

New Year 2014



Chinese New Year, that is. This weekend had several snow events, and the photos above were after the first one. The snow stuck to the branches. The view is of our back yard. The near object on the left is a bird feeder with seed. The conical top keeps squirrels from successfully jumping to the feeder from the trees. The circular platform below keeps them from climbing the pole to get at the seeds. So the squirrels only get to eat what the birds drop to the ground, and they do that well. In the right photo on the left side of the tree trunk is a metal holder for animal fat (suet). The woodpeckers and other birds peck at the suet through the holes in the metal mesh. The squirrels cannot reach into the holder and only get small amounts, if any, through the holes, but most squirrels no longer try to do so. The next snowstorm raised the snow depth to about 10 cm.

My wife baked a peach pie that we have enjoyed this weekend. She bought it at a store rather than made it herself.



On Friday evening I joined Chinese students from Colorado School of Mines and the University of Denver (and elsewhere?) for their celebration of the Chinese New Year. First we had a dinner of Chinese foods. The

next photos show some of the crowd.



Then we went upstairs for various presentations. The photo at the left shows some of the people behind where I sat. There were many others in front and to the sides. The first group sang a couple of songs (in Chinese). Following groups also sang (some in French), played the piano, and presented humorous skits.



I think that the best team was these five doing a ballet to a song in English. It was unfortunate that they had to start over three times because the sound system failed shortly into their routine. Finally the music was played on a smart phone and amplified with a microphone.

Then they were able to finish. A man did a martial arts routine, similar to last year's presentation. A trio had a young woman sing while the men played a violin and a ukelele. A choir presented a skit that appeared to be a humorous rehearsal of a Chinese song. Two women did a duet. A young girl in Chinese dress often ran up front showing her enjoyment but was not actually part of any skit.

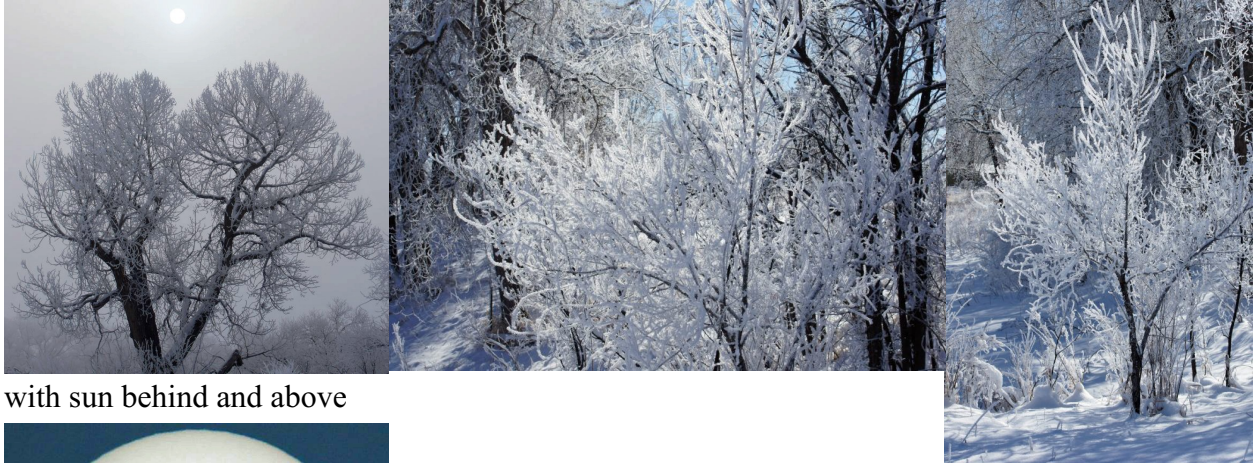


Then I was able to drive home before the overnight snowstorm. There was not much more snow on Saturday. On Sunday morning it was very cold (-16 C) and foggy. The moisture condensed on branches, grass, and other objects, creating a coat of feathery hoar frost crystals about 1 cm thick. The pictures on the next page show some of that beauty. The sun was dimly visible through the fog, so I was able to record a large sunspot cluster safely without damaging the camera or eyes.



hoar frost on grass

hoar frost on trees



with sun behind and above



sunspots

Two years ago there was a similar hoar frost event. I wrote up a story about it that has been on my web site at <http://www.edholroyd.info/HoarFrost.pdf>.

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