

## 2017 was quite a ride...

*We entered the year with that same apprehension and anxiety that you get when the roller coaster safety bar locks into place and you realize that it's too late to make a change - you really are going to do this.*

*During the year, we often felt the same way you feel when riding a big roller coaster, too. Terrified, screaming, and queasy, but also with some exciting moments of exhilaration and clarity. We had the distinct sensation of things careening out of control, and that somehow gripping tighter was the only option. As the year came to a close, we stumbled away only to find ourselves in line for the next ride called 2018.*

*And that was just from watching the weather channel when we couldn't stomach the news!*

*This year has taught us one thing though. Nothing is worth saying unless you can put it in a tweet. So this year we bring you an entire letter written in tweets, that is each sentence is less than 280 characters.....*

## #2017LeftonSteinbartHolidayLetter

Hannah's Peace Corps adventure began in late February. Enid and Lew dropped her off in Washington DC after staying a few days with Enid's sister Sylvia #momtears. Then she headed to Thies, Senegal where she began intensive cultural and language training for a couple months. She's now very fluent in Pulaar (the language spoken at her site) #jamtan and can manage some basic Wolof and French, too. She's a health care volunteer based in Mbakhana which is a #amazing #welcoming small village a couple hours outside Ouro Sougi. It's near the Senegal river and the border with Mauritania #largestcountryyouveneverheardof. The best way to keep up with her activities is follow her blog at <http://hannahlefton.com>

Lew, Enid, Monica, and Natalie all visited Hannah in Senegal at the end of 2017. It was an amazing adventure with some unusual and sometimes frustrating travel moments #Deltasucks #crowdedbuswithgoatontop #camelfarts. We settled in with a few days in Dakar #didnotseeOfeibeaQuistArcton and then travelled to a desert resort camp outside Lompoul. We rode camels on Christmas Day and lounged around our tents. The staff there prepared all our meals and every night there was music and dancing by the bonfire #sultanlife. Next we began our excursion to Mbakhana which took over 24 hours #3AMbus and included the last hour on a horse drawn "charrete" #dontfalloffintothethornbushes. When we arrived, there was dancing and feasting #friedsaltygoatparts #dontaskwhichparts and several days of greeting and resting on mattresses. This activity was broken up with some rice harvesting and mural painting #5timesyoushouldwashyourhands. We even got Senegalese names #Omar #Miriam #Hawa #Adama. Hannah (aka #Aisata) was an amazing hostess #infinitelypatient #knowsherstuff #always smiling. The people were so warm and loving, and Hannah is very happily embracing her life and work there. #Blessed.

Natalie had a very lucrative and prestigious internship at ExxonMobil #postTillerson in the spring of 2017, where she put her knowledge to work and got a taste of working for a large corporation #hardhats #lotsofmeetings. She'll graduate in May with her BS in Chemical Engineering from Georgia Tech #gojackets and has already started interviewing for jobs and applying for graduate programs in Chemical Engineering #goodoffersabound. She and Monica took a trip over the summer to Sweden to visit a friend #Lignonberrycrepe. Natalie continues to be engaged with the Campus Kitchens project too #serviceprojectsinherblood.

In addition to her trips to Sweden and Senegal, Monica spent over a month in India on a summer internship #4continentsin1year #passportfillingup. She'll also graduate in May from Emory #undefeatedinfootball with an English major and Economics minor and a focus on literature of marginalized groups #mayincludereadersofthisholidayletter. Monica still writes for the Emory Wheel and also had a hands-on internship at Peachtree Publishers where she got to experience many different aspects of the publishing business

#pressrelease #blogposts #stockroom #pitchmeetings. She continues her service work tutoring high schoolers who need help with writing. She's planning to work full time next year and is currently applying for jobs and further internships #someareevenpaid.

The Lefton pets weathered another year just fine, but we can't necessarily say the same our furniture and carpets #Madisonbladdercontrol #oxymoron. Bo remains healthy on his diet of spite and glaring #hacklesandhowling. Madison gave us a scare with a bout of vestibular disease #vertigofordogs but she's much better now.

There were other trips and visits this year, too, which was either us heading beyond the I-285 perimeter #triggerwarning #redstateGeorgia or friends and family passing through town. Lew visited Denver for a conference #yeshedid and our niece Janet stopped by with friend Sam on their way to see the total solar eclipse #impressive. Enid took a trip to see Natalie in Texas where they went to the Alamo #nobasement, and Sylvia came to Barcelona when Enid was there #Steinbartsisterselfies. Monica and Natalie also had a wonderful trip to California, visiting Irene in #winecountry #beforethefires.

Enid's very active, doing bootcamp several times a week #noburpees and trying to make her 10000 steps daily #worksbetterwhenyoucanfindyourphone. This fall Enid had a big adventure in Catalonia, Spain. She taught Calculus 3 in Barcelona to a full class of Georgia Tech study abroad students over an intense six-week session #thatsalotofmaterial. It was exciting for her to be there during the Catalanian independence votes and demonstrations #si! Lew came to visit her during her final week and they enjoyed the Barcelona lifestyle #vermouth #longlunches #naps #Gaudieverywhere. At work, she had a busy year as the math undergraduate advisor helping students navigate significant changes in our major programs #curriculumcommittee. Enid still plays cards and games and goes to several book clubs. She's had a healthy year #stablebonedensity #stilloriginalteeth except a freak bar glass accident that gave her a few stiches in her leg #urgentcare #allbetter.

This fall, Lew began a new role at Georgia Tech. He's now working for the Executive VP of Research as Assistant VP of Research Cyberinfrastructure #soundscool. He's also still in the College of Sciences with a 75% appointment as Assistant Dean of Information Technology, #needoversizedbusinesscards. He spends a lot of time working with faculty and the upper administration on finding the best ways to leverage the highly skilled IT staff and the available technology to support research and academic initiatives #agile #bigdata #devops #HPC #otherbuzzwords. It may look like a heavy dose of meetings and email, but it's actually very challenging and often a lot of fun. Lew's still involved with a campus commission that's exploring the future of higher education #GT2040. Through those efforts, he's started learning about behavioral economics and cognitive biases to get a better understanding of how innovation actually works or doesn't #usuallydoesnt. Lew managed to cut the back of his right hand washing dishes and severed a tendon that controls his middle finger #makesdrivingonATLfreewaysharder. The challenge was compounded since it happened when Enid was in Barcelona #thankgoodnessforfriends. After hand surgery, his recovery seems to be nearly complete #physicaltherapyreallyworks. Lew continues to work extensively with Decatur Makers, the nonprofit makerspace he helped found. The business has grown to well over 200 members and there are amazing things going on there #decaturmakes.org. Fortunately, they now have a great executive director on staff so Lew doesn't have to be involved as much day-to-day. He continues to perform stand up and improv comedy and recently had a story circulated on the national Storycollider podcast <http://bit.ly/2D0TN2A> #mathcomedygeek.

We would love to see you in 2018! Atlanta is easy to get to, and you always have a place to stay #notairbnb.

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May you and your loved ones have a new year full of happiness, health and peace.  
#HappyBelatedHanukkah #MerryBelatedChristmas #HappyBelatedNewYear