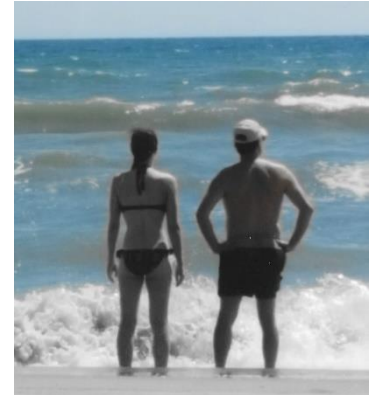


22 Years of Traditions



We discovered the hidden gem known as Emerald Isle in the year 2000. The Logsdon family (In photo to the left from left to right: Susan, Megan, Lauren, and Leonard) is known to celebrate many traditions throughout the year, but our trip to the beach is the tradition we look forward to the most. We are from Ohio, which means that Emerald Isle is about a 12-hour drive for our family. This Island is worth every mile; no other beach has been able to compare to the magic we continue to experience each year on the emerald coast. For the past 22 years we have continued traveling here, building upon established traditions while creating new traditions with each passing visit.

It took us a few years to explore the isle and really begin to acquire a sense of tradition in the making. At first, the ocean itself kept us entertained during the day; Dad taught us how to boogie board and to this day he and Megan still boogie along the coast as father and daughter (see photos below from 2002, 2006, and 2017). When we needed a break from the sun, there were multiple options. The closest was heading to the tent on the beach, where you could sit with a beach book on a low folding chair under the shade, digging your feet in the sand. One tradition we have is that everyone under the tent has to dig a small sandpile with their feet wherever they are sitting. If we have to move chairs to adjust with the moving shade, one of us will always say, "Now I have to start a new pile, gotta meet my sand quota for the day!" The second option was back at the house, where you could grab a refreshing beverage and contribute to the puzzle on the dining room table overlooking the ocean. Each year we bring a slightly bigger or more complicated puzzle and are determined to finish it before we have to go home. It reminds me of a sand Mandala made by the Tibetan Monks; as soon as we finish the puzzle (usually on the last day) we admire it for a while and then break it up and return it to the box. It is the processes of creation and logic that we enjoy most in a puzzle, where there is an almost therapeutic aspect to finally finding "That One Piece" as the vast emerald waves roar triumphantly at a distance.



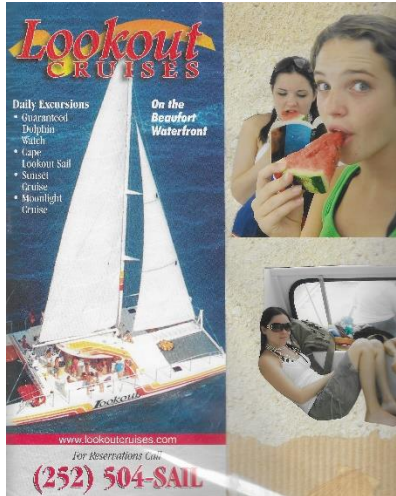
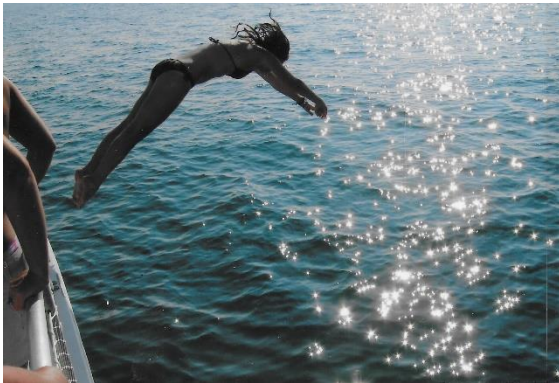
In 2002, Mom discovered an excursion in the Emerald Isle catalog that we continued until the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019. A catamaran trip to one of three locations led by Captain Steve and his trusty sea-Pomeranian Chloe! Over the years we tried all three, but our favorite was the trip out to a large sandbar where very large shells could be found. It was always amazing; we were served lunch, got to sail past an island with wild horses, and of course had access to all of the best shells. We consistently found



large conch shells that were completely intact, of all different colors. Shelling is one of my personal favorite beach traditions. If you walk along the emerald coast when I'm staying here, you are bound to find me inching along the shell piles hunting for shark teeth. Since 2017, I have set a quota for myself that I absolutely must



complete: find at least 1 shark tooth for every day that I am on the beach. 2017 was the year that I found the teeth in the image above, and to give you a size reference the “Monday” (first) tooth is just under 1 inch long.



