

Lasley Holiday Letter – 2014

As intended, we cut back on our flights in 2014. But that didn't cut down on the adventures!

In January, we all went out to San Diego to celebrate Jacqui having completed her requirements for undergrad. All the grandparents, Ben (Ditto) and Yanessa, our good friends Joop and Marla Kuhn, and many of Jacqui's San Diego friends were all under one roof. It was a perfect way to celebrate her graduation. After that, Jacqui and Ben (B9) packed up their apartment, while Laura and Dan headed up the coast with Grandma Laz. After visiting cousin Kat and some friends, we dropped her off with her brother Jerry (and Pat) in Santa Barbara. We continued on to San Francisco where we saw Ben and Yanessa again, as well as Elyce and John and some Exeter friends.

Jacqui and B9 moved to a Derby-friendly apartment in PA where they enjoyed some freedom despite their crazy retail schedules. Jacqui volunteered at two vet offices, then got a waitressing job (\$\$) at a popular local pub. B9 remained at T-Mobile, staying at the top of the sales charts.

In February, Dan went from a contract worker to a permanent employee at Miller Edge. He finished his first project with only a few issues with FCC testing. B9 had surgery to repair his ACL, and his recovery went pretty well. It took a while for Derby to understand that she couldn't Hop on Pop.

Laura and Dan took an escape weekend in Baltimore in March. We walked all over Inner Harbor, visiting the Aquarium, Ft McHenry, and the tall ships. While there, we enjoyed some fun and funky restaurants with our friends Connie and Ted, John and Kitty, and Lee and Jon.

Tuesdays remained indoor soccer night. We formalized our "house" team of free agents with the name "Chateau Gris". Jacqui played with us through the Spring, until she got stomped on. Wednesdays were reserved for band practice, at least until our lead guitarist left to pursue other projects. We were able to replace him fairly quickly, but it took a while to re-learn all the songs.


Jacqui got in to 3 vet schools! (Penn, Tufts, and wait-list at Cornell) After revisiting all 3, she selected Tufts in Worcester MA - it seemed to be the best fit. B9 put in for a transfer with T-Mobile for the Boston region.

Grandma Laz came to visit in May. It was the first time in a while she was here when it was warm, and we enjoyed a stroll through Longwood Gardens. Later that month, we crashed the Exeter '79 reunion (one year younger than us), then visited our friend Wink and his wife Linda.

After doing some quick math, we found that buying a small house for Jacqui during vet school would cost about the same as renting. Bonus: no worries about finding a rental for a rambunctious dog (and boyfriend). We found a realtor through Redfin (where Ditto works) and after two trips, Jacqui and B9 found a very cute cottage with a big yard for well under our price limit. We closed at the end of July and installed a fence for Derby. The kids moved in August 16th. Just as they were moving up to Worcester MA, B9 got his transfer to a busy store in Boston. It's all good.

Remember when Jacqui got stomped at soccer in June? Turns out it was a stress fracture which hadn't healed. She spent the first two months of vet school on crutches.

Laura's neonatal group took on several new hospital contracts, and she became part of the transition team. This sent her to Allentown and N. Illinois for several days, where she easily demonstrated how great she and her company are. And she got to see her parents in IL!



Nephew Jerry got married to the delightful Casey in Florida in July! Since Ditto got married in January in New Hampshire, we were in no position to complain about the weather. It was a wonderful ceremony, and great to get the family together again.

The following weekend was the annual Riverside Jam, held this year just outside Baltimore. Good to see friends, and a lot of music was played. Dan continues to referee, and has become part of the local referee chapter leadership team.

Unfortunately, we never found time for a sailing vacation; we did sail a lot on our catamaran Hilfy, including some rollicking rides across the Chesapeake. We managed to take an escape weekend to Chincoteague and stayed in a very nice B&B. We rode bikes to the beach every day, and walked and body surfed a lot. And saw the wild ponies, which was on Laura's bucket list.

After 6 months of unreliable performance, we fired our "new" guitarist in September, having lost the entire summer gigging season. Our latest guitarist is promising and we remain hopeful for 2015.

Later in September we attended the Exeter Leadership Weekend. The class of '78 remains prominent in many aspects of the Academy business. Plus we have a really good time.

Ditto bought Dan (and Laura) tickets to the Panthers @ Bengals game in October. A great weekend, and the father-son rivalry ended in a very rare NFL tie. Through a strange confluence, we were able to see Razz and her band "Direct Divide" in their Cincinnati performance, which was a fun evening.

Grandpa Kwaan was invited to be the keynote speaker at his alma mater, and invited us to attend - in Hong Kong! Despite the relatively short notice, we were able to juggle our schedules and go. The presentation was great, and we spent a week touring HK with Laura's parents and brother Spike and meeting up with extended family. It was a wonderful trip.

We went to Tufts/Worcester for "Parents Weekend" in November, which was great! The vet school is wonderful, and Jacqui has made several friends. We found some really good restaurants too.

Laura worked Thanksgiving Day again which allowed us to go to the Black Friday music jam. We had friends over for "Thanking Duck" (Peking Duck for Thanksgiving!) on Saturday. B9 was promoted to Assistant Store Manager that weekend, and will be opening a new store soon. It's wonderful to see his skill and dedication rewarded.

Laura, Dan, and his sister Barb all surprised Grandma Laz for her 80th birthday in Punta Gorda. Her friends threw a surprise party the next night, and it was great fun to be there. We'll be having a family reunion next February, and for Christmas we're going to Worcester for a few days.

Other than the family reunion in February, returning to sail the Abacos in April, and possibly going to Canada for the Womens World Cup in June, the calendar is wide open. And with any luck "Back to the Well" will be gigging in 2015.

We hope all is well with you and yours. If you're anywhere in the Philly/Baltimore area, please drop by for a visit.

Love,

Dan & Laura