Debi's computer up and running, only to find the NAS burned completely out.

I had to repair the LAN cable to my office next, before I could test the equipment in my office.

Everything connected to the LAN was toast. I had one old computer used only for accounting, not connected to the LAN which survived, but you can't do much with only 512megs of memory these days. My LAN switch up in the office was fried as expected. I had an old 10/100 on the shelf to tide me over until I could get to the computer store.

I normally spend time studying what to buy, and am kicking myself for passing up a deal when I was in the computer store the first time. I bought a new computer instead. It was no longer available when I returned to bring my brand new computer I just purchased the day before back.

The store owner was nice enough to drop everything to build a new computer for me while I waited, but he did not check the compatibility of the motherboard since he is in bed with Mickey\$oft. It was a Windoze ONLY motherboard. So I had to wait a week for him to order the proper motherboard. I couldn't be without a computer, so took the only used machine he had on the shelf. A commercial grade Dell computer from a dentists office.

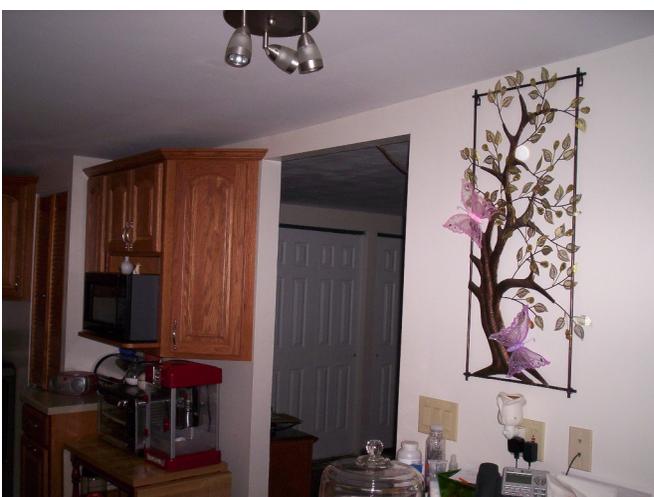
My ancient 512 meg machine is 1000 times better than a Dell on all counts. The Dell was, and still is a useless piece of junk. Better than HP's garbage, but I should have known. I've had Dell's in the past and they just cannot perform properly, and are a continuous source of headaches.

All was not lost though, one of the lightning damaged machines only had the LAN card and audio out. I slipped an old 10/100 Ethernet card in the box and used it until the new machine was ready. I say new machine, but it was my newest lightning damaged computer, the case and power supply was usable, but everything else was fried. Still cost me double of what I'm used to paying for a machine, and it is not one I would have selected had I had more time to study my purchase.

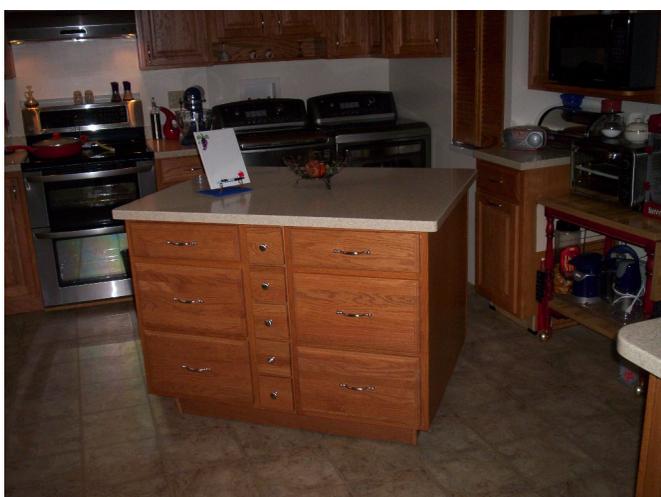
We still have not fully recovered from the hailstorm a couple of years ago, and it will be some time before we replace all which was damaged by the lightning storm. Sometimes we wonder if the proverbial Ole Murphy moved in with us.

Well at least we almost finished the new kitchen. Some of the final touches, like tile and utility area covers are not yet installed, and I have no idea when I'll find time to get a 'Round-Tuit,' working a full-time job, plus handling everything else I have to do, at a snails pace since my heart attack.

Here is a panorama of our new kitchen.



The large center island is mounted on wheels, so it can be conveniently moved for other uses.



The single cabinet seen at the right corner of the island in the above left image does not belong there. It is a cabinet and top with waste container inside. We selected this cabinet to use in the patio room with the kitchen table, pictured below, as a divider to hide a small chest freezer.

Here is our breakfast bar. It divides the working area of the kitchen from the dining area.



In this left image I am standing by the refrigerator, looking across the breakfast bar into the South East corner of the patio room. The china hutch caused the trash bin cabinet and chest freezer to be relocated. The right picture is the same room, standing by the sink.



Our two newest rescue additions to the family. Maggie and Moky.



Now that our tummies are full from Thanksgiving, I dread the thought of another tempting round of food during the Christmas holidays.

Hope to see you all sometime soon!

Gary, Debi, and the Critters.