

Hamburg, 23.12.2014

Dear

this year was the second one, where we had to adopt the dialysis of Renée. We have learned to change our daily rhythm. Besides Tuesday, where our polish girl Borzena comes to clean our floors (under the cabinets is not her habit, exception only when we precisely ask to do), on all other days the week (if not dates at doctors or physical therapists are on schedule), so on nearly all other days (sorry, besides if Renée cannot sleep, e.g because of pains in her backbone), so on some days of the week we can sleep some longer in the morning. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, day end is after midnight because Matthias (the driver of Renée's taxi to and from the dialysis) unloads Renée in front of our door about 10:45 p.m. After this we have "our hour", with beer or wine, and talking about our life or e.g. what we think about Putin.

However, and please take this as an important message: We still live, and I mean LIVING with fun, friends, events, culture, travelling. Yes, we travel despite dialysis! This year we were again 10 days in Crete and 10 days before with a boat between Passau (Germany) and Budapest (Hungary). Dialysis on board! We enjoyed this very much. And then we made several tours from Saturday to Sunday or Saturday to Monday. During some of them, we slept in our VW bulli – enjoyable (!) for us. During other short travels, we flew to Munich or to Bâle, visiting some friends.

A wonderful series of events are additionally in our program since this year: We visit MET in Hamburg – live! This is possible, since midday MET opera performances are transmitted worldwide, and we sit in a cinema in comfortable chairs and listen. You should try it – you save money and save time and you see all actions much better as if you would sit in the first row of MET. Fantastic!

Our kids meanwhile grew up to 11 (Ella) and 9 (Lucy). They both are so different, one cannot believe. Ella is sensible, social, helpful – Lucy tries to avoid all things which are not in her mind or which require work. At one time she answered to her mother, when she had misused the creditability of her mobile "It is not my fault, if you leave your smartphone open to my access". But – but, we love both. They manage the school successful and will both find the way to survive.

Our son, Seppl, has found a new girl friend, who already lives together with him. Our daughter-in-law has re-activated her lover before the time with Seppl and so both, Seppl and Kate, are not lonely any more. Especially, what we welcome very much, is that there is no what we call a "rose war", where he and she ongoing fight against each other about money and whatever. Both have a good job and earn good money, which of course helps a lot.

What else? I am still busy and don't know, what to do first. I still sing in a choir. I still play golf – although not very often. I still help repairing and gardening – at least a

little bit. This is not a typical retiree life. Renée joins a lot of friends, does painting and visiting a lot of cultural things. We both travel a lot around with our cars, we still meet the group of choral singers in Monteverdi-Choir at earlier times, we laugh und talk, we both consider, life is valuable. We both take part of all the international and national activities, where some of them (especially the fundamental Islamism) makes us frightened.

All of you, we wish a very peaceful Christmas, a wonderful start into the New Year, we wish health and ability to recollect all fundamentals, and not to harm too much about, what one cannot avoid anyway. Especially, while we all get older. No, we don't get older, we are older – don't forget. Sorry. But remember, life is a present, a miracle!

Lots of love, Horst and – of course – on behalf of Renée
December 23rd, 2014