



# Oak Haven Happenings

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## Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

**What a wonderful season of life** that Jim & I are experiencing as empty nesters. We have a fresh appreciation of each other, we're enjoying **great friendships** with each of our kids and their spouses, grandchildren make life extra fun with **lots of hugs, discovery and enthusiasm**, we have freedom to do lots of traveling, we enjoy working together on photography and fixing up houses, and we have a purpose to protect natural areas and to be stewards of God's creation.



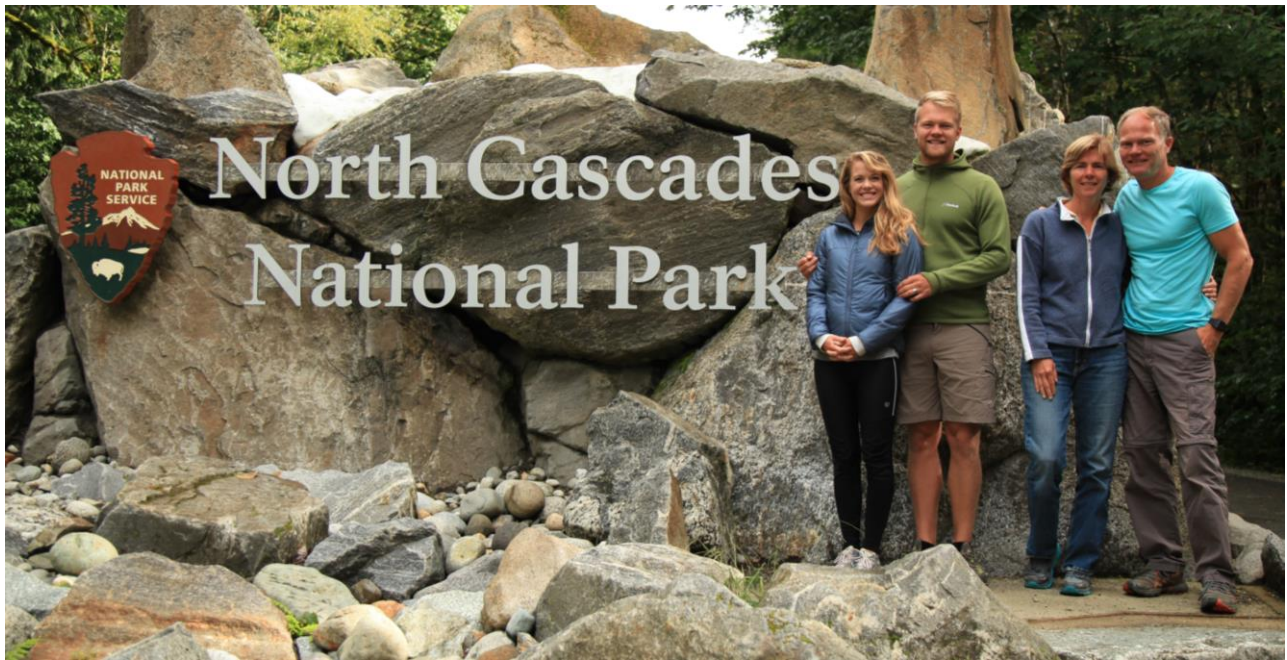
We were thrilled this year to welcome the newest member of our family: **Aubrey Marie, born to Jennifer & Bryan Lutes** on August 4<sup>th</sup>. She is precious! It was my privilege to get to witness her birth and to spend a week with them. Jennifer enjoyed a ten week maternity leave and the last two weeks of it she, Bryan & Aubrey were able to go on a vacation with us & my parents to see the Fall color in New England. **We spent a week in the White Mountains of New Hampshire and a week in Cape Cod, Massachusetts.** It was a special time. She returned to work in a new position at 4 Paws for Ability as Associate Director, which she really enjoys. Bryan started a new job this year with Reynolds & Reynolds as a Document Solutions Analyst and is taking classes towards a degree in financial planning. They also just purchased a duplex for rental income. A lot of adjustments this year for them, but they are doing great.



**Our other six grandchildren are thriving under Kristin's care.** Gabby will be 10 soon, Landon just turned 8, Matthew is 7, Laken is 4, and in September John turned 2 and Hosanna 1. They are the most enthusiastic and affectionate kids I know. Kristin was just recognized recently as **"Foster Parent of the**



**Year" for Clermont County.** She has a big and tender heart. She does a great job at reaching out to the kids' biological families and the neighbors on her street, while juggling all the therapy and doctors' appointments. She is a 4H leader, a gardener, homeschools her kids, and sometimes takes in daycare children as well. **They are a big happy family.** I love going on regular field trips with them. Conner Prairie up near Indianapolis was our favorite one this year I would say.



**Brian & Liz have had an exciting year traveling and seeing our country.** Liz took a traveling nurse position in Las Vegas for 3 months (Feb.-April). We got to visit them in April and experience some of their life there. Brian was a great tour guide. Red Rock Canyon was amazing for bouldering and rock climbing. (I stretched my comfort level just getting to the places that Jim & Brian started their climbs from.) We visited the Grand Canyon, which was awesome in the daytime, but really cold at night (30's) when you are camping. We took a day trip to see Zion National Park. (Jennifer & Bryan joined us too for a weekend.) Jim & I also squeezed in a side trip to San Diego. What a fun time! Their next assignment was Seattle (July- Sept). We got to visit them there too in September. Seattle is a big city, but close to the mountains of the North Cascades, Olympic Peninsula, and the Pacific coast. **It was so special getting to share in their travel adventures,** and it gave Jim and me a real appreciation of the challenges they went through to get settled in each new area. **It's great to have them back in Cincinnati.** They both agree that Cincinnati is home for them, where friends and family are, but they will always have the travel bug, exploring new places.



**Michelle & Corey are doing well.** They are happy parenting their two dogs: Dash & Finley. They started the year off with a **cruise to the Caribbean** for a nice break from winter. They are still fixing up their house and love its big backyard and close proximity to the park. Their “family” took a Fall trip to the Smokies. They found a really neat cabin that used to be a mill set along a stream. The dogs had a great time playing in the water. Corey has been super busy at work so he really needed a quiet mountain retreat. He started a new position at his company, Patheon, which is requiring a lot of overtime and travel (Italy twice and Japan). Maybe at some point Michelle can join him when he goes overseas. Michelle still enjoys her work

as receptionist at Bethel Animal Health and is responsible for all of their social media. Dash & Finley regularly get to star in her Facebook posts. She works 4 days a week and has Fridays off. It’s so fun to go off and do something with just the two of us. We also both **love game nights**. (We’re looking forward to making homemade pretzels for next time.)

That about sums up how we all are doing. We hope you are doing well, enjoying life and investing in the people that are important to you.

We thank the Lord for each one of you and hope that you may know His peace and joy throughout the upcoming year.

With love,

Jim & Julie and family

*“For behold I bring you good news, for today in the city of David, a Savior has been born... and He shall be called Emmanuel, God with us!”*

