

Happy Twentyleven from our Blue Boat Home!

2010 was another busy year for us, full of work and travel and joy and sadness. In addition to several road trips to visit our parents in Bartlesville, OK and Manley, NE, we went to Pittsburgh, PA in March and again in December; we visited Lucas and Greensburg, KS on our anniversary, we toured Minneapolis and San Francisco on rented bicycles; and we even camped for a week in the Nebraska August heat. We had some adventures close to home too, including watching the elephants at the Topeka Zoo paint as a part of a psychology department field trip. We had visits not just from friends, parents, and siblings but from an uncle and a nephew as well! We even made time to renovate Ben's home office and to sell produce and art at the farmers' market.

We surprised our cats Simon and Warren in May by bringing home a puppy from the local shelter. After narrowly surviving a bad case of parvovirus, Marcel quickly became part of the family. Unfortunately, Warren got sick later in the summer and passed away. We all miss Warren very much, but Marcel lost his favorite playmate, so we began fostering a cousin's shih tzu, Loca. The two dogs play constantly and stay out of Simon's gray hair!

Jessie

It has certainly been a busy year. I started out the year teaching, advising, and studying in my various roles as professor, academic adviser and graduate student. In March I presented at and helped organize our annual art therapy conference, Discovery Day, and also attended the American Counseling Association conference over spring break. In April I started an autism art therapy social skills group for ages 10 to 21. In the summer I began practicum for the mental health counseling degree. I was very excited to be seeing clients again! In August I celebrated my 30th birthday with a full house of family and friends and a rented hot tub! In the fall, I returned to teaching and also began interning at a local alcohol and drug treatment center, Path to Recovery. The internship has been a great learning experience and it doesn't hurt that I have two wonderful supervisors! In November I presented on art therapy and autism at the American Art Therapy Association National conference. In December I enjoyed making homemade Christmas ornaments that we later sold at the Farmer's Market and Kriss Kringle Shoppe in Emporia. It's a lot to balance but it is worth it—hopefully next year I will be writing about how I obtained licensure in addictions and mental health counseling!

Ben

I made progress this year in exchanging my white collar for a green one! The energy auditing certification I earned last year has turned into a business named Central Energy Savers that is already as profitable as my Web work, while helping people to save energy and money. My Web development business has stayed busy as well – in April I had back-to-back conferences in San Francisco and Davenport, Iowa, and in June I presented at the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association and came home with half a dozen new clients. Then at the end of May I camped for two weeks outside Fairfield, IA for a Permaculture Design Certification course, so that I could start teaching permaculture classes and designing edible landscapes here in Emporia. It's a challenge balancing three careers, but I'm having a great time!