

Happy HOLIDAYS

FROM HOLLY AND MATT

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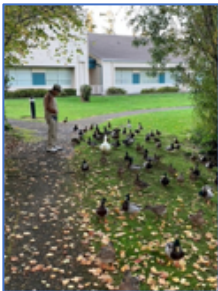
We Finally Moved!!!

December 2024

Holiday Greetings from Olympia Washington, our new home! As you might remember, Holly was nagging Matt to move for at least ten years; but the summer of 2023 in Texas cemented her case. After a month in Olympia to test out the winter weather, we decided on January 31 to move. In order to take advantage of the high season for selling real estate, we left our Austin home of 26 years on March 18 (our 30th anniversary!). Yes, it was really fast and no, you didn't miss a going away party.

Settling In

Now we're living in an apartment complex on the west side of Olympia we jokingly call "Seniorland." Most of our neighbors are our age or older and we can walk to doctors, grocery stores, a lovely park, a shopping mall, and other shops. So, it couldn't be more convenient. There are gorgeous trees everywhere and our complex is beautifully landscaped, so it doesn't feel sterile. There's even a duck pond nearby, and small mammals like bunnies abound.



The beauty of this place is still a constant delight.

We love our apartment, which was a surprise to Holly, who has hated beige open-plan architecture. But it's a single story with an attached garage, it shares only a part of one wall with a neighbor, and there is nobody above or below us; it feels like a house. We never hear any noise from neighbors. Not taking care of a home is fabulous and the management here is really responsive. We ditched nearly half of our belongings (including one of our cars) and it does make life simpler. Holly describes our décor as "mid-century group home" but down the road we hope to spruce the place up a bit.



Most of our neighbors have dogs, so it's been easy to meet folks as we walk to the store or mailbox. We have a regular Friday happy hour on our porch with our Irish neighbor and have hosted happy hours with several others. We're enjoying spending time with Matt's family who live nearby and friends Freida and Nancy, and we

stay in touch with distant family and friends via phone or Zoom.

Our time the past eight months has been taken up with delightful things like exploring new restaurants and walking trails and completing our extensive survey of donut shops.

[We have a winner – Original House of Donuts!] We've also



found a good Mexican food place with outdoor seating and several



Vietnamese and Thai take-out options. There have also been tedious tasks like updating estate documents, insurance, and finding new doctors and dentists. We've

both had minor health issues (since resolved), and so far have been happy with our care. We're enjoying life in a small(er) town.

Keeping Busy-ish

Holly continues to supervise three dissertation students from the University of Pennsylvania. Matt had paid consulting until it ran out in October. He is getting used to being fully retired, though there is still some unpaid work (guess that's called a "hobby") and there might be more consulting in the future.

Holly has connected with the local Project Linus quilting group and started attending a meditation group at the Senior Center. She also attends

a monthly writing group at a local bookstore and a monthly Death Café (<https://deathcafe.com>) where we contemplate a "good death," which is not as grim as it sounds. Matt played pickleball at an outdoor court near our home until the weather became too cold and rainy.

Speaking of the Weather . . .

The summer here was short and glorious – we used our air conditioner only twice, when temperatures went up into the 90s. We laughed. Both the spring and fall were mild and full of eye-popping color. We are now into winter, which

is cold and grey and rainy. The locals moan, but it's Holly's favorite weather and Matt has adjusted. We have both acquired more gear for cold and rain and as long as we put it all on when we go out, we're fine.



2025 promises to be challenging. Whatever your political persuasion,

We hope the peace and love of this holiday season carries you through the whole year.