

We hope that everyone who reads this is healthy, happy and doing well. For us, 2013 was a year of reunions and transformations. We love our El Sobrante home and have had to weather a few minor earthquakes, but so far so good. A big storm early last year led to a roof repair, but since then we've had very little rain; in fact, now we're in a serious drought.

Chris has been working away to improve the property while having fun climbing trees and playing in the dirt. The big tasks have been building gopher-proof boxes and gardening in them, pruning and shaping trees, maintaining the riparian zone, and filling in a few holes. We thought that part would take six cubic yards of soil and a weekend, but when all was said and done a couple months later, he had moved 35 cubic yards and added a couple hundred feet of usable yard area. That meant losing our big fountain, but we repurposed the five barrels into planter boxes, plus new garden beds with organic garden soil. We've been using paprika, milk, cinnamon, etc., to ward off moles, skunks, deer and assorted garden pests that seem determined to devour the scenery and vegetables. It's a challenge.

Mikki has been enjoying the garden bounty, coming up with yummy new recipes using freshly picked tomatoes, kale, chard, spinach, lettuce arugula, peppers, basil and parsley. The harvest slowed with December's freezing temperatures, but some of our leafy greens are still producing! What we need is rain, so wish us some water!

RIP, West Coast Leaf: 2008-2013

In January 2013 we laid to rest the last issue of the *West Coast Leaf* newspaper. Colorado and Washington State had just legalized marijuana for the first time this century, and it seemed like a fitting ending after our five-year run that the last issue prominently feature articles about those historic votes and a prediction that this is only the beginning. However, for our print edition, it was

BEST WISHES FOR 2014



Chris and Mikki
at Seattle
HempFest,
August 2013

the end. Our circulation peaked at 175,000 copies and we became a victim of our own success — the high cost of distribution made it hard to expand readership. We had a coast-to-coast distribution network, a reputation as the “cannabis newspaper of record” and terrific support of our community and volunteers, especially Jackie. But the stress, pressure and deadlines that come with newspaper publishing are not missed, and we have more time now to pursue other interests. We have since fielded calls from many people who were sad to

see their ‘favorite newspaper’ go. Some WCL fans gave us a plaque expressing their appreciation in handwritten notes. It was quite touching.

Luckily for us and the world, we forged a new partnership with



Jackie, Chris and Mikki



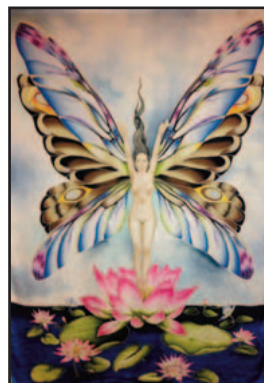
Jeremy, who has been instrumental in making the transition from paper to an online format. **TheLeafOnline.com** was launched in the Fall and is building steam toward a goal of turning a profit sometime in 2014, so please visit our website and "like" us on Facebook. WCL also spun off an online program, **Leaf Radio Reports**, on the Time 4 Hemp Radio Network section of the iHeartRadio network Mondays at 4 pm, or listen to it anytime via the link at theLeafOnline.com.

Chris keeping almost as busy as usual

Chris still teaches at Oaksterdam University and works as a marijuana defense expert. His trusty assistant Danielle moved on, so now Sharon helps tame his crazy calendar. At the beginning of the year, he installed the Oaksterdam Cannabis Museum at its third location in less than a year, at the new OU campus on Telegraph Ave. The cabinets are consolidated and look good, but there is a lack of wall space to hang the informational posters and it needs better labeling. He is trying to help Richard and Brenda figure out what to do to preserve their USA hemp museum collection, as well.

While other states' elections technically do not affect California law, Chris's court schedule for the year was noticeably lighter. Many cases that typically would have gone to trial were resolved for low-level plea deals and there were more legalization and reform bills offered in US and state governments this year than ever before. So we're seeing gains across the nation. Congress even legalized industrial hemp research in the Farm Bill that later stalled due to its failure to act.

A fabric painting Mikki got at the Women's Visionary Congress.



