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## Dear friends and family,

We hope you had a good 2019. The Twenty-Teens decade opened with us working hard on Prop 19, California's first adult cannabis legalization initiative since 1972, helped Prop 64 legalize in 2016 and ended with legal medical and/or adult cannabis in most of the USA. So, it was essentially a decade of working our ways out of a job.

### Life on the banks of San Pablo Creek

We wanted to start 2019 on the right foot but were both dealing with *plantar fasciitis*, a painful foot condition caused by walking barefoot on hard, flat surfaces — like our hardwood floors! Mikki tried all kinds of treatments, got new shoes and orthotics and switched from jogging on a mini trampoline to pedaling a recumbent bicycle machine. Chris got shoe inserts and a floor mat with spikey protuberances that he grinds his feet on while standing at his work desk. Then we both came down with the flu the same day Chris' brother Bob and family arrived for a visit and right before our trip to Spain. The flu didn't spread to anybody but it did keep us off our feet for a bit — precisely what we needed.

Since Cali legalized, arrests here have dropped and so has Chris' work as a defense expert witness. As our income has likewise slowed down, we decided to travel less and focus on the home front as stewards of the Earth. Last winter brought a normal year's rainfall but, after seven years of extreme drought, it felt like a lot! It was a great way to start the year. The soaking softened up the soil, so Chris seized the opportunity to clear dirt and debris from the oak trees' crown roots and carve out rustic hillside trails. One rainy January day, our neighbor's giant, 150-year-old Bay Laurel trees splintered at the base and smashed down hard into our oaks and riparian area where Chris had been working just a few minutes earlier. Our old oaks took a mighty hit, with major limbs ripped off and massive scrapes down the trunk, but they're still standing tall. It really changed our yard by opening up the view and bringing in a lot more sunshine. So we added new planter boxes in the area the trees used to shade and this year we hope to plant more native species along the hillside.

The soil building is paying off. Our garden was reasonably good with copious roses, a little cannabis, lots of other flowers, plus tomatoes, lettuce, onions, a few handfuls of beans and potatoes. We get a lot of herbs from the yard, including bay, oregano, rosemary, basil, thyme and mints. We planted some ginger down by the creek and it seems

to be taking hold, so next year we should have fragrant flowers and spicy roots, unless the spring flooding washes them away.



Mikki's new passion is combatting illegal dumping, since she now seems to hone in on every bit of furniture and assorted junk in sight, especially when it's piled up in our neighborhood. We held a house meeting to talk about what to do about it and Mikki spoke to the El Sobrante Municipal Advisory Board (ESMAC). We reported dump sites, posted warnings down by our nearby bridge and by the end of the year, she was appointed by our county supervisor as a voting member of ESMAC.

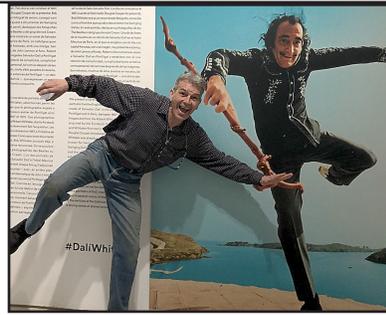
### Rest in Peace, Betty Conrad – Chris' Mom

Chris' mom's general decline meant we got to visit Portland a few times to take her out for dinner and see his siblings. Betty passed away in November, just before her 93rd birthday, but not before Chris got in one last really good visit where they talked and took a particularly beautiful walk in the autumn colors and flowers of Vancouver WA. Betty had a long, happy life and passed peacefully surrounded by family. Chris will miss their weekly phone calls.



### Portland, Barcelona and Colorado beckoned

We still get speaking invitations from around the world. Most events don't offer a stipend or cover many expenses, so we have to pick and choose which are most interesting to pursue. During our Portland trips we got to speak at the Global Hemp March, appear on Paul Stanford's cable TV show and visit Marci, Tom and a rhododendron garden.



Page 2: Mikki at Hash Museum display, Chris at Dali museum. A Mexican artist made this “Weed Warriors” caricature portraying Mikki and Chris as wrestlers for legalization. Below: NoCo Hemp.

In early Spring we went to Barcelona for Mikki’s inclusion in an exhibit at the Hash, Marihuana and Hemp Museum, *We Are Mary Jane*, honoring leading women in cannabis culture. It was timed for the Spannabis Expo, especially fun as a whole contingency of California activists went. We walked the city, went to the Picasso Museum (and gained a new appreciation), visited the Salvador Dali museum in Figueres (highly recommended), and joined a few cannabis social clubs. We thought it would be helpful and fun to stay in three different areas, but on the train moving from one Airbnb to the next, someone stole Mikki’s wallet out of her purse. An expensive ride. We’ve been robbed in that city twice in 28 years, but its architectural beauty, cultural vibrance and friendly cannabis scene still draw us in.

