



ROUNDUP



I was born and raised in Fort Lauderdale. I've traveled to New York five times. I've never been on an airplane. **We drove. Every time.** My family and I made the voyage up the East Coast and back in a loaded-down minivan.

THIS IS OUR STORY.

On The Road

I don't know how it's even possible, but it seemed like every time we drove to New York there was a baby in the car. Have you ever ridden in the car for 24 hours straight with a baby? It's not fun. At all.

When I was 6 years old, my parents, my sister Paige, who was 3, and my sister Kara, 1, headed north for a white Christmas. We left a couple days before December 25 to spend the holiday with our family. Since my mom is from Queens and my dad is from the Bronx, we tried to go up for the holidays when we could.

Naturally, since it was so close to Christmas, Paige and I were horrified by the thought that Santa wouldn't know where to bring our presents. My mom reassured us that Santa knew where we were, but that didn't stop us from crying and fussing the entire way there. We prob-

ably asked my parents 100 times if Santa was coming. Little did we know that on the roof of our van was a luggage carrier filled with toys wrapped and ready to be opened.

As we got older, the crying fits faded away and were replaced with tantrums and arguments that all sisters know well. After my third sister, Brenna, was born, we made the drive to New York one final time.

That trip sticks out the most in my mind because during the 48-hour round-trip to New York and back, we only had one break. Other than stopping to go to the bathroom and grabbing Burger King from the nearest rest stop, we were driving. With four kids, all of them girls, you can imagine the amount of bathroom breaks we had to take.



Travels

Currents editor Kayla Lokeinsky recounts her family's crazy road trips to the Big Apple.

My dad loves driving. He gets some sort of weird pleasure out of sitting in the car for exhaustingly long periods of time. His plan was to make the 24-hour road-trip to New York without stopping. My mom however, wasn't having it. After we made it all the way to Maryland, my mom snapped. She couldn't take sitting in the car anymore. So, after a couple minutes of shouting that she had to get out of the car or she would go insane, we pulled off at the next exit and checked into a hotel.

On the way home, my dad was determined to make it all the way back to South Florida without stopping. Back then we had a minivan, and my three younger sisters sat in the middle row with a tiny TV and a portable VCR watching Disney movies and Barney and singing the same songs over and over again. I was squished all the way in the back row with the luggage, listening to Shania Twain's greatest hits on my CD player and trying to get the Barney theme song out of my head. Every 30 minutes or so, someone would yell out, "Kayla, raise your hand if you're alive," just to make sure I was still back there.

Once everyone fell asleep, I got a new job: designated driver entertainer. My dad just kept talking and talking and talking. He wouldn't stop. And, every time I told him I was tired, or I wanted to rest my eyes, he told me it was my job to keep him awake. I don't even remember what we talked about while driving down the highway at 4 a.m., but I do remember singing all of AC/DC's greatest hits while my sisters snored away.

After that trip, Paige and I refused to get into the car for two weeks. Whenever we stepped into a car, we instantly got nauseous. Driving non-stop for two days will do that to a person.

People say its not the destination, but the journey that matters most. While we did love the destination, it was always the journey that we never wanted to relive.

The Big Apple

Once we finally got to New York, those worries about having to get back in the car faded away. As born and raised Floridians, my sisters and I only ever got to see snow while we were in New York, so we took full advantage of the winter wonderland, making snow angels, snowmen and eating the snow off the ground (probably not the smartest thing to do).

Some of my most vivid childhood memories happened in the snowy banks of New York. Like the time I was four and my sister Paige beamed me in the head with a snowball so hard I fell down. Or, when I was six and my dad was pushing me on the swings and he pushed me so high I flipped completely over the top of the swing set and fell face-first into the snow, and he laughed hysterically. Good times.

However, on our last trip to New York, our first as a family of six, I wasn't able to have any snowy experiences. It was the hottest



Born and raised in Fort Lauderdale, Currents editor Kayla Lokeinsky's only experiences with snow are from her childhood trips to New York.



Currents editor Kayla Lokeinsky is pictured with her mom, Nancy Lokeinsky, her dad, Brian Lokeinsky, and her sisters, Paige, Kara and Brenna Lokeinsky. The Lokeinsky Family frequently makes trips throughout the state together, but their longest trips have been their 24-hour drives to New York.

week of winter New York had ever had. The cherry blossoms were blooming in December. We went ice skating in Central Park in jeans and T-shirts and wore flip flops while we walked around. Then, the day after we left it snowed. It seems like we brought that Florida heat with us.

These funny moments always give us great stories to tell, and the good times always outweighed the bad. Those snowy nights in front of the fireplace at our family's home, drinking hot chocolate and defrosting over slices of real New York pizza. Then, waking up the next morning and eating fresh bagels then running out into the snow for the rest of the day. Those are moments I will always remember.

While we would all love to get back to New York and see the sights and our family, my sisters and I only have one rule: no road trips!



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