I have always loved the ocean and the “critters,” which can be found when you take the time to discover them. On nights when the weather is clear, we go “crabbing.” This has always been the tradition, where the only things that have changed are the quality of the flashlights and slowly overcoming our fear of actually touching a crab. In recent years, my fear of touching crabs has subsided as you can tell from this photo to the right. Our top priority is to catch and release—we just genuinely love looking at animals but always take the animal’s well-being into account during these adventures.

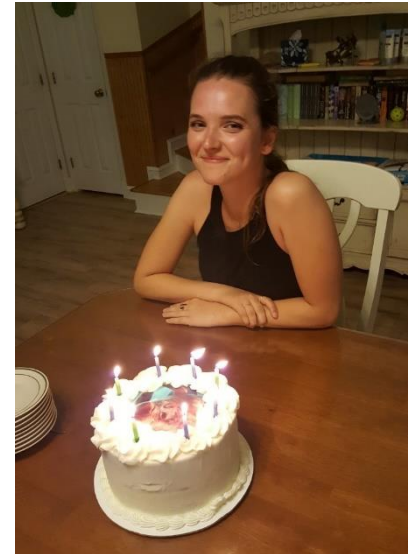


When we have a rainy day at the beach, we have a backup plan: go to the aquarium. Many of our friends have come with us to the aquarium as well, and we always try to take a ridiculous picture in the crab photo prop. I love the aquarium here so much, there is even an area where I get to interact with and pet my favorite animal in the world: the cownose ray. Believe it or not, they are slightly velvety to the touch and some of them really like being petted. My sister and I always look for the smallest ray with the short tail, our favorite, because we view it like an underdog of sorts. I remember we petted this particular ray with my young cousin the first time he came to the beach with us. Megan and I felt like this short-tailed ray overcame great strife, much like how cousin Ethan overcame his strife of petting an unfamiliar animal that day.

There are so many great shops in Emerald Isle that it’s hard to fit them all in on shopping day (which is almost always the second to last day of our beach trip). We love shopping at the Emerald Plantation Shopping Center; without exception we must go to J.R. Dunn, Ellie’s, Granny’s, and the Burt’s surf shop up the road. There are so many fun beach stores but we always have to make an effort to stop by Colors. When my sister and I were younger, we used to get those painted on henna tattoos from one of the beach stores (see photo from 2008 to the right). One year, they asked to take a photo for the wall showing all the successfully cool designs people have gotten over the years. So every year, we would continue to check in with our past selves on the inside photo wall. This was until 2019 where our picture



was enlarged outside the building as well, which we discovered on my sister's birthday after dining at Kathryn's nearby. By the way, I can't recommend a restaurant of higher quality than Kathryn's. Before my sister and I turned 21, my parents discovered Kathryn's martini bar after a day of shopping and it has been a hit ever since. On the night of Megan's birthday, under the soft glow of the Kathryn's lighting, she remembers thanking mom for creating a lifetime of memories here at Emerald Isle.



We have always loved inviting our friends to join us on our trips to the beach. One tradition that began in 2017 was started by our dear friend Theresa (photo on right at the Maritime Museum in Beaufort), who was able to experience the magic of Emerald Isle before passing from breast cancer in early 2018. To say that Theresa was an excellent baker is



an understatement—she was THE best. The trip with her that year was so special to all of us that she actually taught us her secret iced sugar cookie recipe (photo on left). We made those delicious cookies alongside Theresa while the sounds of ocean waves soothed our souls from the open windows. It gave her, and continues to give us all, such a significant sense of peace in the struggles and stresses of daily life. That gift of serenity, given



and received by the people I love, is exclusively attributed to this very beach and the memories we create here together.



Emerald Isle is a place where we come to heal emotionally; it is our home away from home. There are apparently 90,000 beaches in the United States alone (based off our Google search) and yet we exclusively refer to Emerald Isle as "The Beach" since it holds such a significant place in our hearts. We have so many traditions here that it is difficult to list them all. From buying shrimp and scallops at Captain Willis', to spending at least one evening at the pier as a family, we try to keep these traditions going. Mom and Dad have even celebrated four separate wedding anniversaries here: their 20th, 25th, 30th, and 35th! We share these special memories with so many of our friends, who





