

Here we are, yet another year older!

We had quite a good year. The short story: travel, art, groups, tennis, pickle ball, exercise, charity, and movie making.

Traveling was good. We ended 2023 with a cruise from Miami up the Amazon River. Alan's daughter, Cindy, went with us, which added immensely to the fun. We went to Paris for a river trip to Normandy for our 30th anniversary in May. We particularly liked Honfleur, Le Havre, and Giverney, in addition to the solemn landing beaches.

In August, we did a two-week cruise tracing its way partway through the Northwest Passage in the Arctic. We went with our Canadian friends, Rick and Julia Sauter, who are a delight to travel with. We flew from Toronto to an unpronounceable place in Greenland, where we boarded an almost brand new, luxury, ice-capable ship with a capacity of 200 (plus two helicopters). The icebergs were magnificent and plentiful. We whizzed around in Zodiacs, sometimes twice a day, thanks to the midnight sun. We visited quite a few Inuit villages – small and colorful, especially in Greenland. We saw 3-4 adult polar bears and their cubs on the shore. Actually, we spent hours watching them. There were thousands of birds, but other wildlife was lacking. There were go-getters among the passengers who kayaked and took long climbs. We weren't among them, nor were we among those who took the polar plunge. We were treated to wonderfully entertaining lectures everyday. We disembarked in Resolute, namesake for the Resolute desk that sits in the Oval Office. Alan made an hour-long movie using photos donated by other passengers as well as the onboard pro. Between the Sauters and us, we hosted 4 showings. All got good reviews. If you want to see it, go to [AlanandJan.com](http://AlanandJan.com), click on Travels, and then on Alan's Movie Dropbox, and download the Quark Expeditions Movie.



We drove to Florida and spent 6 weeks on Marco Island. Part way there, Jan realized her AZ driver's license had expired 5 months earlier! That led to a lot of angst until we got home, and she once again became legal. Florida has friends and relatives from several times of our lives that we enjoy hanging out with. We are going again in 2025. Alan has taken up pickle ball just so he can have a group sport to look forward to there.

Jan kept up with her art work. Always trying something new. She did her usual shows, but was also invited to be part of the month-long show held at the Sedona Arts Center's Special Exhibits Gallery. She enjoyed her work as co-VP of workshops for her El Valle Artists Association group. Jan also captained her team in the annual Verde Valley Walk to End Alzheimer's. Thank you to all who donated.

We did not escape catching a few diseases. Alan had a second (minor) bout of Covid, despite having had every booster. Jan had a miserable three-month bout of pneumonia, despite having had her shots. The North American shot only targets strep pneumonia, which didn't protect us from a ship full of international passengers. Who knew? She was down and out for about a month and has taken a long time to get back to her former walking speed and distance.

We wish everyone the happiest of Holiday Seasons and the best of years ahead.