

Happy 2025 from our Blue Boat Home!

2024 was the year we visited Australia and New Zealand! In addition to seeing the sights, we caught up with friends Asabi, Nathan, Jonathan and Theresa. It was also the year an icy accident totaled our 2013 Chevy Volt and gave us the excuse to upgrade to a 2017 model. We had visits from cousin Tiffany and friend Diane and their families, friends Brett & Kristin, and our nibblings Nick & Lydia. We became official members of our church, continued to serve as church youth advisors, and saw folks we knew as youth graduate and marry! Our cats Didi and Dahli, dog Kooper, and guinea pig Doodle continue to keep us busy and entertained.

Ben:

I spent the first quarter of the year sick with a series of respiratory bugs before starting IgG infusions in April. Since then I've stayed pretty healthy! I started a new CLL medicine just before we left for Australia that keeps the disease in check and has no side effects.

I took on a new part-time position at Encore Healthcare to supplement my work for Share Good USA, and I passed ownership of my permaculture business to my colleague Evan.

I continued helping to teach the Kansas Permaculture Institute's certification courses three times a year. Maybe in 2025 we'll build demand for a course in Omaha!

The annual bicycle ride across Iowa (RAGBRAI) passed through my old home of Fairfield, so I took the opportunity to visit friends there. Then in the fall I attended a conference in Minneapolis to visit that old haunt as well.

I finally completed our backyard greenhouse — and I studied ASL and Yiddish — but I'm not sure what I'll use any of them for!

I continue to serve as treasurer of the board of Green Omaha Coalition.

ben@blueboathome.com, 531-225-6036

Jessie:

I continued to work at the Therapeutic School, as an art therapist. I added a clinical supervisor hat at our outpatient child and family center.

Our NE art therapy licensure bill passed and signed into law, making NE the only state in the central plains with an art therapy license! Some colleagues and I won a legislative advocacy award for this work. I again taught Exploring Art Therapy University of Nebraska Omaha.

I worked on academic projects including modules for the US Department of Education (Emporia State University) to train Vocational Rehab Counselors to work with autistic adults. I presented at art therapy conferences and co-wrote a book chapter, among other writing.

I assisted with Dad's care. In addition to Alzheimer's, he had hydrocephalus subsequent to 2023 cancer treatment and had several minor brain surgeries in 2024 to drain the fluid. Despite this he remained in good spirits joking "they were just making sure my brain was still in there". He also finds excuses frequently to use his favorite idiom: "that sounds like a 39 cent word on sale for \$4.99 today" when anyone uses fancy words.

jessie@blueboathome.com, 402-657-8236

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

Blueboathome.com

