

Mindy & Paul's Amazing 2019



Dear Friends and Family,

What a year of BIG activities and happenings. Our globe-trotting trip to New Zealand and back to Paul's Peace Corps posting (in Sabah, Malaysian Borneo) 48 years later. Getting married twice, once before our journey then our unforgettable backyard extravaganza on Sept 21. And the awakening of our country to realize that our future is inextricably tied to increased action on solutions to our climate crisis. How to share that concisely? Here goes...

The Weddings

The first, on March 2, two days before our lift off to 10 weeks in New Zealand and Borneo. This "just in case something happens" wedding was still a special occasion thanks to our dear friend Pat Corcoran who opened up her pre-theater/birthday dinner party to include our simple wedding ceremony officiated by Rev. Molly Cox. Pat's friends were great sports to celebrate the wedding and share dinner with us and a couple extra guests.



The "real deal" was on the Equinox/ International Day of Peace, Sept 21, 2019 - a day to live in *our* history as more than unforgettable. As students and supporters all around the globe stood up and joined the Strike for Climate Action, Paul and Mindy stood up for each other and pledged the remaining days of our lives and love.

The predicted rain on that Saturday never materialized and from the morning yoga at Christopher's memorial tree in Weber Park through the sunshine breaking through the clouds during the wedding ceremony, the day could not have been more perfect. According to Trevor Braatan, (our wonderful neighbor and builder of the wedding arch and platform) there were 226 people seated and standing in

our backyard as our friend and wedding officiant, Anne Murphy, blessed our rings with the holy waters from our childhood; Mindy's from the Mississippi and Paul's from the Minnehaha Creek.



Following the wedding ceremony, we all processed down the driveway, up the street and around the corner to our local Edina Morningside Community Church. The reception was filled with love, yummy food, toasts and our "How Sweet It Is" dance to remind us that the dance of our lives has just begun (there is a video). Paul was in Frisbee heaven passing out our custom designed wedding disc to all who "promised to play."

The power of our community was demonstrated through the contributions to Cool Planet, Citizens' Climate Lobby, NAMI Minnesota and Sister Parish in addition to gifts that offset the cost of throwing the party of a lifetime.

The Journey (going back in time)



2019 was the year that Mindy turned 50 and Paul was 70, so for years we've been planning our 120 years-of-life celebration not knowing then that it would culminate in our marriage. Mindy has long dreamed of going to New Zealand and thought as long as we're on that side of the world, we can include Paul's dream to finally return to Sabah, Malaysian Borneo to see his former students and teaching colleagues from his Peace Corps days where he cut his global citizen(ship) teeth in 1971-73.

About 2 years ago Paul connected on Facebook with Lim Suat Hong, one of his former students from Kota Belud, Sabah and started talking about our return trip. Paul's son Christopher always wanted to see where his Dad had all his great adventures that he heard about growing up. After Chris' tragic death from suicide in April 2018, Paul now had another reason to return to Malaysia, to leave his son's remains and share about the beauty of Chris' life, the pain of losing a child and the importance of talking about mental health issues.



Before the trip, Paul spent 100+ hours digitizing his Ektachrome and Kodachrome slides from the early 70s to share with his friends in Sabah and announced his retirement from his contract work with Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL). Mindy took a 10-week sabbatical from her climate work. For 40 days we traveled the North and South Islands of this magical country of New Zealand. We participated in the global student climate strike near Wellington. Our 3-day Routeburn trek, kayaking Milford Sound, visiting the ancient Kauri trees to leave Chris' ashes and presenting our film "Saving Snow" to a group of climate concerned skiers in Wanaka were some highlights of our time down under.



An 8-hour flight took us just north of the equator to Sabah, one of the 13 states of Malaysia on the island of Borneo - the 3rd largest island in the world. After 48 years much had changed, but the memories and relationships begun nearly 5 decades earlier were still strong and sweet. Student and teacher reunions, Paul's 5th and final climb of SE Asia's highest peak Mt Kinabalu (13,495ft) with Mindy and 2 others, then touring the jungle life along the Kinabatangan River and in the Tabin Wildlife Sanctuary to bring us up close and personal with the native flora and fauna (much of which Paul had never experienced as a busy Peace Corps Volunteer) were all part of our trip around the Malaysian state.



The final highlight of our Borneo journey was the "No Plastic" presentation put on by Paul's former students and local environmentalists (check out the Facebook group "Zero Waste Sabah") with media attention and the staff of the local Member of Parliament. Did we mention it was bloody hot in Borneo and plastic waste littered many of the beaches? Action required here - and the local movement was re-energized by our visit.



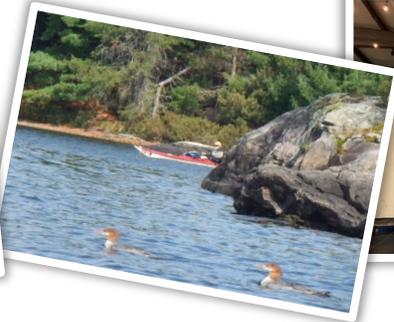
On our final day in Sabah we were shopping for a suitcase to carry our treasures back to Minnesota and we ran across 2 mannequins wearing traditional Malaysian attire. Mindy pointed and said, “We could wear that for our wedding”... and so we did.

Ps the carbon offsets for our 20,000+ mile flights with www.climatestewards.org cost only \$246 for both of us, try it out.



Our Work, Play and Family

Since our return from our trip Mindy has taken over sole responsibility as North Wind Regional Coordinator for CCL and is continuing as the Administrative Assistant for Ignatian Associates. Paul is focusing on supporting her at home while doing more Cool Planet outreach work with our Edina High School Project Earth Club. Paul now has a new mission in his life to encourage honest conversations about mental illness and to help provide pathways to wellness. We did squeeze in a short honeymoon kayaking in Voyageurs National Park between rain and snow storms in October. We also participated in the World Overall Flying Disc Championships in Richmond, VA last July where Paul became the Legends Division (70+) World Champion in a tight competition. Now training for Birkie ski marathon #39 (and #4 go Mindy) and working with skiers and clubs to be more sustainable and active with local and national actions and advocacy. At our suggestion, the Birkie adopted the “Birkie Green” concept and are developing a number of programs aimed at waste reduction and reducing carbon emissions.



As our families grow older, we are more attentive to caring for aging siblings (Paul’s Sister Sue and her husband Tom recovering from strokes and Mindy’s Dad Jim post knee replacement). Mindy’s niece Michelle married in November and Maryon, her youngest niece, is planning an Oct 2020 wedding celebration (It seems like just yesterday they were in marching band). Always realizing that family comes first and that we all need to be present with life’s daily adventures and challenges to give and receive when our turn comes.

With the latest UN Climate Report on the lack of effort by countries to reach their carbon reduction goals we feel that climate action has finally reached the ‘now or never’ point. We remain hopeful that we have enough time to limit the damage as we build the future we see as possible. Lead by 16-year-old Swede, Greta Thunberg, the youth voice has been key in this growing awareness and much of our work is now supporting this youth voice in our state and country’s national conversation for action on solutions.

Please visit www.citizensclimatelobby.org and help us build a bi-partisan, action oriented effort to engage our families and communities not to Save the Earth (she will be fine) but to realize that it is us who are endangered and when we act together amazing changes can happen with unexpected velocity.

Thank you for being in our lives and supporting our new life together. We wish you deep connections and meaningful conversations in 2020 and a whole lot of fun and joy along the way.

See all of the wedding photos and videos at www.paulandmindy.com along with our trip blog.



Paul and Mindy (and Pickles our precious and precocious orange tabby)