

Lasley Holiday Letter - 2018

2018 started quietly, with Dan visiting his Mom while on a business trip, followed by a band gig the next weekend. This year, our band Back to the Well had 9 gigs at 5 venues, plus 2 showcases. We've really got it going - we have fans who look forward to our shows, and bars that actually call us!



In February, we went to Maui with Laura's parents. It was odd to fly from Philly to Hawaii, only to watch the Eagles win the Super Bowl. After that, we spent every day snorkeling with turtles. We hiked in a rainforest and endured a snowy peak to enjoy a fantastic view. We also saw whales and dolphins. Someday we'll try sailing around those beautiful islands.

Dan continued to lead his team of engineers, as well as attending trade shows and visiting customers. Variety is good!



The big news is the arrival of our first grandchild in April - Tristan! We went to visit Ben and Yanessa after two weeks, providing assistance and reassurance that they would all survive and thrive.

Later in May, we threw a fun party to celebrate Jacqui's graduation from WPI, combined with a bigger marriage celebration. All the grandparents were in attendance, as well as Jacqui's godfather, who we hadn't seen in over 20 years. It was wonderful to catch up.

Despite the reported shortage of trained engineers in the workplace, few employers are looking at new graduates. Jacqui's job search was quite frustrating. Unexpectedly, Oliver found a great new opportunity in the New London CT region, and they moved to Norwich in July. Happily, Jacqui found a job in that area after a bit of hunting.

Dan and Laura went to their 40th reunion at Exeter. So much has changed, while the core remains very familiar.

As the weather improved, we restarted bike riding, and we got Sonja in the water. Twice during the summer, we have heavy rains that caused the Susquehanna river to flood, bringing trees, silt, and other stuff we don't want to know about. The trees and logs created serious hazards for most motorized boats, so there were several days when we had the entire bay to ourselves. Unfortunately, the river and bay looked like chocolate milk.



For the 10th year, we continued to play soccer on Tuesday nights, and for the second year, Laura tore a muscle in her calf. Thanks to diligent PT, she was able to get back on the field in only 7 weeks.

While our band was doing quite well, we still had many open weekends where we went out to see new and familiar bands. The music scene has recovered and grown in the past 5 years. Although there are still more bands than venues, we are all supportive of each other.

July 31st was Laura's last day with Onsite at Riddle Hospital. Due to complicated machinations, Laura ended up effectively unemployed. So for the first time in 40+ years, Laura is not drawing a paycheck. This is very strange for her, but she has been enjoying the freedom, travelling and relaxing, and exploring her options.



In September, we made our annual trek to Exeter for the alumni leadership weekend, and then we visited Jacqui and Oliver in their new apartment. We also went to Nashville to celebrate a good friend's 60th birthday. An accomplished musician, he had never been there, and we had a lot of fun soaking up the never-ending musical amusement park.

In October, Laura and Jacqui took advantage of their (non) job status and flew to Chicago to visit the Kwaans. At the end of the month, we went to the wedding of Jacqui's friend Hayley. The next day, Jacqui started her new job at a fiber-optics equipment company. Around this time, Yanessa also changed jobs - she is now at Redfin, just down the hall from Ben! Hopefully this simplifies the childcare logistics.



In November, Laura went to Dallas as a panelist in a Women in Medicine seminar (#GirlMedMedia #GirlMedLive), and had a wonderful visit meeting our grand-nephew.

Thanksgiving was an expansive affair, with Friendsgiving with Jacqui and Oliver the week before, Thanksgiving Day with our music friends, followed by the traditional Black Friday Jam, and then a home-cooked Saturday turkey - because we had no leftovers!

As Christmas approaches, we will have visited GMa Laz in Florida, and played one last gig for 2018. Then we will head out to SF to spend the holiday with Ben, Yanessa, and Tristan - as well as other friends.



2019 will bring new adventures. We'll have a family reunion in March. The band is already fully booked for the year! We're planning to go to London in the Spring, and we'll go for a sailing trip somewhere on the Chesapeake this summer. It is likely that Laura will find a new job, as we're not quite ready to retire yet.

If you are ever passing through Philly, let us know - we'd love to see you.

We wish you a healthy and happy 2019.

Dan and Laura

