



Happy Holidays!

The old adage, "May you live in interesting times" has never seemed so applicable and ironic as it has this past year. According to Wikipedia, the expression has its origins in a traditional Chinese curse, which seems fitting in this time of COVID-19, BLM, and a divisive election.

Like everyone else, our lives have revolved around the pandemic since March. Dining out was initially replaced by take-out, then by outdoor-only eateries as restaurants re-opened. Hugs and handshakes were replaced by elbow bumps and then complete social distancing. Jane initially sewed masks for us, but we later transitioned to standard paper masks as they became available. We do go for our daily walks and avoid crowds when we can. At the beginning of the year we had never heard of Zoom, and now we use it to connect with friends, relatives, and organizations on a weekly basis.

Had the year gone as planned, we'd be showing you pictures of our Viking cruise on the Rhine River from Basel to Amsterdam that was scheduled for June. We have rebooked for next May, but I will be surprised if we're able to go by then. As it is, the biggest excitement of the year was me starting Social Security. But, please, don't refer to me as "elderly."

Our only trip came in August when we decided to make our annual visit to our timeshare on Sanibel Island, FL. We drove straight through both ways, stopping only for lunch/gas and pit stops at rest areas. The drive takes about 11 hours and is something we have done in the past. The beach wasn't crowded, and we were able to socially distance while walking and being on the resort grounds. We either did take-out or dined at places with outdoor seating. It was a nice break and our only trip of the year.



Greenville saw its share of heavy rains and tropical storms throughout the year. Our condo building is two blocks from the Reedy River, so we can view the changes to falls after these events. As the pictures show, the normally tranquil falls can quickly become a torrent of water. I wish we could send some of our excess out west.

Jane has been very involved with Greenville Women Giving for the past three years. GWG has over 500 Greenville women engaged in identifying and funding non-profit organizations in the arts, education, environment, health, and human services. Jane is co-chair of the Mentor committee for new members and one of the team leads for the Grants committee. Last year they distributed over \$540,000 to area organizations.

Jane is also working with ReUnited, a group within the United Way. ReUnited works to keep seniors connected and engaged with the United Way's work, sharing their skills and life experiences.

I finished my last year on the board of Greenville Chautauqua. This year has been challenging, as we had to cancel our June festival which was to feature performers portraying Benjamin Franklin, Hedy Lamarr, Thomas Edison, Rosa Parks, and Nicola Tesla. Chautauqua transitioned to monthly Zoom performances featuring other characters like Betty Crocker and Edgar Allan Poe. Now it's not clear what type of festival can happen in June 2021.

We continue to take classes with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Furman University. Classes migrated to Zoom after Furman shut down its campus in March. We are grateful to the instructors who quickly pivoted to online presentations.

We wish you and your family health and happiness (and a vaccine!) for 2021. Stay well, stay safe, and don't forget your masks. Have a great holiday season!

Jane & John



The author at his 70th birthday dinner

Pearls Before Swine

