

On the Move...

In this moment, a rainy day in November, things seem rather still. The house is quiet, the dogs calm, all Thanksgiving visitors have gone home. It turns out to be the perfect time to reflect on the year full of movement. We have literally met ourselves coming and going.



On New Year’s Day, Becky and Damon served as gatekeepers at the Passion Conference in Houston with church friends. Inspired by God’s truth and faithfulness in that worship celebration, assured of His presence with us, a year on the move began.

Dan had accepted a job in north Arkansas, almost 5 hours away. On January 4th Damon moved them with the help of church friends, the same day Dan had surgery for testicular cancer. After relief and gratitude for good results, we left Dan and Jane and Bethany to settle in Jonesboro and we returned home for our own move. Having sold our home of 13 years, we said goodbye to Seven Acre Sky, and moved to Mom’s house in town.



Downsizing from seven country acres to a city lot was significant. Without our church family’s support, it would have been difficult, but instead it was exciting, adventurous. Mom was settled in the Pillars assisted living, having celebrated her 90th birthday and in good health and good care. We no longer had hours and hours of yardwork. It was clear to us that a new chapter in our lives had begun.



We had been shopping for months for an RV, and bought a fifth-wheel in February. Our first trip, of course, was to Jonesboro—a campground just minutes away from Bethany! We returned home the day before our 19th anniversary in March.



Damon’s next move was to Eureka Springs, where he had been awarded the Moondancer Fellowship for a writing retreat. He worked on a non-fiction series title, this one on prairies. The time away was priceless. He also taught and worked with some exceptional students on poetry at a local school. Becky took the time to settle more into our new home, and also returned to Jonesboro to stay with Jane Marie and Bethany while Dan was on a business trip.

We camped near home again in April (with a full-moon night-time kayak tour) and in May enjoyed a get-away to Myrtle Beach. In early June we found another campground about an hour west of Jonesboro, and enjoyed a retreat with Dan & Jane’s church family in north Arkansas. Later that month we travelled to Lake Catherine in west Arkansas, with hiking and kayaking! Incidentally we discovered one of Becky’s close high school friends, Glenda and husband Wayne, were there too. They’ve become our camping buddies!



Next it was Tonya’s turn for a move. She had resigned as director of the non-profit in St. Louis, and moved to Kansas City in pursuit of a new venue. She has begun a job working for an agency that supports academically gifted students in disadvantaged situations, and the work is a promising change of focus for her. She still

works on the side with her dog-sitting service, and animals like Mo and Moss are always part of her passion.

You would think Mark and Hannah would be tired of the beach...but they were excited about our plans for July.





They too got on the move for new shores. They drove up, Tonya flew in, and Dan, Jane and Bethany convoyed with us to sunny beaches at Cape San Blas, Florida for our bi-annual family vacation. Our rented beach-side house had quick access to the surf for our kayaks and a paddleboard. Dolphins, pelicans, seagulls—and sharks—were part of the adventure week. Not to mention some competitive card and dice games.

In August we spent some down time in mid-state camping and



geocaching, based at Lake Dardanelle. Bethany transitioned from the prior spring semester to her new school, and made new friends. She loves her ballet and jazz dance class. She performs constantly—at home, in the stores, when they go out to eat! Constant movement. We think music is in her bones.



In September we planned a round-about fall camping trip, upward through north Arkansas (for some geocaches we needed) and into Missouri. A rendezvous with Tonya was postponed, when we needed to add a stop in Little Rock to connect with some of Becky's family. Afterwards we traveled to Memphis for our niece Haley's wedding to Josh. These two crazy-in-love youngsters' wedding was a fun event. After that we stopped again on the way home—in Jonesboro, of course.

In October we hauled north to Village Creek, one of our favorite spots. Damon's brother Larry and Kim came over for a birthday steak, and our friends Glenda and Wayne pulled in beside us for the two week stay. Damon's sister Marsha and Bruce, Haley and Josh, and their friends populated the other sites in our circle for a great fall-color weekend campout feast at Village Creek in north Arkansas. Great walks, perfect weather.



The camper was at rest for a moment, until Thanksgiving week. Dan and Jane and Bethany were able to use it at deer camp for the week. But we were still on the move. Becky spent the holiday at sister Dorothy's lake house at Greer's Ferry with family from all over the country. The Wilson clan kids loved the fishing and boating. Damon stayed in Crossett to host family arriving there. Tonya with her pets, Hannah and Mark, Marsha and Bruce and Haley and Josh all made Mawmaw's holiday special. Turkey? No way. We thanked God for his blessings with a special feast—80+ eggrolls and oriental rice!



Now we sit here on this rainy day, looking ahead at December. Friday we head north to Branson. We have tickets to see the theatre event Moses, and perhaps get a sense for what it was like for a whole community of people, a nation chosen, to be on the move. It's a reminder that wherever we are, God is there. Many blessings have accompanied our travels. Friendships were deepened, new venues discovered, and faith renewed. Little miracles of grace, in all the places we've been, have been milestones—whispers of God's care and presence.

We hope that you too, will sense Him with you this Christmas, as we celebrate His coming. Praise be to Immanuel (*God with us*) on this upcoming holy day and, for us all, in each new day to come.

In His Love, **Damon & Becky**

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