

Happy 2023 from our Blue Boat Home!

This was the year COVID-19 caught us: Jessie in the spring and Ben in the fall, but we managed a pretty normal year otherwise! We both got to visit Becca's and Diane's families in Pittsburgh, plus we had a few trips to Bartlesville and Emporia and a weekend getaway to Meow Wolf Denver. We hosted friends Sherri and Marisa and our nephew Nicholas, joined for the first time by his sister Lydia. We said goodbye this year to our beloved dog Marcel but welcomed Kooper the Alaskan Klee Kai into the family. We both served as church youth advisors, and we made some more improvements to the house.

Ben:

After UUWorld.org went live in March, I ended my 7 years of contract work at the UUA. That leaves me with just one client, Share Good USA, where my colleagues and I completed a major software release in November. It's a great team with ambitious plans for the future. In my permaculture business, I'm taking on junior partners to help me with the design & education work.

I doubled the size of the backyard greenhouse I started last year but still have no idea what I'll do with it! In June I hiked some more of the Appalachian Trail with friends Diane and Helen (age 5). In August I helped friend Marisa move again, this time from Minneapolis to Humboldt, NE.

The summer permaculture design class (PDC) was a blast this year, with three weekends in three different Kansas locations. I also taught my soil ecology class via Zoom to two PDCs in Nigeria organized by one of our graduates. I continue to serve on the boards of Green Omaha Coalition and Benson Neighborhood Association.

My plans to bike more in 2022 came to nothing, but maybe this is the year? We'll see!

ben@blueboathome.com, 531-225-6036

Jessie:

I continued to work at Heartland Therapeutic School, which is in a temporary location in Omaha. It's just 2 miles from our house! This year I became their first ever full-time art therapist! I taught for Emporia State and the University of Nebraska Omaha. I closed my private practice, as life is too short to work all the time! My book was published in September. It has been well received but isn't wildly popular due to the super specific topic...lol: <https://us.jkp.com/products/special-interests-in-art-therapy-with-autistic-people>.

I visited Diane and Helen in PA after flying back with our niece and nephew following their visit to NE. I traveled to New Orleans with my friend Amanda. I attended and presented at the American Art Therapy Association conference in November.

We had a party for my 42nd birthday...since the pandemic spoiled celebrating my 40th. It was fun to bring together my different groups of friends!

I hope to make more art and perhaps take an art class or two in 2023.

Stay safe and healthy, everyone!

jessie@blueboathome.com, 402-657-8236

Ben & Jessie Stallings welcome guests at 2811 N 49th Ave, Omaha NE 68104

blueboathome.com