

Dear Family & Friends,

We hope this letter finds you all well with much to celebrate this Christmas season.

It has been another busy year for us both and hopefully sharing our year with you will put a smile on your face and encourage you to live your life to the fullest and enjoy every moment regardless of the circumstances.

We'd like to start by mentioning the record snowfall! After the first dusting in October of 2022, we had a short break, but the snow continued to fall through March of 2023. The snowbanks around our house were taller than both of us (hahaha), not that either of us are particularly tall! There is a problem to be solved when you have so much snow and no more space to store it once you plow the streets and driveways.



Leia (our pup) had such a great time in the snow. She is a snow dog! We also had a moose visit the neighborhood!



We had a nice season of skiing with record snow fall. Claude is all about skiing on a powder day. I on the other hand am a groomed slope fair-weather skier. We like making snow angels too 😊



Our first RV trip in late April brought us back home to Louisiana for a two week stay. We enjoyed the LONG ride and the many stops along the way! Some interesting notes along the way, the town of Claude and a truck named Parrish which is my maiden name.



Our time in Louisiana included celebrating Claude's 57th birthday with family and friends as well as golfing with his father, a most treasured moment for Claude 😊



I flew back home at the end of our trip and Claude drove back to Utah with his brother Mike and son Cooper, who is now attending Utah State! They had a great trip visiting many National and State Parks. Here is one great pic from their trip!



Forgot to mention one important thing, before we left for Louisiana, we closed on a 10-acre property a few miles down the road from our current house. We purchased this land 1.5 years ago with my sister and brother-in-law Pam and Tim in hopes of splitting it into two 5 acre lots so we could both build and live next to each other. Long story short the county would not approve it, so we now own the 10 acres and plan to owner build our future home. If you would like to follow along with this process and watch our many other daily adventures, we started a YouTube Channel:

Mountain Modern Adventures. Subscribe, comment and like our videos and hopefully you can have a good laugh!



Upon returning home, we took a ride to the property where hundreds of cacti and wildflowers were blooming. It was the most beautiful sight and at that moment we were overcome with so many emotions. Most of our emotions were ones of happiness, but bittersweet happiness because the county denied our request to split our land. Despite this, we are embracing the daunting task of completing this build ourselves. Whether it is family, old friends, or new friends, we want our home to be welcoming! In addition to the house, we plan to have a small Airbnb rental on the property and provide parking for an RV to stay overnight (Boondocking).



In June we said goodbye to my much-loved 2013 Land Rover. When we bought the car, I swore I would keep it until it died! But we were happy to gift it to Nathan and Martha. Martha really needed a new car, and this was the best solution for them at this time. We enjoyed our short visit with them in a sweet little cabin in Colorado.

Call us CRAZY! In late June we left for another RV cross country trip to visit our daughter for her 30th birthday! We took this same trip a few years ago when we bought our first travel trailer. We had so much fun on this trip, we decided to do it again. The difference is this trip we were over 60 feet long with the RV and car in tow! This made travel much slower and difficult at times. Below are a few stops we made along the way.



Holy Family Shrine

Gretna, NE just off I-80

This is worth the stop! We saw this from the highway and decided to stop! You must drive down a hilly dirt road to get to it, but it is well worth the trip! There was even a place for us to park in a separate lot down the road from the regular parking lot.

RV Hall of Fame in Elkhart, IN

Dog friendly and an amazing display of RV's!

We stayed the night in their parking lot 😊



Star Hill Vineyard & Winery

Curwensville, PA

The owner Ken, a recent widower, was very kind to show us around the winery. We had a nice quiet one-night stay.

Sister Trone's 30th





We finally made it to New York after almost 2 weeks on the road! Sister had a chance to meet Leia and watch over her for a few hours while we ran into the city to catch a show. We had a fun visit celebrating her 30th birthday. It is always a joy to gather with the sisters. She finished a needle point piece I think she had been working on for over a year! It is now on a priest's vestment. She is also learning iconography and continues to play the organ for the community mass.



In May/June she had the opportunity to leave the cloister and travel to Argentina to attend the funeral mass for the founder of their religious community.



This picture they got a ride to their destination on the back of some random person's pick-up truck. I think they had a great time 😊

