

Holiday Greetings from Doug and Sherry Wilson

Wow! Can't believe it's time to sit down and write out another Holiday letter already!

We've had quite a mix of highs and lows this year.

Our long-time friend Rita Skelton (we go back to 1971 in Midland MI) moved here to Aiken this summer from Mound City KS, giving Doug one more household for which he gets to perform resident nerd support duties.

We didn't plan a lot of trips this year due to Doug's back problems (more on this later), but we did manage to get some folks to come here instead. Mike and Deb Husk from TN paid us a nice visit in March, followed by a return visit to spend Thanksgiving. Jim and Casey Berg, also from TN, stopped by in April. Bob and Lynn Russell (OH) enjoyed a few days of outstanding Carolina fall golf weather here with us in October.

Doug's back didn't keep us from using our three timeshare weeks this year, however. January found us at our own Spicebush Resort in Hilton Head, where we met up with Aiken friends Tom & Anne Grillo and Ed & Barb Conover. In June we drove to Branson MO, where we were joined by our friend Rita just before she moved to Aiken. Then in July we escaped the SC heat and did a week at Sapphire in the mountains of North Carolina, joined again by Mike and Deb Husk. In September we met Mark and Liz Danner for a few non-timeshare days at Pipestem State Park in WV.

Late spring was a real downer as we finally had to bow to the inevitable and take our canine companion Cookie for that last one-way trip to the vet. She'd been a big part of our lives for sixteen years and she is sorely missed. We still are surprised sometimes not to find her greeting us at the door when we return home...

We told AT&T to take a hike this year and went to two smartphones in place of our old land line. See our numbers at the end of this letter.

Here in Aiken, we've pretty much continued with all the activities we've mentioned in previous years: golf, garden clubs, mah jongg and hand & foot, book clubs, Academy for Lifelong Learning, Timeshare Users Group, and the Aiken Visitor Center/Train Depot.

Now about Doug's back... We spent the first part of the year trying to improve his situation. He undertook physical therapy and underwent pain management where they attempted to deaden the nerves transmitting his pain. None of this helped. So, late this year, we decided to proceed with lumbar fusion surgery (L2-L3-L4). This is his second fusion, the first taking place 14 years ago in Midland MI (L4-L5-S1). The surgery took place on December 2, right after Thanksgiving. As this is being written he's been home for a week, is progressing very well, and now is beginning to wean himself off the walker. It's going to be a long recovery of a few months, but should result in a major quality of life improvement when he comes out the other end.

As always, 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

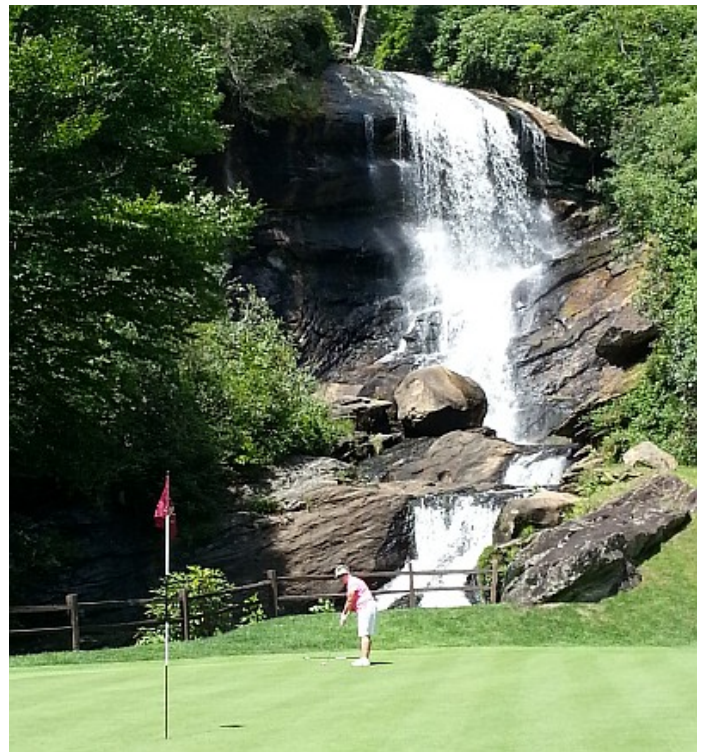
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Cookie Wilson, 1997-2013. *Requiem in pacet.*



Sherry at Highlands Falls Golf Club, Highlands NC



Tom Grillo, Sherry, and Anne Grillo at Hilton Head Harbor



Tailgating at our railside spot for the annual Aiken Trials horse races



Deb Husk, Sherry, and Mike Husk enjoy a wine tasting at Biltmore Estate



Jim and Casey Berg grace our front yard



Mark and Liz Danner at Pipestem State Park, WV