December 2021

Greetings,

The holidays are here and thank goodness we can "sort of' celebrate this year. We can meet in person, but we have to hide our smiles. Of course, we then have to compare the number of vacdines we've endured. Three! I am afraid that by next year I'll be saying five. This year, however, has filled us with a sprinkle of hope, buckets of fear, a rush of tears and dash of fun.

Nasr retired, but you would never guess it by the number of hours he spends in his office, working on research, helping students finish their PhDs, and having three to four zoom meetings a day. He talks to people all over the world, so he decided to make his meetings feel as real as possible. On the wall of his office, directly in front of his desk, he has a tv monitor that is 49 inches wide --not diagonally but horizontally-all measurements are horizontal--so he can see the speaker's head is twice the size of normal. That is not all. On his desk to the right, he has a 29" wide monitor on which he checks his email, looks a few things up and can see the rest of the people the zoom meeting-very clearly. Directly in front of Nasr laying at an angle, is another 25" wide that he can write on-like a white board, but people can see it all over the world. He's not done. Hehas a choice of using e.ithe hls 9-inch-widaor 4eincll-wide computer to check his notes for his lectures. What else you ask? Nothing! He does not have one piece of paper on his desk. Now tetnetllbw, these **comp** 1 are his toys. When you were a kid, would you have left your room if you were surrounded by your favorite toys and could talk to anyone in the world, and get the answers to all your questions in less than a second? Biking is still his absolute joy, but he has graduated to an electric bike. There will be no judgement here rome and take your bike on the hills around our

)

i

house and you will understand why electric. Maybe age has a bit todo with it, too. The smile on his face as he feels himself

speeding along the Pacific Coast Hwy with giant palm trees on one side of the road and the crashing waves of the ocean on the other with the wind blowing through his hair. Unfortunately, he has to live vicariously through my flowing hair while I am leaving him in the dust a mile away.

Amira, Matthew, Siena (12), Jada (10)-Dec. 19and Rocko, their Cockapoo dog. The whole family came to visit us at the end of June. The girls got the chance to swim-or shall I say live in the pool. We need to check Jada's DNA. I think she is part mermaid from the Greek Island of Atlantis. We could not get her out of the water. Amira suggested we ALL go to Hawaii in July. We missed each other so much and we needed to get away "from the pandemic", which we couldn't, but we tried. Amira found the most spectacular condos in Kanapali in Maui. They were big enough to house all 1O of us, comfortably. All the Koemers went up to the top of Haleakula to see the sunset over the volcano. Siena wore short shorts and insisted she wasn't cold--everyone else donned winter coats. Twelve-year-olds are hardier than most of us. Both girls learned to snorkel in seconds. We snorkeled at Molokini, but tourism has spoiled the corral there and there weren't as many fish as 28 years ago when we first visited the island. But we didn't need to go anywhere to see fish, there were so many beautiful tropical fish swimming in and around the purple, blue and orange corral right on the beach of our hotel. Siena and I are pen pals. I am learning about Olivia Rodrigo. I was not up on the current singers, but now I know how good she is. Jada loves the camera on her ipad. Well, actually she likes the application that turns her face into weird shapes and adds interesting features to the picture. I am jealous. I have to figure out how to send the same kind of pictures to her. Move over Gidu! Siena has surpassed--some'cifyour mathematical-knowledge. Nasr has Pi memoriz.ed *5* digits after the 3.14. He was so proud of himself-until Siena recited 27 digits by memory! I think that puts a lot of pressure on Gidu. Amira and Matt are looking for a house, but houses are often taken before they get the chance, or their competitors bid

$100,000 more than the asking price. Send good thoughts that they will find their dream house this year. Adam, Oanh, Olivia (9) and Gemma (6) Dec. 16

Adam is always in our hearts and prayers. We miss him, but we all are learning to live with our new normal. Thank

goodness Oanh is well and back to work. YEAH!!!! Olivia and Gemma coµie once a month to spend time with us. These two girls are good at finding things. They discovered a light blue, soft, suede bag, and on one of our trips to the beach they filled it with small rocks. Gidu hopes this is not a foreshadowing of the girwanting to fill other Tiffany bags with sparkly rocks. Gidu is good at telling the girls things that could be considered far-fetched. He wants the girls to use his "Magic Brush." He believes it combs out their hair so much better. But it doesn't ac lly comb through the hair; it just flattens the hair on top. One morning, Olivia was using Gidu's Magic brush and she exfitedly called Gemma into the room. "It really is magic!" Now they both use the magic brush. I will let their mom tell them the truth. All three of them loved Hawaii. But please remind Oanh that next time she has to take Dramamine ***before*** she gets on a boat. Her face's color matched the floating green kelp. We had to keep her away from it so we could find her. We were worried that Gemmie would not be able to snorkel with us because of her age. She was great, she laid on a special board that has a plastic window so she could

.,

see into the water. She got tired of laying there, so she headed to the boat and decided to go down the slide which was up high on the boat. We wanted her to wait until Nasr got there to "catch" her. She couldn't wait for her slow-swimming grandfather and slid right into the deep Pacific. Yup, she popped right up like a buoy. She started a trend and then everyone was slipped and sliding into the water. The adults were wmy of the height-I have no idea how Gemma did it. She is a risk taker like her dad. Olivia is a math fact queen. She worked so hard to memorize them through the fun computer games, and of course her mother works with them daily.



