

un Jubilación

A blueprint for my Retirement

Carl Lahser

***Un jubilacion*** is the Spanish term for retirement or receiving a pension. Since I retired, I have written several poems about my retirements from the US Air Force and Federal Civil Service. Since then, time has flown. Hammocks. Shade. Walks around the block. I have just turned 77.

**Blueprint for Jubilación**

**(My Retirement)**

**1: Birthday morning**

**2: Night time**

**3: Wheels – An old man’s Time Machine**

**4: Heat**

**5: Glimpses**

**6: How to Embarrass the Kids**

**7: Hong Kong Chestnuts, 1978**

**8: Hą Long Bay, 28 Oct 2011**

**9: General Store, May 2000**

**10: Night**

**11: Jamaica Palace**

12: Maybe there is a God –A Daydream

13: Summer Madness is Finally Here

**14: Another Fine Birthday**

**15: 81**

***Un jubilacion:1***

**Birthday Morning**

**I woke up with the sun**

**the beginning of year 77**

**on the 4th of November 2013**

**I was up but the sun**

**was still hiding**

**behind jet stream clouds**

**blowing in from Mexico**

**For breakfast,**

**the panaderia down the street**

**sold me a small tres leches cake**

**En mi jardin**

**I put on a jazz tape**

**sliced the cake**

**squeezed a glass of fresh, cold orange juice**

**and sang Happy Birthday to me**

**A blue jay joined in**

**along with a Monarch butterfly**

**heading south for the winter.**

**The sun broke out**

**heralding a good, good new year.**

**CARL 4/11/13**

***Jubilation:2***

**Night time – Ticking of the Clock**

**Dozing before the TV was pointless.**

**So, it’s off to bed at 10 pm**

**I’m awake at 1:13 am.**

**Then, the lying clock says its 3:21**

**and my bladder agrees.**

**Gird chimes in that supper is talking back.**

**I answer the call and take a Tums.**

**It’s back to bed**

**‘til 4:37 when the clock lies again**

**and again at 5:27 when my bladder**

**issues a first warning.**

**A loudmouth mocking birds begins**

**atop a tree out front**

**making the rounds, marking his territory.**

**Suddenly, it’s 6:46**

**when the school bus begins its growling run**

**and I used to get up for work.**

**Now it’s 7:47 when I once sat down at my desk.**

**My bladder gives a final warning.**

**I throw off the covers and my feet hit the floor.**

**Time to put out the trash,**

**pick up the paper**

**and figure out what to do today.**

**Is this what I must look forward to**

**for the next thirty years?**

**Carl Jan 2003**

***Jubilación :3***

**Wheels – An Old Man’s Time Machine**

**Driving home from my volunteer work**

**I came up behind a time machine -**

**like the DeLorean in “Back to the Future” -**

**a white Ford Shelby Cobra GT 500 convertible.**

**Top down.**

**Driven by a cool blond.**

**It took me back 60 years.**

**Back then, I was driving a jade ’49 Ford convertible**

**with pinstripe trim**

**along the new Los Angeles Freeway.**

**She left me in her engine’s rumble**

**at the exit for Hollywood**

**The blond ???**

**The Cobra, however, was a new $60K machine.**

**What would I do if I had caught it?**

**Carl 07/14/15**

***Jubilación :4***

**Heat**

**As a kid in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas,**

**summer nights began at 90 degrees plus.**

**North African mornings**

**began at 113º with flies and 80% humidity.**

**A Thule Phase hit -30ºF,**

**70-mile winds pushing horizontal snow**

**and zero visibility.**

**SW Arizona afternoon heat reached**

**117º and humidity at a dry -3%.**

**Considering this sampling**

**Where would I like to spend eternity?**

**I will probably stay right here.**

**Carl 24 Feb 2013**

***Jubilación :5***

**Glimpses**

**I saw her in a Christmas crowd**

**she vanished in a sea of bobbing heads**

**I called to her in the Plaka in Athens**

**she turned and spoke to me in Bulgarian**

**I bought her favorite drink from across a bar in St Louis**

**she was gone before the waiter arrived**

**Countless glimpses of her over sixty years -**

**in airports; on busy city streets; on passing busses.