

## Happy Holidays and Happy New Year

Nearing the end of my third year of retirement, I still haven't caught up with all the things I want to do, which I imagine is a good thing. After my Eclipse Expedition last year, I didn't really go anywhere this year since I wanted to spend time with my aging, ailing dog. I don't know if the the feeling is mutual, but he is stuck with me. I have had opportunities to learn new things. After my car was burglarized three times this year, I started learning about security surveillance systems. Actually, I learned that they don't do much good. They don't act as a deterrent and they don't really help the police much. They're mainly good for producing videos you can show your friends. I also find it entertaining to watch the the world through the monitors. Saves me the trouble of going outside and there are no commercials. I think there is a movie about this sort of situation.

I'm still building or reworking my audio gear although I had sworn to stop. Mainly blowing up amps, but not as dramatically as before. While working on what I hope is my last speaker cabinet, I discovered a new way to do very dangerous things with a router. My power supplies are probably not UL compliant, but I have managed not to electrocute myself, so far, although I did manage to scare the heck out of myself once.

Diverted some of my energies to trying to develop a motorized ("goto") telescope mount since I thought the commercially available ones are too expensive and not that good after buying one. That forced me to learn about electric motors, micro-controllers, and sensors. Also having to relearn how to program again after having dropped that about 20 years ago when they locked down everything at work. My mind has been very resistant to engaging again. Some of what I have learned is spilling over to quadcopters and I am getting close to knowing enough to build a robot, albeit a not very advanced one. I definitely won't be responsible for AI enslaving mankind.

Still taking photos and my newest affectation is having old film cameras refurbished and shooting film. So far all the photos in my online galleries are all digital, but I'm working on it. Thought I was doing something original but then I found out that there is a big resurgence of film shooting, sort of like listening to vinyl. You have to slow down and be a lot more thoughtful about each shot. (What a pain:)

I have been putting some effort into exploring the local sights via day trips. I especially like combined rail and folding bicycle expeditions, especially since the traffic is so bad here, you sometimes don't feel like driving a car. Some of the places I visited this year are listed at:

<http://ikemi.info/mytravel2018.html>

I did take a long weekend to visit the Dickens Fair at the Cow Palace near San Francisco. I also visited the beautiful Marin Headlands where I went for a hike and strained my Achilles tendon, again. I stayed at the Montara Lighthouse hostel since boarding the dog used up all my travel money :) The scenery around the lighthouse, which is a misplaced New England cast iron one, is pretty impressive. Well, time to get ready for the New Year,





