



**Brett Sorem**

Husband,  
Father,  
Skateboarder,  
Movie Editor,  
and now...  
Author!



**A SKATEBOARDERS 11 LESSONS  
THAT TRANSITION TO LIFE**

**LAND  
ON  
BOTH  
FEET**

**BRETT SØREM**

# BRETT WRITES A BOOK!

By Brett Sorem

Now that Bryce and I have already made the best movie you can buy on Amazon (Bro'd Trip...and if you haven't seen it yet, Yaya says shame on you) I figured since I already conquered film I should venture into a new medium. Writing can't be that hard right? I know words and stuff.

So, during Covid in our tiny Brooklyn Condo I set out on that adventure. It's called Land on Both Feet. Surprise surprise--it's about skateboarding.

After my first draft I did what anyone with half a brain would do, I asked someone much smarter than I with a

whole brain for their input. Luckily enough, we have quite a few big brained bros in our family, but one stood out among the rest. Not because he just looks the part of a big brained bro with his stylish glasses and hair color that screams wisdom, Kevin Riel also happens to be an actual writer and skateboard aficionado. He agreed to help me with an initial developmental edit. I remember him telling me, "congrats on the manuscript, now the real work begins." Boy was he right.

After Kevin helped me craft it into a somewhat cohesive state, I began what seemed like a pretty daunting task, the query process. I sent out proposals to publishing companies with a blurb about the book in hopes of getting an email back asking to get a copy of the manuscript.









By Birdy Hall

# Another Memorable Super Bowl Party

Super Bowl Sunday is always a time for fun, competition, and, of course, great food. As always, Kym and Doug graciously hosted the much-anticipated annual Super Bowl Party, bringing together an amazing group of friends: Myself and Lyle, Bob, Listy, Holly, Rex, Robert, and Joyce. As the big game approached, excitement filled the air. It wasn't just about football; it was about the camaraderie, the laughter, and the joy of spending time together. The atmosphere was lively, and everyone was ready for an unforgettable party.

One of the most thrilling aspects of the party was, without a doubt, the betting. We didn't just place our wagers on the game itself; we threw in some fun bets on the commercials as well. For just one quarter you could name the first commercial in the next



break from the game. If no one got it correct the pot would stay and you had to bet a quarter to guess on the next break. This added an extra layer of excitement, and the stakes were high as everyone eagerly anticipated the outcomes. As we all watched the game unfold, there were some big winners among the group (Bob and Listy), creating moments of celebration that only added to the fun of the evening.

Of course, no Super Bowl party is complete without incredible food, and this gathering was no exception. Kym outdid herself with





a spread that had everyone's mouth watering. We indulged in four kinds of deep fried, chicken wings, made on the spot by Doug with his new deep fryer. Each batch came with its own unique flavor profile that kept us coming back for more. The Philly steak sandwiches (also made by Doug and Kym) were a big hit, filled with tender meat and topped with the perfect blend of cheese and vegetables.

But the real showstopper was Kym's famous barbecue beans, a dish that has become a tradition at these gatherings. They were, as always, a crowd favorite and a comforting, hearty addition to the feast. To top it all off, Robert surprised us with mini, Nilla wafer, ice cream sandwiches that added a sweet and cool end to the evening, leaving everyone in a state of bliss.

As the game played on, we enjoyed the atmosphere of good food, lively conversation, and, of course, the friendly rivalry between teams. The camaraderie among friends made the event truly special. There's something about watching the game together—sharing laughs, celebrating the victories, and commiserating over the losses—that makes these gatherings so memorable.

It was an evening that perfectly blended sports, friendship, and great food in the best possible way. With so much fun and laughter shared, we can't wait for next year's gathering. Here's to many more Super Bowl Sundays filled with great moments and even better company!





