

Chapter 11

This chapter is probably best described as “more of the same”. I traveled more during this year and developed a wrist injury around Jan/Feb time frame which made it difficult for me to play bongo and even to dance at first. So, I had to lay off and did not actively seek much music work. I did play with Carlos de la Sol at Cocomo on a Wed night in an experiment with a singer, sideman (electronic) and percussion section that would certainly annoy the local musicians. But the economics were such that even that configuration was not supportable.

Café Cocomo continued to do well at the start of the year, just as the stock market peaked. But as we all know, the last half of the year was the beginning of a new low for our country's economy. Cocomo opened a restaurant, but it was not a whole-hearted effort and died out soon. Of course most of us still love the simple home-cooked food there provided by Maria! (tacos, etc.)

There were several out-of-town acts brought in such as Sonora Carruseles and Gilberto Santa Rosa. New Swing Sextet from NYC was at the Down Low Lounge in Berkeley, CA in May 2009. Fernando and Mimi also did Tango at Cocomo on Sundays, which was a good addition to the line up. In September Eddie Torres was in town for what appears to be a yearly visit to do workshops and performances. And DJ Fab Fred organized the annual Tribute to Percussion which was fantastic as usual in October.

I sub'd for Tito Garcia for a set late in the year that was fun. And my assistants narrowed down to the most reliable and of course best to work/dance with: Louise on Thur and Lisbeth and Eri on Saturdays. I sat in with Louie Romero and Mazacote at The Beat (formerly Studio J) dance studio on a Friday night social that was a lot of fun.

I went to Asia in November and came back to a stock market in shambles, with everyone shaking their heads like, “How could we not have seen this coming?!”. Class sizes started to decrease as more and more people lost jobs in the recession.

This chapter ends around December 2008.