**

**She must be gone.**

**Consumed by time.**

**Absorbed in space.**

**Existing only in a tiny corner of memory.**

**Unchanged in all these years**

**as I grow older.**

***Jubilación :6***

**How to Embarrass the Kids**

**In late November, it’s still warm.**

**One afternoon, a blue-black cloud forms in the north.**

**A Blue Norther’s on the way.**

**Quickly wrap the pipes.**

**Water the garden.**

**Lock up the chickens.**

**Take jackets to school for the kids.**

**“How embarrassing,” say the kids**

**(but how good it feels).**

**Carl 111213**

***Jubilación :7***

**Hong Kong Chestnuts, 1978**

**Part of my retirement plan is to sit in the shade**

**Watching the leaves rustle against the clear blue sky**

**Looking back, reliving memories.**

**For instance, a walk down Nathan Street in Hong Kong,**

**at dawn, past Kowloon Park, with my wife and son.**

**No one is in sight except a chestnut vendor a block away**

**warming his hands as his chestnuts begin to roast.**

**No one else is out in the cool, white morn.**

**The chestnut man eyes us warily**

**and greets us in English with a Shanghai accent.**

**I show off and reply in Mandarin and warm my hands.**

**Then, I purchase a bag of hot chestnuts**

**and put one hot nut in each of my son's jacket pockets.**

**The old man grins and wishes us well.**

**Carl080815**

***Jubilación :8***

**Hą Long Bay**

**In the fall of the year,**

**after the monsoon,**

**my wife and I cruised Hą Long Bay, Vietnam.**

**Vįnh Ha Long**

**Bay of the Descending Dragons**

**2,000 emerald karst islets spit out by protective parents-**

**jewels and jade that sprang up as temptation**

**before the enemy fleet.**

**Hą Long – the place where mother dragon lived**

**Bάi Tú Long – where her children lived**

**A quiet black night on the Bay**

**watching Scorpio wheel overhead.**

**hearing halyards slapping the wooden mast.**

**listening to the creaking wooden hull.**

**Quiet and a pot of tea.**

**28 Oct 2011**

***Jubilación :9***

**Amazon General Store**

**May 2000**

**Memories of a trip down the Amazon,**

**an anniversary trip.**

**On bluff 30 feet above the Apayacu River**

**a few miles from the Amazon,**

**sits a lone general store.**

**Bright blue planks and a thatch roof,**

**corrugated tin walls and awning**

**No window screens.**

**A sign says they sell**

**cerveza, gaseosa and curichi**

**but no chocolates.**

**Log steps lead up from the river**

**where kids splashed in the muddy water**

**and played in beached pirogues.**

**In the distance, a thatched house.**

**Hammocks full of kids hung on the porch.**

**Pigs and chickens under the house**

**to keep snakes at bay.**

**Mosquitoes fill the air.**

**Chiggers fill the grass.**

**The sky looks like it might rain.**

***Jubilación :10***

**Night**

**Night enters through my window**

**altering the velvet blackness of the walls**

**diluting the inside darkness**

**The invading night adds:**

**1% starlight,**

**3% light of a sliver moon,**

**20% stray ribbons of coolness,**

**10% sounds of a distant train,**

**7% rustling of unseen night life.**

**Stir gently.**

**Barely illuminating pictures hanging on the wall:**

**framed views of an alien world of light,**

**snapshots of people and lighted landscapes,**

**the alien night sucks up all but the gilded frames.**

**Perhaps I should go out into the night,**

**bathe in the night,**

**inhale the song of a mockingbird atop a mesquite tree,**

**join unseen life in the night,**

**instead of lying here immersed in darkness,**

**warm and waiting for the dawn.**

***Jubilación :11***

Jamaica Palace

