

Dear Friends and Relatives,

Lets start with the first half year, filled with fun adventures.

We went to the Spring School in Ettal especially for the 20 year event celebration. Like every year some friends from Munich and Jutta's cousin visited us in Ettal. On our way back to see relatives and friends in our Saarland youth towns, the first stop was Munich downtown. There we met with cousins, and a friend , went to the Cathedral with High Mass celebrated by the associate bishop. (What pomp. Here in Reno we get greeted at the door before church and meet for a social afterwards.)

Next stop Stuttgart, where 2 couples spoiled us for a day and a half. Even Jo made time, Jutta met him first as a 5 month old or so.

On-wards to FRA again with the German Train system... renting a car at the airport, we got our walking in... the SUV would not start, had no manual and there was not a single person around ... Got the thing going by trial and error, it got easier as time went on.

Then we visited Diether's brother and met his partner in person. We had lunch with cousins. Thank you for a tasty Lasagne. In the Saarland we stopped to visit Jutta's parents' graves, met with mother's neighbor for lunch and afterwards with the couple who bought her parents house. What a great job they did on the remodel.

And then we visited Diether's family. All of the the children of Diether's sister were there. We had not seen them since before COVID and now there was a five year old and a 2 year old , both of them very verbal, a joy to be around.

In April Petra visited for 3 weeks; she does not want to stay any longer. So we squeezed a trip in to Mt Hood. It was a dream: the apple blossoms were at their fullest and Mt Hood and Mt Adams were fully covered in snow.

In May we splurged and stayed at the Inn at Death Valley, just for 2 days, being lazy by the pool and swimming in the warm spring water. Too bad, there are only a few days in the year with the perfect temperatures and no flooding to go back. So far a no go.

In June we got a trip in to the Oregon Coast to escape a heat wave in Reno: blue skies, no fog but wind, great short outing.

We went back to Oregon this time to meet up with the children who vacationed there. We stayed in town, Bend is lovely, river walk, green, mountains... we had great weather.

In July we still ( still see below 2<sup>nd</sup> half year ) made it to Mammoth Lakes, nice old Hotel with a large pool. We even went on a short hike to the Inyo Craters.

And then we could attend the ordination of Father Francis and a day later his first mass, a most emotional and spiritual experience. More church activties this year including making coffee and providing donuts on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month for the social after the 10am mass. We are also doing other volunteer work. Another highlight was meeting the Bavarian organ builder and experiencing the first use his new custom made organ in our small church in December.

We enjoy meeting with friends for lunch or dinner, Jutta does just fine there even in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year...

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year since the end of June Jutta cannot lift her right foot by more than an inch or so. X Ray and MRI gave no answers. The leg moves just fine if the other one is angled. So 2 times a week PT , massages...., 2 times a day exercises... very limited mobility for distance walking.

The good news is Diether is seeing the Physical Therapist as well to help with his limp. In addition spine specialist and X Rays... His diagnosis seems more straight forward, osteoarthritis in the hips. He still walks quite well.

We hope all is well with you and please come visit. We wish you a blessed Christmas time and a good year 2026.