

Life in Arizona

Life is good here in southern Arizona. The weather has been so nice that I've only had to wear a light jacket once since we got here, that was because it was raining. We've still not turned the heat on in the house. You may be interested in what we do here. It's pretty simple, we volunteer. I'm doing web pages for three non-profit organizations here. There are not very many people willing or able to do web work here, they are all older than we are, you know! One of the groups, called the Forum asked me last year to do their website. I must have done an OK job, because last week I was elected president for 2019. The Forum is a group that schedules presentations for each Wednesday morning. The topics are varied including the Tucson Art Museum, the Nogales AZ and Mexico partnership, local history and a presentation from an editorial cartoonist from the Arizona Star newspaper. We have to warn folks before his presentation that some folks might be offended by some of his cartoons. He is similar to our friend at the Fargo Forum, Trygve Olson. I will be doing a Genealogy presentation next week. We average about 200 people at the events.

The local Jewish Temple learned of my background and talked me into being their tech support guy which not only means I help with computer and networks but also with sound and video technology. They even gave me a key to the building, so I could do my work. While at the Temple's Hanukkah party on Sunday, I talked with Tamara, a woman who was playing piano. She said that she was Russian Orthodox. Since I was a Russian linguist in the Air Force, I asked her if she spoke Russian in Russian. Of course, Tamara did and much better than I. Her mother was from Russia and her father from Poland and was Jewish. Her father was held in one of the Nazi concentration camps during WWII. They married following the war and came to the US, settling on the east coast. In 2001, her parents moved to Green Valley, AZ. Tamara's parents were invited to a neighborhood Thanksgiving Day dinner. It was at that party that her father met an Army Veteran who relieved the concentration camp where her father was held. What are the odds that the two would meet almost fifty years later in Arizona?

Tamara's story reminds me of the story of former Moorhead mayor Ray Stordahl. I recorded Ray's WWII story several years ago. Ray was with an Army unit in Europe during the war and relieved one of the Nazi concentration camps. Ray also had a book written about his unit and their campaigns in the war and Ray was listed in the book. I remember him saying that "he was published". Many local Veterans stories are on-line at heritageed.com.