# Family Fun at Laurence Welk with the Best Friends Crew

By Birdy Hall

Our recent trip to Laurence Welk with the Best Friends Crew was nothing short of spectacular! Gathered together with our dearest friends, we embarked on a week-end filled with laughter, sports, and a surprise celebration that left us all with cherished memories.

The adventure began with a day on the golf course. Under the clear blue sky and surrounded by the lush greenery of Laurence Welk, we set out to enjoy a friendly round of golf. The camaraderie among us was palpable as we cheered each other on, shared tips, and occasionally laughed at our less-than-perfect shots. It wasn't about who won or lost; it was about spending quality time with our friends Holly, Rex, Kym, Doug, Bob, and Listy, and simply enjoying the game. We played a scramble and everyone felt good about the way they contributed to the team effort!

Along with our golfing escapades, we headed to the pickleball courts, ready for some fast-paced fun. Pickleball, a delightful mix of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong, provided endless entertainment. The competitive spirit kicked in, but much like our golf game, the joy lay in playing together. Amidst the rallies and volleys, there were moments of pure joy and laughter, making the experience unforgettable.



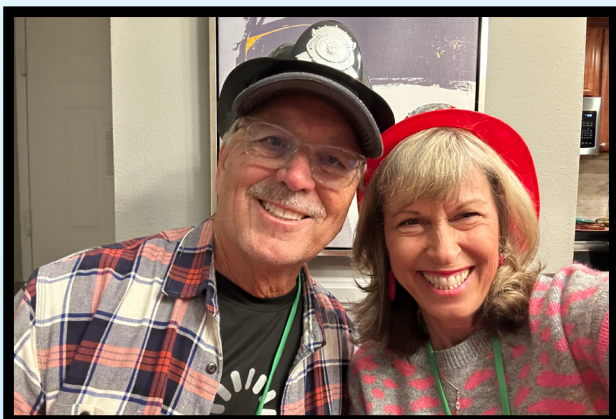


The highlight of our trip was undoubtedly the surprise retirement party for Lyle. With over 40 years of dedication to the fire sprinkler business, Lyle's retirement was a milestone worthy of grand celebration. Listy and Bob orchestrated the surprise with incredible finesse, ensuring every detail was perfect.

As the evening sun set, we gathered in a beautifully decorated space, eagerly awaiting Lyle's arrival. The look of astonishment and joy on Lyle's face as he walked in was priceless. Surrounded by friends who have supported him throughout his illustrious career, Lyle was genuinely moved.

The evening was filled with games that brought out the child in all of us. We organized a series of activities that had everyone participating and enjoying themselves. From trivia about Lyle's career to fun challenges that had us all in stitches, the games were a hit.

In honor of Lyle, we gathered to sing a specially composed song celebrating his achievements and the impact he has made over the years. The heartfelt lyrics and melodious tune resonated with everyone, and Lyle's eyes glistened with tears of happiness. It was a poignant moment that encapsulated the love and admiration we all have for him.



### Lyle's Retirement (sung to "Fire and Rain")

Just yesterday mornin', they let us know you were gone  
Just a wave to your workers, you'd been there so long.  
Off to the golf course or any damn place you choose  
Former shitty clients get the big F U.

Oh, Lyle's seen fire and sprinkler rain  
He's seen working days he thought would never end.  
He's seen miles of pipes with every curve and bend  
But it's time to retire just like his loyal friends.

Won't you look down upon Lyle, Jesus?  
You've got to help him make a putt.  
Or, just add forty driving yards to make his day.  
A one-digit index is a dream to be had  
Maybe cheating is the only way

Oh, Lyle's seen fire and sprinkler rain  
He's seen working days that he thought would never end  
He's seen miles of pipes with every curve and bend.  
But it's time to retire just like his freakin' friends.

Been traveling with Bird to an easy time  
The world is there's to explore  
Lord knows, when the cold wind blows  
Bird'll grab a jacket... or four.

Well, there's Greece and LeMans and Oahu too  
And any darn place they might choose  
Sweet dreams in flying machines, a first-class  
kind of schmooze.

