

Lasley Holiday Letter - 2021

This was a quiet and introspective year for us. January was the quietest, as there was no sailing, no soccer, no band, and no job for Dan. Zoom calls and reading HCR's letters didn't really fill the spaces. Laura's job ran smoothly, with her workload reduced slightly as a few medical systems suspended case management.

In February, Dan's early retirement was cut short as 3 companies contacted him, and he ended up working for a start-up in the solar power industry. Strange to be the olde fart, but that's what they hired him for - to mentor the young kids and develop some standards. They're all smart and eager, so it's very rewarding. He works from home most days, which is interesting, but it's mostly CAD and programming, so it works. Everyone there is comfortable with video conferencing.



Through March, we prepped the boat for the new season. We added a generator and an intricate waste treatment system; both allow us to stay away from marinas for many days. In early April we dropped *baji-naji* in the water and made our first sail of the season. From April through November, we only missed three weekends on the boat. We also went on a two-week vacation, sailing as far south as Crisfield. We won't bore you with the details, nor the 100s of sunset photos (and one of sunrise!), but rest assured that we enjoyed these adventures to the fullest. Feel free to ask us about the dolphins, night sailing, Chesapeake mud, and a wayward barge.

Thus, very little housework got done. We both got shot #1, which reduced our anxiety, but only a little. Jacqui and Oliver stopped by on their way to Denver, where he had a job waiting, and she had several possibilities.

Shot #2 made us feel much better, and we started to go out for dinner and see friends in outdoor settings. We weren't quite ready to come back to normal, but we were relaxing incrementally. In July, Dan's workplace removed

the mask requirement in the office, and even had an all-company picnic, but masks were back by the end of August due to Delta.

Laura's Mom had been having some health issues, so we drove to Chicago for a visit. This started a cascade of medical issues across the family, including Jacqui, Dan's sister and her husband, and Dan's Mom. Thankfully, all except Laura's Mom have recovered pretty well. Laura's Mom will be having surgery in Jan '22, which should fix her up properly. Laura and I have been healthy throughout, but we don't take that for granted.

In August, Jacqui announced that she was getting divorced from Oliver. We don't know the details, but she's happy and confident in her decision. She has moved in with Ben's family in Dallas, working remotely for a medical device company. Tristan is delighted to have an auntie in residence.

We popped back to Chicago to celebrate Laura's Dad's 90th birthday in September. We arrived on Friday, just after her Dad got home from work! Spike was also there and we had a relaxing time and lots of good food.

In October, we returned to the Annapolis Boat Show for the first time as boat owners, which is a very different perspective. We sailed *baji-naji* down and had dinner with another sailing family from our marina. The show was great, and we learned a lot. Most importantly, we confirmed that our Dufour 382 is the right boat for us. No lusting after a newer or larger boat. But a spinnaker might be nice...

The next weekend, we flew down to Florida for Dan's sister's 60th. She and Skip are enjoying their retirement. We had a great time with them and with G'Ma Laz.

Coincident with the end of the sailing season, we reformed the band with two new members. Rehearsals have gone well, and Back To The Well will be gigging again in 2022. On top of that, soccer restarted, so we're running around on Tuesday nights again.

We enjoyed Thanksgiving with the usual collection of music friends from college. Feasting on Thursday and jamming on Friday made for a delightful and relaxed weekend. A trip to Longwood Gardens really put us in the mood for Christmas.

Assuming that Omicron doesn't derail everything, we will be having Christmas in Dallas with our kids (Jacqui, Ben, Yanessa) and grandchild (Tristan). It's been way too long since we've seen them in person.

The new year will bring surgery for Laura's Mom, gigs for the band, soccer matches and who knows what surprises. And then we'll drop the boat in the water and start the cycle over again.

We hope that you have weathered the storm and kept your health and sanity, though we know that not everyone has been able to do this.

If you are travelling near Philly, or find yourself on the shores of the Chesapeake, let us know. It would be great to see you.

Dan & Laura

