

Neighbors of

WATERLOO

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RESIDENTS OF WATERLOO



**MEET THE
ALLISON FAMILY:**
Enjoy the Ride!



Best Version Media

Photograph by Allyson Schwab Photography

Meet the Allison Family:

Nate, Kristi, Anna, Katherine, Noah & Mary

Enjoy the Ride!

By Tathan Cuzzarelchy

Photos by Allyson Schwab Photograph

The proverb can be traced back for millennia and their particular life experience revealed the same, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder." Absence hasn't always been the case in The Allison's relationship, growing up only 23 miles from each other the couple would never have met without the swift action of friends and the ability to endure their time spent apart.

Kristi was raised in Worthington, Iowa, and absolutely loved small-town living. Growing up with two competitive siblings, Kristi's early life was filled with memories of intense pickup games, outdoor activities, and time together as a family. Upon graduation from Beckman Catholic High School, Kristi attended the University of Northern Iowa and started work on her general education classes. With an intense passion for helping others and an extreme interest in human biology, Kristi transferred from UNI to attend Allen College where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

Nate grew up in Manchester, Iowa, and attended West Delaware High School; intriguingly, despite the close proximity to Kristi's hometown (23 miles), the couple never met during high school. Following high school graduation, and having no solid future plans, Nate felt pressured to attend college and registered for classes at Kirkwood Community College, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to study criminology. "During that time it seemed as though you couldn't get a decent job, or have a career, without going to college, and I wasn't ready for it."

"I met Kristi the summer after graduating from high school. Kristi is one year older than me, and when she came home for the summer after her first year at college we both worked at Modern Fold." The Modern Fold manufacturing plant historically hires an influx of seasonal help during the summer, and both Nate and Kristi had planned to benefit from their positions. "He was there working with a group of his friends and I was there working with a group of my friends, and we all just started hanging out more and more. I didn't have a thing for him, but he certainly did for me, and he was very persistent." With the help of their mutual friends, Nate arranged an opportunity, unbeknownst to



Kristi, to go to the movies as a large group. "The next thing you knew we were hanging out a lot," remembers Kristi. Much to the delight of Nate, who replied with an emphatic, "Thankfully!"

"At some point I came to realize that he had a charm to him, and he is very persistent," exclaimed Kristi. When the summer had drawn to a close the couple had agreed to try a long-distance relationship while they both attended colleges at separate universities. "Things were pretty typical for us as a college couple doing the long-distance thing," said Nate, adding that the couple made time on the weekends to visit each other.

College lasted less than a semester for Nate and without any direction in life, he knew it was time for a drastic change. Nate drove to the recruiting office in Dubuque, Iowa, and spoke with the only recruiter on duty that day. Nate enlisted in the United States Air Force that winter of 2006, with a ship date to basic training in April of 2007. The couple decided that they would continue with their relationship despite the situation and the recent change in plans. "I have a rich family history of military service," explained Nate, so the decision to enter "the military seemed like the best route to take in life."

Enlisting in mid-2007 and arriving at his first duty station in early 2008, Nate thought he was prepared for war stating, "I joined after 9/11, so it was assumed that you'd be deployed." His job title was Aircrew Flight Equipment Specialist, and Nate's job responsibilities were the maintenance and inspection of the aviator's equipment from the unit to which he was assigned. Nate wasn't prepared for the news that came when his unit was selected to fill the next rotation on deployment to Iraq in 2009, with the 4th Fighter Squadron, part of the 388th Fighter Wing at Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

Staying together during that deployment to Iraq proved to the couple that their relationship could withstand incredible circumstances. "There was no social media, Skype, or Facetime back then. All I had was a flip phone. We actually had to write real letters to one another,"

explained Kristi while citing the fact that the couple exchanged hundreds of letters. So, when Nate returned home from Iraq, it was only fitting that marriage would be the next step in their lives together.