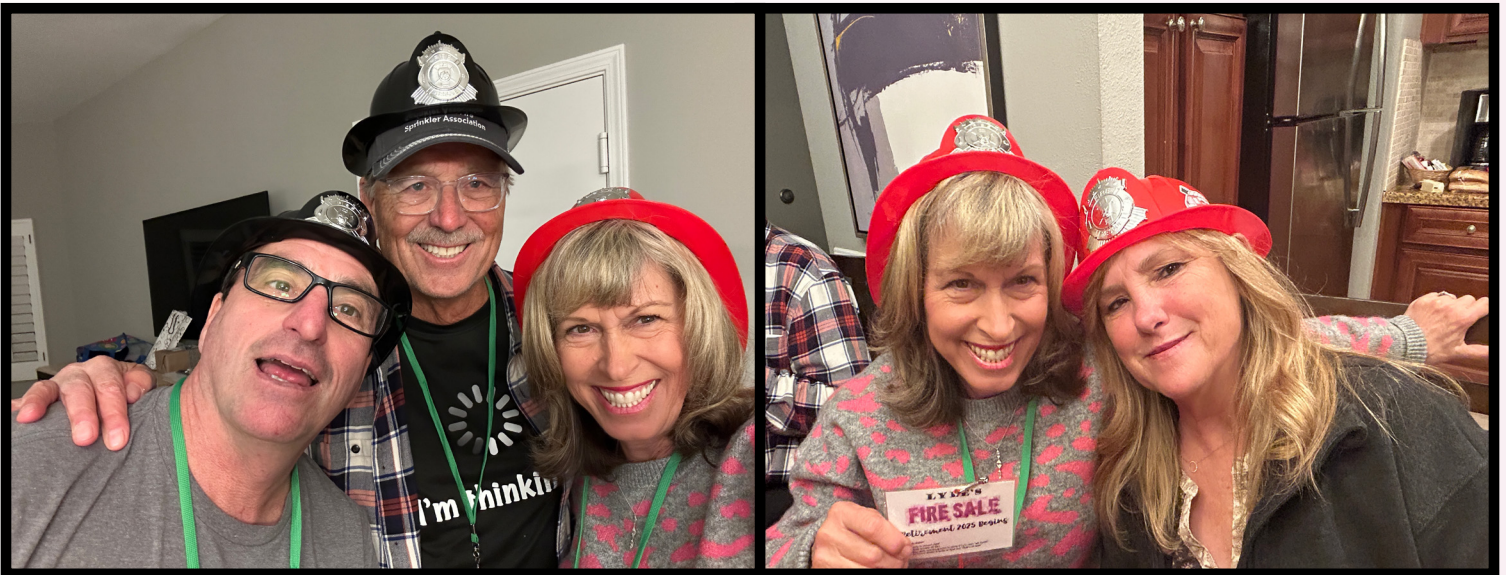
Oh, Lyle's seen fire and sprinkler rain  
He's seen working days he thought would never end  
He's seen miles of pipes with every curve and bend  
But it's time to retire just like his dickwad friends.



The night was a beautiful blend of joy, nostalgia, and heartfelt emotions. Lyle was deeply touched by the efforts we made to honor him and celebrate his retirement. The presence of friends like Holly, Rex, Kym, Doug, Bob, and Listy made the evening even more special.

As we concluded our trip, we carried with us not only the memories of the fun and games but also the warmth of friendship and the importance of celebrating life's milestones together. Our time at Laurence Welk with the Best Friends Crew was a reminder of how precious these moments are and how they strengthen the bonds we share.

The weekend was a testament to the power of friendship, the joy of shared experiences, and the beauty of celebrating achievements. Here's to many more such memorable trips and celebrations with our Best Friends Crew!