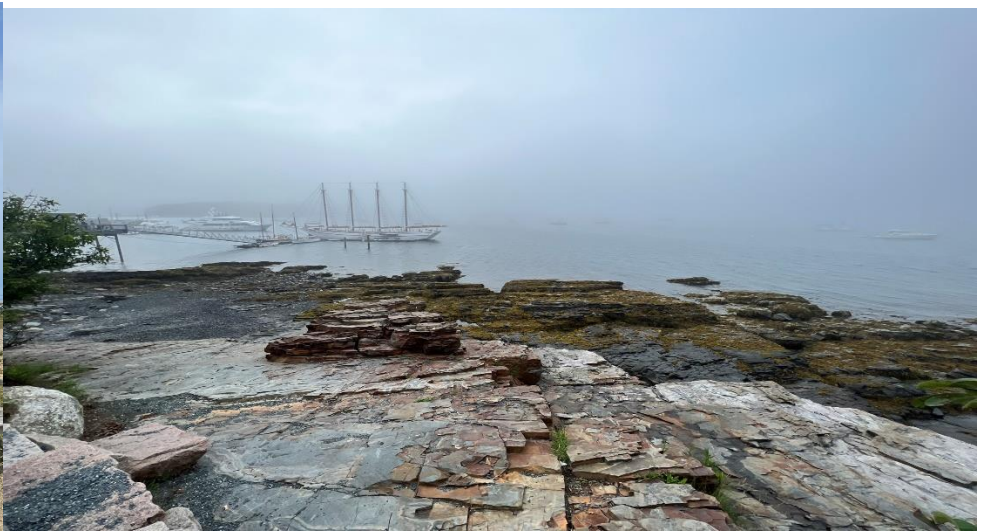


After our sweet visit with the sisters, we headed to Maine for 2 weeks. Our friends, the Millers met up with us. I mentioned them in last year's Christmas Newsletter and many of you have prayed for them for the loss of their son John. Thank you all for your prayers. They were so kind to give us a blanket made from Johns old t-shirts, we will treasure it and keep it in "Big John" our RV.



We had a great time in Maine sampling the various ways they cook lobster. We visited Acadia National Park and drove up to the famous spot to see the sun set but fog was present both times. We took the Millers on a grueling hike.... well, we are still friends, so I guess it was not so bad!

Claude had to leave for an event in Kansas (shoutout to **MWAVE**) and had his first experience on a very small plane! Let's just say, I was relieved when he was back on the ground both ways!



We left Maine and slowly worked our way back home. Our stops along the way included touring 2 Frank Lloyd Wright homes in PA. Falling Water & Kentuck Knob. Both were fascinating and the grounds were beautiful! If you are ever in that area, I would recommend the tour. In one of the gardens there was a piece of the Berlin Wall.



We visited the world's largest Cuckoo Clock in Sugar Creek, Ohio. I went there as a little girl and remember the area well!



We camped a few days outside of Cincinnati and while there we visited a park where John often walked his dog.

We also visited with Fr. Jacob, a Legionary priest we knew while living in Louisiana. We had a nice evening cooking for him, catching up and talking about a future trip to the Holy Land! Looks like those plans might be on hold now.....unfortunately we didn't get any pics!

Campground name: "Off the Hook"

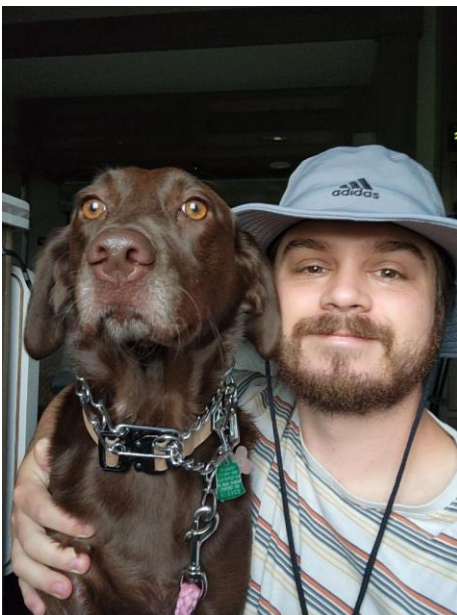


The last leg of our trip was spent in Colorado Springs area for a week and a half to spend with our son Nathan and his wife Martha. I highly recommend Lake Pueblo State Park. Our sunset views were spectacular, and we had lots of room between camp sites. No water hookups but they do have water spigots in various places. The lake was beautiful! We spent one day fishing and the rest of the days we did some serious relaxing and light walking. It was nice to have down time after all the driving cross country!

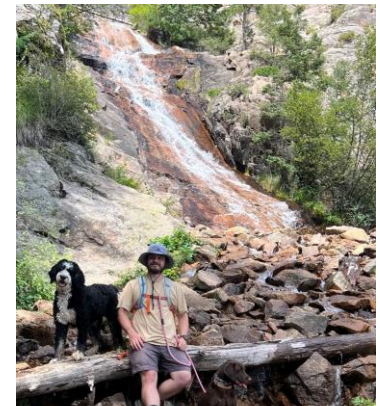


We stayed in Pueblo for almost a week then moved to Moutaindale Cabins & RV Resort which was closer to Colorado Springs. Another nice campground except we had to be in our RVs by nightfall because of the abundance of bear activity! We didn't see any bears but the day before we arrived a camper next to us said as they stepped out of their RV in the early morning hour only to find a mama bear and two cubs up in the tree at their campsite.

While here at this campground Claude and Nathan were in a constant state of corn hole play!



We had an exhausting but nice hike to St. Mary's Falls. The hike proved to be a lot longer than we expected. I cannot express enough how much joy it gives us to be hiking with our son!



After being on the road for a month and a half it was nice to see this sign!

Home for a few weeks then back on the road for a short trip to visit my parents in Montana! For some reason we only got pics with mom so I'm including a picture of them taken last Dec. 😊

We had a nice visit!



That about wraps up our year into September of 2023!

Hope you will join us on this new adventure! Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!



Watch the rest of the story on YouTube!

All our love,

Claude & Wendy

