



Happy Holidays!

November 2021,

As we rapidly approach national Turkey day, I am reflecting on 2021 and trying to capture what the year has brought to our household.

At the end of February 2021 we took our first weekend trip for pleasure to Los Olivos after attending a bridal shower. It had been so long since we had stayed in a hotel, ate out at restaurants (even though it was outside) and gone wine tasting. Then in April, we got on a plane and headed to Portland, Oregon for a week. We had rented a house on the beach in the town of South Beach, Oregon during Christine's spring break. We had a fantastic time and one of Elizabeth's best friends from high school (and another daughter) Wendy joined us for the week. We drove around the coastline, explored a few fun places, ate good food, and rested. We headed back from Oregon and the next weekend attended Jenna and Austin's wedding, which we turned into another fun weekend away. April continued to be a busy month as the following weekend my sister LouAnne and niece Rebecca returned to visiting for a few days. They hadn't been down for a visit since everything had started to shut down so it was another piece of normal. In July, we hopped on another flight and headed to Seattle for a week. I love that town but had forgotten how hilly it is! We had the best time seeing the sites, eating great food, and even went to a great second hand shop outside of the city center that Elizabeth found.

At the end of May, Christine decided to add some additional drama to our lives and I had to take her to the emergency room. Turns out she had sepsis caused by pancreatitis caused by her gallbladder. She spent a few days in the hospital and had her gallbladder out before coming home to finish the school year remotely. She had been back in person since March for half her day. Her high school allowed students and parents/guardians to choose so her classes were split. There was only 2 weeks left of school once she was out of the hospital and they didn't allow her to return for 3. So she took that to mean she could work remotely... Christine also applied for an Assistant Principal position at her school site in June. The position was open for about three weeks before they closed it and scheduled interviews due to the end of the school year, her principal going on a vacation, and then the 4th of July holiday. Elizabeth and I suffered through all of that with her and thought we would have to endure a LONG weekend of her not knowing after the interview BUT within a few hours of her interview, while I tried to keep her busy, her principal called to tell her that the position was hers. She loves it even as she has been faced with a ton of things that you don't normally see in 5 years let alone the first 4 months. We are happy she is happy- and more present.

Elizabeth is still working from her home office, i.e. her bedroom. Her department is not student facing and they can work remotely, plus right before this all hit, they remodeled her office space and took out the offices and put in cubicles, definitely an oops kind of moment. Currently, each member of her department goes in one day a week but that will likely change at some point where they have to go in more. Elizabeth firmly believes that her productivity is up from working at home. I know that her work/life balance is more skewed from working from home. She is much more likely to work longer or answer something from home now that she is working from home than when she





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worked at the office. Elizabeth is my planner- it doesn't matter if it is financial planning or vacation planning. She is definitely the one that makes that all look easy and Christine and I are both blessed that she is talented in this regard. Christine will say that she is pretty spoiled (which she is) but in this I have to agree with her.

I continue to love retirement. Elizabeth jokes that she and Christine ruined my retirement since they were home for a year working and Elizabeth still is. Christine traded working 12 hour days on all her other stuff for some days where she works 12 hour days but she isn't here. I've enjoyed having them home though because it gave me insight into what they actually do. Don't get me wrong- listening to them saying the same things over and over definitely got tiresome. I was glad when Christine moved furniture around and that Elizabeth's room/office is on the other side of the living space. We came back 4 years today from my retirement trip to Paris- it seems like it was much longer than that! I don't have any real desire to go back to work and love being able to not set an alarm most days. The girls tend to tease me about my sleeping habits but I know it is because they are jealous.

It will be five years this May that we moved into our house in Templeton. We love both the area and the house. The backyard is a work in progress and we have serious discussions about what we want long term. My favorite time to have those discussions is in the backyard, with a glass of wine, enjoying the weather! The conversation about the backyard just got put on hold again as we had the pantry collapse this month. The pantry (think cupboard) is one of my least favorite things about the kitchen so anything we do will be an improvement. We were lucky in how it collapsed, that we were home when it happened, and that nothing broke.

The girls have been spending time with their dad, he retired to Paso Robles to be closer to them, and dealing with a few things this year there as well. In late April, Jim was diagnosed with stage 4 metastatic renal cell carcinoma that had spread to his lung and spine. The girls have been taking him to infusion treatments about every three weeks in San Luis Obispo. There is no cure but he is responding extremely well to the treatment which should give them some additional time. Both girls are grateful for the flexibility that their current positions have and that their respective employers have been supportive.

We are looking forward to a fun end of 2021 and an even better 2022.

Happy Holidays, Seasons Greetings, Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa, and Happy New Year

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