



MELLO & CODA
BEST BUDDIES ON
THE COUCH



ROLLY & TANNER
SHARING THE
PAPASAN CHAIR



SYLVIA & JOE
NEW FIRST COUSINS

CHRISTMAS 2021



Family & Around Home

As I highlighted in last year's Christmas Letter, I connected with my birth family through DNA matching. I met one of my cousins in person this year, since Sylvania lives in Victoria. Sylvania and I also had more DNA testing done in her family, which confirmed the ties to my birth family in an even stronger way than before.

We continue to stay home most of the time, only venturing outside for exercise with dogs walks, and to do essential shopping and errands. I have resumed meeting a few friends in person for coffee, but I mainly keep in touch with friends and relatives through social media, email, and telephone. Our cat Coda is about 18 years old, and seemed to be shutting down a month or so ago, so we took him to the vets. After an exam and tests, he was treated with some medication, fluids, and we came home with a new, bland cat food.



This seems to have perked him up a bit, so he is happier (as are we). Our other cat Mello is hail and hearty, as are our two Jack Russell Terriers Rolly and Tanner, who still behave like pups.

Astronomy & Photography

I must confess to going a bit crazy this year upgrading to some high end camera gear, including a new Canon R5 mirrorless camera, 15-35 and 100-500 zoom lenses, and a new macro lens!

Observing the night sky with my astronomy buddies hasn't happened this year due to pandemic restrictions, so I've subscribed with an online telescope service called Slooh, which is very rewarding, and keeping me busy.

Travel

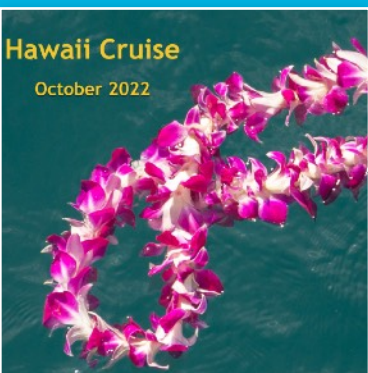
2021 has challenged the travel industry in fundamental ways, and I can assure you, being a dedicated traveller during a pandemic isn't much fun. Consequently, I haven't travelled much this year! The only cruise I had booked for 2021 didn't happen, and I have stuck pretty close to home, taking short, local trips just to get away for a few days.

My 2021 Alaska cruise I had planned for September was cancelled thanks to the Canadian government refusing to permit any passenger cruise ships to land in the country until February 2022. After careful consideration, I rebooked my Alaska cruise with Holland America for May/June 2022. I have also decided to run away from home for my 70th birthday (October 13, 2022) by booking another cruise with Holland America to Hawai'i. Both cruises depart from Vancouver and return to Vancouver, so I'm hopeful things will work out.

Speaking of travel challenges, my 50th High School Reunion planned for July was cancelled for the second year in a row due to the pandemic restrictions on gatherings. Since I had made reservations to stay at guest house in the Cowichan Valley for that summer weekend, I decided to keep the arrangements in place. It was good to get away for a few days on a local trip. The weather was lovely, I enjoyed my few days away from home, and I managed to meet up with a few of my fellow grads who are friends I have known for over 50 years. It is always fun to reconnect!

We hope you and your family have a joyous holiday season, and the New Year brings everyone happiness!

Travel Booked for 2022



Next year's travel starts out with astronomy in southern Arizona in Feb/ Mar. Next up is a cruise to Alaska in May/June (rescheduled from last year). I'm also running away from home in Oct - celebrating my 70th birthday on a cruise to Hawai'i!