Mikki's year of mindful self-improvements

After having a mastectomy in 2012, Mikki elected to take the year off to focus on her healing journey. She had reconstructive surgery in April to put in an implant and form a new breast. In November, her doctor performed another surgery to help achieve better symmetry. She is happier with the new result and is considering getting a tattoo on her bosom to take ownership of the change, give it an artsy look, and celebrate her personal transformation. In addition to eating well, exercising and taking lots of recommended supplements, Mikki took a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course and is developing a daily meditation practice that has been life-changing. Recognizing that she was a bit of a stress addict, she is learning how to deal with *Full Catastrophe Living* (the class textbook by Jon Kabat-Zinn) and feeling much more calm, happy, healthy and present. She highly recommends the MBSR course that is offered all over the place. She continues to learn more about how to have a healthy, anti-cancer life-style, and Chris goes along for the ride.

We are conscientiously trying to get and stay in shape. We hiked Mount Tam with John and Ellen and have been checking out hiking trails and walks that are close to home, sometimes with Ray and Louise from Lakeridge Athletic Club. Luckily the club has a wonderful pool and is only a five-minute drive from our house. We take yoga, Pilates and Tai Chi classes there, and use some of the exercise machines. Chris did a little swimming but Mikki really got into it as her summer cardio

workout program. It is such a great form of exercise. Mikki has shown great discipline sticking to a healthy diet, but she says she doesn't really miss sugary desserts (a no-no on her diet) now that she is enjoying her Blendtec blender that helps her make wonderful fruit sorbets, smoothies and milkshakes that taste delicious with no sweetener.

Finding time for fun, music and guests

We went to wonderful Paco Peña and Hugh Masekela concerts with Shelley and Jesse. At the end of summer, we finally went to the 'Not Strictly Bluegrass' festival in San Francisco that has top-notch, free entertainment. We saw Boz Scaggs, Los Lobos, and Natalie Maines there. We saw our friend, Baba Ken, perform with his African band and dropped in on a drumming class he teaches.

In March we had a fun musical birthday party for Chris with wonderful guests — old friends and family, neighbors, friends from our political world and from the club. We continued to host quite a few visitors in 2013, including a sizable Conrad family reunion with Mom and three of the sisters, Rosie, Missy and Ruth. It was a great two weeks. Luckily everyone slept late and was happy to go along with Mikki's enhanced diet, since she did most of the cooking (and they loved the various dishes). Good thing the sisters pitched in to help with the chopping and food preparation, as learning new recipes is time-consuming. Missy made a souvenir doll of elvish Chris holding a paint brush and broom to clean up after everybody.

The reunions just keep coming back

Jennifer from Hawaii became a regular visitor, as were Mary Pat and Sassy. Mikki's long-time high school friend, Suzanne, came for a visit. We recon-



Dave, Sherry, Paul, Mikki and Chris took to the streets to protest plans to frack our planet.



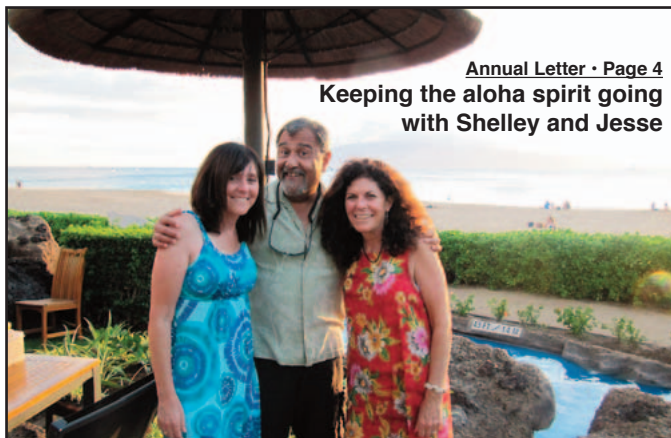
nected with our old housemates Caroljo and Mark in June. We went to LA in July for Adam's "When I'm 64" birthday party, visited some old friends there, and had a reunion of Mikki's ESL teacher friends from back at Fairfax Adult School. August brought Dave and Sherry from Hawaii and we went together to protest fracking and the Chevron refinery's accident record, followed by our Parisienne friends Michka and Tigran, who just published a book (in French) that features a chapter Chris wrote about the US cannabis scene.

