



Gym Rat Rantings

by Bob Ring

Let's Celebrate!

One day last June Pat wanted to celebrate by going out to dinner. She wanted pizza and bread pudding – what a combo! We had heard that Vivace's, one of Tucson's best restaurants, had added pizza to their menu, and we knew already that they had great bread pudding. But when we got to Vivace's that night, we were told that they did not serve pizza; however their new sister restaurant Pizzeria Vivace did, just across the parking lot. So it was decided – we would go have a pizza there and then come back to Vivace for dessert, bread pudding. Well, that's what we did – had a great time – and discovered tasty Barbera wines from Italy's Alba region.

We were celebrating Pat's five-year survival anniversary from the completion of her final treatments for breast cancer.

Pat had gone through a lot before the end of those treatments, including surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation – and this was her second bout with the disease. As part of that experience, Pat learned a lot about the importance of good diet, dental care, and exercise. She continues today on all three fronts; the fifth anniversary of her FitCenter membership was in August.

Another activity that continues from those thankfully far away days is the jokes. Pat had asked friends to send her jokes by email. She's still getting jokes daily and we bring them to the Gym to share with our Building Bones class three days a week.

Pat's medical procedures for cancer occurred in Mesa, Arizona, where she had a business (what else but knitting?) and a townhouse. In those days, we split our time between Tucson and Mesa. After the successful treatments, Pat sold her business and townhouse and moved to Tucson to accept an important new job. (Her words: taking care of me.)

Pat's positive attitude was renewed; she talked about making the most of each day, and not leaving anything she wanted to do undone or untried. We keep our own bucket list and prioritize things to do and places to go. We travel a lot – some big trips, some small – but always rejoice in the feeling of being at home again.

Besides exercising and traveling we celebrate being together by trying new and favorite meals, dining out, weekly wine-tastings, attending new movies and getting DVD's of old ones, taking and processing photos, doing newspaper puzzles each day, and enjoying weekly fresh flowers.

I live with a woman who loves to celebrate life by learning, whether it's knitting, at which she is already an expert; spinning, having recently succeeded after years of trying; drawing and painting, where she is in the classroom and exploration stage; photography, where she is well along towards mastering digital photography and processing; or even reading, where she has figured out how to download digital books to her computer and MP3 player

In fact, Pat puts me to shame in the high tech electronics world, keeping up on improvements to devices from satellite radio, do-everything digital cell phones, and hand-held media players, to the navigation system in her automobile. Pat is also a self-taught master of computer internet operations, particularly buying and selling on eBay.

So with all this variety of wonderful activities, when Pat says, "Let's celebrate!" - I'm ready to go.