A week later, we were in frosty Denver to speak at NoCo Hemp Expo. It was a great event with lots of newbies and some old hempster friends going back to the 1990s. We got to sample Colorado cannabis, explore Boulder, visit the gorgeous Red Rock amphitheater and lead a *Cannamaste Circle* at the International Church of Cannabis.



### Cantheism carried us to Canada

About that last point: This year was Chris’ 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of smoking cannabis. He defined the non-dogmatic term *Cantheism* in the 1990s as cross-denominational cannabis spiritual use. Since legalization, we’re more free to explore the herb’s higher virtues via sacramental circles (Cantheism.org). We led *Cannamaste Circles* at home, in Denver, at EVB in Oakland and, in June, the Conscious Cannabis Workshop in Vancouver BC. We took advantage of the trip to Canada to stay with Donna and Andrew and indulged in their wonderful vegan cooking and a very cool virtual reality

(VR) experience with their son, Kial. We got to see some Canadian activist friends Mari Kane and Billy, Ruth Shamai, Alex Shum, Dana Larsen and Chris Bennett. We also had a beautiful Circle at the Emerald Cup in December. Chris led an endocannabinoid body scan meditation over all the expo noise. Who knew that shouting a meditation could still be so effective? We honor it with high honor.

### China, Mexico and Chicago invitations

Chris spent the Fourth of July in Harbin, China, as a guest speaker at a government, business and academia-sponsored hemp summit amid a forest of high-rise towers. He got to walk among willows along a river and spent a day exploring the historic city center with Rick Trojan. His remarks, stating the value of THC as well as CBD, were controversial (China is very anti-marijuana) but well received. They grow lots of hemp in China — the biggest producer in the world. During a quick, five-day trip, he got to visit the biggest hemp fields he has ever seen.

Everybody said we must attend the ExpoWeed Mexico, conference — but after Spain, we knew we needed to brush up our Spanish, so we took an adult school evening class with Patti, but *¡Ay, caramba, el profesor! ¡Que terrible!* (he rarely spoke Spanish in the class). ExpoWeed, on the other hand, was great. Our host, Julio, and crew treated us wonderfully, and our talks were well-received by people in this new, emerging movement. We had not visited Mexico City since 1984, so it is nice to see what a world-class city it has become with great architecture. They took us on a side trip on boats around Xochimilco and the surreal *Isla de las muñecas* (Island of Dolls), where dolls and doll parts that were dredged out of canals dangle from the trees, in sheds and strung along clothes lines in a macabre aerial dance. It reminded Chris of his Dad.

Our last big trip of the year was to Chicago. Chris was a keynote speaker at CannaOne’s Illinois Cannabis Summit. While in town, we also connected with Mikki’s cousins Adam, David and Morris. We went downtown to the Library Cultureal Center, Grant Park, even saw part of the Columbus Day (or, as we prefer “Indigenous People’s Day”) parade and took an architectural boat tour on the river and

lake. It was cold but beautiful. We learned about Chicago's role in transforming high-rise architecture after the great fire, first echoing European epochs, then helping define our modern urban aesthetic.

## Hosting and visiting friends and family

We once again hosted lots of good company in El Sobrante: Tom and Marci, Adam and Eris, Tom and Ronnie, Mary Pat, Brian and Dianne, Bob, Lucky and Nova, Stacy and Yvonne, Geoffrey, Jennifer, Donna and Andrew and others. We kept busy with friends from Lakeridge Athletic Club. We still enjoy Pilates classes. We went sailing with Patti, Jan and Ali and occasionally go out to dinner with Friday night yoga friends. Mikki got into a Bocce Ball league tourney but didn't win the prize. We also enjoy the benefits of a home vibration platform and share it with houseguests. Stand on it and it shakes you top to bottom, relieving pain, loosening joints and stimulating assorted body systems.



"Love Never Dies"



Grateful Dead fusion band? We liked both Mr. Rogers movies, the documentary and Tom Hanks' homage, *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*. The world could use more of Mr. Rogers' integrity and decency right now. *Downton Abbey* was like visiting old friends. Chris read a bunch of suspense novels and Roman history this year (and likes to draw parallels to today).

We hosted some good parties — notably, Mikki's birthday and Adam's 70<sup>th</sup>, with a band reunion on our backyard and the giant oak trees as a backdrop. People came from afar to celebrate, dance, sing and listen to hits from the 60s and 70s, played by people in their 60s and 70s, plus Brent. Then we moved into the house for feasting and acoustical jamming. All the neighbors said they enjoyed the band and welcome them to play again sometimes.

