



John and Martha at Glen Coe, Scotland, in June

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Dear Friends and Family,

As noted prospectively in last year's letter, John had his shoulder surgery just before Christmas. Hence there is not much to report for January except time spent recovering and the start of physical therapy. It still continues to get better. Range of motion is now pretty good but strength is still lacking.

In February, Martha traded her 14-year-old Prius toward a new Kia EV6, all-electric car. We set out to get another Tesla Model Y so we would have identical cars on both coasts but there were three strikes against the Tesla when it came up to bat: the price had gone up \$8000 since John bought a year before, the \$7500 federal tax credit no longer applied to Tesla, and delivery was in nine months. Yikes! The EV6 was available on the lot here in Davis and its features are very similar to the Tesla. Having now driven it for a year, we find some features that we like better than the Tesla and some not so much. Charging on road trips is a bit more of a trial as stations are less frequent than for Tesla. But so far, we've been able to charge reasonably well on trips north and south in CA.



Our Kia in the Redwoods



Ian and Simone in their backyard
along the Smith River

Four days after getting the Kia, we set off for Crescent City to visit Martha's daughter, Simone, and the redwood parks where she is a CA State Parks Ranger. It was a fun trip. We learned a lot about the car, had a lovely visit with Simone, hiked among the amazing redwood trees, saw elk, seals, and other wildlife and watched sunsets over the ocean.

In March we attended a music weekend at Montara Lighthouse on the coast south of San Francisco. John unfortunately got sick on Saturday evening but was fine by the time we were ready to

go home on Sunday. Two days after that John flew on the redeye to Virginia, getting home in time to work with Chris pruning the fruit trees and preparing the garden.

In April two field researchers from Virginia Commonwealth University came to stay in our cabin for a couple months while studying golden winged warblers, a threatened species of song bird. We did not see any of that species but they set up their net in our yard one day. So we got to see how they catch and release small birds for banding and study. Martha got to hold several precious birds.

On 8 May, Martha flew in from CA to Dulles where John picked her up and we drove directly to her family home on Cape Cod. It was cold and windy the whole time we were there but we had a list of chores to do, including assembling a new bed and disposing of an old one. We enjoyed one evening of music at a nearby inn but this was mostly a working trip.

Back in Virginia we got right into gardening, putting in a new flower bed along the house and planting the vegetable garden. Memorial Day weekend brought the annual BCCS work day, where we were largely involved with turning dead trees into firewood for the fieldhouse. Martha acquired a nasty gouge on her arm, which has since healed with little trace.



Martha at Dunrobin Castle, Scotland

June brought our long-awaited trip to Scotland. We drove to Annandale, VA, left the car with Claire and Paul Gesalman, and took an overnight flight to Edinburgh. The main event was a ten-day musical tour, which took us to historic and cultural sites all over Scotland and featured performances by local musicians every evening. We saw castles, churches, museums, neolithic sites, a distillery, and lots of lovely countryside. While riding on the tour bus, we sang songs about the places we were seeing along the way. Thanks to Jim and Susie Malcolm! We had an ocean voyage to Orkney Island, off the north coast of the mainland, which was glassy

smooth going up but offered four-meter seas on the return. And the long days up north were spectacular!

We had planned a private tour after the Malcolm tour to see a steam railroad, to visit other places not covered by the musical tour and to do some genealogy. John's great grandfather Ochiltree was from Scotland. We rented a car, made B&B reservations, but just then Covid intervened (despite being fully vaxed and boosted) and that changed everything. John started to feel poorly the day after the Malcolm tour ended and he tested positive the next day. Martha came down with it the day after that. With the help of our Scottish friend whom we were visiting we were able to rent a tiny house (called the Wee Hoose) in Kinghorn, Fife, for a week, where we could isolate and recover. Neither of us was terribly sick but it was sure inconvenient. We had to delay our return flight by several days but we survived it all and got home safely.