Also in August, Mikki enjoyed a reunion of the Vanscoy Ave., North Hollywood, neighborhood friends she grew up with from ages 1-16. She hadn't seen most of them for over 40 years. About 60 people came from Georgia, Washington, Texas, Virginia, Hawaii, Missouri and around California. Some had kept in touch with each other and others were looked up and found on Facebook. It was an incredibly loving and special get together, and some long kept secrets were revealed. It was also wonderful to see some of the parents and her sixth grade teacher was even there. Nothing like looking into the eyes of an old friend to help you feel connected with your childhood, which usually feels like another life ago.

Shortly later, after the Seattle HempFest, we visited our teacher friends Tim and Linda in Bremerton, followed by a visit from Mikki's childhood friend Sylvia. In September we visited Tom and Marci in Portland and had dinner with Chris' sisters



With childhood friends at the Vanscoy reunion.



Ruth, Missy and Michele and her husband Tom, as well as nephew Lou, before attending the Portland HempStalk where we met up with Missy and brother Anthony. October brought good friends from our Los Angeles days, Donna and Andrew, along with their grown son, Kial, who came down from Canada to visit. In November we stayed close to home but did visit our friends, Jane and Lou in beautiful Ft. Bragg, after Chris did a property inspection there for a case. We had been there in May as well for another court case, and got to visit the beautiful botanical gardens and stay at the Loveinit bed, bud and breakfast.

Going farther than further

In June we made a highly memorable car trip to the Oregon Country Fair, a psychedelic carnival for the senses. It is a holdover from Ken Kesey's Merry Pranksters. We got a coveted camping pass, and it was the first time we had gone camping in decades. It's pretty amazing and hard to describe, but the highlight was definitely staying up all night for the midnight concert after the event had closed to the public for the night on Saturday. Plus the food options fit Mikki's diet. Chris is still driving all around the state working on the court cases, of course. Our summer was cool, but Mikki took a nice, warm vacation in Maui with Shelley and Jesse in September at a timeshare resort in Lahaina and then stayed with Jennifer and Suzy respectively, who both live there. It was a wonderfully relaxing trip where Mikki enjoyed ocean swims and good snorkeling. Chris had to stay behind and work, alas, but he's into that.

Rolling with the political changes

We also made pilgrimages to both the legal marijuana states. It felt great to walk around with

a bag of marijuana in our pockets and no fear of being hassled or arrested. In August we went to Seattle Hempfest, where we spoke and were facilitators for a series of Hemposium panels, and where police let people smoke in public to honor the occasion. Cops handed out bags of Dorito chips to festival goers, with a great message on them about the new law. Totally cool. In October, we went to Denver for the International Drug Policy Reform conference, where we saw lots more of our friends from all over, many of whom we hadn't seen in a couple years. It was exhilarating to be in the mile high city with people celebrating a surge of support in public opinion polls and looking to make more progress in the future. Legal sales began there on January 1, 2014.

By the end of the year, it was starting to feel like a tipping point. Dr. Sanjay Gupta endorsed legal marijuana on a CNN health special report, a solid majority of US voters supported legalization in various polls and the South American nation of Uruguay legalized it, as well. Chris is a bit of a celebrity down there for his book, *Cannabis para la salud*, and more recently his monograph, *Cannabis Yields and Dosage*, that has been circulated among government ministers there. We've been invited to take a trip to Uruguay in the spring, and to speak at conferences in Chile, which has a history of hemp growing, and back to Argentina. So, 2014 may take us South of the border again.

Four ballot measures are being floated for the November 2014 election (not sure any will make the ballot), so it looks like yet another busy year.

Life keeps rolling along and, as it does, we are reminded how blessed we are to have such great friends and colleagues as you.

Thanks for being in our lives, and have a happy, healthy and prosperous 2014.

Love to you and yours;
hope to see you soon!

Mikki



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