Jasmine bought a house! She struggled with same issues in the housing market as Amira, but somehow, she got lucky andfound this one. She lives in Oceanside about 10 miles from us. Her address is 4757 Sandalwood Way, Oceanside, CA 92057. Her cousin Adam was her realtor and he made sure she got a good house. Jasmine hasdiscovered a new hobby­ plants. She knows the scientific names of every plant and she knows how to take care of them and propagate them from a stalk. The plants are beautiful. but it's kind of a jungle in her house. Make sure that you bring a small machete when you visit. The two Huskies, Dakota and Juneau are no longer living here-nor are we babysitting them. In case you didn't know, Huskies shed so much hair that you can knit a sweater with the fallen hair every day. Nasr is happy-he does a lot less vacuuming. Jazz is lucky because she has tile floors and the hair doesn't stick to it. The reality of home ownership hit Jazz, so she is now working threejobs. She still teaches Public Health Administration at National University. She teaches grades

-7.d.2,,alUUl!jects at thecharter school, Audeo IIand she is an application reader for the University of California, San Diego.

She probably has the mosFeducatell giitdenet on·trerblock. YeN; herdad cuts her lawn, trims the grass mid lfushes and'fakes - 1

-care-of hebrackyard. I think the next-door neighbor wants to hire Nasr to do her lawn. I

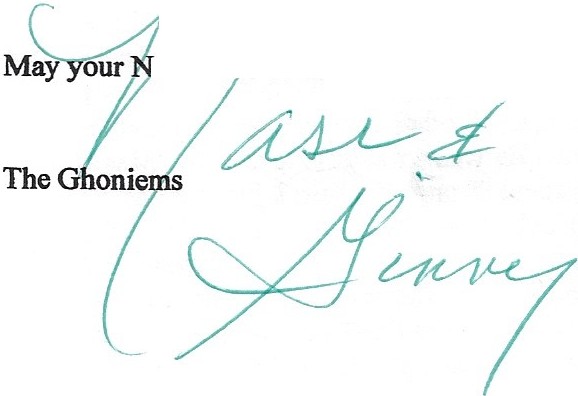
Virginia-provided the comic relief on our Hawaiian trip-but not by choice. People are more buoyant in salt water and some people are very buoyant-like Virginia. I also have an issue with balance. I can get in the water very easily. I have no problem swimming. While swimming just off the hotel beach, Jazz and I saw a huge green sea turtle. I've seen them struggle to get out of the water and onto the sand. Well, I guess I must be a member of the sea turtle family. Getting out of the water was a family affair. *Every one* of my family members pushed and pulled as they tried to get me out of the water. I would stand up when the water rolled in and when it rolled out, I ended up going backwards and tumbling back into the

water. So, for good reasons, once I was in the water I stayed there for a long time. At one point, no one was there w help

because I swam too far north. Yes, you guessed it. I ended up tumbling and rollingonto the sand. A nice young gentleman helped me up. I was mortified. Do not mention this to my family because they will start laughing hysterically. We were so lucky that we could escape for a week and not have to think about problems and just enjoy being with family. We learned the hard way how difficult it is when we cannot be together. We are trying to get back to normal.

Pumpkin-(See the Picture) -a miniature Golden Doodle-is the newest member of our family. Doodles don't shed! That is the only reason I got this dog. She is now a little over *5* months. We go for long walks and we visit the Huskies. She even has too much energy for Juneau and Dakota. Pumpkin jumps and nips at their faces, necks and backs. The two older ones get angry and growl, but it doesn't phase Pumpkin one bit. She is oblivious to the havoc she is reeking with those two dogs. Once Pumpkin is in her pen, Juneau and Dakota put their heads on my lap and howl as Huskies do. They are begging me not to bring the brat back.

As this year wraps up, I pray the vaccines work against the variance Omicron and all the future variants through Zeta. Nasr and I are tryin decide what names they will give atl\_ances once the Greekalpha,furt.\_oms Qut. A.re we alLgoing to\_ learn to count in Greek? I pray that our fears will be allayed, that families can unite again-simply for fun. And I pray that no one else has to die from this horrible virus. The day I saw Gemma jumping upand down on the couch, crying and saying "I hate the Coronavirus, I hate the Coronavirus" over and over again made me think. One part of me was jealous because I, too, wanted to jump up and down and shout that I hated it. For a five-year-old, her vocabulary is impressive. I just wish she didn't have to learn and understand that word.



eQ

be filled with peace and joy.