

Jane's Journal July 2021 – Written by Jane DeFrank:

July 23rd was a momentous day for me as after 16 months of staying at home and only seeing my 55+ Club friends through Zoom, if I got to see you at all, finally we could be together in person. I don't believe our lives will ever be the same. In early March, 2020, we were in Northern California celebrating our great-granddaughter's first birthday. I remember standing in line at Rite-Aid and reading the headlines on the National Enquirer and in disbelief. I was thinking that this is not real. That if the National Enquirer was reporting it then it must be a hoax. However, by the time we had gotten home, the news was getting worse and in just a couple of weeks everything was being shut down.

Those first few weeks as we settled into a routine of staying home, getting up before dawn to go to be standing in line at the grocery stores for senior hours, and not being able to visit family, were surreal. One by one everything that we were involved in began to be cancelled indefinitely. Strange things started happening. We started cooking our meals and eating together, we started a happy hour for the just two of us and I started baking desserts. Needless to say while this did help our mental stability it was not doing much for waistlines.

Fortunately we found Zoom so we were able to stay in touch with family and friends and we were able to have the 55+ Club meetings.

I sincerely congratulate the past board of the club for keeping things together and getting a Zoom account that allowed us to continue with many of our group activities.

Since George and I were often on different meeting schedules, we had to learn muting ourselves so that everyone would not hear us talking to the dogs or other phone calls and meetings. A big thing for me was to remember that I couldn't just walk up behind George while he was on a Zoom meeting in my pajamas or worse my underwear!! Being back to meeting in person means that I have to remember that I have to dress from the waist down again.

But all of this did not really hit home until we lost Jack Snyder. He was our first club victim of COVID-19. Up until that time we had not even know anyone who had been sick with it. After Jack we lost three more friends including our dear neighbor and former 55+ Club member Manfred Bartsch.

At this point I want to believe that the worse is over. As more and more people get vaccinated, I want so much to believe we will overcome COVID-19 and it will eventually go the way of other devastating diseases. And we will

once more get back to being the social society that we have enjoyed. But we are not through this entirely yet. So as we begin to enjoy each other's company, let us stay diligent in remember many of the safety precautions that we have been practicing for the past 16 months and continue to stay safe.

Now I wish to thank the current board of the 55+ Club, for their help in making last Friday a very successful meeting and 8th anniversary celebration. And a special thank you to Sharon Stuewe for the amazing video.