

March 29, 2019

Hello family,

First of all, I've ALWAYS wanted my family to write a letter back when we sent them in the mail, but we never did, so thank you to the older cousins for starting this up again!! Right now, I attend Ames High where I am finishing my sophomore year. I help run Dance Marathon (DM) one of the clubs at AHS. DM started in colleges as a way to raise money for children's hospitals all over the US. Five years ago, my high school had its first Dance Marathon, we fundraise all year and sold shirts. Now in its fifth year, we get a few hundred students to come to our event, dance, eat some food and listen to the stories of families and kids who have been treated at the U of Iowa Children's Hospital. Last year was my first-year planning anything.

This year I've taken a bigger role in planning the event. I also spoke about my time at the hospital, that was my first time doing it along and it was amazing. As a senior, I plan on leading the whole thing! It's been so amazing to see my classmates get as excited for DM as I am. In one-week, last October, my honors English class raised over \$1,400 for DM!! Dance Marathon was March 1, we had a 3-hour celebration at the high school gym. After raising money all year out total was \$21,059.69!! It was an amazing night.

In September I went to homecoming with my friend Kayla and a boy we both work with during PE. We both do PE with students from the special ed rooms.

In October it got the chance to travel to Florida with my dad's coworker and her two kids. We had a blast, we flew out of Des Moines Friday the 26 after school and came back to Iowa the following Tuesday. We went to universal, Harry Potter World and DISNEYLAND!! I was amazing, although true to fashion I got sick on the day we went to Disney. Pictures below obviously.

One day a week I go to dance. My studio isn't a competition studio, but we have one recital at the beginning of June. I have danced there for 8 years and it's one of my favorite things in the world. This year I'm doing tap jazz and ballet. We are just finishing our dances and will get our costumes soon. I've been working at a Mexican restaurant for the past year and a half as a hostess. I work four days a week and really enjoy it. I learn a fair bit of Spanish there. It's definitely helped at school in my Spanish class, and it's neat to see some of the workers learning English as I learn Spanish.

I think that will do for now. Happy birthday Grandpa, Ryan, Lindsey, and Lucas!! Oh, and go Hawks!

Love,

Sophia Hammes



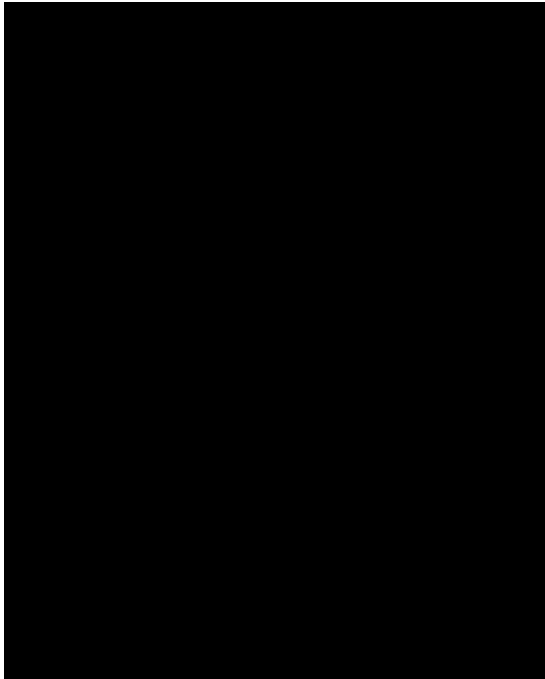
Went to a Hawkeye Volleyball game in saw this beautiful bird



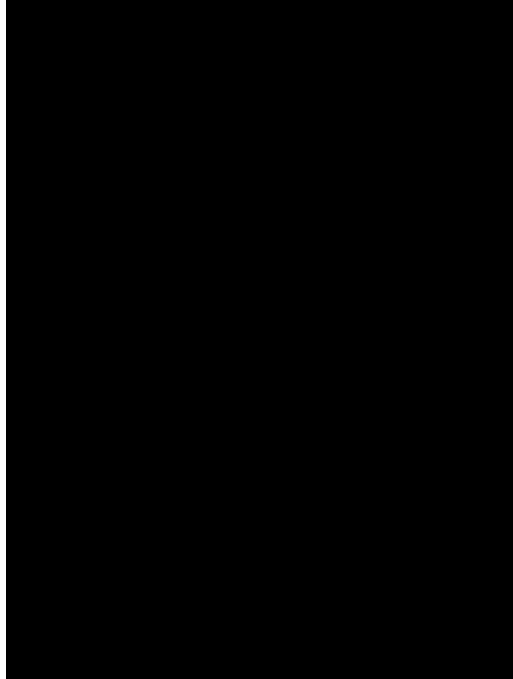
Homecoming 2018 with my friend Kayla
September



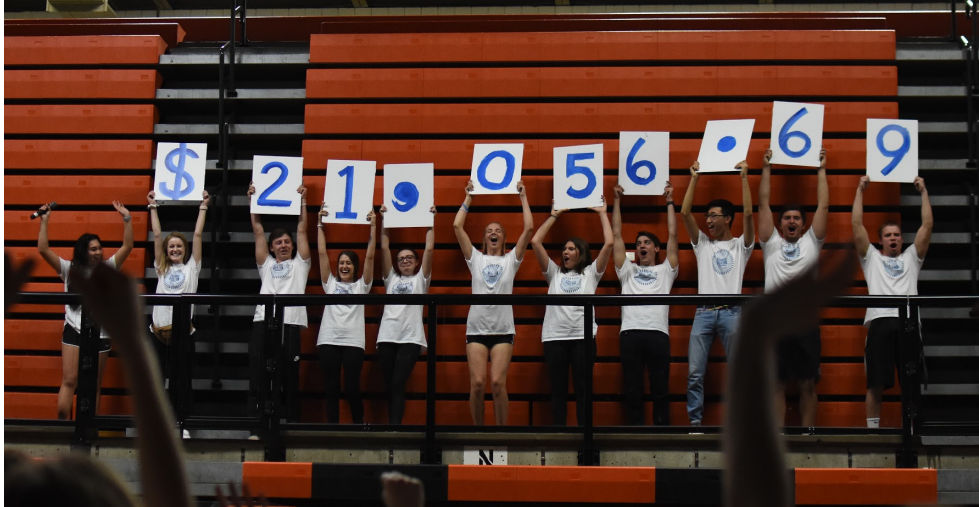
Aren't we cute??!!



Reagan (9) Mitchell (6) and I
with Minnie Mouse



Harry Potter World in Universal



The reveal of our total at Dance Marathon I'm holding the comma. We beat last year's total by over \$2,000!!!!