



2022

*I will honour Christmas in my heart  
and try to keep it all the year.*

*Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol, 1843*

AS WE HONOUR CHRISTMAS 2022 IN  
OUR HEARTS, WE THINK FONDLY OF FRIENDS  
LIKE YOU AND THE PERSONALITY TRAITS YOU  
POSSESS THAT QUALIFY YOU TO RECEIVE THE  
30TH ANNUAL ALTERNATIVE INGLIS  
NEWSLETTER. BUT  
ENOUGH ABOUT YOU...

*"Fine"  
Dining*

Austin is a dog-friendly town, but not so elsewhere. So, on trailer trips, it's a problem taking Walter places. For a couple of years, I've thought about getting emotional support animal status for him, but I always chicken out thinking it's a big scam for whiners. And after all, what dog *isn't* an emotional support animal? But when he wasn't allowed on a restaurant **PATIO** for god's sake, that was the last straw. Letter obtained.

For Ian's birthday, I took him to a cozy fine-dining restaurant that I'd been meaning to try since we moved downtown 18 years ago. Time to test my new ESA letter!

With the letter pulled up and ready on my phone, I bravely entered the restaurant with Walter, despite being nervous about the letter. Beads of sweat began to form on my forehead as I looked around to see a small, intimate environment with relatively dressed-up people quietly chatting and drinking fine wine. Ian waited outside to see if Walter and I could get a table.

The tall, nattily dressed host with silver hair and a pony tail wore a dignified, kindly expression on his slightly

wizened face ... until he turned and caught sight of me and Walter. From his look of horror, you'd think he'd come face-to-face with Ma Clampett with a leashed javelina hog. He didn't even seem to appreciate that I had gone to the trouble of putting on a skirt! Granted, it was purchased from the maternity department at Target before John was born 38 years ago.

With a now homicidal look, he bent to my ear level and slowly mouthed in a hushed, almost trembling tone, "WE ... do ... not ... *allow* [pause] *dogs* [think maggots] in the dining room [think Sistene Chapel]." So much for the ESA letter.

He hurriedly ushered us out the door where he immediately froze encountering Ian in his hiking shoes with dark socks, long shorts, reggae T-shirt, reggae necklace, big backpack and baseball cap made out of material scraps that the company (Kavu) appropriately named "The Ugly."

In retrospect, we should have left then.

The host took us to the table outside farthest from his vaunted dining room. Ian grabbed a spare chair telling him, "This one's for Walter." The host closed his eyes, sighed and walked back to the dining room muttering inaudibly.

White tablecloths outside — *très élégante!* But they couldn't mask the faux wrought-iron torture devices misnamed "chairs." In retrospect, we should have left *then*.

We ordered the 5-course tasting menus with wine pairing. The waiter brought us each a teaspoon of citrus rinds mixed with something. "This is to cleanse your palate," she explained to the backwoods elderly couple. Cleanse our palates? Really? I wanted to ask



Being a schnauzer, Walter is generally freaked out when Ian and I separate. Ian went to the restroom, and Walter performs the schnauzer stare at the place he last saw him. He straightens his nose, lifts tail out, right foot lifts and bends up in a point and he freezes until he gets back. (Note paw on white tablecloth. Take THAT, host!)

*Continued on page 2*

her if we were supposed to eat it all at once or just a tad between courses, but didn't dare. After she turned around, Birthday Boy declared, "This is bullshit."

In retrospect, we should have left *then* for sure.

The first course consisted of no more than a tablespoon of food, after which Ian asked for bread. "I'll bring it out," she told him, "with the third course," thus eliciting another "This is bullshit" from Ian.

I was beginning to think taking Ian to a fine-dining restaurant, much less with Walter, might not have been such a bright idea.

The second course again consisted of no more than a tablespoon of food. We finally got bread with the third course, but it was only one paltry piece for each of us.

For the fifth course, we each got a long plate with their three signature desserts, even though the flavors clashed. The dessert was more "food" than the other four courses combined. That was probably by design to soften the blow of being handed a check north of \$350. No wonder the restaurant's name is a four-letter word: "Wink."