Nate had ideas of a grandiose proposal, as the family had pictures scheduled for later in the day. Nate planned to propose to Kristi surrounded by his family, inside the moment of family pictures. As the young couple got ready in the dreary basement bathroom at Nate's mother's house, he walked in, shaking like a leaf, holding the ring in his cupped hands and said, "I can't wait anymore, will you just marry me?" Kristi went into detail about the prospect of getting married and she knew it was going to happen sometime, but it didn't dawn on her that it was going to be that day. "There was always some anticipation when he was home on leave and I would always find myself wondering if this was going to be the time that he'll propose." Thankfully, the botched marriage proposal by nervous Nate wasn't a deterrent for Kristi as they married that January in Kristi's hometown of Worthington, in her childhood church surrounded by family and friends. Military buddies of Nate still remark to this day about the decision to hold a wedding in Iowa, at the end of January. But, all the military members have since been back to visit.

Marriage made things "official" for the couple and the military moved Kristi to Utah after graduation. She quickly found job placement as a nurse at a transitional rehabilitation facility. The couple thoroughly enjoyed their time in Utah, frequently taking advantage of the state's bountiful parks and recreation areas. While the couple had "service members throughout their family tree," they weren't prepared to be so far away from their families while raising kids and all attention soon turned to ways to get closer to home.



RESIDENT FEATURES

Get to know your neighbors and community one resident at a time. We enjoy featuring residents from all walks of life. Make the magazine your own by submitting nominations of families or individuals who you would like to see highlighted- could be the newest or longest living residents on the block, your friends next door, the hobbyist, entrepreneur, etc. Help us honor the people who make this community a great place to live, work and raise a family. Or use this feature as a way to share your own story with neighbors.

SEE PAGE 3 FOR SUBMISSION INFORMATION



Following Kristi's graduation and job placement at MercyOne as a Midwife, the couple elected to keep Nate home as a stay-at-home dad. In order to fulfill his responsibility and test his capabilities the couple extended his role with two more healthy children. Noah was born in 2017, and Mary followed in birth by being welcomed to the world in 2019.

Kristi's work role aligns with her values; additionally, it allows her to welcome new life into the world as she provides compassion and care through one of life's greatest journeys. "We are continually greeted by people when we are out and about; moreover, after conversation ensues it's usually noted that the connection exists because Kristi has delivered their baby," says Nate. Kristi draws upon her own life experience and loves "seeing empowered women taking control of their health and wellness," and feeling fortunate to be able to be a part of the childbirth journey.

The family attends St. Patrick Catholic Church and after falling in love with the "Leader In Me" program when touring the school in 2014, the family decided to send the children to St. Patrick Catholic School. Anna, now in 5th grade, loves to play volleyball and spend time with her friends. Katherine is a 2nd grader and lives for TNT Cheer. Noah is in kindergarten, he enjoys playing with dinosaurs and thrives at Ninja/U. Mary is the youngest, at 2, and spends her days with dad at "daddy daycare."

In Nate's "free" time, in the midst of the worldwide pandemic of 2019, Nate saw the need for inspiration, authenticity, and edification; thus, The World With Nate podcast was born.

Find the podcast and more information about Nate's mission at: www.theworldwithnate.com

Enjoy the Ride!



Base of preference is used as an enlistment-retention tool by the military, and with the move to Scott AFB, Illinois, came another four-year commitment to the United States Air Force. Life happened quickly, and the couple was blessed with a beautiful girl, Anna. Kristi had found a position as a labor and delivery nurse at a large hospital in Belleville, Illinois. The now-defunct hospital gave birth to their first two children, with Katherine being born in 2014, all while Kristi had worked on the floor.

Two wars and the "inability to prioritize life before service" led to Nate's burnout and a short-notice tasking to Qatar solidified the fact that Nate wanted change. This surprise tasking to Qatar came after sequential deployments to the region and Nate was under the assumption he wouldn't have to go back to the Middle East for some time. Having grown up in a broken home, Nate wanted a different trajectory and knew he needed to change his priorities. The couple decided getting out of the military would be the best opportunity for their life going

forward. Leaving the military in the beginning of 2015, the couple enrolled in their respective schools, with Nate in-residence at UNI and Kristi doing an online master's program through Philadelphia University. Their classes started and life began as full-time students, with jobs and kids.

After a flooded basement liquidated the family's financial nest egg, Nate went to work as a server at Texas Roadhouse of Cedar Falls, Iowa. Concurrently, Kristi finished her Master of Science (MS) in Nurse-Midwifery.

