



Southern California Warm Wishes from the Hallahans – 2022

To borrow a phrase from some medical reports, our 2022 was “unremarkable.” And that’s a good thing. Nothing unusual or worrisome. We’ve enjoyed a year full and blessed yet remarkably low on significant headlines.



Our pattern of six months in California and six months in Minnesota still works for us. We’re grateful to sidestep both the winter weather drama up north and the tortuous heat that’s come to define southern California’s summers.

Once we arrive around Thanksgiving, our life seems to revolve around food and fellowship. We do twice weekly dinner and TV nights with Kay Dempsey, Jean’s longtime friend from our years in Colorado, and dinner and cards evenings with newer friends Gary and Rebecca Wooster. We hosted Nancy Lilleberg from Phoenix and saw the musical “Wicked” at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa with her this year. We also made a trip to the central coast to reconnect with Doris Derelian, a former colleague from Jean’s Dairy Council days in Los Angeles. Doris is Jean’s needlepoint guru, and she loves picking Doris’ brain for how-to’s on upcoming projects. Bless you, Doris.

Myriad day trips seem to fill out every season here. We could use more excuses for outings to L.A., Pasadena and Palm Springs or a walk-shop-eat in quaint Julian in the mountains south of Hemet with its to-die-for Dudley Bakery. So come visit. We’ll also go for lunch in Temecula’s wine country or for apple pie up north in Oak Glen. Jean might cook some, despite the fact her Covid-related loss of taste and smell hasn’t fully returned – after TWO years!

Minnesota summers at the lake seem to be the antidote for a few too many fabulous California food experiences. Gardening and lawn care...boating and tubing...and all sorts of kid fun with grandson Atticus and with Jean’s family at our annual Family Weekend. The clan now includes Brother Bob and wife Sue, nephews Nate and Sabin and niece Hannah, their spouses, and 11 kids in all. All the activity certainly keeps us moving.



Daughter Jenna has some news to share. She and her longtime friend Robert Alexander have started down a path together as a couple, bringing a new sense of family to her house in Grand Forks. Robert's work at out-of-town construction sites with ICS (Industrial Contract Services) keeps him away many weekdays but he and his daughter, Amelia, join Jenna and Atticus in town most weekends and at the lake when the weather cooperates.

Atticus, now in fourth grade, is a master of Minecraft on his Nintendo Switch device and has met his match when he and Amelia play electronic games together. .

After being petless for several years, Jean searched adoption and breeder sites for the perfect dog. In September, we brought home Bentley. And he's perfect. Really! Not too big and not too dainty...just 19 pounds of curly, non-shedding, cavapoo cuteness (a mix of Cavalier spaniel and small poodle). We should have named him Velcro -- some part of him needs to be fastened to one of us whenever possible. We did want a lap dog, after all. Now 8 months old, Bentley is still 100% puppy, requires six walks a day and is a menace to the Christmas tree and anything lose and within reach. Gotta watch that kid all the time! Oh well. Jean's quilting, stitching stashes and probably the flower bed dreams will have to wait until Bentley grows up. When Kirk's not on dog duty, he



continues to teach his online History of Media course for Colorado State and dawdles while editing and fact-checking his book about the aftermath of the 1914 Colorado coal strike. A publisher may get a peek at it eventually.

We hope you're welcoming the New Year by breaking bread often this season with people who bring you joy and feed your soul. We'll be at Kay's table Christmas Eve and with Jill Vig and her brother Joel in Altadena, along with Margie Dufford and Jon Yormark, on Christmas Day. As Julia Child said, "People who love to eat are always the best people." We think so too! From our kitchen to yours, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

--Jean and Kirk