

Heiss Holiday Humbug

Issue XI • December 2016

The calendar's saying the end is upon us
But fret not! I proffer poetical solace.
Though two-thousand sixteen has nearly concluded
It's **summarized here** in the form just alluded.

From January's frost until April's spring showers
The girls and I rehearsed for hours and hours.
We sang and we danced (then we danced and we sang)
In our stake's rendition of **Chitty Bang Bang**.

With snow somewhat scarce we went up to the hills
(Which here they call "mountains") for wintry thrills.
We took the kids sledding—they zipped and they zoomed—
On snow that came out of a cannon. Ka-BOOM!

'Round **Easter** we took a **trip out to the coast**
With Andrew's parents (they love us the most).
We saw the lighthouses **Bodie, Ocracoke,**
Hattaras, Jockey's Ridge and **Roanoke,**
And **Kitty Hawk**, too, graced our itine'ry
Leaving plenty of time to just sit by the sea.

From **into the toilet** to onto the table
Miss Zoë's been climbing wherever she's able.
Pat-a-cake, popcorn, and playing outside
Are three things she likes. And as an upside
Of my new calling as **nursery** leader
Zo got to enter quite young (li'l cheater).
She's learning to talk, which really is fun,
Though I'm in denial that **my baby's one**.

A more sincere boy you'd be hard pressed to find
Benjamin always says what's on his mind.
For instance **he prayed to upgrade his dump truck**;
When one arrived we were rather dumbstruck
But humbled, 'cuz though his petition seemed silly
Our Father in Heaven responded quite bigly.

We spent almost all summer **poolside**, I think,
Where **Ben learned to swim**—so he no longer sinks!—
A worthwhile skill for us thalassophiles.

My dad took us to a new beach, **Emerald Isle**,
A place he found while stationed at **Camp Lejeune**
And wished to return to when this year in June
He and my mom came to visit us here
To spoil the kids with **grandparental cheer**.

Our **school schedule shifted**; now quarter of eight
The girls need to be in their desks or they're late.
It's early but so far we've made the change work.
Andrew drops off the girls (I sleep in—what a perk!)
Then **heads into campus** to "write like he's run-...
-ning out of time" for his dissertation.





Rachel's developed an artistic flair.
 A painting of hers showcased **at the State Fair**.
 She also elected to join **the school chorus**,
 A choice that, while shocking, indeed did not bore us.
 She strums on her **uke** and will practice piano
 But when asked to sing (in the past) she's said, "Yeah...no."
 In **soccer** she likes to play defense, not goalie.
 She recently proved she's **an ace at orthography**.

The contradistinction of analphabetic,
 Miriam's prolix and, yes, arithmetic.
 She hopes to one day **become secretary**
 Not of the state but of the treasury.
 She's just in grade two but has **plenty of grit**,
 She's funny and wise like a Cheshire kit.
 And when this kid smiles or grins ear to ear
 Her face remains seen but her **teeth disappear**.

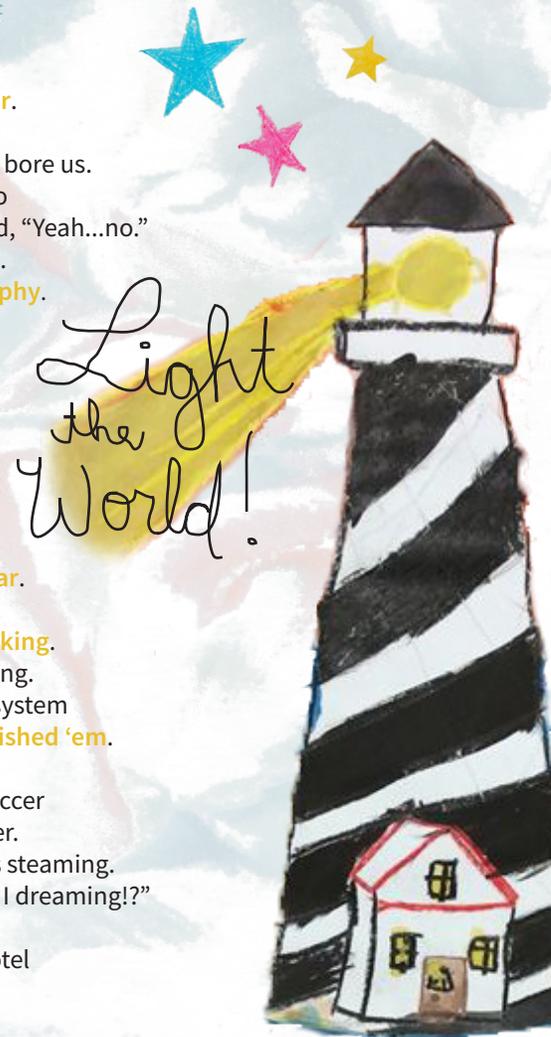
In August **our van started chugging and clunking**.
 Suggesting that multiple systems were flunking.
 We replaced the belts, brakes, and balancer system
 But all was for naught because later...**we squished 'em**.

While driving the kids (and a friend) out to soccer
 A car made a hasty left turn...and I clocked her.
 The children were screaming, the engine was steaming.
 "This is my worst nightmare!" I thought. "Am I dreaming!?"

Rushing out to the scene from the nearby motel
 Came heroic responders: the family Patel.

They called the police, unbuckled the children,
 Escorted us all right inside the building,
 Gave us some water, said, "Boy, what a scrape!
 We caught it on video surveillance tape."

The tape helped to prove that it wasn't my fault.
 I did nothing wrong, yet my gut somersaults





...if only we
look
around...

When I think of the crash—'cuz it could have been worse,
(T'would've been a real downer for this festive verse).
All parties involved walked away from the crash
And aside from burns, bruises, and Ben's seat belt rash,
We're doing alright. But the van? Not so much.

Conferences, job talks, and research and such
Had Andrew commuting from hither to yon:
Columbus, Atlanta, **DC**, and London.

With him gone so much (what an in-demand man)
This wasn't a great time to buy a new van,
But a new van we bought. Yahoo. Whoop-de-doo.

Sob Adulting's hard. (Can I have a tissue?)

Adding to **November's status as traitor**
The toilet, the oven, and the garburator
Broke. Then while Andrew was scoot'ring to church
His **back tire popped** leaving him in a lurch.
So we fixed all of that. Now you're wondering, "Heck,
Why scooter to church?" It's cuz he's the **exec-
utive secret'ry**, and meets far too early
To rouse our sweet boy and our three little girls.

Fall wasn't all bad. We had happy times, too.
We **went to DC** and we went to the **zoo**
For some quality time before all Andrew's trips,
Then enjoyed a mom-in-law visit-eclipse!
While **he was in London my mom was as well**
And **his mom came here** to help me—ain't she swell?
The day Grandma left **my niece Rose** came to visit.
Spending time with our family sure is exquisite!

December's now here; the year has grown old.
We hope that two-thousand-and-seventeen holds
Great things in store for our family and yours:
Good health, love, peace, laughter, and open doors.

Love from

The Heiss Family

