



Happy Holidays 2019!

Another busy year comes to an end!

JANUARY



FEBRUARY



MARCH



APRIL



MAY



JUNE



JULY



AUGUST



Liya starts weekends as a ski instructor for 6–10 year-olds at Snoqualmie Pass. The kids like her, but it's a lot of work. If a kid falls and Liya bends to pull them up, when she looks around, she will discover that two more kids have fallen.

The girls' schools usually only close once or twice a year for icy conditions, but this February brings blizzards. It's one snow day after another.

Our annual "Big White-Knuckle Drive" to Big White, BC, is made even more harrowing when we approach a snowy, remote mountain pass and discover that we're very, very low on gas. We make it over the top of the pass and coast 30 miles to a gas station. During the week at Big White, Liya and Bree have fun snowboarding with Jan. Liya's now as fast as he is. And on one particularly epic powder day, Bree works out how to reliably connect turns on a snowboard.

Our cats Mojo and Moxie keep sneaking into our garage, where they get trapped. They get their feet dusty and leave little pawprints all over the car windows.

Jan, Skye, and Lyn fly to San Francisco to surprise Chris for his 50th birthday. They enjoy zooming around on a Segway tour through Golden Gate Park.

All three girls have different spring break weeks. Anya spends hers with Angela on an East Coast road trip to visit colleges, looking towards applying at the end of the year. Jan and Liya take a train trip across Canada and find that it can be springtime in Vancouver but still deep winter in Winnipeg. Jan and Bree go backpacking in Oregon's remote Owyhee Canyonlands, where the trails are sketchy, but the scenery beautiful and the natural hot springs rel-aah-xing.

Our neighbor Marc takes Jan and another friend sailing for three days in Puget Sound. They sail from Bellingham, through the San Juan Islands, to Port Townsend and finally Seattle. Sailing through active shipping lanes with occasional, mostly-submerged floating logs is fun/terrifying.

Liya flies a plane! In her high school's week-long aviation elective, she and another student are paired with an instructor for a Cessna 172 discovery flight. They have perfect clear weather. The other student goes first, flying from Renton to Bremerton. When Liya gets her turn to pilot the Cessna, she flies back over Puget Sound and Lake Union. She asks the instructor if she can fly over Madison Park. He adjusts their flight plan, and she's able to pick out our house from the air. The instructor lines up the landing at Renton, then Liya lands the plane.

Bree plays the role of Jack in the Beanstalk in her class' performance of the musical, *Into the Woods*. Her role includes the solo, "There are Giants in the Sky". Meanwhile, her 5th grade Tech class holds its annual Programmer's Potluck dinner. Bree shows off her Halloween-themed game, Candy Run, in which one tries to gather as much candy as possible before the night is over.

Liya begins a summer-long intensive class in American Sign Language at the University of Washington. At 15, she's the youngest person in the class. Each day she bikes back home and shares new signs and aspects of Deaf culture.

Anya leaves Seattle for a month-long intensive Spanish language class in Cadiz, Spain. We're sorry to lose Anya for a third of the summer, but it seems like a great opportunity, and she and a Seattle friend of hers have a fun time.

During the backpacking season, Jan puts in 350 miles on trails. He, Chris, and Lyn hike the Ozette Loop on the wild coast of Olympic National Park. When Angela's parents visit, Jan and Bree take Cheng-nan on his first backpacking trip ever to quiet Baker Lake at the foot of snow-covered volcano Mt. Baker. Jan and Liya make a steep climb up to Washington's spectacular Enchantments area, where they manage to stay dry during an all-night thunderstorm. Jan's big solo trip is 156 miles (251 km) over 9 days on the Pacific Northwest Trail across the remote, roadless Pasayten Wilderness. This entails clambering over hundreds of blown-down trees and dealing with snow in July. One night, camped near the top of a peak on the U.S./Canada border, Jan's woken up by a *wolf* howling near his tent. It takes a while to fall back asleep. Most unusual hike of the year: Jan heads out our front door and walks for 3 days to the Pacific Crest Trail at Snoqualmie Pass, 75 miles (120 km) away. Jan also invents "conference camping": when he travels to a work conference in Fukuoka, Japan, he brings along just enough camping gear to do a 3-day hiking adventure on the beach and mountains.

