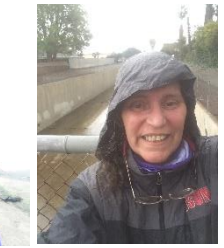
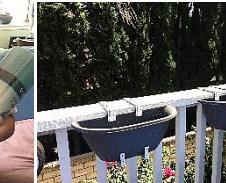


Javier y Renée 2021



January



March

April

May

June



June

July

August



August



August

September



October

November

December

We **welcomed in 2021** exhausted from a COVID-ridden 2020 and City and State-wide **lock downs** as case numbers surged to their highest since the beginning of the global pandemic. Starting the new year with LA as a worldwide hot spot was a bit discouraging. The new year's notorious and glorious events consumed much of our time and energy (e.g., DC Capitol insurrection, a second impeachment hearing, the eventual peaceful transfer of government power including the inauguration of first female Vice President of the USA). Jav and Renée vied for the desktop computer in our home, as we continued to zoom CSUN classes (Mechanical Engineering – Numerical Analysis, 3rd level of Calc, Civil Engr, Materials Engr, Advanced Computer Aided Design) and work (25th year at CSUN, the past three as a Retention & Data Specialist). Despite all the messiness in life, by the end of the month we took time to celebrate with a nice dinner for **Renée's 60th birthday** (at home, of course!).

In **February**, nice weather gave us chances to get outside despite the lock down - for some relief from endless hours in cramped spaces, we exercised and enjoyed the deck. We also got the opportunity to visit with our dear friend **Rocio** who was back from Mexico visiting and supporting her family. We had a nice time catching-up and walking in **Escorpión Canyon near Bell Creek**. Later our month's highlight was celebrating **Tahsi's 9th Birthday** – we followed our best safety protocols, physically distanced, masked, outdoors - brought her Denny's "to go" and hot chocolate! A **unicorn rainbow shower cake** experience ensured a party, despite COVID! For Renée, getting out of the house during lock down became a priority, with running a couple times a week, in addition to her daily zoom workouts.

We continued our tradition of **celebrating Pi Day** (on 3.14.21) with a "to go" pie from Marie Calendars. During **March**, **vaccinations** began in our household, continuing into **April**. With added safety we visited with friends and tried to go exercise at the park more often. One evening while out we were **interviewed by a local TV 11:00 o'clock nightly news** reporter about crime near campus. For **Mother's Day** we celebrated together, with Jav buying his mom exercise items in support of a healthy lifestyle! We also tried our hand again, after several years, to have set up some window boxes and plant flowers before the triple digit summer weather started baking the deck.

In **June**, with everyone vaccinated, we joyously embraced the chance to **join together as family for the first time since 2019!** What better way to do it than to celebrate all the **June birthdays (Abuela, Isa, and Mimi)**. We also exchanged Christmas presents and gifts for the other missed birthdays during 2020 and 2021. It was a moment to rejoice our good health, sharing appreciation and gratitude for being with each other. In a year of such loss and grief it was a valuable chance to reflect upon the simple things that we have missed.

In **July Javier turned 20** and said goodbye to being a teenager! That did not stop his mom from still asking him to help her by **putting together a new bed** and a kitchen cart with cutting board. We had a chance to celebrate and visit Abuela and Tía Michele in Lake Arrowhead, grilling and making custard tarts. We also took advantage of the California free fishing day – although we only "caught" some lovely early morning peace at Orchard Bay. It was also fun to see the July 4th fireworks over the lake and enjoy a nice walk down to the Village. Back in Canoga Park Jav received from his mom a "**Typewriter Poet**" (friend **Billie Marie Robinson**) **hand-delivered gift basket**. We also had a **meal inside a restaurant** for the first time in a year and a half (**IHOP**), and got to celebrate later with Norah and the Poseys – as part of our week-long birthday fun, which included parties, mini-golf, bowling and more with his friend Caitlin whose birthday is the same week. **Nino Paul** also treated us to a **Dodger game** as a birthday present – getting back to such beloved activities was wonderful!