Our nephew Loren hosted a Studio 54 Disco 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash in Los Angeles that had everyone decked out in their Andy Warhol / Saturday Night Fever best. We skipped going to Seattle Hempfest for that one, but the party and seeing friends and family in LA were worthwhile. We dropped in on the Museum of Weed, an entertaining and informative temporary exhibition.

We saw a few good shows, too, including the stage musical *Hamilton* with Shelley and Jesse, the *Mittens and Mistletoe* circus cabaret and Dr. Frank took us to experience a band called the String Cheese Incident — an upbeat

## Hearing, protests, scams, odds and ends of 2019

We are happy to welcome a new addition to the family, our great-niece, Sierra — Shelley and Jesse's second granddaughter via Tesse and Eric. Jesse gave us a scare in April when he needed heart bypass surgery, but he's back recovering and gaining strength. Mikki started teaching Advocacy at Oaksterdam University where Chris teaches Politics and History. Listen up: We've always prided ourselves in our communication, and came to find out that getting hearing aids has really helped in that regard. They're pretty subtle, being small and tucked out of sight behind the ear, and the technology amplifies only the parts of your hearing range where you need a boost, so things sound pretty natural. We recommend them to all of friends with high frequency hearing loss. It helps hearing music and has cut down significantly on how often we have to say, "What?"

We comingled Halloween with *Dia de los Muertos* this year and went to a nearby neighborhood that was shock full of

Page 3: *Isla de las Muñecas*, Arya's *Dia de los Muertos* NORML fundraiser. Norris sisters Andrea, Shelley, Mikki and Dolly and Chris and Mikki at Loren's disco birthday. Adam's band rocking out under our oak tree.





Page 4: Red Rock Colorado. Chris rallies for impeachment. Mikki the great-aunt in action.



debates and impeachment hearings and reviewed the evidence. He definitely violated his oath of office and should be removed, even if the GOP Senate says they won't obey their Constitutional oaths. So we hope that by this time next year he, Moscow Mitch and their ilk will be voted out and preparing to go (if he's not been removed by then).

We don't use the hot tub, so wanted to sell it via Craigslist. Instead we got some scammer who tried to bilk us. He sent a fake check issued in one city but mailed from another, showing two thousand dollars more than our asking price and told us to forward a money order for the difference to a third party in yet another city — lots of red flags. We called his bank and found out there was no such account, reported it to the FBI and FTC and then strung him along for a few weeks with excuses about why we hadn't sent any money, to waste his time and give law enforcement a chance to (probably not) investigate our complaint. Now we have a real buyer but have to disassemble part of the deck to get the tub out, so it's going to be here a bit longer.

### Signing off until next time we connect

The rains are back and Chris is working in the yard again. In January Mikki plans to launch an ESMAC subcommittee to get neighborhoods more involved to stop dumping. We hope to go to more events in Mexico as legalization opens up there. We're also talking with a group about designing and curating a new cannabis museum in Uruguay this year. It's been moving slowly, so we'll see if it happens.

When things look tough, it's nice to know we have friends like you out there. So, thanks for being there, for being kind and for showing decency and humanity. We hope you have a fantastic year, and may The Twenty-20s Decade see the return of science, honesty and integrity to society.

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grave yards, haunted houses and costumed kids that tore through the candy at lightning speed. This Thanksgiving we really had something to be thankful for: We just missed being in a five-car collision by a matter of seconds on the way to Shelley and Jesse's dinner. We didn't see them hit, but cars went spinning around us. Mikki dodged tires and flying debris and pulled to a stop or we would have run smack into the middle of it all. Luckily, the cars behind us stopped in time, too. We called 911, checked that nobody needed our help, cleared some debris out of the roadway to let traffic pass and still got to dinner on time. Thankfully.

Richard Lee, who sponsored Prop 19 and founded Oaksterdam U, moved back to Texas. We passed a big chunk of our hemp artifacts to Don E and archives to Cliff S, who was in town to pick up another collection. He's going to scan the documents, catalog them and post it online — at least, he hopes so. In any case, we handed them off to him with a clear conscience and a garage that's less full of papers. We continue to clear stuff out, as we don't want to impose that task on anyone else when it's our time to go.

We kept up our activist spirit, such as the Women's March



in the winter, a cannabis freedom march in springtime Portland, an anti-swastika rally in our hometown in the summer, and national pro-impeachment rallies in the fall. We watched the Democratic





Page 5 Bonus pictures: Chicago boat tour. Makenna and her new sister, Sierra Struve. Chris with Alex Shum, the first importer of hemp fabrics (Stoned Wear, 1989) in BC. The couple standing behind us in this selfie is actually — us, reflected off a giant polished elliptical orb in Chicago. Our local rally on impeachment eve.