**A new eatery opened in the mall.**

**Jamaican cuisine and drinks.**

**Jerk Chicken.**

**Curry goat.**

**Green bananas.**

**Ginger beer.**

**On Saturday, Ackee rice and salt cod.**

**Bob Marley music.**

**Who could want better?**

**I asked the cook if he had any Belafonte music.**

**He said he had never heard of Belafonte.**

**I said I had several calypso albums.**

**He said he had no phonograph**

**and went back to the kitchen.**

**Never heard of Belafonte?**

**Lord Invader?**

**Mighty Zebra?**

**The waitress said her grandmother**

**loved Harry Belafonte**

**and the other calypso singers.**

**And had a record player!**

**Goodness! Am I that old?**

**Or is this cultural erosion?**

***Jubilación :12***

**Maybe there is a God - a Daydream**

**I went out this morning**

**to put out the weekly trash**

**when a neighbor’s junkyard dog**

**ran out ready to bite my ass**

**One of my hot-rodding neighbors,**

**just then, came roaring by**

**and put that ornery junkyard dog**

**into the big kennel in the sky**

**The car jumped the curb and bent its frame**

**and he was hoppin' mad.**

**No more will he roar by at 50+**

**and that makes me really sad.**

**In one fell swoop the car is off the street**

**and the dog is under the sod.**

**There is neighborhood peace and quiet again.**

**Maybe there is a God.**

***Carl 6/7/16***

***Jubilación :13***

**Summer Madness Is Finally Here**

**It looks like a long, hot summer already.**

**The temperature has started to climb.**

**Militants have started to riot.**

**The destitute are turning to crime.**

**It’s too hot to sleep or work**

**and they'd kill you for only a dime**

**if it wasn't so damned hot.**

**Maybe some other time.**

**The weather is dry.**

**The sidewalks fry.**

**Lawns and trees cry.**

**Cold weather's a lie.**

**I want ice cream pie**

**I've run out of rhymes and patience so**

**Ihopetheycanfixmydamdedairconditioner NOW!!**

**Thank heaven for ice water and mesquite tree shade**

**while I wait for the bad news.**

**$500!!!**

**It better be one Hell hot summer**

**or I'm gonna be mad.**

***Jubilación :14***

**Another Fine Birthday {80}**

The painter Constable said,

“Nothing is ugly in this old world. “

Shouting girls on one side of the street

exude sexual defiance

in the way they challenge boys across the street

with their loud laughter.

Two mustached nuns dressed like penguins

walking side-by-side like penguins

in a flat-footed way

wave shyly as a passing Lowrider toots its horn.

A homeless woman sitting on a bus bench

eating potato chips out of her purse

mumbles to everyone and

holds up a finger to a passing police car.

Snotty infant paddles rapidly along the sidewalk

in nothing but a T-shirt and screaming

his sister runs after him waving a diaper

shouting for him to come back this very minute.

Time races and creeps and crawls

Minute by minute

Until another year has passed.

4Nov17

***Jubilación :15***

**81**

I am walking.

Walking through the neighborhood.

The sun is shooting upwards

into a clear blue sky for the first time in weeks.

Leaves of red oak and live oak

Pile up along the curb.

Acorns lie scattered

along the streets and sidewalks.

A flock of Mourning Doves pecks acorns flour

From acorns crushed by passing cars.

Grackles, heading south, are singing the sun up

Preparing for their flight to Mexico.

Blue jays, migrating from someplace else, are screaming.

Imported Fire Ants are building new mounds

To replace mounds the recent rains destroyed.

I am 81 years old today,

contented as 81-day babe.

I see on this glorious day that I’ve been falling

Deeper and deeper in love with life

And now I swim like a fish in a tropical sea.

Happy Birth Day to Me.

Carl 4Nov1018



**Retired!**