

The Lettini Newsletter 2020



Napping



Joce at 15



We had some strange weather this winter year. A lot of rain - which is very unusual for this area. Spring and summer were mild but we had a lot of hot days - we got to 96 on one day. We do Zoom video conferences to keep up with family and friends.

Inge had another great garden but the local deer ate all off her pumpkins a most of her tomatoes.

This summer, Darin and Kara took a family road trip to Bend, OR. The family had a wonderful time adventuring on several hikes, river rafting, and bike riding the local terrain. They took a side trip to Crater Lake, which started as a bust due to the wildfire smoke. There was zero visibility of the lake from the lookouts! But thanks to a friendly park ranger's recommendation, the day ended with an amazing hike down to the lake itself. What an awesome, humbling experience to see first hand one of nature's wonders, one they will never forget!

Kara still enjoys working at the licensing office, and working with her amazing staff. Kara's garden was a wild success, so many tomatoes, cucumbers and carrots! And other than one unfortunate incident involving almost eating a slug, she's excited to do it all again next summer. She shared the fruits of her labors with the neighbors, and joked with them that she was the co-op distributor. Kara also took this time at home to try out new recipes! So far, favorites have been home-made meatballs, enchilada casserole and roasted rack of pork. Kara has also been baking up a storm. This has been mildly problematic since no one really likes baked goods in her house, so it becomes more like a fun science project for her and the kids. And a sneaky way to practice math!

Darin shifted gears this year and accepted a managerial position at work. This was to be his first time in 14 years working in an office as opposed to working from home. How ironic! But, he has enjoyed working with his team and he truly enjoys his new role and all the challenges it brings. While working from home, Darin has set up a very tight ship, school wise. He monitors, manages and facilitates the kids' online schooling schedule. For fun, Darin continues to develop his BBQ/smoker skills, his ribs are second to none! He also enjoys cultivating his favorite past-time: golf. This

was his most successful season yet, as he made it to the semi-finals in their golf club's tournament. It was very exciting! He also has perfected his fire building skills. He loves building bonfires in their backyard fire pit and the family enjoyed the fun nights stargazing in between marshmallow roasts.

Charlie has taken this off-season with sports to get back into soccer. He really enjoys practice sessions with a former professional player from Liverpool. He is very eager to play with the team when the regular season returns. We are proud to say he continues to develop his taekwondo skills and is now a purple belt! And even though the disciplines are different, he REALLY enjoyed watching Kobra Kai. And so did his parents! He's also taken up skateboarding (which has given his mom a few freak out moments) and loves bike rides with his buddies. Oddly, the Xbox has also been handy to keep him connected to his friends. His parents crack up at hearing the dialogue between the kids.

Caitlin is now a full time scientist and business owner. She has perfected her slime recipe, has an employee in her slime shop, and has experienced first hand the ups and downs of personnel management and staffing! She also loves analyzing various household substances using her microscope. Nothing makes her happier than a trip to the store that ends with glitter, baking soda and contact lens solution. She really loves playing the piano and loves to perform. Currently she's practicing Christmas songs for the family to enjoy. Caitlin also loves bike and scooter rides, and swims every chance she can get! She's stayed connected to friends through Facetime and Zoom, and scooter rides with friends. His sister and occasionally lets her choose the movie :) He really looks forward this upcoming ski season!

Caitlin is now in third grade and really enjoys her classroom. She loves gymnastics and even joined a competitive team this year. Despite doing very very well, she decided to keep gymnastics as a recreational sport and is now focusing on golf! She continues to love playing the piano and cannot wait for this year's Christmas recital. Caitlin loves reading and has discovered the fun of make-up, hair and bath bombs. Her father is overjoyed, ha ha.

2020 was (and still is) a truly unforgettable year. Despite being deep in a pandemic, resulting in numerous restrictions and cancellations of in-person gatherings and many beloved traditions, and being surrounded by an unfortunate negative environment at times, we had several wonderful things occur as well. Let's focus on the positive aspects!

