

December 2014

Happy Holidays, dear friends and family:

The high points of our 2014 are mostly environmental, broadly speaking. A great white shark named Katharine came into our Wellfleet Harbor to have a look around. We didn't see her, but you can watch her wanderings on a website. She's a juvenile, so she'll be in the North Atlantic for a while:

<http://www.ocearch.org/#SharkTracker>

At Thanksgiving, when our kids were here, we did see the local white fox and last winter saw a coywolf, a new neighbor in the region. You can guess the derivation of the hybrid.

We didn't rescue, but did see some of the hundreds of sea turtles who beached themselves along the bay, and Wellfleet made the front page of the NY Times: *Cape Cod Mystery: A Surge of Stranded Turtles, December 12*. When we first heard about this unusual increase in strandings in early November, we went over to watch volunteers frantically unloading cold-stunned turtles. This sounds very romantic—turtles in a holiday letter—but we were mere bystanders. We didn't actually fly any turtles to Florida, though, if given a chance, we might have.

Our shark is named after Katharine Lee Bates, who was born not far from here and wrote the words to *America the Beautiful*. It is indeed beautiful, as we've been reminded with wonderful trips this year to California, Texas, and Illinois, to see family and friends. In the case of Illinois, Chip also taught his class and gave some talks.

In the spring we missed the annual herring count because we were in France-Romania-Turkey for a few months. Chip recounted some of our adventures and work there on his blog, which you can see if you scroll back: chipbruce.net.

Most of our time in Turkey was spent at a university along the Dardanelles, which is said to mark the divide between Asia and Europe, and is therefore ripe with metaphors. It was a great opportunity to get to know a small part of Turkey and to spend time with many Turkish scholars, who gave us a warm welcome.

Chip also managed to wrap up one book, *Youth Community Inquiry*, to begin work on another, and to teach a class mostly online this fall.

Emily is finishing up her doctorate in History this coming year, while working as a writing consultant. Stephen has been doing some large translation projects: Russian to English, French to English. And had an chapter published in a UK book.

Chip and I have launched into our own writing project with some friends in Paris, who are doing the bulk of the work. We hope it leads to a French translation of Jane Addams's *Democracy and Social Ethics*, with some material that helps reveal why that book, written over 100 years ago, continues to be relevant today.

I've taken on the role of President of the Board of the Friends of the Wellfleet Library, a mouthful. My first big task was to find a speaker for next summer, and after much finagling we secured Barney Frank (so do pray for his good health and wit, it's a big fundraiser.) Then we had to find a new director to replace our wonderful Elaine, who's built this terrific library over 34 years, a tough act to follow.

We lost two dear friends this year who are still sorely missed: Chip's piano teacher, Deborah Geithner, and our friend, Ati Gropius Johansen, a woman of big ideas and serious talent. But our mothers are so well that we feel blessed. Catherine is in Austin, winning reliably at bridge, and Rhoda is in Los Gatos looking over the house she built with my dad in 1946. We'll see them, and all our siblings, in February.

Best wishes from all of us for a very good 2015.

(Emily & Stephen last month on Uncle Tim's bridge, Wellfleet. Same sunny, windy day at the pier, with Emily on camera.

