
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2021



Sky clearing over Hightop Mountain

1 January 2021

Covid, George Floyd (and others) and the election dominated the news for most of this past year. Too much of that was about separation and deep division. May the coming year bring us all back together.

Again – and even more so because of Covid – it was a mostly quiet, close-to-home year. All in all, we are surviving this terrible pandemic quite well. We wish others could be so fortunate. While missing get togethers with family and friends, one of biggest issues for us has been the inability to swim regularly. This is especially significant at our age. Our home pool closed down in March, and it wasn't until Lake Inferior on the farm (below) warmed up enough in late May that we could return to regular workouts. But that ended as well in early October when it became just too cold. So, we ended up limited to about 5 months of swimming this past year and can feel the consequences. We look forward to returning to either the pool or pond – whichever comes first. Meanwhile, walking and hiking have taken on increased importance.



Diane swimming Lake Inferior

Photographing and sharing images are important to John. A good friend and neighbor on the farm had serious medical issues forcing him to remain at home to recover. This was especially hard on someone used to hiking every day for both his physical and spiritual health. Diane suggested John send him an image each day from around the farm so he might see through the images what he was unable on his own. So, John started *Around the Farm* and soon included others as well. Making new images worthy of sharing has been motivating and rewarding.



Trees at Dusk (from our porch)



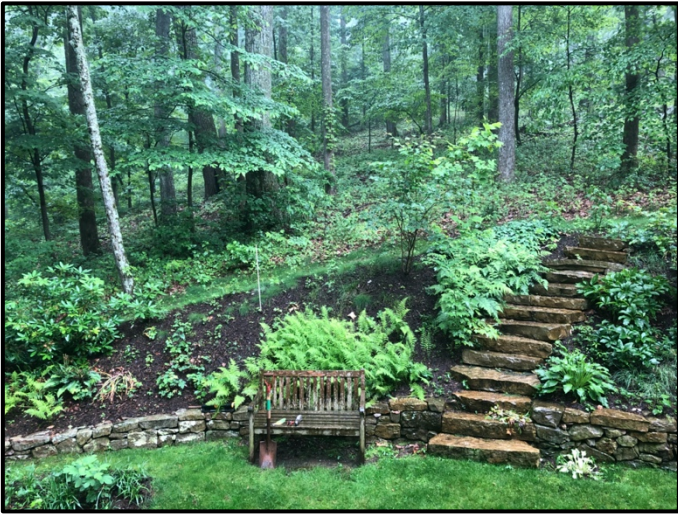
The seasons from our back porch

Before Covid, Diane volunteered once a week at Venable, her old school in Charlottesville, tutoring a brother and sister from Columbia in English and phonics. She has also gotten increasingly involved with Odyssey, a women’s group that meets to hear from leaders in different fields, discuss, and socialize. She has met some wonderful people. Her 2 reading groups had to be put on hold due to Covid.

Diane was scheduled for replacement of her right knee in June, but she cancelled due to Covid. Miraculously, that knee is no longer an issue. Yet, her left is now often quite painful. She has not yet made a decision on what to do, but she will probably have replacement surgery in the spring.

Together, we both got involved in a project on the farm creating inventories of native plants, invasive plants, and birds. With information from knowledgeable residents, we organized and formatted their information into documents now shared on the farm’s website.

John heads up the Trail Adopters who monitor the wonderful 15 mile trail system on the farm. He also initiated a project to design and build a dock for Lake Inferior. It has been presented to the Board of the BFCA (Bundoran Farm Community Association) and is awaiting approval. The hope is for a group of homeowners to build it in the spring.



