



Maybe it's post-covid-enthusiasm, but everyone we know has been busy this year — and we have been, too.

On New Year's Day, we drove down to Venice Beach, Florida to live and work in a condo six minutes from several gorgeous beaches. The next month, we moved to a condo overlooking Panama Beach, and enjoyed several Mardi Gras parades. But then we headed home for Don's last term as president of Summer Place Theatre, its first season back on stage.

"The Sound of Music" filled up our days. Don produced the play and several pre-show events including a movie sing-a-long. He also enjoyed playing a villain on stage as the Nazi admiral. Emma directed the orchestra and painted scenery. Kate was in charge of organizing two storage units of props and costumes. And we all helped print a zillion S.O.M. t-shirts. It was an incredible show and a real high point for Don's last one.

The summer started sadly, however. After fighting the odds for many years, Don's godchild, Elena, passed away in June and left a pretty big hole for a little person. Her medical miracles are recorded for the future and her out-of-control giggles will always be remembered.

Due to covid concerns, Don's 40th reunion from Knox was rescheduled to spring and Kate's was held in the fall. We had a great time reconnecting with friends. We also attended Emma's graduation (with distinction!) from North Park College. She was the first master of music in collaborative piano in their program and we're so proud!

Beyond Summer Place, this year Emma has been music director for several high school musicals, is the accompanist for Triton College, and teaches piano at two schools and at home. We had no idea there were so many options and she's exploring them all.

Josh changed jobs and is now a senior

software engineer for Fivetran. He enjoys tackling woodworking projects in his spare time. They squeezed in a couple of camping trips with Bonnie the dog and Irman the cat and even took part in a kayak race.

James and Nina are both working while attending school. To fit around his class schedule, James picked up some freelance film editing and has been serving as stage manager for Pasadena City College. They also adopted a dog last Christmas. Furry little Mischief is now our second grand-dog. Don got to hang out with them when he visited this fall to help James build a shed in their yard. We do wish they lived closer so we could help more often.

We visited Don's family during our travels south and we get to see Kate's folks often. They celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary in August.

We caught up with as much "summer" as possible after "Sound of Music" was over by going to outdoor concerts, the Renaissance Faire, and even a ball game. Don gave his last Ghost Stories show in October, then landed a role in a stage play of "Miracle on 34th Street" with a theatre closer to our new home.

We're getting to know the neighborhood better after moving last fall. Kate misses her garden, but she did grow flowers, herbs, and a few tomatoes on the porch and in the little bit of yard. What she didn't do is finish that book. But truly, it's SO close!

We celebrated our 40th anniversary this year. Where does the time go? We're looking forward to making the most of our time together this year, starting with more sunsets on the beach by January. We wish you and yours many beautiful sunsets in 2023 as well. Merry Christmas!

- Kate & Don

