

adventure

ALASKA

December 2018

Volume 24 Number 1

Transition Time

Yup, that's right. If you didn't get last year's newsletter, that means the "Big R", retirement, at least for the middle-aged Bureaus. Long planned and the trigger now pulled, Adventure Alaska is now in the hands of another. But don't despair, most of you know him, his name is Patrick. The very same one responsible for many of your fine memories of the North, and for not a small part of our success for nearly three decades. The focus will be a bit different, concentrating on family and custom groups with maybe somewhat more limited itineraries, but promising many of the same places and of course, the inimitable charm and intimate knowledge of Patrick. We'll let him fill you in on the details when he's got it "all worked out".

We'll be doing our best to assist in the hand-off and won't be completely removed, as the understanding is that the Van Cleaning Department Head/Staff, Liam, has the option to pick back up when Patrick is done, but only after at least an undergraduate degree and more of the world under his belt. He might only be sixteen, but has a lot of Alaska and travel in those short years. This summer when putting a last (?) group on the Yukon River (in fact Patrick, Julie, and her reasonably well-behaved Australian family), while I was merely witnessing in sentimentality, Liam unsolicited said, "I could do this". Of course it was a sunny day...

Both respective moments and observations though, were borne of the incredible fortune that we've had to make our lifestyle our livelihood. We've always been conscious of how frightenly uncommon it is to get to choose either in Life, and the fact that we have gotten to do so for both, and combine them in the most satisfyingly fortunate fashion imagineable, can only leave one eternally grateful. Many a past client has reminded us of such, and fostered a continuous renewal of that appreciation. We thank you more than you might imagine for being a part of this privilege.

A big change too is the fact that Discovery Cabins, where many of you have stayed, is in fine new and wonderful hands. Though it wasn't part of this year's plan to sell, a fine young local couple has been gently insistent for the last couple of years, and it is now theirs. No, we haven't forgotten the joy of clearing the land and peeling logs at 20 below, nor breathlessly sweeping the sawdust out of each almost-finished cabin just as the next group pulled into the driveway, but to each new season a new adventure. Adventure Alaska groups under Patrick (and maybe Future Liam!) will still stay there and drift off to sleep listening to the same creek. And Barb, Todd and Liam will still stumble over for

meals with the group, but probably will not be manning the grill or doing the dishes.

As to who will, meet Jamey Stehn, Samantha Brown, and daughter Ellie! Past clients may recall Sam while caffeinating at the "Grounds for Hope" coffee shop downtown, and Jamey from riding herd seasonally on the Seaview Bar and Cafe (furiously building and enjoying local trails in the "other" season). And second grader Ellie (assistant cabin cleaner in training) would most likely be voted, "Most Enthusiastic Hope Husky" at the lovely little school right next door. And so, if doing a trip with Adventure Alaska or merely wandering back through Hope, your new hosts will proudly welcome you and build on a satisfying tradition. It's



Discovery Cabins, Family #2

of course bittersweet for us, but we're very excited for them (and we'll still live across the street for plumbing issue consultation), so c'mon back to Hope! A new generation awaits.

Other News

As for other news, of course the cosmos doesn't stay constant and time makes its passage felt. For the newly liberated Bureau family, they'll be embarking shortly on a tour of colleges in the West. Liam has refused to stay young and with one more year in our wee school of Hope, he'll be off to that next great passage in 2020. As every parent knows, it's a shockingly quick process in the long run, this child rearing (but of course there are moments during which it can seem a bit longer..!). We feel quite fortunate though as he has all the makings and promise of being a fine, curious, engaged, and ultimately satisfied human. One can't ask for much more. Speaking of our small school, Liam's education this year includes an unexpected bonus for a teenage boy with a total school population of 17 and no girls near one's

age --an endearing female Belgian exchange student (not staying with us!). They've become quite "close".

He and Todd are off in March to again attend a Spanish immersion program for three weeks in Mexico, though now he's fostering an interest in learning French (ref. above Belgian). As for other passages, Todd this summer had the privilege of joining the Prostate Cancer Club. (Check that PSA boys!) It's a very large club, entry fees are minimal and you get to meet lots of new people. In his case it provided for the exclusive opportunity of 45 radiation treatments. Not much of an option for such in Hope, but he was fortunate to



Group searching for "scientists" denying global warming

get to fly to most all of them in Anchorage, making the one way hour and a half road trip, a delightful 12 minute flightsee. All done, prognosis good, and again concertedly playing hard --back to being full of "p*ss and vinegar". He's back in the Chihuahuan Desert for the winter, riding a mountain bike furiously, paddling, and working on an oral history project of area elders. Before all that, he got to enjoy moving the "Unabomber Shack", Patrick's summer abode, from its perch on the the Discovery Cabins property to the lot behind our house. In a fit of sentimentality, possibly



Loading for the Yukon -- and it all fit!!!

aided by a last shot of whiskey at the old table within as Patrick boxed his last items, the notion was born. Skids were built underneath (in the coldest stretch to

that point, during which while underneath, the wisdom of the notion might have been internally debated) and it was drug successfully by bulldozer to its new home in the pre-dawn light, hours before Todd's flight south.

As for Barb, who endures winter far better than her spouse, she had the frustration of an atrocious season of fall weather precluding her passion of cross country skiing, only to drive through a blizzard on the day of the flight south for the holidays. The blizzard ended up dumping four feet of adequacy for skiing, all left unattended for the duration of the three week family wanders. Oh yeah, and they had a big dang earthquake just before, the biggest since the great 1964 calamity. No lasting damage in Hope but several schools in the region will not be re-opening for more than a year. The whole family (avec La Belge) is scheduled for a reunion in California in February, palling around with Patrick and Julie in their winter haunts for a bit to help break up the winter. May the sun shine.

Staff Updates

As for **Patrick**, well you've already gotten his newsiest tidbit, and the contact info here now reflects it. We'll leave it to the droves to reach out to him, and continue their Alaska adventure. We'll have an "on-the-ground" update in February, and hopefully he'll be complaining about too many interested folks....

Chris and Kathleen, thoroughly retired, purchased a spiffy new RV and are slated to visit our world in the Big Bend on its inaugural voyage in early 2019. Yep, right smack down there on that southern border, where the proposed "Wall" is most adamantly rejected. Yep, a borderland filled with the very people who are most closely familiar with, The Other --like the "others" that founded this country and formed the basis of its dynamism. Like the "other" way of thinking, the one that dignifies humanity and its intrinsic shared path. Maybe after we visit Mexico, we'll visit the National Park, if it's open. What nonsense, to say nothing of the moral element...

Saner "facts" include the one that **Sheri and Michiel** continue to aid travelers in exploring the diversity of this planet and its delicate balance, in both northern and southern hemispheres, by small expedition vessel. We're contemplating visiting them in France this fall, maybe with a visit to Belgium (don't tell Liam).

And so here at the end of this humble newsletter, where we usually have a plug for returning to Alaska with the enticement of a, "Repeat Offender" discount, this time around we'll defer to Patrick. We hope that he might give us a small discount when we finally get the opportunity to discover some of his "secret" spots in Alaska that we've heard so much about.

And with a written adios, au revoir and sayonara, we'll wish you the very best in all your endeavors, travails and adventures to come. We're determined to do so in our lives -- as soon as we get used to answering the phone with a simple, civilian, "Hello". Please do keep in touch. You can see just who is answering with, "Adventure Alaska"...