

March Letter  
3/31/2020  
Sarah Samman

## Family Letter

Hello All, I am writing this while trapped in quarantine which I'm sure many of you are as well. March of 2020 has been the longest year of my life. Yes I mean year not month because oh boy it's felt like an eternity. A lot has changed since the last time I sat down to write this letter a year ago. I've learned a lot about myself as a person and have begun to try and build myself into the person I aspire to be. This past year has been a rough one I would say. Our family has grown in so many ways and it has made us all stronger and closer. It has truly put us to the test. I encourage you all to take this time in quarantine as an opportunity to catch up on yourselves and do some things you enjoy.

May of 2019 was a tough one, losing someone so dear to all of our hearts. It really taught us to appreciate every moment because things can change in an instant and we have felt that this year. This summer I spent a lot of my time in the pool getting ready for my freshman year swim season and that was awesome one. I surprised myself this season and my work in the pool paid off and I was able to make the section team and although I didn't make it to section finals it was still a really fun experience and I hope to make section finals eventually. The pool is one of my favorite places to be and it's like my second home. I hope I will be able to return to it soon after this chaos settles down. I also entered into my first year of the highschool experience and wow it has been an experience. I've met so many people and made many new friends, those of which I actually liked. This year I definitely learned how to manage time better and I am in no means good at it yet just to clear up any confusion. And anyone in my family knows that I am a continuous procrastinator and I should probably fix that.....eh maybe later.

Then my parents, siblings, and I went through some major changes. My beautiful amazing and strong mother who amazes me every day with her kindness and ability to push through the impossible faced an even more difficult roadblock in her path to recovery and feeling like herself again. You are all very familiar with her health condition and diagnosis due to extensive updates. But the majority of the struggle can't be written with pen and paper. Our family had to find a new balance and a way to adapt to this new reality. I can say

that we had a weird Christmas this year. It's been the hardest thing I've ever had to go through and I'm not even the one who had the surgery. I watched as my lovely older sisters and amazing father stepped up to fill in the hole that my mom had to leave to take care of herself for the first time in her lifetime, she had to learn to let herself heal and it has been a rough and bumpy road. My parents have given the world to me and my sisters and the least we can do is everything in our power to be there for them as much as they have been for us.

On a more upbeat note a few weeks ago I had my 15th birthday also known as my corona birthday amidst a global pandemic. I passed my permit test and I am rather upset I will be the last person to get a license in the family because apparently Minnesota laws are stupid and I'm jealous but whatever, everything's fine (Minnesota laws say you cannot get a permit until 15 years old unlike Iowa which is 14 years old). I would like to think I am a good driver but it's really confusing and I have referred to the highway as "The Zoom Zoom Lane". They do say practice makes perfect so I guess time will tell and I advise you all to keep Hassan in your prayers as he attempts to teach me to drive.

Currently, I will not be going back to school until May 4th and I start online classes this coming Monday (April 6th). It's been quite a scary experience watching the number of cases and deaths grow each day. Please stay at home and healthy because God knows we do not need someone in the Hammes clan getting coronavirus. Don't forget to wash your hands! Take some time to go outside, go on a walk, or honestly just nap because though it may be boring it's a great chance to get back on track physically and mentally. A special shoutout to those with compromised immune systems and especially you guys stay home please.

Have a Happy, Healthy, and Safe rest of 2020, send some thoughts towards Grandpa, and I miss you all dearly.

Also a huge congrats to Calli and Nathan on their beautiful baby boy!

-Sarah Samman

Below are some pictures of this year :)



Downtown Rochester by the Kahler Hotel Sign



Fiddlehead coffee shop this Christmas break



Fishing with Matthew this summer and taking some hilarious pictures



Climbing the Elba Fire tower this August with Matthew and Emily, woke up really early for this



My very good friend Hailey got a new Corgi puppy Rosie and if you couldn't tell I'm quite excited



This summer at Sophias and Bens Annual Visit

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A part of my swim team at section finals



High Schools Annual GOFA (Give One For All) December Fundraiser hit a new record and raised \$61,732 this year