

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is doing well! I absolutely love the idea of a “cousin letter” but I must admit that aside from picking which Tuggle5 stories to share, I was a bit worried about the use of the oxford comma in a newsletter. As some of you may know, the oxford comma is a comma before the word ‘and’ while writing a list and it doesn’t occur in journalism. I spent many hours pondering if it was appropriate to use in a newsletter but I am very pro oxford comma, so I will be using it regardless of official grammar and punctuation rules. #Ravenclaw

We’ve had a very exciting year! In February 2018 we welcomed the smallest member of the Tuggle household. Casey Delano, named after my grandfather (pronounced like President Franklin Delano Roosevelt). Casey joined our family on a sunny Wednesday afternoon on 2/7/18. He is the most delightful baby (now young toddler) despite his 2 hour parties in the middle of the night or 5:30 AM wake-ups. If I appear to be a zombie most days, it’s because I’m actually only alive due to the sheer amount of coffee that I consume on a daily basis. Casey doesn’t say any words yet and like his big brother, Simon, he also refuses to use sign language. Him and Simon also share a deep appreciation for sound effects—include “fart noises” made with the mouth. Casey completed the “1000 Books Before Kindergarten” program through our public library. In just over 6 months I had read and recorded a thousand books read aloud to him. Casey loves going up and down stairs and eating “floor food” or food he finds under the kitchen table or behind the couch cushions. He also loves tormenting our beloved Roomba (affectionately named Rosie) by standing on her while in motion. Poor Rosie is not doing very well these days.





Simon is busy wrapping up his 4 year old preschool program. He attends St. Pius X for a full day five days a week—same as Lucas did. He loves school despite beginning the year with almost no letter or number recognition. Simon has the ability to sit and listen to books for hours and repeat them almost verbatim, but had no desire to do any workbooks. He'd much rather spend his time in the garage, making airplanes with scrap boards, nails, and a hammer or be out in the backyard digging holes. He reports being friends with everyone in his class and his teacher reports that he typically walks away from conflict (I sure wish he'd apply that skill at home with his big brother). Simon has taken a special liking to a little girl in his class named Maddy. He has said more than once, "How can I trick Maddy into marrying me?" We're working on consent vs bribery and coercion. Simon is constantly making our family laugh while also shaking our heads in utter disbelief. We never know what is going to come out of his mouth. I recently learned that he has invited a classmate on our summer vacation...out of state. Simon is playing spring soccer again this year. He's hilarious to watch because he's other ignoring the ball or drilling it into the net. He only has two speeds and nothing anyone can say or do can make him switch things up. Like almost everything in Simon's life, it has to be his decision. Which brings us to the latest Simon gem: Despite being potty trained for well over two years, he still refuses to wipe himself. I recently presented him with the option of getting a "special treat" once he is successful at this new goal. Naturally, he has demanded a welding mask and torch. So family, if you happen to have a spare welding torch and mask lying around, please consider donating it to Simon's Butt Wiping Reward Program.





Lucas just celebrated his seventh birthday. Each year we let the boys choose a theme and the cake is centered around that theme. This year Lucas chose 'Mad Scientist.' He was able to have three friends come over after school on his birthday to help him celebrate. Lucas served rat brains (popcorn), Rotting Sweets (cupcakes with an eyeball and gummy snake), and yellow radioactive potion (lemonade). ← Notice the oxford comma! He had a lot of fun with his classmates and Simon. Lucas (and Simon) participated in a ninja training class at our local kids warrior gym. Lucas has increased his strength and speed tremendously over winter. He's still the smallest in his class but he is quite strong. He is able to do pull-ups, which he is constantly doing on my doorknobs, door frames, staircase banister, etc. He has also been participating in Brazilian jujutsui since November. BJJ is hand-to-hand martial arts. It's especially good for individuals with asthma since it teaches them to work smarter rather than harder. Lucas went through environmental allergy testing this winter and he's allergic to almost everything inside and outside, with the exceptions of dogs and cochroaches. Ryan got a puppy, Moose, and despite Lucas's fear of dogs, he actually enjoys Moose (probably because he's the cutest dog in the universe). I watched Moose for a day while the big boys were in school and Moose got to ride along with me to pick them up from school. He fell asleep in my lap and I really didn't want to give him back to Ryan. The boys are hoping we can have a 'Moose Day' each week in the summer. Lucas loves PE class at school and reports that it's his favorite! He also really enjoys STEM Lab, although he was extremely disappointed the first day of STEM Lab when he wasn't able to build a robot. Sorry dude, maybe in second grade?!





Nathan is approaching his 11th year working at Quality Manufacturing. He continues to work long hours during the week and every other Saturday. When Nathan isn't working, he enjoys taking the big boys to Home Depot on the first Saturday of the month for the Kid's Workshop. Nathan enjoys the time with the big boys and teaching them how to use hand tools and follow multi-step instructions. Casey will join his big brothers in the next year or two. Nathan and Ryan coached Lucas's fall soccer team. Nathan and I had coached Lucas when he was four and Nathan reported coaching six year olds was much easier since their skill level and concentration is greater. Nathan had the opportunity to work with Lucas in 4-H this year. Lucas presented to his 4-H friends how to make a simple switch by making a light-up card. Then later in the year, Nathan went to Lucas's first grade classroom on a Friday afternoon while Lucas was 'Scientist of the Week'. Lucas taught his classmates about different conductors of electricity.



Casey and I manage to stay busy while the big boys are in school during the week. In the fall Casey and I had the opportunity to work mornings at a Montessori School while their normal associate was on bereavement leave. I was in the primary grade with children ages 3-6 years. They loved having Casey tag along and wanted him to come out of the baby carrier to play with them. I continue to enjoy meal planning/prepping. I always enjoy having a freezer full of meals that I can pull out at the last minute or meals to pass on to new moms. In January we got a family YMCA membership, so 3-4 times a week Casey and I head there after dropping the big boys off at school. Casey is getting into a routine and looks forward to his time there. I like to utilize the hour listening to audiobooks; I also exercise. I continue to be a lover of books and participated in the adult winter reading challenge at the library (which I didn't win despite reading 24 books in 6 weeks; I'm not bitter—it was probably rigged

anyway.) I also recently purchased a DSLR camera and have been enjoying taking photos in manual mode and teaching myself the basics of photo editing. It's a fun hobby and I've had the opportunity to take photos for a few friends as well.



This summer we will be taking a family vacation to Colorado. We have made arrangements for an AirBnB and will be spending a lot of time hiking and visiting different state parks. I've even looked up locally owned bookstores and restaurants to visit during our time. The big boys have started asking for money rather than presents on their birthdays so they can do "experience" gifts. Lucas will be participating in another coding day camp this year. The focus on this year's program is video game design. Simon will participate in an outdoor science day camp where they make slime, tie-dye t-shirts, and make "fossils." Simon will also participate in Safety City and take a school bus to the fire station and the police station. I'm looking forward to warmer weather and gardening and getting a new front door.

Nathan recently (finally) agreed to one so I'm putting it in writing so everyone can help hold him accountable. ;)

Tuggle5 will see you at the family picnic in August!

Love,

Nathan, Calli, Lucas, Simon, & Casey