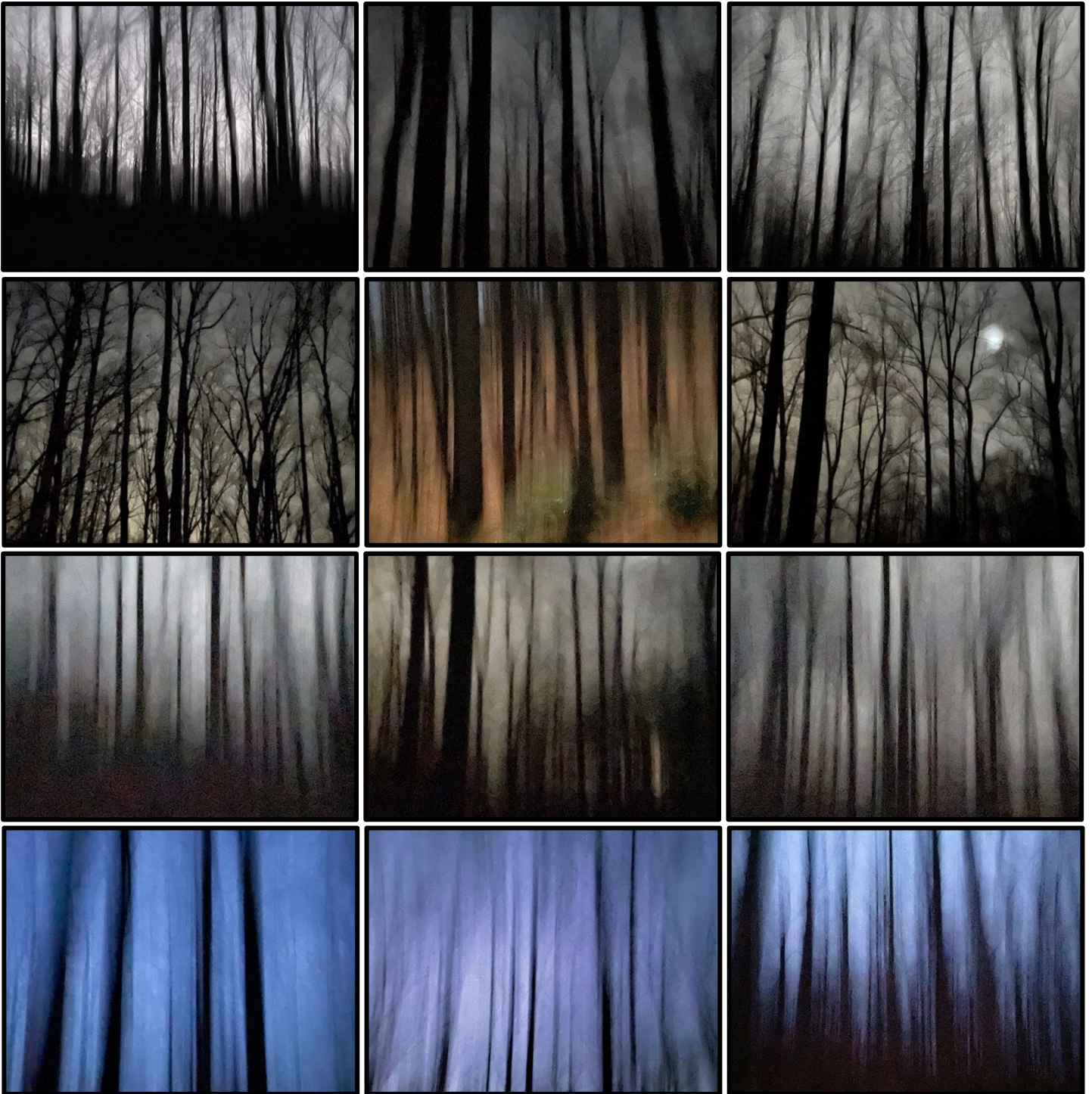
Looking up the hill (our small mountain)

We also continue to be involved in the ongoing business of managing the farm. This preservation development is an active community of owners. While our association employs only one person, a full time farm manager, all decisions are made by a Board advised by various committees. Everything works through the efforts of the owner volunteers. It's a democratic process which requires an informed and involved community. We see it as part of our responsibility in living in such a wonderful place.

In October/November, we travelled to Cape Cod for 2 weeks to care for Kathleen, our sister-in-law, who was recovering from heart surgery. John also used the time to hike, photograph and help Jacki, Diane's sister, overlay a floor in her kitchen.

Another fallout from Covid, is that the WindFeather project which we got involved in to develop a small, affordable, smart wind turbine has been put on hold. Most unfortunate. And yet another was the elimination of the entire season of the Charlottesville Symphony Orchestra. We've tried to compensate by enjoying even more than before the world class concerts offered on YouTube.