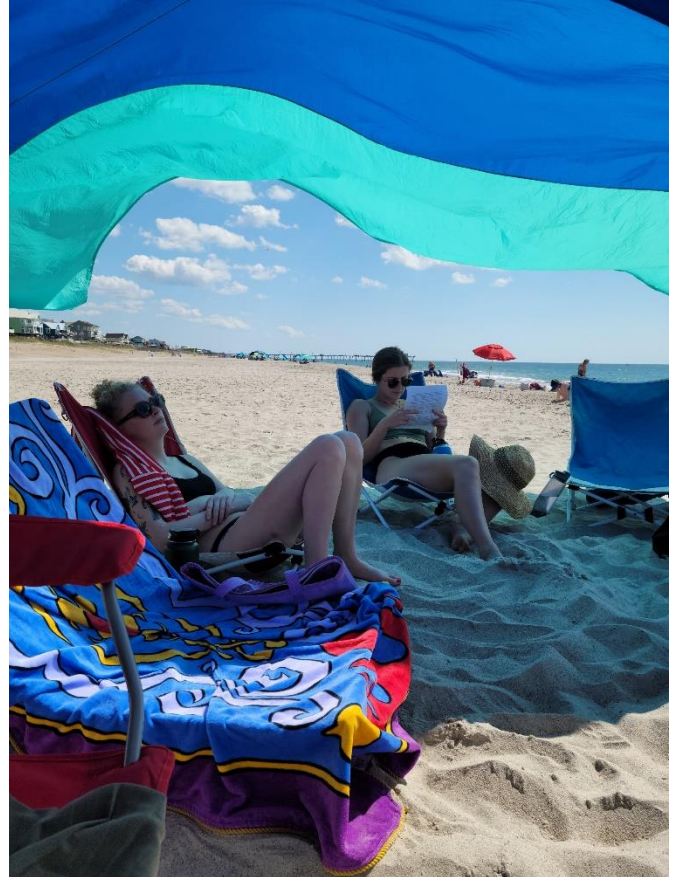
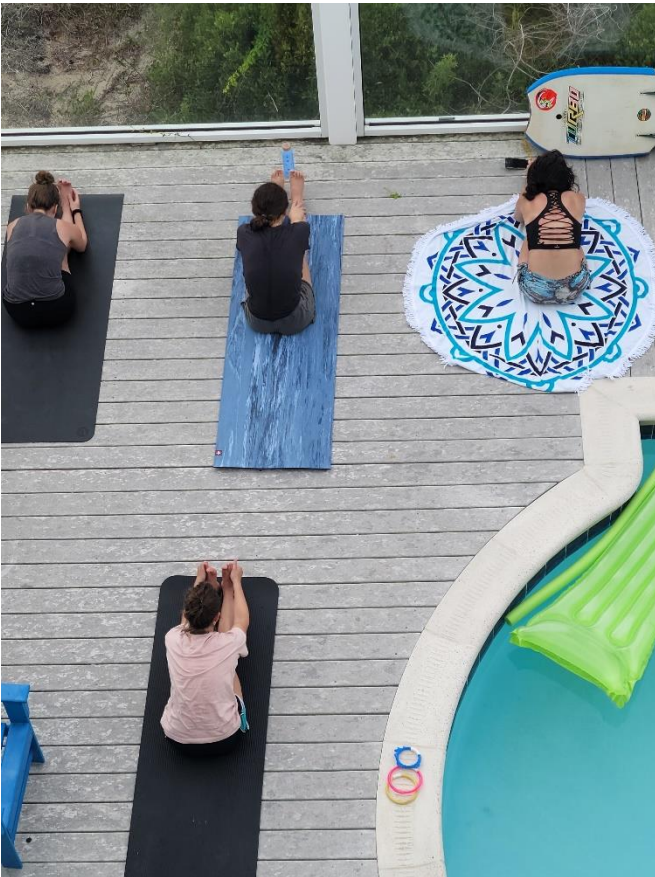
bring us everlasting beach memories as well. In 2021, many of my sister's friends joined us in a house called 'Sea Angel'. We have learned as paying adults that renting a house with a pool is the best way to truly enjoy the vacation. We add new pool floats here and there, such as the American flag, the roach, and watermelon island. Last year was the introduction of watermelon island, and we made a watermelon themed playlist to listen to by the pool in celebration. It had songs like 'Watermelon Sugar' by Harry Styles and 'Watermelon Man' by Herbie Hancock. Writing this has made me even more excited for the Logsdon family trip in September 2022!



We have already started packing the boogie boards, a new puzzle, the tent, chairs, beach books, shelling gear, flashlights, Theresa's cookie recipe, and the pool floats. We have our beach trip down to a science, but who wouldn't after 22 years of vacationing on the beach of their dreams.



Additional Photos:



2012
Christmas
Card



2020 Christmas Card

Family photo from 2017



Lauren, Megan and Leonard in 2019