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2017: Year of wind & weddings

What a year - some events we cherished and some really tried our spirits, but God continues to bless us this holiday season.

In April, my sister Konni suffered a serious stroke and I was able to spend some time with her while she completed rehab in California. The experience was truly a lesson in faith and courage. She is my greatest hero and continues to make amazing progress.

This summer we celebrated 40-year high school class reunions. Russell used his internet marketing skills to help plan and organize some great festivities for his [reunion in Blackduck, MN](#).

Families gathered for two wonderful weddings. Allyn & Amy were married June 9 (also our 38th anniversary) at our church in Naples. In September, our goddaughter Kassi (Konni's daughter) and her husband Dave tied the knot at [Fortino Winery](#) in

Gilroy, CA. One highlight of the day was seeing my sister walk down the aisle with her son, Kyle, and give a [beautiful toast](#) at the reception. Many tears!

Also in September, Naples sustained a direct hit from [Hurricane Irma](#), which toppled our dock, damaged our office building and destroyed the back lanai on our little rental house. As first responders, Amy (dispatch), Allyn (sheriff's office), and Riley (fire & rescue), were all called to duty so Russell and I rode out the storm at Allyn & Amy's new-build home, watching the three dogs. Despite some damage and extended power outages, we were all grateful to be safe & sound.

Looking back, we received so many blessings even in the struggles. We hope your year was filled with many blessings as well and wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Two lives become one in love

After more than a year of planning, Allyn & Amy were married on June 9, 2017 at [Trinity by the Cove](#) Episcopal Church. Allyn's uncle Rev. Roy Tuff officiated. It was a beautiful wedding and a wonderful gathering of family and friends.

In September, their new home withstood Hurricane Irma with flying colors. Allyn's beloved lemon and lime trees had to be straightened but that was the extent of the damage.

In October, Allyn & Amy completed their first makeover project by refinishing their kitchen. Although their home is brand new, they didn't have a say in any of the colors or finishings. One year after moving in, with a vision and



some elbow grease, their standard brown kitchen now features a customized gray and white motif that they have carried into the rest of their home.

The newest addition to their family is a Golden-doodle puppy, set to arrive a couple days before Christmas. Hopefully Molly, who currently rules the roost, will approve!

New start in the Cape

This has been an exciting year for Riley.

Last summer, he left the United Way of Collier County to become the new Emergency Management Coordinator for the [Cape Coral Fire Department](#). His duties include oversight of the Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT), which is very popular in Cape Coral.

The move came with a raise in pay and relocation from Collier to Lee County. He moved into his own apartment in [Ft. Myers](#) and enjoyed decorating and furnishing it. Ft. Myers has many more social opportunities for young people than Naples and he enjoys exploring his new community.

After moving to Ft. Myers, Riley joined a dance studio and is currently preparing for a dance competition in December.

After Hurricane Irma, Riley took in a new four-legged roommate - his brother's



dog, Tico, who came to visit and ended up staying. Their apartment complex features several small lakes that are perfect for walking and the two enjoy checking out area dog parks.