

Dear Family and Friends,

December 2016

Summing up a year as interesting as 2016 is a bit tricky. No surprise there. Nor do we expect the coming year to be any less confusing, but we are counting on friendship, conversation, curiosity, music, and good books to make it worthwhile.

Kaelen and Ibrahim kicked off 2016 in fine style, welcoming their second daughter, Amal Dia on January 6. Like her big sister, Noor, Amal is already a world traveler, having visited Brooklyn and Scituate in June. We catch up on things through Facetime conversations; Amal looks on in amazement as Noor plays hide and seek with us through the computer screen.

As noted, music is an important component of our lives. A continuing member of the Broad Cove Chorale (“the Broads” as they refer to themselves out of the public eye), Joyce made her debut on glass harmonica. The instrument is not the glass harmonica invented by Ben Franklin, with each glass ground to a particular pitch, but rather individual glass bowls or wine glasses filled with various amounts of water, which produce specific notes when a finger is lightly run around the rims. In the concert Joyce was “D”. Joyce likens the sound to an imagined harmony of spheres in nature.

John continues his investigation of the mysteries of the string bass, exploring bits of jazz, bluegrass, and country music in the company of various friendly combos.

We think it’s more important than ever to celebrate the things we love and value, among them the art of carrying on good conversations. We are fascinated by this notion. Recreational talk among family members — quick quips and high jinks — to keep the ball rolling; history buffs amplifying a topic, sharing facts, and recalling patterns of events. Such exchanges grow, like a snowball rolling down a hill. Good conversations explore various options, weigh costs and benefits, and synthesize courses of action. But good conversation seems to have gone missing in our public spaces. Maybe the pendulum will swing back in its favor in the coming year.

Best wishes for the New Year!

John & Joyce