Danny continues to work in his same position helping to make various programs and systems accessible to all users and has become a subject expert in many ways. He has discovered that remote work is not his preferred method of work, but he's been able to adapt by fixing up the basement office into a more comfortable and separate workspace. Taking on the role of family handyman, he's fixed up so many things to list around the house and seems to enjoy researching options to resolve various issues. Our house is slowly continuing to become even more comfortable and modernized.

Kim also continues to work with the same company as part of the senior leadership team and is happy to report that she has a strong and stable administrative team to manage. She has added the role of recruiter to her position and has enjoyed being gently forced out of her introverted comfort zone through the numerous conversations with candidates during screenings and interviews. Kona continues to accompany her to the office once a week to the delight of her co-workers.

Jocelyn and Dominic are also learning to cope with remote schooling and staying in contact with their friends. As many other kids during these crazy times, they have found ways to escape the drudgery of being cooped up at home. Jocelyn has been able to spend some in-person time with some of her "quarantine friends" while also face timing and texting, while Dominic takes full advantage of the remote/virtual ways to stay in touch with friends through online games and texting. Jocelyn has nurtured her love of baking and is fully diving into the famous cookbook sharing her delicious creations with us!

We've had several additions to our family since the last newsletter. Kim has learned to bake the best sourdough bread and bought a sewing machine to make masks for friends and family. She's threatening to make jumpers for the family as she looks for ideas to improve her skills. (This, of course, comes after she learned to sew a straight line and to stop sticking herself with sewing needles by accident.) Danny bought a keyboard and serenades the family several times a week. Jocelyn and I sometimes join in to sing and no, we won't be releasing a CD anytime soon. Maybe next year- look out American Idol! The keyboard has cool sounds and features so if you are nearby, you might hear sounds from sporting events or a full choir or feel like you're near the newest and hottest club!

Kona has kept us entertained with her chirping and wiggles when she greets us and new people, but has also taken on the family protector role by notifying us when anyone comes near our house or even when neighbors are in their own yard outside without her permission or advance notice. She likes to remind us to take breaks and play by bringing us her frisbee or other toys and plunking them down right by our feet with an eager look on her face. She's also the resident food taster ANYTIME food is around and especially when she can tell that rice is being cooked. It's good knowing that she won't let us eat anything bad.

Despite all of the obstacles that met us this year, we're looking forward to a happy and prosperous 2021!

With the Virus life did change for us this year but Michael and I tried to accomplish some things we do yearly. We did have a very productive vegetable garden. I did again plant heirloom tomatoes in the back yard and had a huge crop of tomatoes. My raised veggie beds were a bit more of challenge due to the deer, squirrels, & wild bunnies. The animals did eat all my cucumbers, pumpkins, sweet peppers, but we also had huge crops of scalloped squash, carrots, garlic, herbs, onions, spinach, beets. We also had strawberries(they bloomed twice a year again) and raspberries. I frod the berries and did manage to get some blueberries to freeze also for the winter. Tomatoes were also frozen, whole and as a sauce. I also dug up a lot of plants in our front yard that I didn't want to deal with and created more space for the strawberry plants.

Back yard we had a section of grounds dug up which was mainly a huge blackberry patch we thought. Once cleared we found 3 Rhodies, the old ones with the purple flowers, that were covered by the blackberry bushes. Stickers are gone now in that section.

I managed somehow to make it through my medical appts..Phew. My heart is good and I am still in only stage 3 of my Kidney disease. I did have a slight set back with my Blood pressure going up and down but finally have that controlled.

I am a very high risk and I am committed to staying home. I worked a lot in the garden and even now as it is cooler I will be outside if only to get some fresh air. I wear my mask when I am in the front yard but not in my backyard because it is pretty isolated. I wash my hands so much I am amazed that I still have skin on my hands and I forever am using lysol wipes through the house.

Christmas will be different this year and we will all be staying at our own homes but will zoom.
Stay safe everyone, take care, wear those masks, stay home!

