

Barb and Mark Waters
5548 Stanley Street
Percy Point, OH

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Captain's Log! Stardate nearing 2020! Sorry, I'll stop doing my Shatner. Just very excited for the new Star Trek: Picard. You know what nerds we still are! These are the voyages of the starship Waters!

We visited Maggie during her third semester at Amherst. She's loving her classes but NOT sharing a dorm with five other girls (and only one bathroom)!!

Of course, we had to make a pit stop in Boston to see John and little John Jr. He just turned 4 and finally said goodbye to diapers. John and his wife are expecting No. 2 in early March!

While we haven't been able to visit Uncle Charley in Belize, he's still scuba diving around the Barrier Reef and studying underwater sculptures.

We finally took that trip to Russia we've always talked about. Being the booknerd that I am, I enjoyed visiting the library. And of course Mark found some interesting historic tours to do. You might have seen the ONE photo he posted on Facebook this year. It's him making an offering to the porcelain altar that ancient Uralic tribes worshipped!

We are definitely enjoying retirement, although Mark still writes for the Morning Constitution from time to time when we're not traveling. Besides that, we've been content to spend most weekends at the log cabin we built up in Strong Stream, fishing brown trout on our boat the Jimmy Riddle. All that timber we dropped at the build site finally paid off! Unfortunately, the boat's main vein was drained and broke the seal, so we had to put out that fire! But our philosophy has always been "Don't blow one out when life makes waves." We can't say the same for Uncle Charley when he visited the cabin, though. He had one too many from his "Thunder Mug" and hit the head - literally - nearly falling into the pit toilet!!!!

Sadly, this year has not been all laughs. Mark's beloved Grandmother Urina went to see Jesus. Her hearing had been going so we had to talk to Grandma slowly. Of course, we'll miss her bubbly nature and her homemade swamp pie. The night before she departed, we took her to her favorite bakery and she had nearly an entire loaf. When Grandma finally passed the next morning, the orderly said she'd never seen someone void their bowels that much postmortem.

That pretty much sums it up! No more 2019 skeletons in the Waters' closet! Mark is STILL hoping that Baker Mayfield can take the Browns to the Super Bowl. And our adorable labradoodle Chester shits consistently twice a day. Once in the morning and once at around 3pm.

Thank you so much for being a friend to us this year! Thank you for sharing our tasks, our tears and our TP. Please don't hesitate to contact us and stop by! We've got plenty of extra bathrooms if you want to stay.

Relievedly yours,

B + M