# February 2025

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>9</b> <i>Scott &amp; Krissy's 5th Ann.</i>	<b>10</b> <i>Michael's 44th &amp; Brett's 42nd Birthdays</i>	11	12	<b>13</b> <i>David &amp; Bethany's 5th Ann. &amp; Addelyn's 8th Birthday</i>	<b>14</b> <i>Dave's 44th Birthday Valentines Day</i>	<b>15</b> <i>Greyson's 10th Birthday</i>
16	<b>17</b> <i>President's Day</i>	<b>18</b> <i>Bob &amp; Karla's 42nd Ann.</i>	19	20	21	<b>22</b> <i>Brett &amp; Carinda's 5th Ann.</i>
<b>23</b> <i>Avery R's 3rd Birthday</i>	24	25	26	27	28	

# March 2025

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

						1
2	3	4	<b>5</b> <i>Madeline's 9th Birthday</i>	<b>6</b> <i>Margaret's 75th Birthday</i>	7	8
<b>9</b> <i>Daylight Savings Begins</i>	<b>10</b> <i>Cleo's 1st Birthday</i>	11	12	13	14	15
16	<b>17</b> <i>Jessica's 42nd Birthday St. Patrick's Day</i>	18	<b>19</b> <i>Craig's 42nd Birthday</i>	20	21	22
<b>23</b> <i>Jeff's 73rd Birthday</i>	24	25	26	27	28	<b>29</b> <i>Kieran's 5th Birthday</i>
30	31					





# MEET HALF MARATHON MAN!

By Listy Gillingham

Health goals and various challenges can be short-lived for most people, as though the intentions are good, putting the pedal to the metal is a lot harder over time, especially as life happens.

This is not true for Robert Riel, who five years ago, after COVID reared its ugly head, decided half marathon running would be his commitment to his own health. And that's how it began, one month at time, Robert has run at least one-half marathon distance run (13.1 miles). Five years later (hard to believe COVID days are 5 years behind us), he's still running 13.1 miles each month.

In theory, that's not too hard to think about, however in practice it takes planning and a commitment to running year-round. Each month, he checks in with our running group, trying to figure out when is the best day for him to do his half. When I'm training for the Rock and Roll marathon, that's an easy fit for us, but when we're in our down months of recovery, he's still revving up for his thirteen.





Another challenge that shows up is where he happens to be at the time, especially now that he's retired. He has run the half in other states and National parks across the country. He has also had to work around injuries and sickness to make sure he stays within the scope of the monthly commitment. The running club has watched him log the miles on Strava (a running log application) and he has never missed a month nor cheated on the distance (13.1 or higher). Though the races are unofficial in that he charts his own course and doesn't pay an entry fee, they are still miles on the feet done monthly to impress us all and keep his goal intact.

How long will he do it? That's always a good question, but now that I've published this accomplishment, quitting becomes less of an option for him. Yearly, he logs close to 1400 miles which again demonstrates his commitment to the challenge as the 12 halves only add up to 157.2 of those miles. I personally love watching him achieve this goal and hope that we are all able to run well into our 80's or more! Way to go Half-Marathon Man Robert Riel!

Some of his half marathon locations are:

