

Lasley Holiday Letter - 2015

Another busy year in the Lasley Household. January kicked off smoothly, with Jacqui returning to Tufts Vet School, and Dan getting promoted to run the 5-man engineering group. One of his first assignments was to attend a major industry trade show in Orlando, where he met lots of new people, including the competition. Due to an oddity of the industry schedules, he had to announce the development of several new products a year in advance. He spent the rest of 2015 trying to meet that deadline. He also went to other trade shows in Indianapolis and Chicago.

Jacqui and B9 (the other Ben) were living in the snow-zone, where they recorded over 100" of snow. In a strange turn of events, Jacqui ended up with a serious concussion while digging out her car. She ended up taking a leave from school, as it was very difficult to study, and you can't fake your way through Vet School.

In February, the entire Ward/Reid/Lasley clan, including WAGS, got together for a reunion near Tampa. It was a bit cooler than we'd hoped, but it was great to have all 12 of us in one place.

You may recall that at the end of 2014, our band **Back To The Well** had recruited a new guitarist. After just a few months, we felt we were almost ready to play out, so we arranged for a showcase performance in March, which

doubled as an audition.

It was a rousing success, and we've had 3 paying gigs spread across the year, with a few freebies too.

It is very gratifying to have a bunch of people, younger and older, out dancing to our music. (No we are not a country band - but that is a country bar!)



<http://www.reverbNation.com/backtothewell>

In April,, we went off to the Bahamas to sail the Abacos again, this time with our friends John and Kitty along for the ride. It was delightful.

Given some time for introspection, Jacqui decided that the Veterinary life was not for her. She asked Tufts for a hiatus, but it is unlikely that she will return. She has grabbed a retail job at Apple(!) to keep her busy while she explores other options - and to pay the rent! ! With B9 working at T-Mobile, they are juggling two retail schedules, which will be interesting during the holidays.

Ben/Ditto and Yanessa are doing quite well in San Francisco. Ben continues at RedFin, now managing a team of web developers. Yanessa has settled in at PlanGrid, doing their software QA. They have taken up running 5K, 10K, and half-marathons. Oh yeah, and they bought a house!

A side benefit of playing out in the local bars is that we've met several other bands who have similar interests. The music world is big enough for us all to be friends and we often show up at each other's gigs. As a result, we've been out dancing more this year than in the previous 5 years combined.

In addition to the band, we continued to play co-ed soccer on Tuesday nights, and we got the boat in the water before Memorial Day, starting an exciting season of sailing all over the top of the Chesapeake. Dan continues to referee soccer games (though fewer than in previous years), and helped out with the local referee training group.

In June we headed to Canada to see two Womens' World Cup matches. We saw excellent skills, including one outstanding goal.



Montreal and Ottawa are very pretty cities.

Not to forget our musical roots, we hosted our Fireworks Jam with some new players. Some neighbors asked if it was our band performing, and when we told them it was just a jam, they said "Ah that explains the odd endings."



Despite being well understaffed, Laura was able to schedule a long weekend for us to charter a boat on the Chesapeake in August. We hit some favorite haunts, and returned refreshed.

Labor Day weekend saw us in Chicago, meeting up with Ben and Yanessa to see the Stanford vs Northwestern football game. NU won, despite all predictions. Both teams remained in the top 25 for most of the season, finishing strong. Later that month, we spent a short weekend in NYC, and a long one in Exeter, where we followed our alumni meetings with a delightful hike with Wink and Linda in Keene NH.



As the sailing season drew to a close, we noticed a “wrinkle” in one of Hilfy’s hulls. We talked with the manufacturer who confirmed that it was the dreaded hull cancer that affected boats of that vintage. After 20 years of wonderful sailing around Westport and Havre, we are going to have to retire her. We hope to find someone who sails on a lake where it will be less likely to run into the strong wind and waves; a place where Hilfy might sail for many more years. We were also able to find a slightly younger boat of the same type that does not have the hull weakness. Next year will see us sailing with red sails instead of blue.



Laura also had several meetings, most in Chicago. She took some extra time to see her folks and other friends.



In November, we started a renovation of the master bathroom. This has gone smoothly so far, and should be done well before Christmas.

Laura worked Thanksgiving Day as usual, and we spent Black Friday jamming with our New Jersey friends. Despite the late hour, we decided to go out dancing on our way home (at 11:30p!). We’re just a couple of crazy kids!

December will be a mix of crazy and quiet. The reno should wrap up nicely, and we’re taking a few weeks off from the band, but soccer continues, as does work - Dan’s 5 new products need to launch in the next 6 weeks! XMAS will be in SF with Ben and Yanessa.

2016 is not planned past January. We haven’t made any travel plans yet, but we know that soccer, sailing, and the band will keep us busy. If you’re ever near Philly, let us know. We’ve got plenty of spare rooms for guests.

Best wishes to you and yours for 2016.

Love,

Dan and Laura