

Dear Family and Friends,

We hope you had a great 2014! The biggest news we have to share this year is quite momentous, so we won't bury the lede: Erica is proud to announce that she has earned her doctoral degree from Princeton University in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences! This accomplishment is especially remarkable, as she completed her research remotely, while continuing to work full-time as Director of the Masters in Science Teaching program at Florida State. She successfully defended her dissertation just a few days ago, so as you are reading this, she and Ryan are taking a much-needed vacation in Iceland. It took many years of perseverance, hard work, and late nights,

but now you can officially call her Dr. Erica Staehling (if you wish... she will also continue to respond to just Erica).



firm and make progress. As Facebook denizens well know, he also ran for an elected seat on the Leon Soil & Water Conservation District board this year. The good news is that he enjoyed running a vigorously zany campaign, including appearances at local candidate forums, a newspaper op-ed, official mixtapes, and a suitably bold slogan/logo. The bad news is unfortunately doing all those things well didn't translate to a win against an insider opponent. Please enjoy the enclosed momento of this not-to-be-repeated windmill tilt against nefarious political elites, which unlike the rest of Ryan2014 merch, was not immediately sent to clothe sub-Saharan Africans the day after the election.



Otherwise, our year was busy as ever. When not obtaining degrees or contesting hyper-local political offices, we found time to check the Alabama high point, #19 of 50, off our life list in **February** for Erica's birthday, enjoying camping and BBQ with Erica's dad. We also enjoyed meeting Ryan's parents' adorable new Lhasa apso puppies, Breezy and Sunny (pictured below, along with our own equally lovable but much larger Chloe), in **August** when they came up to watch Ryan cap off a hard-earned fifth-consecutive summer track series win with a 4:47 mile.

As is inherent to modern life in your late 20s, most of our travels revolved around weddings. This year, we celebrated with friends in locations as diverse as Charleston, Seattle, DC, and Macclellany, Florida. The Pall-Farley nuptials in **October** even featured the musical stylings of Ryan's alter ego, DJ Endless Shrimp, to light acclaim. Speaking of endless shrimp, Ryan's SHRIMPTOBER birthday feast returned this year more dystopian than ever, with record-shattering performances across the board, tallying a heroic 2,605 total Red Lobster shrimp consumed.



Well, now that you're up to date on critical items, like who ate how many crustaceans and when, it's time to call it a letter for 2014. Who knows what challenges—food and otherwise—2015 may hold?

Merry
Christmas
and
Happy
New Year!

Erica & Ryan

