

Happy Holidays from Marla & Cody!

As 2017 is now squarely in the sights for all of us looking forward, it is time once again to issue forth the Holiday Letter, full of this and that, and other observations, to give you a taste of what 2016 was like for us. Feyd continues to wake us as early possible with their mewling when she is not acting as a decency monitor, sitting exactly between the two of us at all times to prevent us from physical contact. It is Feyd's contribution to the house, not counting naps.

It has certainly been a hard year, for everyone. We lost a lot of incredibly artists – not to mention my own Grandmother – and as we move into a technologically confusing future run by the Orange One, it seems like there isn't much hope for us in the new year. But I'm trying to remain as positive as possible, amid the angry outbursts and horrific insanity this means for us all. All I can hope for is that reflecting on the good things – and focusing on what good the future may hold – will offer a tiny amount of solace considering how terrifying everything is right now.

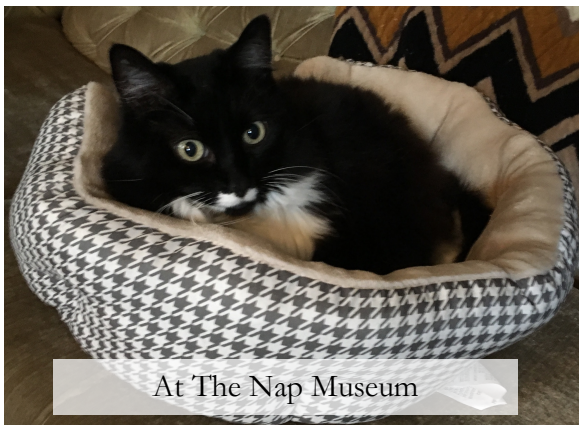
The last year has offered us, specifically, some challenges and strange opportunities. Marla continues to work in Energy Efficiency, while I took over caregiving responsibilities for George, Marla's Grandfather, for most of the year, until that was no longer possible in September. Now, he lives in a care facility, and I work for Willamette University as an Administrative Program Assistant to fill the time. (Please let me know if you know what that title means, as I will be most appreciative.) I also took on two other jobs this year: volunteering at KMUZ here in Salem (where I'm on the air every Friday at 10 PM, and help out with other responsibilities), and writing for the *Salem Weekly*, a local paper where I write about music, among other things. It's been a transitional year for sure, and as we brace ourselves for the coming year and the changes ahead, we're content to know that we are now fully (and regularly) employed. Which means health care coverage, which I certainly need what with teeth and eyes to worry about.

The centerpiece of our year was most certainly the trip to Chicago that served as our anniversary adventure this year. Not only did we get to do some great tourist-type things like visit the Art Museum, the Shedd Aquarium, and the Field Museum, but I got to flip off a Trump Tower before he took power, and ate way too many food items that were well worth the trip, and then some. Special thanks to our friend Ash who not only put us up the entire time, but was an incredible host, who really took care of us while we were in town. It was a trip to remember, and we owe it all to you.

The end of the year also means that we are moving. As Marla's parents hunker down to follow trailer life, we have taken over their house, and have spent the end of the year moving in. It's been an adventure, as we're not exactly home-improvement types, and neither of us have done anything like this. But surprisingly, it's incredibly what you can do with a hammer and some paint, and soon enough we'll be inviting all of you over for a house-warming party. Please message us if you need our new address; we would love to see you, as soon as possible, even.

Other than the usual mundane and incredibly boring bits and bobs that we all suffer from, we have to admit that we made it through relatively unscathed, and ready to take on another year together. Certainly, it would have been nice to have politics work out differently, and I can't even count the number of people we lost that I wish we still had. But this marks the sixth year we've been together, the fifth year we've lived together, and the first full year we've been married, and those numbers are very encouraging, to both of us. We have re-doubled our efforts, politically, and we are ready to face the challenges of the coming year. Hopefully that, if nothing else, will keep us motivated to take on 2017, and whatever else comes at us.

Happy Holiday! 2017 can only get better from here on out, right?



- Cody & Marla Rich