

## Happy Holidays from the Goldenbergs



The picture above was Benji's idea and I ran with it! We are beyond the years of believing in Santa which makes my heart sad but also allows for a sigh of relief. He thought we could show what it looks like a family post-Christmas Hanukkah holiday banter and what happens when everyone is together without a device. I love it because aside from the blood loss this really could be us!

Any **WHO** let's get on with our review of the year.

Our annual family trip to the East Coast was a great success. We celebrated Bubbies' 80th with a dedicated family, beautiful spoken word with dedication and of course some gentle roasting. We enjoyed the view of the Hudson and drank grandma's signature dirty martinis. This fact was disputed by her siblings while sober but agreed-upon once they had a few. Ultimately what we could agree on was that a grand time was had by all. We made our way to the shore and spent lots of time at the beach, which is and has always been good for all our souls.

Dad took us on the trip to the UP. The Upper Peninsula was breathtaking with its many waterfalls and hiking opportunities. However, unfortunately dad and Benji had to be picked up halfway through our four-hour kayak trip. Benji's a trooper when but when ADHD kicks in you better get them out of the boat or he's going to go down with it. Next time we all agreed we should go for a shorter trip and or train accordingly. Back at the hotel WIFI saved the day and our sanity.

Scoop of the day what do we have two in our 'daily'

*David* recently started a new job in Cardiac Cath Lab at Northwestern. He has a Roto Routed (heart speak) his way to a comfortable position that he really enjoys. We are so proud of his moves and his ability to pivot. David has been using his new white light and St. John's wort to combat his seasonal blues and we are optimistic that his naps in the afternoon before bed will diminish sooner than later.

*Ella Marie* aka ME the mom. Finally, after years of wrangling Covid in the emergency room and then my gap year as a school nurse has led me find my passion for teaching. I am now teaching as a professor at Northwestern which is amazing. I am also working with some brilliant ladies at a little endeavor we call Stitch and Bitch which is a spoken word show in our community about

things that affect us and our community. It has been a wild success as you can imagine. We pack up in every month because everyone loves to bitch these days.

**Miss Jessica** just turned 14 going on 24 is bright, witty, well-spoken, and not sure who she is right now. Jessica has been looking for a label which doesn't exist until at least high school. That's eighth grade for you. Hell, that's life for you. I remind her that she is my baby and that designation she still secretly loves but outwardly repels it. She keeps busy with her plus classes in school and she constantly teases her brother about it at report hard time. Jessica loves spirits and her viola. These activities helped her not only find her people but gave her opportunities to excel. She/they/them is beautiful inside and out now if only she could see it.

**Benjamin** what can I say but thank goodness for middle school! We were originally concerned about transitioning from Snappy Sappington elementary because it's been our home. He has grown in so many ways because they treated him/us like family. This is a gift to special needs families. He has been saying for years that he's no longer 'special' because he is doing so well. In middle school he doesn't have to be seen as 'special' because he can really blend in with everyone he is just as special as everybody else. Benji is not participating in any activities aside from full-time job as sister annoyer her as per Jessica much to my chagrin. Benji is acclimating to middle school which really takes it out of him. When he comes home, he naps and plays video games. If gamer was a job, he would be living his best life. Please don't tell him its possible! We think many of the struggles are behind him so much so that we may put his door back on his room which came off at the beginning of covid. Boys will be boys.

We cannot have an update without mentioning a little animal menagerie Jack and Diane, our pandemic puppy and his service kitty continue to entertain us. They have devised a way to destroy/eat the ornaments on the tree! It's tick-tock quality stuff over here. Just imagine a sweet little Diane crawling through the tree like a sleek little fury ninja smacking ornaments off the tree and then Jack running to retrieve them. They then take turns tearing it apart unless one of us intervenes and they run like hell! We can't make it up its truly comedy gold!

I hope our little letter finds you all well and that you and your loved ones have a Golden New Year!

Love, Ella, David, Jessica and Benji and who can forget Jack and Diane!