



December 2024

Dear family, friends, and favorite people,

Our 2024 Memories and Highlights

- **TEDX-Oshkosh 2024.** This was on our 'someday list' and became a reality November 16th at The Grand in Oshkosh. Theme was ELEVATE. And it did! Well done; what an experience; we'll go again! (<https://www.tedxoshkosh.com/>)
- **Oshkosh Grand** concerts. An awesome venue we enjoyed several times this year: Billy Joel-Elton John tribute, Michael Martin Murphy in person, and an Abba tribute concert. Highly recommend if you prefer a smaller-city experience in a historic venue, with convenient parking across the street. (<https://thegrandoshkosh.org/>) Easy stop to get tickets at their box office, as well.
- **Some R.I.P.s.**

- We said goodbye to our little black cat, Mo (Mozambique). She was Michael's *other sweetheart*, curled up on his lap most evenings. From a very shy cat who'd been in a shelter for six months when we adopted her in 2009, she came a long way. She and Lankie are probably having a good time together again. With Mo gone, our Simba is much more vocal and wants more attention... so he's getting it and likes to be close by.



- My brother Dan got his wings on August 26th. His body was done, and he knew it was the end. Before he went, he was lucid and not in any pain. He took care of details like asking friends to be pal bearers and honorary pal bearers, making funeral arrangements with a classmate friend, and asked Michael to play and sing 'Tears in Heaven' at his funeral. In weeks and days leading to the end, family and friends had time with him. We had closure, we got to say our goodbyes. His family, including Virginia daughters, were with him and Nona in his last week. Danno talked and told lots of stories. Angie recorded them and shared videos of moments we were present for. What a gift all of that was. There's a peace in this one for me that wasn't there last time. He was looking forward to seeing his sister and dad again. Another blessing was seeing so many cousins, neighbors, people we hadn't seen in years or decades at his visitation and funeral. He had a big heart and touched so many.
- Other passings this year: An accident took Cousin Evelyn's husband Harry. Didn't see them often. Remember Harry as being so full of life and kind. When travel took me to Ohio some years ago, I got to meet them for dinner one night and had such a good visit. In June, Dean and Verna Weigand had a party to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in Waukesha. We saw friends and people we didn't know knew each other. Small world. It was a special reunion... Shari Zergeibel was there with husband Richard. Shari passed September 19th. Dean's younger brother Paul, who sat at our table in June, passed November 29th. I'll be seeing that family again tonight for his visitation.

- **Mom Days continue.**

- usually on Thursdays. Mostly usual stuff that includes St. Vinny's and library stop. Other times, there are medical or other appointments, and sometimes special treats. In February, Mom turned 89; Aunt Ceil turned 90. Once again, Cousin Sue and I coordinated an afternoon to celebrate and share cake with these two and Uncle Joe, for such a happy occasion.



- **'The Shack' Music Weekend in Door County.** An annual October gathering, hosted by musician friends Dave and Becky. We so look forward to these. Good friends, food, music, and a peaceful place in nature. An added treat this year was a coffee shop meetup with Cousin Fr. Don, who spends much of his summers in Door County. At Dan's funeral, we didn't get a chance to talk, so I let him know we'd be in Door County in October. We made a date to meet Friday morning at 5th and Jefferson. Love how it worked out to meet and visit like this.
- **Neighborhood Backyard Concert.** We have a good neighborhood. I walk with Mary and Diane a couple times a week. Mary's brother Scott, another musician, visits in July. Last year, he and Michael did a small backyard concert that sounded great and turned out well. This year, Mary made flyers and handed them out to neighbors on our walks. It turned into a kind of neighborhood backyard music and potluck social; adults and kids mingling, meeting, and having a good time. A third annual backyard concert is already scheduled.
- **Movie Nights at Donn's.** Our friend Donn is a social person who likes movies and hosting potluck gatherings of friends. Same guy who hosts annual May birthday party where about five names go on the cake, including Donn, Mike, and Anne. Movie nights have become a monthly thing. Depending on the movie, some of us only stay for the potluck part. Best movie we saw this year was CODA (Child of Deaf Adults).
- **Cooking and Making Stuff.** Continuing last year's vegan and gluten-free functional nutrition path, I'm a follower of some helpful bloggers and have found and saved some recipes we like and that have worked out deliciously well. And then there are recipes that I played with: like substituting pineapple for zucchini and making GF muffins instead of bread, and freezing them (yummy snacks); and substituting 1 cup of vanilla hazelnut coffee for some of the oat milk in a chocolate zucchini GF recipe, making muffins instead of bread, and freezing them (omg yummy; passed that one on after taking some along to movie night). Also found recipes for tofu ricotta that we used in lasagna and in our walnut-portabella casserole. Anyway, I'm a go-to resource for such things if any of you want to know more.

Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, health and happiness to each of you now and in the New Year!

– Anne and Michael

Our 2024 photo gallery, letter, and links are at: <https://annewondra.com/notepad/>