

The Bainbridge Blabber

Holiday Edition

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December 2017

Merry Christmas



Christmas Greetings to you all! Hard to believe it is once again time to write the Bainbridge Blabber. Where did the year go? We hope you all had a good year and that this greeting finds you happy and in good health. As for us, we had a comparatively quiet year, although as we prepared to write this letter, we found it was certainly not uneventful!

Raccoons 2, Bob 5: Having sparred with the squirrels last year over their emptying Sandy's birdfeeders, Sandy purchased a "squirrel proof" birdfeeder to foil their efforts. It worked! She was happy. That is, until the Raccoons showed up this spring. These clever bandits quickly figured out how to unhook the feeder and drop it to the ground, breaking the feeder apart and spilling the seed. Bob cable tied the feeder to the hanger, but the coons soon figured out how to unscrew the hook from the feeder. Feeling defeated, Sandy took the feeder down. In protest, the 'coons came up on the deck and left their "number 2" calling card. So, Bob got a trap and the offender was finally foiled. However, other raccoons then proceeded to leave their deposits on the boat dock—in solidarity most likely. A neighbor said that their favorite bait was canned sardines! With that bait, Bob trapped another 3 'coons and that was the end...at least for the summer. Lately, they have been at it again on the dock—probably knew Bob could not get on the dock with his walker (see Medical Report). You can almost hear them snicker! Time to get out the traps again.



I love Paris: In August we celebrated our 35th wedding anniversary with a trip to Paris—Arkansas, that is! Paris AR is located near Arkansas wine country and we spent a couple of days touring 5 wineries—from the larger, more modern Post winery to the older Wiederkehr winery. People were anxious to talk and we really learned a lot about the history of the wine industry in the area, and even found a coal museum in Paris. Didn't know Arkansas had a coal industry at one time. As an unexpected bonus, the owner of one of the smaller wineries collected bells which were on display—we're talking big, cathedral sized bells which we were allowed to ring (wow—really loud)! We stayed at the luxurious lodge at Mt. Magazine, the highest point in Arkansas, and had wonderful meals along the way. All in all, a fun time and a lovely anniversary!



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Medical Report: If you remember from last year's letter, Bob was having some issues or as he put it a "pain in the ass". Having achieved little relief from therapy he sought a 2nd and 3rd opinion. A neurologist prescribed diagnostic injections and recommended Sacroiliac Joint surgery to install pins and stabilize the joint. He had the surgery in November which necessitated his using a walker during recovery – allowing him to grumble, complain and remind Sandy what a pain in the ass he was. 😊 That said his pain is gone! Happy days at last!

Well-read Hornworms?: Sandy contemplated not growing vegetable garden this year, but relented over Bob's disappointment about not getting home grown tomatoes. Ever determined, she tried some new tactics this year—better soil amendments, newspapers and hay for weed control. She pondered which section of the paper would work best—the business and financial news (for growth), or the home and garden section! Either way, the weeds were mostly thwarted and the plants grew well. However, this year's nemesis were hornworms which have voracious appetites and can strip a tomato plant of leaves in a few hours. Sandy hand picked some that were 4" long and as fat as your finger—yuk! All in all, we got enough tomatoes to keep us all happy, so will count this year as mostly a success.



Brewer Bob: Last year Bob decided to try making mead—a honey based wine which has been around for centuries. He is still working on refining that process, but is enjoying sampling the results along the way. His latest endeavor is to make sparkling (or hard) apple cider. Still too soon to report on how that is doing. At least he's not bothering Sandy to grow hops, apples, or keep bees for his hobby.

Brew Club Bob: Earlier this year, Bob decided that Mountain Home needed a Home Brew club for guys who like to brew beer and wine. After some effort which included doing a radio interview and the usual networking, the club started to form. They meet monthly and have grown to around 24 members. Happily, someone else has taken over the leadership, so Bob can be part of it without having to run it!

Sandy Cements Dirty Deal: Sandy likes to amend her gardens with a mix of topsoil, compost and peat moss. It works well, but mixing it is hard work. In an effort to speed the process, she got a small cement mixer to do the hard work for her. Works like a charm. She is soooo pleased and declared it her Christmas present. Bob was going to get her diamonds or a fancy car, butoh well who knew!



Again, we feel blessed to live in Arkansas and are thankful for good health and good friends. Come and see us if you're in the area. We'd love to see you all!

*Merry Christmas to you and yours.
Bob and Sandy Bainbridge*



May this Christmas Season be one filled with love and joy for all of you, and may you find the New Year filled with blessings and all good things for you and your loved ones.