

Happy 2013 from our Blue Boat Home!

We had another exciting and eventful year in 2012... we renovated our kitchen and hallway; saw Craig Ferguson and Poison live; we made road trips to Fairfield, IA, Savannah, GA, and Denver, CO, with stops at three famous ecovillages as well as Atlanta and Memphis; we were both on staff at Unitarian Universalist Camp StarTrail; and we visited relatives in Pittsburgh, PA as well as numerous times in Bartlesville, OK and Manley, NE. Jessie's brother Josh lived with us until August when he moved to an apartment a couple blocks away. We sell produce and crafts at the local farmers market year-round.

Ben: When 2012 started, I was doing home energy audits for our electrical utility, but that program ended in June and the market dried up. I attended a week-long "window restoration boot camp" in Wichita, but I ultimately decided I didn't want to go into restoring windows, either.

In August I left my part-time job of seven years as Web coordinator of Prairie Star District UUA and tried to hang out my shingle as a permaculture designer, but the market is not yet ripe for that, so I jumped at the chance to buy Emporia's #1 curbside recycling service, The Green Door. The sale became final at the end of October, so I now have 160+ customers and three employees, not to mention a truck and trailer and hundreds of green plastic tubs!

Other highlights of my year included a visit to Minneapolis; riding the DK Lite and (half of) Biking Across Kansas; celebrating International Permaculture Day and the first International Ragweed Day; catching up with my dear friend Susan after some 10 years apart; mentoring a friend's son in Javascript game programming; getting a Little Brother; and attending the Land Institute's Prairie Festival with my parents.

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Jessie: When the year started so did the second session of ARTStar, the 8 week Saturday morning program for kids with disabilities that ESU ran with Easter Seals Capper Foundation in Topeka. In March, we pulled off another successful Discovery Day, the 38th Annual art therapy conference put on by the ESU art therapy program and the 9th I was involved in. In April, Up til Dawn, the St Jude's Charity I am the Faculty Sponsor for, visited St Jude's hospital in Memphis, TN as well as Target House, the long term patient housing.

When summer arrived, I taught my very first summer course. I presented at the Annual American Art Therapy Conference in July in Savannah. In my role as conference chair for the Kansas Art Therapy Association, I put on the first of two conferences I am responsible for in October, with presenters from Peace Paper Project. In December, I kept my Dad company in the hospital when he was hospitalized for an infection. He is well on the mend now. Earlier in the year I was invited to write a book chapter for an upcoming Handbook of Art Therapy and am continuing work on it into 2013.

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We always welcome guests at 1301 State St., Emporia KS 66801, and we still occasionally blog at www.blueboathome.com. Best wishes for a happy and prosperous 2013!