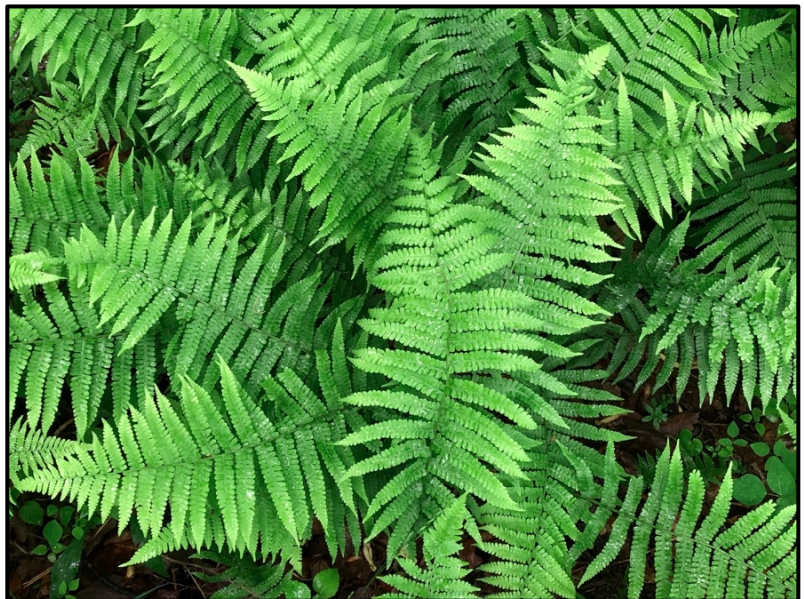
Lastly, we must remember Harold, a good friend, whom we lost during, but not on account of, Covid.



Night trees from our porch (variations)



Around the Farm



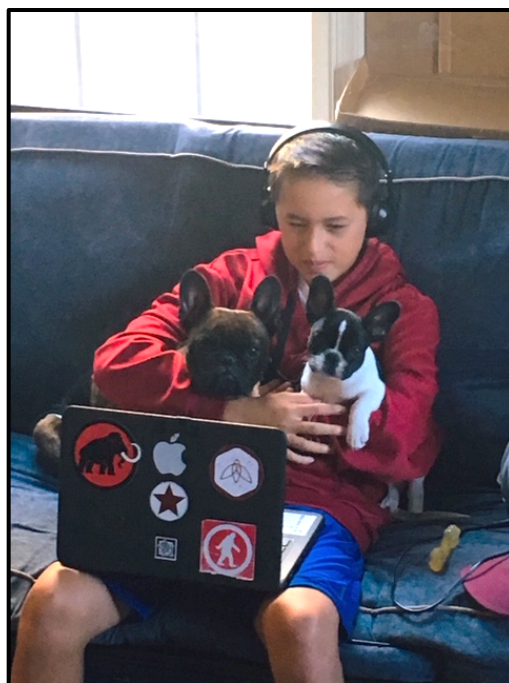


Around the Farm (more)



The children and grandchildren continue to grow and do well. Eli, Audrey and Emma have been schooling online. They're making the best of it, but it's tough for kids. Emma (kindergarten) spends 4 hours/day with online schooling. Audrey (grade 2) and Eli (grade 7) are faring better, but it's simply not the same as being with friends and learning together.

Jett started his college career in September at Swarthmore. He lived on campus in a single room but had to take most of his classes online. And, though recruited for baseball, his team did not have a season (only group workouts). His spring semester will be entirely remote, eliminating what campus experience he had. This was on top of no high school baseball season or prom and a very unconventional and rather silly high school graduation ceremony under a tent in a parking lot with only one student and family at a time to receive his/her diploma. Jett was awarded top student/athlete (the only one in his entire class). We really hope our grandchildren – and all children – will be back in class next fall.



Jett, Eli with Roxy and Lola, Kiersten and Eli, Eli and Jett together in December



Proud flower, Audrey and Emma with their new dog Luna, frog discovered on hike on the farm





Images of the year (including FaceTime with Emma and Audrey, and Christmas via Zoom)





Earthrise, 24 December 1968, Bill Anders, NASA, Apollo 8

For 2 years now, we've shown this *Earthrise* image made in 1968 and quoted poet Archibald MacLeish: *To see the Earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the Earth together, brothers on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold – brothers who know now that they are truly brothers.* We ask ourselves again if we are doing what needs to be done to care for this planet, this sacred ground, this home of ours.

We are gratefully relieved and hopeful with the incoming Biden/Harris administration.

We wish you and your family health, happiness and hope in the coming year. And let's keep wearing our masks.



John and Diane

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(Note: We've terminated our land line and now use only these cell phone numbers.)