



"One Day in May"

(May 15, 2021)

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Connection to the College (student? faculty? alum? friend of the College?): Alumnus/alumna

Describe your day on May 15, 2021. Tell us whatever you'd like at whatever length you'd like. We think future students will especially appreciate hearing about concrete details -- What can you see and hear from where you are right now? What did you do for fun today? Did you cook or eat anything special? Did you work or do chores? Who did you spend time with? What did you learn?

Today has actually been a great day! I flew from California to Indianapolis to visit my mother this last week for Mothers Day and got back California to enjoy some of the sunshine in the mountains. Today, my roommates and I are hanging out outside by the pool of our apartment complex. The pool never opened last summer due to COVID, so it's nice to see things starting to come around. From where we sit, I can see all the plants in our complex starting to sprout green buds, some already blooming into full flowers. The woman who maintains the grounds is watering our grass (even though we're in a drought and fire season is upon us) and making some light conversation with us. There is a pair of mallards that hung out around the empty pool last summer that have returned. Everywhere here in Tahoe are the Stellar's Jays. I have said that they are the raccoons of the bird kingdom. They shriek instead of squawk and will scare the hell out of any unsuspecting tourist.

Myself and one of my other roommates are fully vaccinated and the other is halfway there, so we have had a couple gatherings with some friends. We have all been traveling a bit more too; I think being vaccinated as well as being in a state (California) that really cares about its people and made the sacrifices to be able to safely open helps. As of right now, I am going to take a drive down the Pacific Coast Highway next week. Not the entire thing because I'm going to be car camping alone, and I really only want to see the California part of it, for now. I know a lot of people feel as if they spent way too much time alone during quarantine, but I feel as if I learned how to actually enjoy being alone. I really value my alone time now, and am realizing how many experiences I would miss out on waiting on others. Especially being back at work after not working for so many months. My time is better spent doing the things that bring some happiness to me and to those around.

What do you think you'll remember most about surviving the pandemic? Tell us what whatever you'd like at whatever length you'd like. We think future students will especially appreciate memories that help them picture your life and relationships -- Have you taken up any new leisure activities in the last year, or have you changed how you eat, or cook? If you're on campus, what was it like in classrooms or dining spaces or locker rooms or offices? Have you been able to stay in touch with family or friends (including classmates and other Hanoverians)? How? What have you missed the most in the past year?

I think what I'll remember most about surviving the pandemic is those that didn't. It's like trying to imagine what \$1 million looks like when you've never seen it; I can't imagine what 560,000 American deaths looks like. We see pictures and videos of those in the worst conditions, those who were selfish prior to a

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vaccine, and health care workers working to save those in a society that could not care less about giving them a break or a raise. I don't mean to sound so pessimistic - I truly am a person who likes to see the best in people and believes we all have an innately good seed in us. But there are a million other seeds in each of us that can be watered as well. Seeds of hatred, jealousy, arrogance and many others. I believe you have to actively choose to water the good ones and I didn't see enough of that from others' actions this last year or so.

With that being said, there has been so much care and joy that has erupted from others during this time. Our little mountain community stepped up and started holding more food banks, public transit was subsidized by the local government for safety and policies were put into place to protect the locals in our tourist town. The city council voted to fund hotel renovations as housing for the local unhoused community! The pandemic showed me that I really am part of a community that actively works towards the betterment of their people. Priorities are really being shown during this time in our history, and I can't wait until the vaccine is rolled out to other countries so that others can begin to feel this sense of calming relief that I have.

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