John at the Wee Hoose

Tim Duff's farm, nearby to us in VA, hosted an 18TH century crafts fair, featuring many skills common in the Appalachians 250 years ago. There we met Clyde Jenkins, who makes traditional split-bottom chairs with oak or hickory strips. When John's parents lived in Oklahoma in the 1930s, they got a set of walnut, ladder-back chairs made by a Cherokee Indian. Their hickory-split seats are starting to fail after many years of use. Clyde is the first person we've met that John deems competent to replace the seats. We hope to return in the spring to six rebuilt chairs!



Karen, Linda, Martha, John Frink

In September, we undertook a 16-day loop trip via McKees in New Jersey to New England and Pennsylvania. It included the Teeter Land Trust Trustees meeting and fun/family days at Cape Cod, a visit to John's cousin Roy and wife Jean in Wellesley (with lunch with Martha's nieces squeezed in), and finally the Penn State Folkies four-day music jam and folk-song retreat. That was quite a trip!

A week plus later we got our bivalent booster and flu shots and the next day attended a celebration of life for two BCCS members who had recently died, one being Nevin Davis, John's friend for 60 years. Sadly, we got sick the next day with GI issues and that lasted on and off for a month (more for Martha). Despite the discomfort, Martha flew west on 18 October and had just enough energy to plant a small winter garden before John joined her in Davis, CA, on the 31ST.

A few days after John got back from VA, we drove to La Quinta in southern CA for the annual meeting of the International Human Learning Resource Network. Martha has been attending IHLRN meetings for 14 years and John went along to see a different part of the country. And different it is: in the Mojave Desert and close to the Salton Sea, La Quinta is barely above sea level while the surrounding mountains are 5-8000 feet, with a few peaks above 10,000 feet. It rained a bit while we were there and snowed in the mountains. John drove up into the San Jacinto mountains to the west on his favorite type of steep, winding road and also made a tour of Joshua Tree National Park. Both deserve more time.

John's latest joy is a brand-new desk in Davis. He has been sorting things on the dining-room table and "filing" papers in piles and envelopes, much to his frustration. The new desk has a file drawer on each side, five other smaller drawers, and an extension on the back to make it seven inches wider. We found it on the internet after quite a search. It is made almost entirely of real oak lumber. Seems that most desks these days are made of compressed sawdust. We also cleaned up two desks for Martha, added extensions to both of them. The middle room in the house is starting to feel like an office.



John with his new desk. Martha's desks are in the background. The red chair has been moved.

Martha, as board president of a non-profit, Davis Opportunity Village, DOVe for short, (<http://davisopportunityvillage.org>), has been working since 2016 to build a tiny-house village for those experiencing homelessness. In 2019, DOVe joined another non-profit that needed their site renovated. A talented architect, Maria Ogrydziak, on the DOVe board designed a vertical tiny house village called



Paul's Place with eighteen 300-sq-ft apartments on top (yellow at corners here), transitional housing and a service center on the bottom. The two non-profits worked with a team of local business, faith groups, community members, and healthcare organizations to raise \$5M, but Covid delayed construction and increased costs. This year, more contributions and the federal American Rescue Plan dollars put Paul's Place (<http://paulsplacedavis.org>) over the top in funding, and it is due to open in early 2023! The photo at left was taken on 19 October. It's been quite a journey.

Music is an important part of our year. John has run Zoom sessions weekly thru the pandemic for our Davis song circle (a challenge, especially for Martha in VA, since the ending time is 01:00 ET). Martha loves to sing thru her broad folk song repertoire, and John (with some Martha backup) has been singing more and more songs he loves, all according to our weekly themes. We have also attended Zoom old-time jams (Martha plays viola and is learning more old-time tunes) as well as running the once-a-month Penn State Folkies Zoom song circle.

We hope you all have stayed well this year and managed to connect with family and friends safely. May the next year see us be more protected from the virus and with a new appreciation of and more connections to friends and family!

Love to All, *Martha and John*



Martha & John with Martha's nieces, Terri Teeter with her husband, David Sargent (center), and Kathi Teeter Thomas with her husband, Ed Thomas (right).



John with Jean & Roy Perkinson in Wellesley, MA



John & Martha with Tom Irwin in Davis, CA, in Nov.