## Trailer Trips with the Royal Schnauzer

After painfully getting through the trailer learning curve described in last

year's letter, this year the only mishap was a frozen pipe in 18-degree weather in Arkansas. But

luckily, Ian fixed it with his emergency auxiliary deframbulation extrapolator.

The trusty 2016 V6 Touareg pulled us for three trips totaling four glorious months away and 13,500 miles. Even though it would go only 35 mph up inclines, it took us across the Continental Divide six times, the Canadian Rockies, the Cascades, the Sierra Nevadas, the Ozarks and the Great Smoky mountain ranges. Trusty until ... just as we started our 3,000-mile last trip, its cruise control, blind-spot monitor and lane assist all went out at once. You'll be the first to know when Ian's knee recovers.

Ian researched and reserved each

Great horned owl

night well in advance, making sure we stayed in city, county, state or national parks, private RV parks only in a pinch.

In **MARCH** we spent one glorious month in New Mexico and Arizona. The warm glow you get among the adobe homes and to-die-for southwestern landscaping ended abruptly arriving at the annual nüCamp Tab rally in Camp Verde, Ariz., the ostensible reason for the trip.

Imagine a sea of ~150 trailers just like ours. Boring, but Ian *loved* every minute of it, especially the lecture on the trailer's Swedish-designed Alde heating system.

**Toni** (after Ian gets back from the lecture): "Was it awful?"

**Ian**: "No! It was very useful. A lot of the intricacies of the system were explained, like blah blah blah blah blah."

**Toni**: [hangs herself.]

At the dinner on the last night, the host of the rally bragged to the crowd how she converted her trailer's bathroom into a closet, even though she and her husband lived in it year-round. At the break, I asked her how she relieved herself without a bathroom. She said something about a funnel, and I regretted asking. This will be the *last* nüCamp rally we attend.

On to Tucson where we visited longtime friends Donna and Michelle; further northeast, Ian's resourceful, creative and delightful brother John Morton.

Then off to the Gila National Forest and Wilderness in New Mexico to hike before going home.



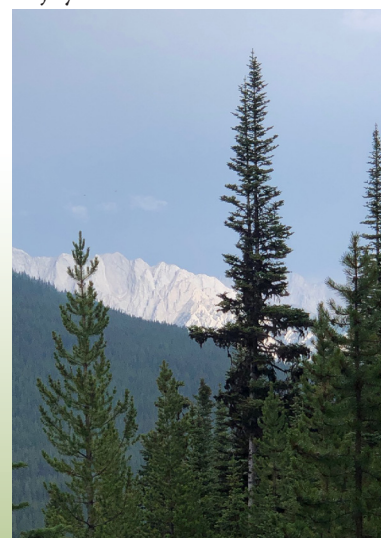
In **AUGUST**, we headed out on a two-month trip.

On the way to the Canadian Rockies, at a city park in Nebraska, a great horned owl flew right next to us. I can safely tell you *that* was the Highlight of 2022 for Ian. You'd think the Pope had flown in.

Thanks to the extreme heat, the Dakotas introduced us to the joys of BITING FLIES, and

Montana

introduced us to biblical LOCUST SWARMS. But once we got to Canada, things were different. Wonderful, actually. No billboards, not many pickup trucks, no abject poverty or wealth, just happy people. The Rockies in Alberta and B.C. with their snow and craggy peaks, wow.







Crater Lake



Vancouver



Pacific Ocean viewed from Olympic National Park



With Claudia in Friday Harbor



Incredible rock formations in Joshua Tree National Park

At Washington's Olympic National Park, walking along the shore of the Pacific Ocean was breathtaking in its vastness and beauty. Walter considers beaches his Frisbee playground.

The beaches in Oregon were just as wonderful. And then ... [drumroll] Oregon's Crater Lake. The deep, rich blue of it stops you in your tracks.

