

Lasley Holiday Letter - 2019

2019 turned out to be a year of changes. Laura remained “between jobs” at the start, and we both kept active with the band and soccer. In fact, the band had 4 gigs in the first two months! Laura picked some moonlighting shifts, but none of the local hospitals had a permanent slot for her. For a very brief moment, we considered moving to greener pastures, but we realized that, aside from employment, we had everything we wanted right here in southeast PA. So we decided to stay.

Over the years we have met some really wonderful musicians, and we go out almost every weekend to hear at least one band. One night we saw 3 bands in 3 bars in the same evening! One side-benefit was a private tour of the PRS guitar factory. In addition to stacks of exotic woods being processed by CNC machines, there were many craftsmen and women providing the personal touches. The custom shop was amazing, especially the custom filigreed fretboards. It was a great experience.

We also have some new friends from our adult soccer league. They are a fun and social bunch, and we ended up at a dumpling party where Laura showed 30+ people the “right way” to make Chinese dumplings (300+ dumplings!). Someone brought a smoked brisket filling which was fantastic.

In March, the entire clan gathered in Punta Gorda FL so Great-Grandma Joan (GG) could meet her two great-grandsons - Tristan and Jaxton - before they turned 1. Our family is spread all across the country so these get-togethers are delightful if infrequent. And Florida in March is a good place to meet up.



A month later Ben, Yanessa, and Tristan moved to Dallas, where they opened a new office of Redfin.



They seem to be settling in just fine, though they haven't bought cowboy hats. Laura also went to Sedona for a girls' weekend, alternating long hikes with excellent food and relaxing spa treatments.

Sadly, our cockatiel Pern passed away after keeping us company for 19 years. He was cute and sometimes cuddly, and we miss him.



In May we went to London to see Dan's soccer team Arsenal play. We saw 2 other matches in 3 of the iconic stadiums. While there, we saw the musical Hamilton, which added some additional humor in spots. Spring is definitely the right time to visit London.



15 years ago, Dan and Jacqui went hiking and camping in western Connecticut, and we had a great time. A few years later, she wanted to go again, but the timing never really worked. Fast forward to May 2019, and we're all geared up and hiking through Harriman State Park, 30 miles north of NYC. It was a wonderful father-daughter experience, and Dan was glad she reminded him of his promise.

In June, Laura went to Chicago to visit her folks, which always involves great food and a visit to the Chicago Botanical Garden.

After several false starts, Laura found a job that really fits her skills and experience. She now works for Optum in their Utilization Management group - yes, she's now working for the other team!

Professionally, she still gets to interact with other doctors and nurses, managing the care of newborns in NICUs, teaching the latest guidelines, and providing leadership to her team - without being the manager! Best of all: no nights, no weekends.

As summer arrived, a friend of Dan's asked him to come and work for him to help a small company (another one!) grow and stabilize. The timing was good, and so Dan is now working at LiteCure, which makes laser therapy devices for people and pets. It's his first time working with medical devices, but the design and process challenges are very similar.



In late July, Dan and Laura were finally able to participate in the Summit at the Summit, where a core group of Exeter '78 meets for food, fun, and philosophy. The next week, Barb and Skip passed through on their way to retirement in Florida.

In August, we chartered a sailboat and cruised around the middle section of the Chesapeake Bay. After choosing modern boats for the past few voyages, we decided to go with a classic Sabre 38, which sailed like a dream in both light and heavy winds. On several nights,



we watched the light show as thunderstorms lit up the sky around us, but never actually came over us. But one day we did get caught in a squall, which really tested our skills as well as that of the dock hands. We met up with a few friends on two different nights, which added to the enjoyment all around.



In September, we headed to SF for Eli and Bongji's wedding. We've known Eli since 2001 and it was great to be included in this event. It didn't hurt that we got to spend time with Tristan. The next month brought Jacqui and Oliver to



stay for a few days of R&R.

After 10 years of living close enough, we finally made it to the Annapolis Sailboat Show. (See how no nights or weekend call changes our life!) It was very cool to see the latest and greatest boats, while re-affirming our love for the classic styles. We were able to talk with several people from the BVI and Bahamas to get a sense for their recovery from the devastating hurricanes. The BVI is recovering, though unevenly. Many places have re-opened, but the Bitter End won't open until late this year - over 2 years after their storms. The Abaco region remains in disaster mode, and the recovery will be slow, mainly due to the



destruction made worse by their very low and flat islands. We had been planning a group sailing trip to the Abaco for the Spring of 2020, but we had to cancel it. Not only would they not be able to welcome sailing tourists, but the cost and availability of charter boats in other regions were greatly affected. We will go back to sail in both places again soon.

We saw the play Come From Away. Charming and well done. Our adult soccer team won the division championship - the best of the basement!

To start the holiday season, we went to Jacqui and Oliver's for early Thanksgiving. Too much food and driving, but great to visit them in their own place. Laura and I spent a quiet Thanksgiving day, and then hosted the annual Black Friday Jam with a few friends. Dan ends the year with a business trip, and then we'll share Christmas with some local friends.

2019 started with a lot of unknowns, and ended with even more changes than expected. New jobs for both of us, new friends and adventures, a new time-zone for Tristan and Co, retirement for Dan's sister, and more. Who knows what 2020 will bring?

As always, if you're near Philly, we'd love to see you. And if we're in your neighborhood for more than 10 minutes, we'll try to look you up.

Have a safe and happy New Year!

Dan and Laura

