



"One Day in May"

(May 15, 2021)

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Class Year: 2011

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?

I woke up around 8 am because my friend Ben Phillips woke me up while he was getting ready in the morning. He stayed at my apartment the night before, and it was the first time I'd seen him in two years. We went to grad school together at Ohio State and both worked at the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities in Columbus, OH before he moved to Ames, IA because his wife got a job as an assistant professor at Iowa State. If it wasn't for the pandemic, I'm sure I would have seen him sooner. Around 11 am, Ben and I went to Mazunte Taqueria at 5207 Madison Rd in Cincinnati for lunch. We both ordered tacos. I had the beer-battered fish tacos and Ben had the chorizo tacos. We split an order of salsa and chips. After lunch, I saw him off as he drove to Lexington, KY to meet up with his brother who lives there.

After Ben left, I went for a 30-minute walk around my apartment complex in Madisonville. The weather was perfect today; mid-70s and sunny.

The complex has two golf driving ranges that I use to hit baseballs off a tee. I play in an age 25 and up baseball recreation league and try to work on my swing a day or two each week when I don't have games. So, I hit some baseballs in the driving range off the tee. Adjacent to the ranges is a small basketball court, and I shot around a little bit after I finished my tee work.

After cleaning up, I went to Shape & Form Men's Grooming to get a haircut. I didn't wear a mask because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently said that fully vaccinated people don't need to wear a mask anymore except in crowded situations. (I got the Moderna vaccine in January/February.) My barber, John, did wear a mask, however. We talked about traveling again and about trips we are taking or want to take. It feels possible to dream again.

After my haircut, I went to spend the night with my parents at their house. I grew up in Cincinnati, but only recently moved back to the area in late December 2020. My parents were not fully vaccinated until the end of March, so between January and March I would visit them once a week and we would sit outside in the garage with masks on. I finally was allowed inside the house and hugged them for the first time in a year on April 3, 2021. It was emotional and surreal, and I was and am so grateful they did not get the virus. I have tried to see them once a week since I've moved back, usually on the weekend.

When I got to my parents house in Monfort Heights, they were working on the garden in the backyard. Because the weather was so pleasant and because the cicadas are expected any day now, many people in the neighborhood were outside. I watched a few episodes of Impractical Jokers on truTV before we ordered Chinese food from the Golden Dragon. My mom still won't eat inside restaurants, so we had it delivered. We ate outside on the back patio and talked about my upcoming wedding in (hopefully) June 2022.

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After dinner, we watched the Reds-Rockies baseball game on the TV in the living room before going to bed around 11. I had to be up at 6:30 am for an early baseball game at Ross Park in St. Bernard the next day.

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?

What I think I will remember most is my resiliency. For example, I got engaged to my best friend, Megan Vendemia, in Palm Springs in August 2020. I bought a ring, hired a local photographer, planned the trip, and asked for her parents' blessing by letter (yes, letter) between June and July. From March through July, Megan stayed with me in Columbus as the nation stayed at home. We had never lived together before, and the pandemic definitely brought us closer together.

I also moved from Columbus to Cincinnati for a new job and played baseball in the summer for the first time in about 13 years. When it seemed like the world was falling apart at times, I kept pushing through. You can make the most of your circumstances, or you can let your circumstances define you. I chose to make the most of it.

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