All over the **San Diego area**

**Arizona** – Apache Junction and Sedona

**California** – Borrego Springs and Visalia

**Colorado** – Cortez and Fort Collins

**Idaho** – West Yellowstone

**Illinois** - Chicago

**Montana** – Glaiser National Park

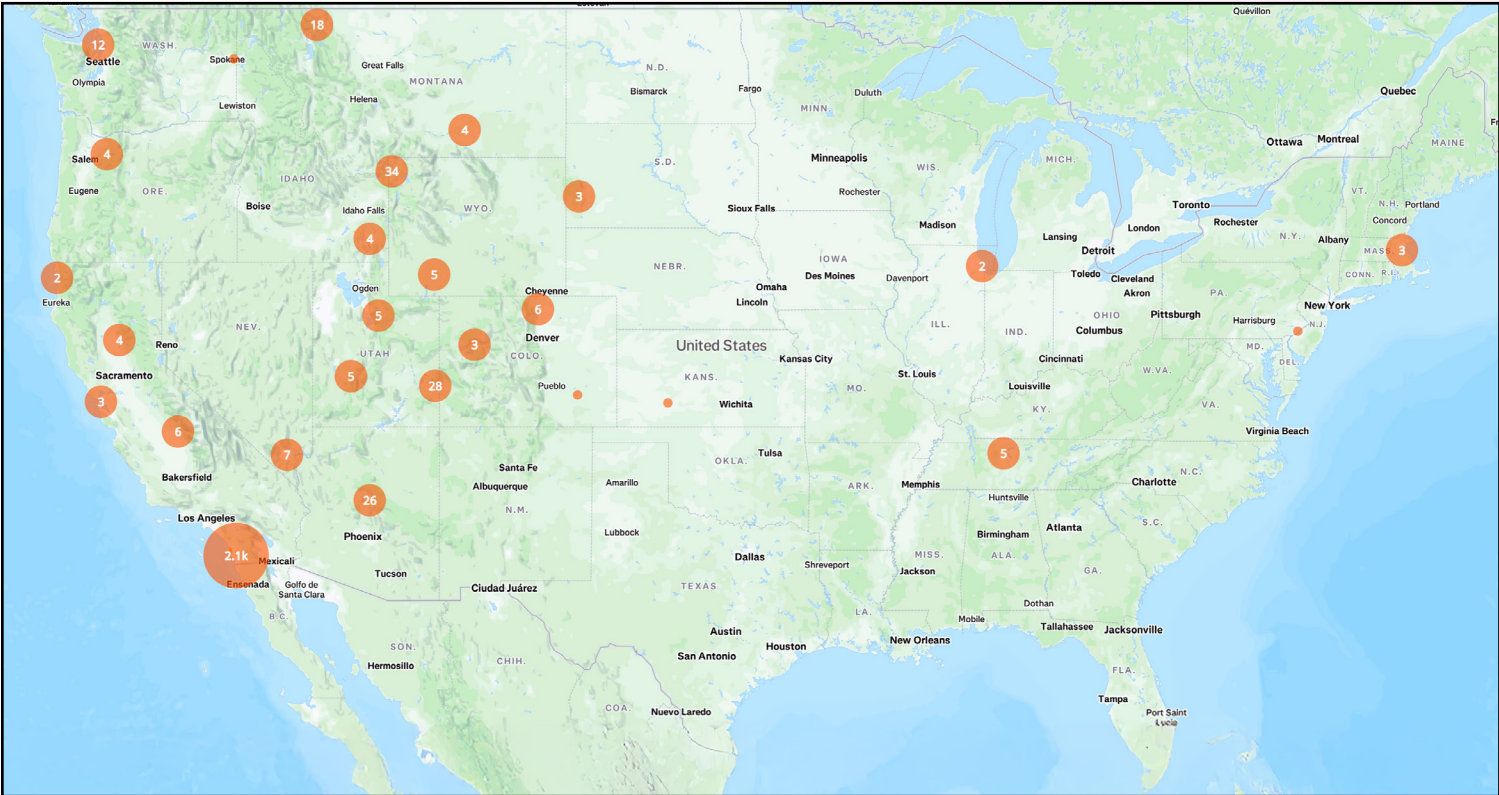
**Tennessee** – Knoxville

**Utah** – Cedar City, Fillmore

**Washington State** – Puyallup and Seattle

**Wyoming** – Yellowstone National Park

The map below shows the locations and amount of runs that took place in the area. While most of them are not Half Marathon distance many are. Every orange dot indicates a series of runs in that area.







