

# Happy 2016 from our Blue Boat Home!

2015 was yet another eventful year for us. We got solar panels on our garage, removed the wall-to-wall carpet in our living & dining rooms, and renovated our bathroom. We protested in Topeka and marched in St. Louis. We said goodbye to three sets of friends who moved out of town, and to Jessie's beloved grandmother CoraLee Hendricks. We attended a science fiction convention in MN and visited Ben's sister's family in PA as well as our parents in OK & NE, and we hosted our nephew Nicholas as well as friends, parents and bike tourists.

## **Ben:**

In June, the City of Emporia began residential curbside recycling, so our company The Green Door transitioned to providing commercial service instead. This transition was many years in the making and went very smoothly, and we're proud to be recycling more than ever!

I'm still working on Web sites for the Unitarian Universalist Association and a few other clients. Notable projects in 2015 included Seventh Generation and Milbank Manufacturing. I've also started doing attic energy-efficiency inspections for customers of rural electric co-ops, so I get to spend some time behind the wheel of our futuristic car.

I got a new Little Brother, Andrew. He loves helping with the recycling business and with our home improvement projects, as well as going on bicycling adventures and learning about farming.

I continued weekly work-shares with our friend Charlene and experimented with hired helpers in the garden as well, but I've decided to take a step back from selling produce at market. I'm now treasurer of the Kansas Permaculture Institute and president of the Emporia Gardeners of America, so I have enough on my plate!

We celebrated my 40th birthday in October with a screening of the Back to the Future trilogy. Here's to the next 40 years!

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## **Jessie:**

It has been an eventful year. I transitioned from behavioral analysis focused private practice work to more general art therapy and counseling, although still primarily working with individuals on the Autism Spectrum.

I went to many concerts with friends and family, throughout the year, including Hairball, Garth Brooks, NKOTB, and Kansas.

Continuing my work at Emporia State University, I published two book chapters, both near the end of the year. I co-authored one on working with individuals in special education and single-authored another on collage.

I got to spend some time with Grandma before she died, which I will forever treasure, and I find I can't sell the sock monkey I was working on at her bedside. However, I did make and sell a lot of other sock animals, like pigs, cats, monkeys, and socktopuses!

I co-presented at a conference held on a cruise ship that took us to the Bahamas. We traveled to Nassau and a private island held by Cruise companies. It was a blast, but I came back with quite the sunburn!

I am now the president of the Kansas Art Therapy Association and am Co-Principal Investigator on a national multisite art therapy and autism study for the American Art Therapy Association, which took me to Tallahassee, FL for the first time in December.

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We always welcome guests at 1301 State St., Emporia KS 66801, and we still occasionally blog at [www.blueboathome.com](http://www.blueboathome.com). Best wishes for a happy and prosperous 2015!