



2020 started out so well...

We had a conference in Orlando and went early so we could camp by the ocean, visit Don's family, and see Star Wars Galaxy's Edge at Disney — which was absolutely awesome, by the way! Kate had a book event with some fellow authors and Don, Emma, and Summer Place Theatre produced a cabaret show just before lock-down.

Then we stayed home, but we stayed busy. We continued sorting 30+ years of stuff. We painted rooms. We re-finished the kitchen counters. We installed a new backsplash. We cut down three trees. We gardened. We had cocktails on the porch to watch the hummingbirds. We put together puzzles.

Don also started baking. He made a crazy-complicated chocolate cake, named "Delicious Death" after an Agatha Christie story. It included candied violets and gold leaf! Recently, he made Julekake, a Norwegian Christmas bread that took practically the whole day to complete.

Our business routine didn't change much since we already work from home. In fact, we were busier than ever because all of our clients now needed to do more online. Also, time freed up by cancelled events means Kate is "this close" to finishing her current book.

James worked on a COVID-edition Bar Rescue for a while, but since production stopped, he has been doing a lot more carpentry, which he is really enjoying. Nina was featured in a women's brewery article and even on a beer can early in the year, but as the brewery reopened and closed several times, her work options have been limited.

Emma's last months at the high school were online, which was tricky for the choirs. She had already made the decision to start graduate school in the fall to study collaborative piano and while it has been complicated, the university did manage to cobble together a program and Emma just completed her first semester.

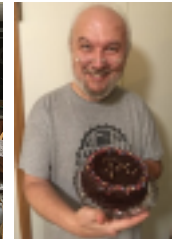
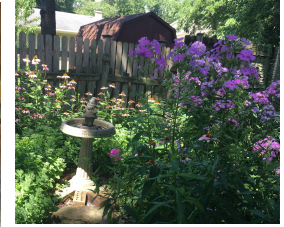
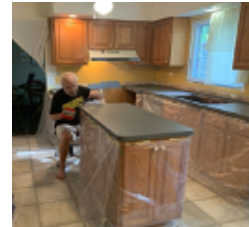
Josh is now working strictly from his home office — which happens to be in their new house! Masked and cautious, we helped them move to Elmwood Park in June. Their dog now has her own yard and they can hang the kayaks in their own garage.

After cancelling the season save for a few online events, Summer Place Theatre was given the go-ahead to have Ghost Stories in the Park, with proper precautions and a limited audience. People were so eager to see live theatre, the shows sold out even before Don, the "Ghost Host," was featured in Naperville Magazine.

We've tried to be outside as much as possible, patronizing local restaurant take-out, walking the neighborhood, and meeting friends and family for socially-distanced fire pit visits. But the weather, of course, is now ending most of these events. It's tough to stay positive, isn't it? Still, the days will start getting longer very soon and we can all look forward to springtime, normal activities, and being with folks in-person again.

Here's to better days, health, and happiness for all of us in the coming year!

-Don and Kate



Interview by Mark Loehrke
Conjuring scares in an already scary world
We like to focus...

