



Our 2020



Soleluna Restaurant, Dec. 1, 2019

What to say about 2020? A sad disaster from the point of view of public health management, but also the discovery of inner strength for many of us. We still remember when we went shopping in March and employees were forbidden to wear masks because it would ‘spook’ customers. We’ve come a long way since then. No wonder so many people are distrustful of the Center for Disease Control.

The year started off well for Robert, with two bands and a few gigs to rehearse for, as well as his weekly jazz workshop. But by March 11 everything started changing. 70 cases of covid had been detected a few towns away, and even though the entire US only had a few hundred cases, New Yorkers started to cancel all social activities. Robert’s rehearsals and gigs were all cancelled (his last gig was March 1) and Cathy started working from home.

Working at home has actually been a welcomed change for Cathy. No riding on the subway for an hour in each direction every day, dealing with crowds at Times Square (where her office is located) and no more stuffy office. She now has extra time every day to exercise (daily 2 mile walk) and has lost a lot of weight - having a new knee has also helped!

By April 1, we both had a mild case of covid-19 (but didn't know it until it was confirmed many months later). But all's well that ends well, and we were both up and running by mid April.

Now confined to the apartment for months on end, Robert started recording pieces by Bach, Barry Harris and Charlie Parker on his clunky old piano (and posting the videos on Facebook), while Cathy started on a quilting project (see photo below of the final result).



Mutattr, by Barry Harris



One of our neighbors recommended to us a day trip to Sterling Forest, about an hour drive out of New York City. It was refreshing to rediscover natural landscapes. We were lucky to go there before the hordes of city dwellers discovered it.



Sterling Forest, June 25

Weather permitting; we were able to frequently eat lunch in our back yard, which felt surprisingly liberating!



As July 4th approached, we noticed that hundreds of people were venting their lockdown frustration by igniting fireworks for hours on end, often late into the night, and weeks before Independence Day. The night of the 4th saw one of the most spectacular city-wide fireworks extravaganzas I have ever seen in New York!



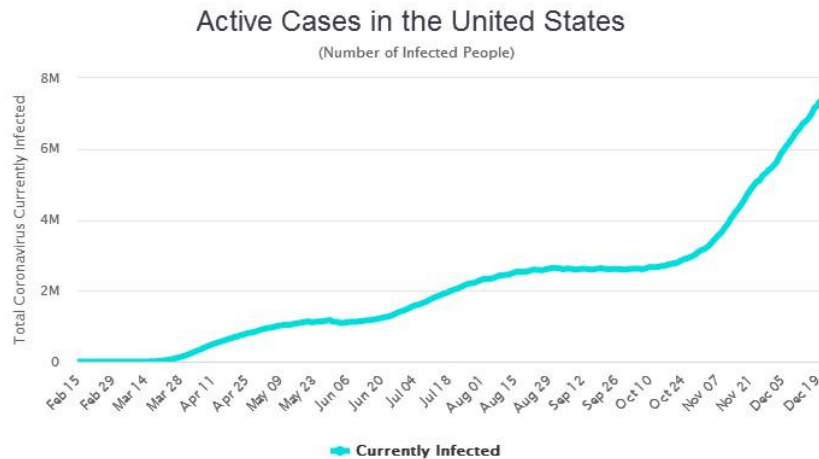
View from our window on July 4th

September weather was warm and pleasant, and musicians were now allowed to play outdoors. Robert was able to play every Sunday afternoon in a jam session at Hastings-On-Hudson, which provided motivation to practice and learn new tunes.



Hastings-On-Hudson Library entrance, September 20

As expected, Thanksgiving (Nov. 26) in the USA came at a price. Covid infections rose steeply, and now social interaction seems as precarious as ever.



While we have all tried to live life as normally as possible, we must be mindful of the misery and pain that covid is causing all over our planet. We're hoping that the new Administration will get us united in tackling this invisible blight.

With this, we wish you all a happy holiday!

