

May Blessings, Love and Laughter Be Yours This Holiday Season and All of 2019!

As I gather the mountains of leaves in our yard my thoughts drift to all that has happened this year and realize that so much has gone on that it is hard to remember what Charlie and I did for vacation in January! Maybe that is just age, weariness, media overload or all the above.

Staying in a yurt was a bucket list experience Charlie and I enjoyed with pups Scruffy and Abbey in Gualala at the outset of 2018. The beach, sight-seeing, exploring Duncan Mills and Penny Royal Goat Farm and lots of movie rentals made for great down time. Our little feral dog Abbey however gave us a scare as she obviously ingested some mushroom matter from the forest floor and became quite lethargic and sick forcing an early return home. Fortunately by the time we drove home she fully recovered.

Our 47th wedding anniversary was memorable. Chef Don Pepe and wife Carol and Charlie and myself had donated a Paella Dinner for 10 at our home and friends Laura Fitzsimmons and John Lambrose were the lucky bidders who invited four other great couples to share the evening. What a treat for us to enjoy such wonderful company, food and conversation on our special day. February also brought with it a public announcement that Café @ Adele's is for sale. Celebrating the restaurant's 40th year in business it was a bittersweet decision but until someone signs on the dotted line we are open for business and we keep showing up for work! No retirement plans as there is as yet no end date.

Winter seemed exceptionally long and cold this year so we welcomed Spring/Summer adventures. We chauffeured folks in our Burner Mobile for a progressive dinner with friends which was an absolute hoot. A fishing trip to Sitka, Alaska with Cousin Jerry and Denise for 4 days was so much fun with each couple coming home with 40lbs of fish (black cod, halibut, yellow eye). I caught the biggest Halibut but had to throw it back after "reeling" forever to bring it up. It was too big and considered a producer and who knew that eagles in Alaska are as prevalent as pigeons!

Special overnights this year were done collectively with all the grandkids as their schedules are even crazier than ours. As teenagers and almost teenagers keeping them occupied becomes more challenging but a glorious four days was spent with them at Fallen Leaf Lake. We all had to share one bathroom which surprisingly worked well and the grandkids all survived without electronics. We kayaked, hiked, played Clue nightly over bowls of popcorn and even had a bear sighting. Poppie Charlie, always pushing the envelope, let all the kids have a turn driving the pontoon boat around the lake which they loved!

All the grandkids are involved and excelling in sports and school. We are so proud of them. Austin and Cam are now both in high school. Austin lettered for his academics, had some great runs and catches playing varsity football as a sophomore, has now moved on to basketball, just had his 16th birthday, will be taking his driving test, and introduced his "girlfriend" to Charlie and I. It is hard to believe and I am so unprepared for how fast they grow up! Cam is healthy after breaking his foot twice last year and back on the basketball court aggressive as ever. He is rapidly catching up to his brother in height and getting all A's. Abby, now in middle school, is one tough cookie on the basketball court and in the classroom. She loves to debate issues which will serve her well in her dream of being a lawyer and she has a heart of gold. Mallory is really progressing with her horseback riding. So cautiously timid at first she is right at home now with riding lessons and the horse she gets to ride. When not at the stable or in school she is playing volleyball or basketball as a strong player on winning teams. She keeps Momma Nicole busy coaching her teams or transporting her to activities. Part of her summer was time spent as a camp counselor at a local ranch and working with farm animals. She wants her own ranch someday. Her compassion is contagious. We treasure the time with all of them!

Our summer kick off, The 10th Annual Concert under the Stars that benefits The Greenhouse Project (a cause near and dear to mine and Charlie's hearts) showcased Jefferson Starship and

was incredible and hugely successful. Now held at the Brewery Arts Center having outgrown the Café @ Adele's footprint, I so love having my Charlie join me during the closing set to dance to tunes of our youth. A Boys and Girls Club auction dinner item brought Charlie and Chef Mark Estee together in our kitchen collaborating on a dinner for some wonderful couples. Their joke was that they were sous chefs for me...not hardly! RV cook out test runs at Washoe Lake and Nevada Beach to make sure we have our ducks in a row for Burning Man, and dinner to include bocce ball with friends are what make summer nights for us special. We even enjoyed an overnight in the bay area for an A's game. Charlie was so hopeful they would make it to the World Series this year.

This year marked the best "Burn" ever for Charlie and I. But I need to back up to a few days before we left. Scott, Racquel's boyfriend, sat down with us and let us know he was going to ask Racquel to marry him. Mind you we are not in a fancy camp at Burning Man and have no internet or contact until we reach Love's gas station in Fernley and the proposal was to be the Sunday before we would return home. Needless to say we could not reach our communication destination fast enough to find out all the details and that our daughter had said yes. Scott is a welcome addition to our family! Vamp Camp was simply awesome and young, old and all in between from all parts of the globe came together. We tended bar to a terrific set of Grateful Dead tunes that our friend Justin put together that attracted quite the crowd. Charlie and I did our two shifts at Center Camp in the coffee shop which is work but great fun at the same time. Dinners with friends at our campsite were delightful and delicious. Always on a quest for public art for Carson City there was plenty to choose from on the playa that I have our arts and culture coordinator looking into. To the younger ones in our group Charlie and I have now reached the designation of the cute "older couple" they want to be like when they reach our age. Oh my!!!

Gratefully it has been a year of positive growth for our kids. Racquel continues in her job at Hometown Health and she and Scott are knee deep in home remodeling. Scott made Battalion Chief and excels in that role. Eric is serious about body building and in his second year came in 1st in the heavy weight class for novice, 1st in the overall for novice and 2nd in the open category for lightweight. The dedication that takes is commendable. Jeremiah is enjoying his new home in Scottsdale and very tastefully working through renovation. He let me know casually that he was now vice president of marketing for the IT security firm he works for with the comment that it's "no big deal". "The title just means more work and more responsibility!"

The annual Celebrity Chef Harvest Dinner benefitting The Greenhouse Project was a re-creation of the dinner Charlie did at the James Beard House in New York. It was also a reunion of all the Chefs working for us at that time but have since moved on to their own endeavors. Great night, tremendous food, wonderful guests and heart- warming vibe! Looking forward to family time at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The Cookies with Santa fundraiser we always enjoy as a loving reminder of the spirit of the season. I will wind down my 2 terms as a Carson City Supervisor. That to a bittersweet decision but time for Charlie and I and family and hopefully a restaurant sale but until then we will see you all in January!!!!

God Bless,

