

July 20, 2020

Dear Family,

I hope you are all doing well and staying safe. It is sure a crazy time that we are living in right now. I just read the letter I wrote last July (2019). It seems as though this letter won't have as many exciting stories and adventures to report due to COVID; however, I keep reminding myself daily that there is too much negativity in the world, and I try to keep a positive attitude and mindset about our current situation. Yes, there is a lot of bad going on right now, but there are some good things that have happened over the past several months.

The year 2020 has brought Tanner and I a great deal of change. The biggest change was we moved from Nebraska back to Iowa (glad to be out of Husker country!!!). Matthew and Blake came up and helped us move all of our stuff. They were a huge help and we couldn't have done it without them!



Tanner started his career as a Chemistry Professor at Iowa Lakes College in January. He has a passion for teaching and has enjoyed his time so far. His semester took a big change when the college went to online classes only. He had a pretty smooth transition from teaching in-person to online only though. I think a lot of his co-workers who are older had a much harder time with the change, as they had to learn a great deal of new technology. This summer Tanner has taught 3 online classes. With more free time, Tanner has really enjoyed getting outdoors and exploring Spirit Lake. He has spent most of his free time fishing. He realized quickly after moving that his little "John Boat" couldn't handle some of the larger lakes in our area. There are some smaller lakes that he takes his boat out on that aren't full of jet skis and large speed boats. Sometimes he takes his fishing kayak out.



Tanner continues to run pretty much daily also. He was supposed to run a marathon a few months ago, but it got cancelled. Tanner being Tanner decided that even though the race was cancelled, he was still going to do his own "personal" marathon. He drew up a route and I met up with him a few times throughout his run to bring him water.

I continued to work for the Home Care Company in Nebraska up until the end of May. I was originally supposed to part ways with the company back in November right before we moved to Spirit Lake, but they had some difficulties hiring a replacement for myself. From November to the end of January, I commuted to Lincoln to continue working. I stayed in a hotel 3 nights a week. When COVID started getting bad, everyone in our office was able to work from home. I enjoyed being home and sleeping in my own bed and didn't miss driving to and from Lincoln every week! They finally hired a replacement, and I did 90% of the training remotely. I spent

almost 10 weeks training my replacement. When I had 4 or 5 weeks of training left, I knew it was time to start looking for a job in Spirit Lake. With COVID hitting the US hard, many companies were pretty much in survival mode. Between trying to make accommodations with people working from home or downsizing, let's just say it was not the ideal time to be job hunting! After applying to jobs for about 3 weeks, I was starting to get nervous because I hadn't gotten a single call for a job interview. At week 4, I started getting a couple of calls.

My last day with the Home Care company was rather bittersweet, as I wasn't able to say "goodbye" to all of my co-workers in person. When I left Taco John's and moved to Lincoln, I was pretty nervous about my first job not working for a company that I had pretty much grown up with. I couldn't have asked to work for a better company in Lincoln. I definitely have missed a lot of my co-workers, but we are able to stay in touch.

I did a few job interviews via Zoom, which I was very comfortable with as that's what I had been using for the past several months for my other job. I ended up accepting a position at Pioneer (the Corteva branch). Corteva is a soybean production plant in Minnesota. It's about a 25-minute drive from our house in Spirit Lake). I work in the office of the plant with about 10 other people. We have about 50 employees who work in the plant. Most of my job entails working with our farmers and growers. I assist them with sales. I also am responsible for doing the whole plant's weekly payroll, helping with scheduling, and assisting truck drivers when they enter and exit the plant.

I had about two weeks when my home care job ended before my new job started. I didn't know what the heck I was going to do for 14 days with no work. I ended up going back to Marshalltown to help my parents at Taco John's. They had a ton of online trainings to get all their employees through with all of the new rules, regulations, and procedures with COVID. I spent about 6 or 7 days there helping, and it was great to see my parents, as I hadn't seen them for quite some time.

Tanner has taken me out fishing a few times. We have also done some kayaking together. I haven't quite mastered fishing in a kayak like Tanner has, but I am determined to get more comfortable!



We have had a few trips and events get cancelled due to COVID, but one thing that will not be getting cancelled or postponed will be the arrival of Baby Metz! Baby Metz is due to make his or her arrival at the end of October! This journey has been such a source of happiness with everything going on! It will be quite the big adjustment for our little dog, Gracie. She is rather spoiled to say the least!! I'm sure that once she gets used to our new addition that they will be best friends!



We haven't seen any of our family (besides our parents and siblings) for several months. Last week, we had a few visitors stop by. It was so nice to spend some time with them! We went on a hike and just enjoyed spending time at our house. We grilled out one night and the boys went fishing a couple of times. Matthew and Tanner went out for a run also.



We wish you all happiness and health. We have sure missed our trips to Sigourney to visit Grandma and Grandpa, and we can't wait until we get back to a somewhat "normal" life again.

Lots of love,

Tanner, Allison, Grace and Baby Metz 