



Advent, 2022

This year has been like a “coming out” party. After hunkering down for most of 2020 and 2021 we began to emerge, still wearing masks much of the time, from our COVID isolation. Rich’s brain fog from COVID in 2021 has cleared up. For much of the year Rich was in Physical Therapy to help restore his lung capacity. Suzi tested positive for COVID this fall, thankfully with no symptoms.

The big excitement this year was Rich being med-evaced to Seattle in late May for emergency gall bladder surgery. He thinks air evacuation adds to his Alaska Field Cred. It was a great flight. A King Air turbo prop flies low and slow so he got great views and pics of the coastline. He was pumped with pain killers, had lots of leg room, the possibility to fully recline, and his very own flight nurse, EMT and pilot. The surgery went well, and Brian came out to Seattle to spend time with us and his friend John who had a heart transplant back in March and is healing slowly.

Suzi flew to Anchorage in February to look after grandson Elias while Shannon recouped from a knee replacement. Both of us were back in Eagle River in early May for Elias’s birthday and in October to take care of Elias while Kevin and Shannon went to a wedding in Colorado.

The June Summer Sitka Music Festival was joyously back in full swing. Rich serves on the Music Festival Foundation board. In August the Uncommon Music Festival, which presents both early and contemporary classical music, was also back after two years.

The highlight of the year was a July family trip to Winnipeg. All our kids and grandkids were with us. We spent some time before the folk festival visiting the outstanding Canadian Museum of Human Rights, the Children’s Museum and other sights. The festival was a joyous reunion, after three years, with longtime friends. We celebrated each other and mourned those we lost. On the way home we stopped for a mini Northwoods vacation on Lake of the Woods with Brian and the Kids. Suzi and Rich also got to Grand Rapids to visit friends at KAXE. It was a great way to come out of our COVID shell.

In November we traveled to New Jersey to spend some time with Rich’s cousins and our Albanian family, Anila and Romeo. We also enjoyed a full blast of hardwood fall color.

Both of us remain active in our Unitarian Fellowship, which is meeting in person again. No more Zoom! We are both volunteering at Raven Radio and Rich is filling in at the commercial station (KIFW) when needed. Suzi is involved with a crafts group, meeting in person, and Rich is on the board of Developing Radio Partners, still meeting on zoom, which works with community radio in Africa.

We're looking forward to Christmas when, Lord willing, all the kids and grandkids will be in Sitka for the holiday. We hope you have a joyous holiday, and your New Year is a healthy one.

Happy whatever holidays you celebrate!

