

Happy 2021 from our Blue Boat Home!

The COVID-19 pandemic kept us, along with everyone else, home for more of 2020 than we'd expected! We did manage two road trips to Bartlesville to see Ben's parents, and one to Emporia to see friends there, but otherwise we did our part to stay home as much as possible. We had visits early in the year from friends Klyde, Diane, and Helen, along with both sets of parents. We bid an untimely goodbye to Loca the shih tzu and welcomed Dahli the kitten and Doodle the guinea pig into our home, much to Didi and Marcel's consternation. We made some more improvements to the house, sold our truck, and bought an electric Nissan Leaf.

Ben:

In February I flew to Austin, TX for friend Rich's memorial service and saw his family Marisa and Gloria and friend Gypsy while there. Had I known it would be our only trip of the year, I would have brought Jessie along! I continued to work for the Unitarian Universalist Association and also on Web projects for Concept 2, Creighton University, SHARE Omaha, and the University of Vermont. I got trained as an Our Whole Lives sexuality educator to supplement my work with the church youth group, only to have the program suspended indefinitely due to COVID. I taught my soil ecology class in Lawrence and Omaha in the spring and via Zoom in the fall. In the summer I totaled our Ford C-Max, necessitating buying a new car sooner than we'd planned. Then while bicycling in December, I got hit by a car and broke my arm! I was lucky not to be run over. I didn't complete any more courses on Duolingo this year, focusing instead on brushing up the languages I already know, especially Spanish so I can teach gardening classes in south Omaha in 2021. There's still so much good work to do!

ben@blueboathome.com, 620-794-1663

Jessie:

In February I changed jobs, taking a position as a mental health clinician at a Therapeutic School in Council Bluffs. I was only there about 5 weeks when we went fully remote due to COVID. I also went fully remote with my private practice at that time. I am still remote with private practice work but we went back fully in-person at the school in August and have been mostly in-person since. I also taught as an adjunct for Emporia State in the summer and fall. I was approached by the University of Nebraska Omaha to co-teach an Introduction to Expressive Arts Therapies class in Spring 2021, an opportunity I am very excited about! Additionally I signed a book contract to turn my dissertation into a published book available through Jessica Kingsley publishers, which I am due to complete in late 2021. I presented remotely at two conferences. I continued to make art and sold some arts and crafts around Christmas. I turned 40 in 2020 and was planning to take a trip somewhere, but that has been postponed indefinitely...so I guess I just get to be 40 for a while!

jessie@blueboathome.com, 402-657-8236

Ben & Jessie Stallings welcome guests (once things settle down) at 2811 N 49th Ave, Omaha NE 68104

blueboathome.com