# ***The Farmers Insurance Golf Tournament at Torrey Pines***

## ***A Memorable Experience with The Gillinghams***

By Birdy Hall

Birdy and Lyle extended a delightful invitation to Bob and Listy to join us at the Farmers Insurance Golf Tournament at Torrey Pines. The event turned out to be a splendid occasion filled with excitement and camaraderie.

We took great pleasure in following various players as they skillfully navigated the course. One of the highlights was watching Theegala, whose performance, although not the strongest that day, was still captivating. His dedication and technique provided an inspiring spectacle for all.



Contrary to expectations for a San Diego tournament, the weather was surprisingly cold, making the day crisp and brisk. Despite the chilly conditions, our spirits were high, thanks in part to our fortunate seating arrangement. We secured primo seats behind the 18th hole, complete with catered food and a bar. This luxurious setup allowed us to enjoy the games in exceptional comfort, transforming the experience into a true treat.

Sitting in the stands, savoring delicious food and drinks, and witnessing the thrilling moments of the tournament, we couldn't have asked for a better way to spend the day. The combination of great company, fantastic golf, and the cozy amenities made this an unforgettable event.



# 20 years ago...



## Jessica in Washington, DC

We have two notes from Jessica on her temporary move to the nation's capital, and they tell us how she is doing.

Hello everyone

Well the time has come for me to change my email address. I have finished at UCI so I cannot use that email anymore. But never fear, you can still write to me at my new address: [jessicaauburn@gmail.com](mailto:jessicaauburn@gmail.com). In case any of you didn't know, I am currently in Washington DC working as an intern for CA senator Dianne Feinstein. I've only worked two days so I don't really know the extent of everything I will be doing, but here are some of my responsibilities: I work with the legislative assistant for Energy and Transportation doing research for bills and whatnot (that's the exciting part), I also do morning press clippings, answer phones, stuff envelopes, sort constituent mail, and eventually I will be giving tours of the capitol. So if any of you happen to be in town, drop in and I'll show you around Capitol Hill. The weather so far has been relatively nice (40's and 50's). I'm told this is extremely rare for January. It is expected to snow some time next week though. Well I guess that's it from over here. I hope everyone is enjoying their new year. Keep in touch!

Love,  
Jessica

(619)218-1071 [jessicaauburn@gmail.com](mailto:jessicaauburn@gmail.com)

P.S. Grandpa Riel, I would love to receive the newsletter while I'm here. This is the address I can be reached at:  
1006 Highland Dr.  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

We will, of course, be sending Jessica RFNL issues as they come out. We received another more detailed report a little while ago, as follows.

Grandpa,

Hi Grandpa. I hope everything is going well in warm San Diego. I am writing to give you an update on life in the Capital city. Working for Senator Feinstein is a wonderful experience. I have to stay extremely involved in everything that is happening in the news and I really like that. It's great to be in an environment that cares more about what the president is doing than what Brad and Jennifer are up to. I am working with

the Senator's legislative assistant for energy and transportation, and I have been doing a lot of research on climate change, so I am definitely learning a lot about many areas of congressional politics. I have been to a few nomination hearings and countless meeting with lobbyists. I have seen a lot of Senators because I get to go to places where the public isn't allowed, so that is a lot of fun. I formally met the Senator last Friday at a lunch she threw for the interns. She is a very nice lady, and at the same time she makes it impossible to forget that she is one of the most powerful people in all of California. When I am not working on energy legislation and research, I am working with the press department, mainly answering phones and cutting press clips. I also give tours of the Capitol building almost every day. Those are generally fun, unless the group of



constituents is particularly cranky or crazy (which is not that uncommon, unfortunately). Interning for a Senator is definitely a valuable experience that I will use in whatever I decide to do later.

In other news, the weather people forecasted only 1-3 inches of snow today,

but we already have had about 3 inches and there are no signs of it letting up any time soon. I actually prefer the snow to the cold because when it is not snowing it tends to drop to below 20 degrees which is excruciatingly cold and really hard to walk to work in. When it snows, it stays in the low 30's, which is bearable, and it is extremely beautiful. Well, I guess that is all the news I have for now. I'll write again if anything big happens over here. If anyone wants to come to the capitol for a tour just let me know!