Early **August** our primo Ricky threw his son Weston a belated graduation party (a fellow UC Santa Cruz banana slug). It was great fun to celebrate his accomplishments with extended family in Claremont. Later in the month we took lovely three-week vacation, flying up to **Portland**, to visit **our dear friend and Javier's Nina Mimi**. While there we hung out, and enjoyed exploring, shopping, cooking, eating out at restaurants, relaxing, doing art, writing, playing music, going to the farmer's market, jogging down by the **river**, and **playing with the Luthers**. We took in a **minor league baseball game with Sam**, went to **TopGolf**, went **kayaking** and joined **Gabby and Ben** in Eugene for lots of fun, and a day at the coast. We also helped decorate Mimi's lovely garden, **stenciling her shed door**, adding a "mountain ridge" **fence topper**, and **renovating an old bench** by adding images and symbols grounded in reflective ancestral wisdom and contemplative gratitude.

In **September** Paul, Danny and Lee Anne represented the Martínez family by trekking to Kona, HI to celebrate cousin **Josh Dawrs and Meaghan's wedding!** The rest of us **joined via zoom** (thanks to Charlie's video and tech contributions!). Such a wonderful way to give long-distance well-wishes and blessings to the lovely couple, his mom Gail and the whole family! While Jav had anticipated to be back full time on campus for **Fall Semester 2021**, the COVID Delta variant had other plans for CSUN. Both Renée and Javier ended up on campus only one day a week during Fall semester. Jav for an Electrical Engineering lab (he zoomed Electrical Engr, his last of 4 calculus classes, Thermodynamics, and a Women's Studies general education course). **Renée rode her bike to work** (16 miles round trip) for the first months, which also got her back into doing it for fun. We joined **Marisol for her birthday** at her favorite Mexican restaurant and went miniature golfing (forever young!)

October started with us participating once again in fun events and activities, including spending time with Abuela/Mom. Javier and Renée went to **Griffith Park's 125th anniversary celebration, and took a ride on the merry go round**; later in the day we joined the open house for Tía Chuchas new location and ended the night catching a movie with Marisol. We renewed some fall socially distanced traditions having a **pumpkin carving** party with the Poseys; we also carved one at home with **Marisol**. Both times Javier's design featured very complex characters from a video game he plays. In **November**, along with Marisol, we happily joined our community welcoming back our **local neighborhood Día de Los Muertos** festival, enjoying the booths, car show, music and neighborhood shops. The next week, we were able to finally catch up with our **dear friend Bea for a belated birthday celebration at India Sweet and Spices** – it felt just like old times! Another highlight of the month was an opportunity to see our good friend **Scotty Barnhart perform with the Count Basie Orchestra**, as their director and an incredible trumpeter – at CSUN's performing arts center, where every seat is a "good seat!" **Thanksgiving** was particularly special this year as we found ourselves appreciative of the simple things in life – utmost among them was spending time with family. Later that weekend, as part of our **monthly "family connection time" with Tashi**, we once again played tennis, added some basketball and did some drawing at the local park. Javi and Renée also started playing more sports on the weekends, appreciating getting out and running around.

As **Decembers** rolled around, we had more time with family. We came together to offer blessings our prima Ariana as she readies for a new baby girl in 2022. Norah and the Posey's hosted our annual Solstice Party once again – a nearly three-decade tradition! Making plans for Christmas in Lake Arrowhead with family **we find ourselves aware of life's many blessings and abundance**. The world and so many among us have lost so much during the past two years.

Yet here we are, stronger, and hopefully wiser, because of all the challenges we've faced. It is with this hope and confidence that we offer this wish to you, our circle of family and friends...In 2022, May you live in Love, Hope, Truth, Kindness, Generosity, Peace and Joy. We hope you are able to do more of what makes your Soul sing!