Next stop: Chico, Calif., home of Sierra Nevada beer. Such a taproom! Then further south to the John Muir Wilderness, inspiring to behold.

Last stop in California: Joshua Tree National Park. The Mojave and Colorado desert ecosystems meet there at 3,000 feet elevation to produce surreal geology and the distinctive, adorable Joshua trees. You gotta see it. Then we hooked it home.



In early **NOVEMBER**, in time for the gorgeous fall colors, we headed east to Washington, D.C., to visit Tisna and Fred. Jim arrived also. Tisna is Dutch and the quintessential host. She made us a genuine Dutch apple pie! Yum! They took us to the National Mall, which elicited emotions long ago forgotten.

Next stop: Bella Vista, Ark., to visit longtime friends Susan and Jim. Susan



Fred (left) and Tisna and Jim (right)



Part of the FDR memorial

and I went to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, by far the most amazing museum I've ever experienced. You must go. After saying good-bye, we hooked it home in time for Thanksgiving.



Then Vancouver, that bustling, gorgeous city, just as wonderful as I thought it would be — good sights, good food, good people.

Before taking the ferry over to Friday Harbor on San Juan Island, we spent the night in Anacortes, Wash.

**Toni** (next morning): "Ian, there's a police car in the camp. It's stopping here! He's getting out of his car, and he has a gun in his holster!"

Officer knocks on our door.

**Ian** (opening door): "Good morning, officer."

**Officer**: "Is your name Ian Inglis?"

**Ian** (gulp): "Yes, sir."

**Officer**: "Someone found these documents scattered on the ground last night and gave us a call."

Officer confirms Ian's identity, then hands Ian both our passports, Walter's and our vaccination records and trip itinerary with notes.

**Ian** (with shocked look): "What the hell?"

We thanked the officer and pondered what happened, finally deciding they must have fallen out of Ian's driver door. Conclusion/understatement: It's harder to travel when you're older.

Claudia and Friday Harbor were fabulous as usual. We spent 10 days at the county fairgrounds where Walter could catch the Frisbee endlessly. Then down the Pacific Coast.



2022

## A Farewell to Tina

This summer, our wonderful granddaughter Talula visited us before returning for her sophomore year at Reed College in Portland, Ore. It was just before our two-month trip to Canada and the Pacific Northwest.

She and I, sitting at the dining room table ...

**Toni:** "Man, I feel so sorry for Tina. She was unceremoniously dethroned at age seven as Queen of the roost when we got Walter five years ago. And since we got the trailer last year, she's been left alone a lot — four months this year! Not to mention that for this upcoming trip, it'll cost us \$1,300 for someone to come in and feed her once a day. [pause] Say!! Don't suppose you might want to take her back to Portland with you, do you??!!"

**Talula:** "That's sad, and I feel bad for her, but I don't think it would work out..."

**Ian** (overhearing conversation, bursts into the room): "Talula! We'll give you \$1,500 if you take the cat."

**Talula:** "DEAL!!!"

Now 12-year-old Tina is Royalty once again, this time with Talula and beau Drew in Portland.



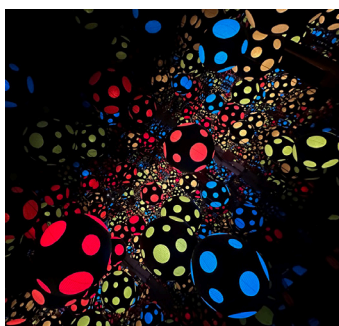
John and AJ's Andrew and Will, age 3



John and AJ on vacation in New Orleans



Not ONE of these buildings was here when we moved downtown 18 years ago.



Inside the Yayoi Kusama installation at the Crystal Bridges Museum



The Einstein memorial

Here's wishing you  
a grand 2023  
filled with adventure, GOODWILL,  
DUTCH APPLE PIE, good friends  
and above all —  
CLEANSED PALATES.

love,  
the Inglises

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The Fabulous Mrs. Roberta Inglis turns 100! Kids from the elementary school sent the centenarian birthday wishes.