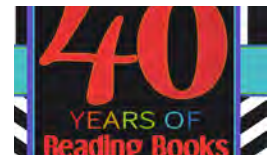




**BOTANICAL BOUNTY**  
WINTER CARNIVAL  
ORCHID SHOW AT  
COMO PARK

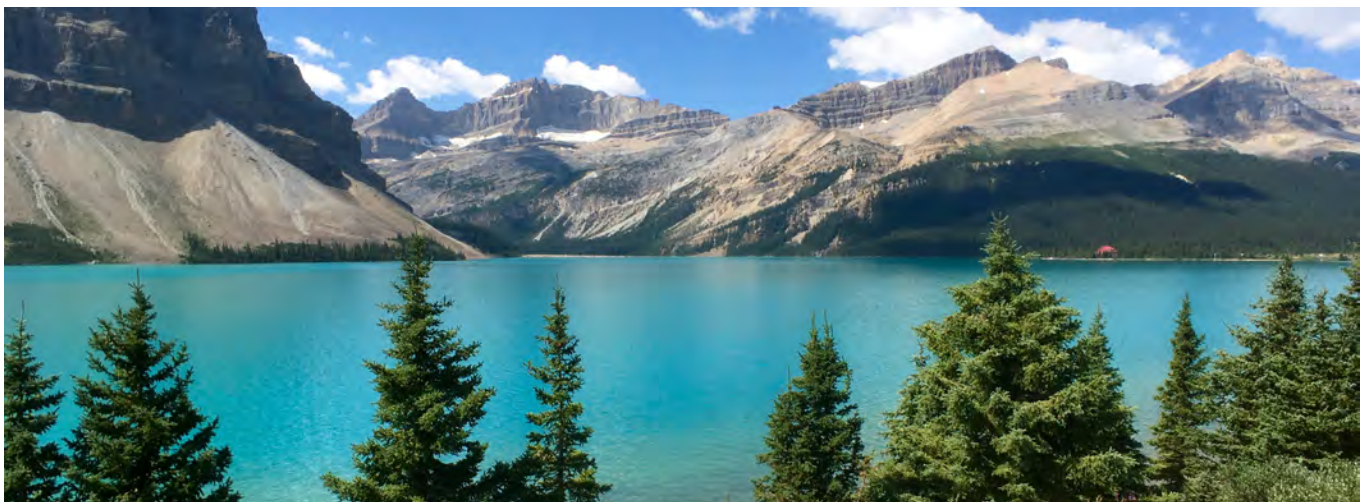


**BROADWAY BOUND**  
ELISE GAVE THE GIFT  
OF MUSIC AND WE  
SAW *HAMILTON*!



**BOOK CLUB**  
FOUNDED BY JUDY'S  
MOM & DAD: STILL  
GOING STRONG

# WATTMAN WANDERINGS



Back to Banff: Reliving their epic "ROAD TRIP!" from 2015, Rick and Judy returned to Banff National Park, and environs, in Canada.

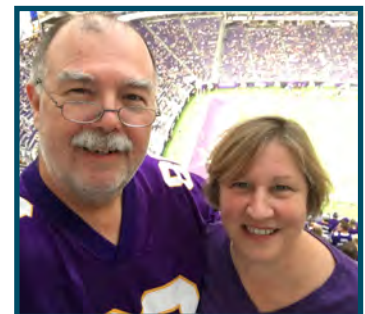
## Emptier Nest

After dabbling in fits and starts through various iterations over the past half decade of an "empty (or nearly) nest," **Rick** and **Judy** experienced the first full year completely on their own in 2017—the first year since 1990 and the advent of kids, that is! We still have frequent contact with our girls and their men (We LOVE it and them!) but we no longer have anyone else living with us.\*

"**Elise's**" room is now the "guest room," and "**Anna's**" room is now the "office." They both still have things here in storage (after all, RICK still has things at his mom's house!) but all that is tucked away out of sight.

