

Holiday Greetings from Doug and Sherry Wilson

Another Holiday Season has rolled around already and as always it brings thoughts of our friends near and far. We expect your eyes will glaze over as you read this, but just in case you find our year of interest ...

Last year's note had Doug recovering from having his right knee replaced. Although it was a more difficult and lengthy recovery than we had hoped, he's getting around just fine now with little or no pain and a limp that is only a mere shadow of what it was before the surgery. He'd also been fighting carpal tunnel syndrome for years, but this spring numbness in the fingers of his left hand was no longer being controlled by wearing a brace overnight and he had surgery to correct it in April.

In last year's note we were also concerned about Cookie, our canine companion for the last 15 years. We're happy to report that she's still hanging in there, although her hips are awfully weak and she's pretty deaf. But she doesn't seem to be in pain, and is still enjoying her life with us as far as we can tell. We're thankful for every additional day we have with her and hope there will be many more.

As much as we love our adopted home in Aiken's Woodside Plantation, we do like to get away once in a while, and this year kept us pretty busy in that regard. We started the year with two weeks in Hilton Head in January. We had a nice sized credit with Celebrity from that norovirus-plagued cruise we reported last year, so we and two other couples from here applied our credits to a Caribbean cruise this March. Early May found us returning to Sedona AZ for something like our seventh visit (those red rocks do keep calling us back), but this trip was extra special because our friends from Maryville TN, Mike and Deb Husk, were able to join us in our timeshare for the week. In late June we headed north to visit dear friends in the Traverse City and Midland areas of Michigan (staying with Ron and Joanie Wallace in Lake Ann), and the Columbus and Newark areas of Ohio (hosted by Bob and Lynn Russell). October found us in another timeshare for our first visit to Myrtle Beach, and once again we were pleased that Mike and Deb could join us for part of the week. In November, Sherry spent a few days in Charleston attending a Landscape Design course.

When not on the road, life here in Aiken keeps us on the go too. As usual, we hosted our annual Aiken Horse Trials tailgate party at our railside race spot in March. In June, Sherry co-chaired the inaugural Women of Woodside Garden Tour fund raising event. She was also President of TWO garden clubs and will be moving into the Treasurer position in both shortly. She also serves as Secretary of the Aiken Garden Council, and helps with the local Master Gardeners. She's now also serving as a volunteer docent at the Aiken Visitor Center and Train Museum.

Although many of Doug's activities were curtailed for the first part of the year by his surgeries, he continues on the Board of the Aiken Academy for Lifelong Learning and edits and publishes the Academy's monthly newsletter. This year he built and maintains the Academy's website and continues to be the Administrator for the Timeshare Users Group's online bulletin board.

We continue to golf poorly several times a week and Sherry is in two monthly mah jongg groups. And we get together with two other couples monthly to play a canasta variation called Hand and Foot that is popular here.

We've been fortunate over the years to have distant friends coming by to see us. John Pedrotti, Doug's old high school buddy from Pittsburgh, and his wife Donna stopped by on their way back from Florida for some golf and cards in March. In April, Bob and Lynn Russell from Columbus OH visited for a few days. An old neighbor of theirs and part of Bob's annual golf outing group actually moved here to Woodside a few years ago, so they held their outing here. Lynn came down too and spent the

time with us, and she and Sherry, among other things, toured the Woodside Festival of Homes and actually worked at one of the houses. Rita Skelton, our long-time friend who was living in nearby Columbia, moved to Kansas this year, but we were very pleased that she came back to spend Thanksgiving with us.

If your travels should bring you down Aiken-way, please be sure to stop in and see us. Our guest room is ready and waiting ...

Best wishes for the Holidays and the coming year,

Doug & Sherry and 

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Columbus golfing buddies Bob and Lynn Russell



Exploring Sedona with Mike and Deb Husk



Enjoying a Michigan winery with Ron and Joanie Wallace



Gathering of Midland friends: Luther Stockton, Jeff Alcott, Sherry, Linda Hess, and Terri Alcott



John Pedrotti mystifies and amazes us with card tricks



Tailgating at Aiken Horse Trials