

# Happy 2024 from our Blue Boat Home!

We didn't get to do the traveling we meant to do in 2023. Maybe 2024 is the year! We did get to see our nephew graduate from high school and visit Diane's family in Pittsburgh, and we had a marvelous week in San Diego, plus we had a few trips to Bartlesville and Emporia and several weekend staycations in the Omaha area. We spent time in Manley helping to care for Jessie's dad. We hosted friends Sherri and Marisa and our niblings Nicholas and Lydia. We both served as church youth advisors, and we renovated the bathroom and attic and upgraded some kitchen appliances to the 21st century. (The range was older than either of us!) Our cats Didi and Dahli, dog Kooper, and guinea pig Doodle continue to keep us busy and entertained.

## Ben:

I continued to work for Share Good USA, where my colleagues and I completed a major upgrade just before the holidays. I took on five partners in my permaculture business, expanding our reach to Kansas, Iowa, and Missouri.

In the spring I co-taught the Our Whole Lives Sexuality class to our church's middle-schoolers, for the first time since getting certified in 2020.

I attended my 25th high school reunion and 29th college reunion. It was great to catch up with people I only see on Facebook, and with some I hadn't seen in decades.

I helped teach the Kansas Permaculture Institute's certification courses three times during the year, and in November I attended a teacher training course, learning all kinds of best practices ... which means I now need to overhaul my curriculum!

I continue to serve on the board of Green Omaha Coalition, but I let my term expire at Benson Neighborhood Association.

[ben@blueboathome.com](mailto:ben@blueboathome.com), 531-225-6036

## Jessie:

I continued to work at Heartland Therapeutic School, in Council Bluffs and our new Omaha location, as a full time art therapist. I testified at the Nebraska Unicameral for art therapy certification/licensure on behalf of Heartland Family Service.

I taught for Mount Mary University and the University of Nebraska Omaha. I resumed offering professional supervision groups for art therapists. I gave well received presentations at the art therapy conference in San Diego and sold and autographed some books. I continue to work on academic writing projects and making more art.

I spent time in PA helping our friend Diane with her newborn Grace and 5 (now 6) year old Helen, prior to Nicholas's graduation.

Mom and I took 2 mini-vacations in KC. Mom is now the full-time caregiver for my dad as his Alzheimer's has progressed. He still likes to chat and have visits if you're interested. Dad was also treated successfully for throat cancer.

[jessie@blueboathome.com](mailto:jessie@blueboathome.com), 402-657-8236

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

[blueboathome.com](http://blueboathome.com)