In fact, we have regular need for an office now, as Judy started her sabbatical in August. She is not heading to campus on a daily basis, which necessitated a plan for a place to complete her projects. She painted the room and found a second desk; wall hangings, furnishings, and furniture are all updated.

**Rick and Judy even managed to attend a Vikings game this year at the new US Bank stadium, site of Super Bowl LII in 2018.\*\***



\* We actually still share our home with **Morris** the cat, until such time as Anna and **Alex** move to more cat-friendly facilities.

\*\* And the fantasy of Super Bowl Champions, too: our Vikings.

In our empty nest, we have been cutting down our clutter: tossing old technology, culling our collection of books, purging past projects, chucking outmoded cameras. We figure in another ten years or so, we should be just about right-sized.

One of the highlights of the year was our return to the Canadian Rockies, in August. With long-time friends from our church, the Wilders and McCarthys, we dubbed ourselves the McWildmans. We drove cross-country, camped in fire-ravaged Kootenay National Park, and took in the sights on day trips. We also camped in Jasper National Park. As we said in 2015, if you ever get a chance to visit, don't miss it. Despite it being our second visit, the scenery did not let us down. Even though the air was smokey—we drove through active fire zones every day, with trees burning beside the road—there was plenty to do and to be amazed by.

Rick had been in Canada already. In late July, he flew to Portland, OR, where he visited his mom, **Doris**. Then he drove to B.C. with his sisters, **Margaret** and **Marian**. There they celebrated with their dad, **Wayne**, his 90th birthday, and sorted through his house in anticipation of his move to an assisted living facility.

Another highlight was our trip to New York City, in July. Elise surprised Rick last Christmas with tickets to see the stage sensation, *Hamilton: An American Musical*, on Broadway! Not to miss out, Judy scouted ticket resellers to get her own ticket—and our seats turned out to be right next to one another. We met **Matt** and Elise at an Airbnb in Brooklyn (not “hood adjacent” but right smack dab in “da hood”). We Uber-ed all over town; we took trains and taxis and ferries; adventurous Judy even biked up Park Avenue in Manhattan during rush hour! We toured a bit (Trinity Church, Rockefeller Center, Times Square); saw legendary jazz drummer Ari Hoenig at a club in Greenwich Village; blitzed through the Metropolitan Museum of Art; saw *Bandstand*, another Broadway show; we had street food and deli food; we even took an afternoon at the beach in Far Rockaway. After one hair-raising taxi ride, Judy exclaimed that she would LOVE to be a New York cabbie.

We pray you had a **Merry Christmas** and that you will also have a blessed **New Year!**

## Other Highlights

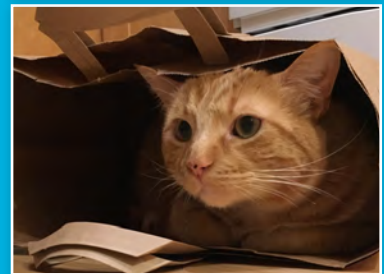
While on an anniversary trip in Winona, Rick and Judy discovered a gem: the Minnesota Marine Art Museum.

Realizing that her sabbatical affords her time to do things she wished she had time for, Judy is taking drum lessons; has joined a drum circle; has taken multiple trips to Texas to see Elise and Matt, and to Seattle to visit Doug & Joanie Kraft, dear friends from church who moved there.

Rick and Judy are finally addressing retirement planning, learning a lot, and attempting the financial shuffle in preparation for that eventuality.

Rick continues to work at **FaithSearch** International as Director of Communications; and at the Apple Store as a technical specialist. Judy still volunteers at Richardson Nature Center, where the new arrival, a broad-winged hawk, is acclimating.

## 2017 in a Flash



**2017 in a Flash:** (top to bottom) B&B anniversary trip to Winona, MN [3/31]; Morris the cat's in the bag [4/8]; in B.C. celebrating Wayne's 90th with Margaret and Marian [7/27]; the McWildmans [8/4]; dinner at Theo & Byron's, with Mike & Annie, Esther & Grant [10/14].