All my love and best wishes  
Jessica

Thanks, Jessica, for all the news! It is obvious that you are enjoying a unique opportunity to see our government in action right at the center of everything. We look forward to some more of the same as time goes by, and a chance to welcome you home soon. In the meantime, we will keep the RFNLS coming.



*The following is a reprint from 10 years ago (February 2015 edition) It is amazing how things have evolved over the last 10 years in Annie's life!*

# Bet 'ya didn't know!

By Bruce Hartman

This month's "Bet 'ya didn't Know" is all about Annie. We met for dinner on Friday night for the sole purpose of digging and prying into Annie's life to bring you all something that... I bet you didn't know!

Only just a very few years ago Annie was living in Spain and teaching English to age 3 through adult learners. There were some frustrating times which, at the time, had Annie on the bubble with trying to decide her direction. She was at the end of a three year chapter of her life in Spain and Annie was giving serious consideration to the pursuit of a law degree with her eye toward a career in law. Interestingly enough it was living in Spain that killed the idea of that degree.

In Spain the people "work to live" but here in the U.S. we tend to "live to work." This insightful perspective gave Annie a more balanced look at what she was doing with her life and the good she was bringing to those that she worked with. Annie recognized that, on the whole, Americans were more creative and innovative in the work place / classroom than those people she worked with in Europe. She decided that the world needed more people like herself in the classroom that had a true passion to teach...something she was beginning to recognize she possessed but was sadly missing in Spain.





Annie's desire to make a difference brought her home with a laser-like focus on obtaining a teaching credential and getting into a classroom. She began this year as a first grade classroom teacher in a Spanish immersion school. Annie teaches all the subjects including PE and Art in Spanish to a class of six year olds that, for the most part, do not speak Spanish. She starts her day at 7:15am and ends at 3:00pm and in all that time never utters a single word in English. There was no hesitation in her answer when I asked if this was simply a job or was this to be her career. Without a doubt this is Annie's passion.

I asked Annie what she felt was the best part of her job. Her answer showed me a side of her I hadn't noticed before. I realized I was interviewing a mature, professional woman and not my little niece Annie when she explained that the best part of her job was being witness to the kids just being six years old with the innocents and magical moments that go along with that. She expressed that she wished she had another adult in the room to share some of those magical moments with. When I followed that question with "what is the worst part of your job?" her answer was similar: ""being witness to them being six years old!" When all of them are melting down and she is tired there is a recipe for the perfect storm. Luckily those days are few and far between.

It was so awesome to listen to Annie speak about her life path with all the confidence in the world. She is setting some lofty goals with a plan to go for her master's degree in language, administration or policy in bilingual education. She is exceptional at her job and is able to articulate why that is... "We are nearly halfway through my first year and no one has died yet." Annie is retrospective and goes through the process of self-analysis regularly to keep herself on the right path. When I asked her if this was her dream job or more of a stepping stone toward a different path there was pause. She absolutely loves the classroom but nonetheless feels that this is more likely a stepping stone to do more in the bilingual education world. She sees bilingual education as being in its infancy and in serious need of research and development and sees herself in either an administrative or research role down the road. For now, Annie is fulfilled and loving what she is doing!

This next summer Annie has been invited back to Spain as the director of the "Study Abroad Program." It is a one month commitment but she will stay in Europe for an additional month or more to take in the sights that she hopes will include Iceland for at least some of the time.



It is so cool to watch all of our kids grow up and become something! It was absolutely my pleasure to sit and chat with Annie about her life and plans for the future...these are not kids anymore! I look forward to interviewing my next victim!



***Happy 5 years of marital bliss to the couples shown below.  
It's hard to believe there were 3 marriages in one month!***