Bree turns 12! Liya is 16 and can drive! Anya is 18 and can vote!

Jan, Chris, Lyn help Skye and Jared celebrate their 15th wedding anniversary at a square dancing hootenanny in Salem, OR.



SEPTEMBER



OCTOBER



NOVEMBER



DECEMBER



The girls and Jan finish playing *The Legend of Zelda: The Breath of the Wild*. They were repeatedly delayed in completing the video game; everyone wanted to be together for the finale. Given the massive firepower the girls had amassed, the final battle isn't particularly challenging, but it does have the usual hallmarks of our collective play: Jan mashing buttons trying to hit something, and all three girls simultaneously screaming out warnings, suggestions, and critiques.

We fly to California for a week of family-friendly Sierra Camp near Tahoe. Jan flies down early, and hikes with Chris along the Pacific Crest Trail for 50 miles all the way into camp. After Chris leaves, we're joined by Lyn. Bree tags along with Jan and his friend on a challenging day hike to a remote lake. They meet a camp hiking guide who's stunned to see a camp kid so far from camp.

Anya has to leave camp early to start her senior year at Choate in Connecticut. She's enjoying the slate of classes she's taking; there are so many more classes she'd like to take that she could easily fill another year there. She's made good friends with the other girls in her dorm, where she's serving as a dorm prefect, and has enjoyed making friends with students from around the world.

Liya begins 11th grade. She's satisfied with her classes, particularly 3rd year Mandarin, her advisory group, and Fire Arts (glass and pottery) class. She takes the SAT as she begins her own college process which will continue all next year.

Bree starts 6th grade, moving up to the middle school division of her K-8 school. This means a number of new teachers for her favorite subjects like science and math, plus some familiar teachers for things like art. As a middle schooler, she gets to attend her first school dance, followed by a sleepover at a friend's house. Bree's often found in the guest room building complex dioramas out of Lego. She gives the Lego figurines custom paint jobs and fashions accessories for them.

Jan and Angela celebrate their 21st anniversary at Willows Inn on Lummi Island.

We all head east to visit Anya at Choate for Parents' Weekend. Jan goes out early so he can visit with Anne in Pleasantville and check in on his stepmother Marlee. At Choate, we follow Anya around campus for two days of classes. Afterwards, we travel as a family for two nights in New York City, where we see a performance of *Stomp* and visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Before leaving the East Coast, we stop in New Jersey to visit our friends Owen and Nicole.

Anya wants to play in a Quiz Bowl — a quiz-based competition testing knowledge across a wide range of subjects — so she forms a Quiz Bowl club. She enlists a set of students and enters the new team at a regional event in Boston, where her brand-new team qualifies for the national competition next spring.

Angela enjoys pastoring at First Taiwanese Presbyterian Church. On the one hand, it's hard to believe it's already been 3½ years, but on the other hand, relationships have beautifully deepened and real work is getting done. And after 16 years of worshipping in the same location, the church now has its own offices and meeting rooms! Which means Angela has a pastor's office! She is enjoying finally having "a room of her own" for work.

Our beloved white birch tree in the backyard has to be cut down, victim of an insect infestation devastating every white birch in Seattle. The white pine in our front yard also dies and also has to be cut down. We replace both trees, but it'll be years before they'll give the same shade and presence as the old trees.

Liya's cross-country team wins the Emerald City League championship for the first time since 2006. Liya's put in many hours of training all year. At the state championships in Pasco, she's the first girl on her team across the finish. She and three of her teammates end the year by running the full Seattle Marathon.

We spend Thanksgiving in Suncadia, WA, with Skye's family, Chris, and Lyn. It's cold, but it's nice to walk around the area and explore the nearby town of Roslyn.

Jan takes a new job as a software architect at Salesforce. The company was interested in Jan's web work, and he liked the people he met there. Although he spent the first half of his career working mostly on the design side of software, he's now on the engineering side, so there's a lot to learn. He's working from home one day a week and hopes to bump that up to two.

Have a Happy New Year in 2020!