

7 Harbor Road
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31 December 2018

2018 Seasons Greetings from Suzanne and Rod:

Greetings from New Jersey, USA. We stayed in the United States this year - no foreign travel. (Insert political reason of your choice at this spot - depending on your color preference, red or blue).

The first 2018 road trip was to break in the new Honda CRV and make Suzanne sufficiently tired of driving to allow Rod to finally touch the steering wheel. Florida in February sounded like a reasonable destination for folks accustomed to winter in NJ for 40 years. We visited Saint Augustine, Sanibel Island, and even managed a visit to a friend in Bonita Springs. Automobile technology has advanced since Rod's 2005 Civic. Now with Suzanne's smart phone connected to the CRV, he is outnumbered by the diverse opinions on when to turn the steering wheel.



Back to the snow and rain, and a real test of the load capacity of the SUV with the booth setup for Suzanne's booth at the Sugarloaf Craft show. Much easier to get everything into the Honda than the Corolla. Rod helped with setup and tear down, but his sartorial choices were not deemed sufficiently mainstream to be allowed to be present along with actual customers. Suzanne's friend was considered a better model for necklaces - something about "being the wrong kind of dummy" for necklace display.

In spite of promises made, when the nor-easter knocked the top off a big maple in the yard, Rod hauled out his trusty Boy Scout hatchet (and a chainsaw) to chop it up himself. Suzanne was not completely incensed about his memory lapse involving the phone number of the tree removal service because she managed to get large chunks of maple cut to order for carving later in the year. Rod notes that the primary art form for the many chunks of maple appears to be growing fungus, but he clearly has never understood artists.

The new CRV got another workout in April with a solo drive by Suzanne down to TN for the regular visit with the coven at Spring Creek. Rod is unsure what exactly happens there, other than cherry pie filling leaves NJ and doesn't return. Something nefarious must be going on.

May saw the unexpected event of a fire in Kevin's building in Collingswood NJ in the middle of the night. While his apartment did not burn and suffered only minor damage from the firemen breaking in through his bathroom window, he was not able to continue living in it. He had been considering a move to the west coast for a while, so made the instant decision that a new apartment in NJ wasn't in his future. Possessions worth moving to the Seattle area left the apartment for temporary housing at 7 Harbor Road, along with our house guest, while he made plans for the move and figured out how to pack his Corolla with the most critical items. He left for a long drive in early July and now resides in Shoreline, WA (a suburb of Seattle).

Timing of Kevin's road trip west to visit friends along the way and attend a convention forced him to



miss the family reunion scheduled by Rod's sister in Hyde Park NY at an AirB&B rental. It wasn't the massive event that Suzanne's side of the family hosts, but was enjoyed by all. It didn't actually rain frogs for the occasion. The hundreds of frogs actually just hopped into the pool at the rental. Tiny frogs - not worth getting the South Louisiana road kill treatment for gumbo. Rod did get a chance to walk on water - a mile on the old railroad bridge now named The Walk Across the Hudson.



Suzanne's NAWBO conference was in Spokane, WA this year, so with Kevin now located in WA we decided to make an extended trip in the fall to the Northwest. We flew out to Seattle and rented a car for 26 days to visit friends and relatives and make the mandatory appearance at Spokane. It was another interesting battle of man vs machine, learning to drive a 2019 Jeep Cherokee around Washington and Oregon. Rod used his experience with the electronics in the Honda to survive the challenge, but not without incident.

He still doesn't know why the computer in the Jeep seemed to want to give him a hot seat at random times, usually when there was no place to stop the car safely and he had to rely on Suzanne working her way through the menus on the car's screen until she could turn off the seat heating element. He is relatively sure that she wasn't covertly resetting the heating to max as after several incidents where he was watching her carefully. Relatively.

Thanksgiving was quiet this year with Kevin on the west coast and not around to help with the consumption of a turkey. Christmas was more festive, with a visit from Rod's nephew and his wife, with leftovers to last until 2019, but not the cherry pie. Cherry pie doesn't last long if Rod is ambulatory.

Suzanne continued her jewelry production in 2018, as those watching her web site will know. With less time spent on graphic design projects, she has had more time for other interests. Sometimes that combination can be disconcerting. Recently Rod looked up from his reading one afternoon and noted that she had laid out a trail of small cubes, glistening in the sun on the front room carpet. He immediately remembered her reference in the previous month to an article on the research being done on the elimination process in wombats. (Wombats poo cubes...why? Look it up.) Knowing of her interest in working natural materials into her art, he immediately came to the conclusion that she had taken it a step too far. Happily the similarity was only visual, not olfactory.



Many milestones were reached in 2018. Rod and Suzanne have been married a half century in June. Rod worked his last day on the job exactly 20 years ago today. Suzanne bought herself a recliner instead of curling up in Rod's when he wasn't using it. Rod is still claiming that the broken spring in the seat of his recliner this year had nothing to do with cherry pie consumption, and is no reason to stop pie production.

2019 should see us down in Lafayette for Rod's 55th high school reunion and in the fall in Jacksonville, FL for Suzanne's 2019 NAWBO Conference.

We wish you a happy and prosperous 2019.

Suzanne and Rod

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