We are in the process of selecting a converted Dutch barge, which we plan to live on while we meander through the waterways of Europe. We have rented self-drive canal boats in France twice before, and we loved the pace and the pleasures of the French countryside. There are extensive canals and rivers in France, Belgium, and Holland where we anticipate cruising.

We came up with this idea one day when we were walking our dog, and it clicked immediately for both of us. We practically ran back to the house, where we went straight to the computer to begin our research. We fired up the search engines, and found helpful web sites: barge brokers in Europe, books about buying and living on a barge, and an organization of barge owners.

We even found a great French teacher who comes to our house once a week. We are currently downsizing and hope to leave this fall. Since this doesn't leave us much time, we have been busy every minute of the day. Our brains feel like they have hundreds of those little yellow post-it notes all over them. If we had known retirement was this exciting, we would have done it when we were in our 20’s.

We look forward to the time when we are finally settled in on our barge, and we can sit on our deck and enjoy the sunset.