

Friends, family loved ones, and Romans. Lend me your ears. Our update from one year and two months in Florida:

We now feel established here and have settled into a fairly comfortable routine. We have a great house, in a quiet, out-of-the-way neighborhood. No crime. Sidewalks. A lot of trees.

We work-out and swim year round in an outdoor pool at the local Y. The water at the pool is 81 degrees, the air temperature, mid 80s to low 90s. Of course, there was a tremendous storm soon after we got here, and our porch started flooding. Allen drove to Lowe's, bought a WetVac, and we sucked up 64 gallons. Thank goodness, we had a landscaper install French drains before Ian and Nicole so the deluge drained away from our porch. Living inside the intercoastal waterway helped us avoid the serious damage that those who lived oceanside in our county experienced.

The magnificent unspoiled state/county parks continue to provide us tranquility and awe. Our sky is unspoiled from light pollution so we can watch from our front yard or the beach as different space-bound rockets soar; the different constellations/planet formations are displayed; and the Space Station flies overhead.

The mighty Atlantic Ocean is peaceful and serene, except the days it isn't. Those days the waves are pounding the shore, and there is an orange flag atop the life-guard tower. Exhilarating, but not for swimming. We often go to the dog-friendly beach with Gator, our beloved rescue dog who just turned five, and let her run between us. Allen also takes her to a huge dog park where she vigorously plays with other dogs, jumps a hurdle, and runs up and down forever a V-shaped ramp (as long as she gets treats).

Alana, Vivian's daughter, and her husband, Michael, bought a house in a lovely neighborhood in Lake Mary. Weekly, Vivian goes to Lake Mary, which is about 50 miles away, to spend the day with Alana and her family. Stella and Serafina, Alana's twin daughters, had their second birthday and began Montessori school in August. They all live incredibly busy lives. Alana and Michael are each teaching 7-8 classes a semester and manage to juggle gym classes for the girls and lots of playdates with new friends.

We play racquetball every Friday. Vivian beats the tar out of Allen. Allen asked a friend, "what do I do to keep from losing?" "Don't play her," he advised. Allen works out twice a week with a trainer, focusing on balance, core, and other areas. After each session, Allen swims. Vivian takes daily group classes and swims three times weekly. She is taking swim lessons to improve her strokes, particularly so she can swim with a group of women in the Great Atlantic Ocean.

On Sunday Vivian spends the morning at the Unitarian Church with the beach calling us in the afternoon. Vivian also is active in the League of Women Voters, Volusia County Democratic Club, and walking dogs at the Halifax Humane Society.

Allen's health? Pretty good. He has Afib which his cardiologist is treating with a cocktail of medicine. He is to have an Echogram in January. Allen has a great deal of pain in his shoulders and conferred with the doctor who owns the medical practice and conducts stem-cell therapy for free. Allen recently had an MRI to confirm how arthritic his left shoulder is. Allen hopes to be on the doctor's list soon for the stem-cell therapy.

Although we stayed fairly close to home this year, Vivian traveled with her sister, Kenille, to the French Polynesian Islands late summer. It was especially memorable because they had not vacationed together in 20 years. The cruise included snorkel excursions to the surrounding reefs and beautiful hikes to the different islands. In fall, Allen and Vivian took a trip to New York City to see the Broadway productions--Six with original cast, the Neil-Diamond musical, A Beautiful Noise, and Take Me Out--along with other sites such as Central Park and the Empire State Building.

Our door always is open to family and friends. We were delighted by visits from a few of you and hope to see more in the future. We love you and hope you have a peaceful, healthy 2023.

