

So technically I chose June as my month because, well, June seemed like a good month to write a letter. But then I got excited about writing this letter *and* there wasn't anyone signed up for May. So in line with the rest of my life (ok, really just my birthday) I am going to walk the line between the 2 months and upload this for you all on the eve of May 31, because, why not? (The only time I will ever turn in something early)

The past 2 years have been rather eventful for us. In May 2017 Matt graduated from med school and we got married. He started residency July 2017. May 2018 I graduated from med school and subsequently started residency last July. How to describe residency/intern year...? If I had to choose 1 word it would be: hard. Back in my youthful days working on the med/psych unit before med school I remember asking one of the interns about her year and her response was "I've never been so tired in my entire life." I fully understand that statement now. I average about 60-65 hours/week at work. I am very fortunate that my program doesn't make interns work 24-hour shifts (Matt's program does). I did do some 18 hours overnight in the MICU (Medical Intensive Care Unit) and that is no easy feat either. But next year I get to look forward to some great 28-hour shifts (every 4th day!) in the ICU. Thanksgiving in the Cardiovascular ICU anyone? Intern year is incredibly hard for other reasons too—the first day of residency I realized that while med school taught me some of the "what" to do, it didn't teach me a single "how" to do it. It's an incredibly steep learning curve and while we are highly supervised and most people are great at responding to questions, the stakes are still high. As a med/psych resident I split my time between internal medicine and psychiatry. This year I spent the first 8 months on medicine and just as I was starting to feel somewhat comfortable I moved over to psych and essentially felt like I was starting intern year all over again. I've been working on various inpatient psych units for the past 4 months. Throughout the entire year I also have a "continuity clinic." This is a primary care clinic where I have my own panel of patients to follow. The end of intern year came faster than I thought and the time to switch back to medicine and become a "senior resident" is nearing (July 1). I still haven't gotten used to the fact that people call me doctor and that I'm allowed to sign important things like TB tests or FMLA paperwork or prescriptions or pretty much anything. But enough about work.

Despite both of us being residents we still try to keep some semblance of life outside of work. We bought a house shortly after Matt started residency and we enjoy doing work around home. Lots of painting, putting in shelves, new ceiling fan and garbage disposal, cleaning up the yard, etc. I learned how to replace a light fixture and an outlet this year and lived to tell the tale. I also can't thank my parents enough for all the weekends they have come up to help us with bigger projects. My dad even puts up with all the teasing Matt gives him (sometimes even looks like he's enjoying it 😊).

We do get 3 weeks of vacation each year. One we try to spend as a "staycation" to work on house projects. The other 2 we travel. Matt's parents have a condo on the North Shore of Lake Superior, about 90 miles north of Duluth, Minnesota and that has been our destination for the last few vacations. As a person who is eternally cold I never understood Matt's obsession with

winter and snow, but the North Shore has managed to change my view on that. We spend time cross country skiing and hiking in the winter and it's hard to beat the beauty of being in a nearly silent, snow-covered woods with my favorite person (and sometimes the dogs). The summers are equally beautiful up there. Words can't really do it justice so I've put in some pictures as well. Our dogs are their usual obnoxious selves. They very much enjoyed the upgrade to a fenced-in yard when we moved from the condo to our house. The dogs often get to come along on vacation. They both have backpacks that they wear when we hike to carry some of their food/water/other supplies and after the cold winter we had this year they now also have boots.

My other big undertaking of the year was attempting a run streak. A run streak is a period of time where you run a minimum of 1-mile every single day. I've been fascinated by run streaks for a long time but have never been brave enough to attempt one myself. As I neared 29 I began to worry that 30 would mean I was "old" (don't laugh all you old people reading this). So I thought a big gesture like a year-long run streak into my 30th birthday would be proof to myself that I wasn't ready to kick the bucket yet. It also seemed like good motivation to keep up an exercise routine during intern year. Being the competitive person he is, Matt also joined me. As tomorrow is my 30th birthday, I can give you the final result of my run streak. It was not a perfect run streak unfortunately. I had to take 5 days off in October for a minor foot injury, 2 days off in January during the "polar vortex" when we were up North on vacation without a treadmill and the high temperature was something like -11, and 1 day off in May when I was sick. So I ended up running 357 out of 365 days and a total of 623 miles. Since my first run was on May 31, technically today was my last one, but I'll probably put in an easy mile tomorrow because it feels right. Saturday, however, I am looking forward to a day off. We also managed to run a half marathon this spring. This was my fourth one and Matt's first. It was down in Washington on the Kewash trail.

To sum it up: work, dogs, running. We have a house, we have reliable paychecks, we have wonderful family. Our lives are pretty good.

Lisa and Matt



Our house in Iowa City. It's a bad time of year to get a picture as the giant silver maple in front obscures most of the house.



Temperance River State Park in Minnesota



The shore of Lake Superior, right outside the condo where we stay: summer and winter



Cross country ski trail



Hiking during the "Polar Vortex"



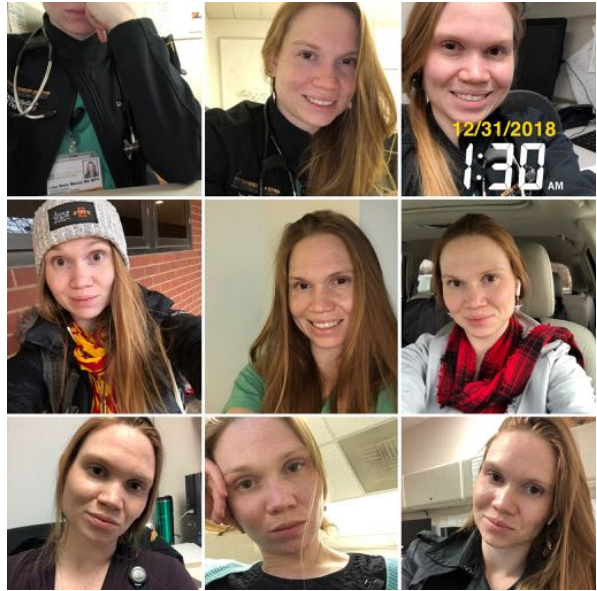
Status post half marathon



Summer fires in the backyard



Med school graduation



A collection of selfies from intern year when I probably should have been working...



The furry monsters: Ziva and Zero (if you don't want to see pictures of my dogs I don't want to be friends with you)

