

Summers Scrapbook 2002

As I sit here at my desk, I am amazed to see that the calendar has but a few days left. I cannot believe all that has changed in our lives over the course of the past twelve months. Time brought so many experiences into our lives and with those experiences we have had an opportunity to grow. The holidays will soon be here and each of the children is excited at the prospects of Santa visiting us once again. It seems like only yesterday that we were taking down the Christmas tree and now it is standing majestically with ornaments hung on every branch. During a rare quiet time in our house, I brought out my journal and began to relive all we have been through during the past year. I welcome you to follow along as I chronicle our family's adventures.

January

As the year began, the family was once again all together for New Years. It has become a family tradition to be together to celebrate the beginning of a new year. After New Years it was Whitney's birthday. This was a special birthday for her since she turned eight years old. Ashley was scheduled to return to Provo to begin winter classes at BYU but instead missed the first two days in order to be home for Whitney's birthday and baptism. It was a wonderful experience to see Jeff lead Whitney down into the waters of baptism and then confirm her to be a member of the church. She is such a special young lady. Jeff and Trina are so proud of her decision to be baptized. The remainder of the month Trina worked hard building lanyards for the Winter Olympic games that were coming up quickly.

February

February was a very interesting month for the family and the beginning of an emotional roller coaster ride that would last much longer than anyone could have anticipated. The month began with Jeff going to Utah to attend the Winter Olympics. He went with his friend Jeff Isaacson and met Ashley in Provo. They had a wonderful time and Jeff took Ashley to see the two-man bobsled finals. It is an experience neither of them will ever forget. While Jeff was gone, Motorola went through another round of lay-offs. This time, Jeff's organization was eliminated and Trina called to notify him that he was unemployed. The family all had faith that everything would work out. Tiffany and Mallorie began track this month. Tiffany is running the mile and several other events. Mallorie is focusing on the long jump and the triple jump. They are both having fun with this activity.

March

March usually means one thing to the family, baseball spring training begins. This year though with Jeff out of work, baseball season takes a back seat. The first week of this month, Jeff's parents came down and stayed. The kids all had a wonderful time getting reacquainted with their grandparents. Everyone made sure that Jeff had a wonderful time for his birthday. Unfortunately, the Diamondbacks have become much more popular since winning the World Championship so the family could not get tickets for Jeff to see a game that day. Dakota though made sure that there was at least presents and cake. Jeff must have seemed like he was getting old since Dakota could not let Jeff open the gifts or blow out the candles himself. During a drive one day, Jeff and Trina

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found a fitness center that just opened near their home. They stopped to see it and Trina asked if they had job openings. They immediately interviewed her and offered her a job. She began work the very next week working for Mountainside Fitness.

April

With Jeff's birthday out of the way, Dakota wanted everyone to know that his turn was next. Each day he would ask if it was his birthday yet. Trina had to explain to him that Ashley had to return from school before he could have a birthday. Before that though, Mallorie and Tiffany had to finish track. Mallorie did very well winning medals in several meets in the triple jump and setting personal records. Tiffany exceeded her expectations qualifying for the state middle school track meet as a sixth grader. She ran the mile and took fifth place setting a personal best. During the final week of the month, Jeff and Mallorie went to Utah to pick up Ashley from school. They made a trip to Idaho to visit. It was wonderful to see everyone and they both wished they could have stayed longer. Time was tight though since they had to hurry back so that Dakota could have his birthday. Everyone was very excited to have the whole family back together again.

May

May is always a very busy month for the family. With two birthdays and Mother's day all within a week, it is like a perpetual party. For Mother's Day, Trina received a new temple dress and she was thrilled. The kids of course continued the Mother's Day Frog tradition making Trina hunt for her gifts. It has been funny watching this tradition grow each year.

Ashley's birthday marked the final year that she will be a teenager and she has suddenly realized that her childhood is nearly over. In between the girls' birthdays, Jeff's bicycle was stolen from the garage. While he was out searching for it, he received a phone call from Wells Fargo with a job offer. At about the same time, he found his stolen bike so things worked out very well. He will be working as a manager of a group of developers who are implementing Internet banking services. Mallorie's birthday marked her turning 16, which means she is now old enough to date and more frightening she is old enough to drive. The family may never be the same. Trina is not sure who is more scared, Jeff who is thinking about boys dating his daughter or Mallorie thinking she has to bring boys home to meet her dad.

June

June was an exciting month around the house. Mallorie made a trip to Idaho where she stayed with Trina's sister. Part way through her visit to Idaho she made an unexpected trip to Nauvoo Illinois to visit the new temple. It was a once in a lifetime experience for her. At home, Tiffany had her twelfth birthday party. The party was held at Mountainside Fitness where Trina works. She and her friends spent the afternoon rock climbing. Even Trina got into the act climbing the rock wall like a little kid. Dakota and Whitney had fun climbing and jumping off the wall. Ashley is once again working at the Chandler City Pool where she is teaching swimming lessons and working as a life guard.

July

The month began with Mallorie still in Idaho where she spent Independence Day with her

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cousins. The fourth of July is much different in Idaho than Arizona. In Arizona, it is too hot for parades or day activities and with the extreme fire danger this year, there are very few fireworks displays. What ones there are, the family watched from the comfort of the air conditioned house. After being gone for a few weeks, Mallorie made her way home from her world travels. This month Jeff began teaching the Marriage and Family Relations class in church. No one in the family is very thrilled with his calling as he takes every opportunity to tell all their secrets in class as examples of how not to raise children. Mallorie and Ashley definitely want to move out of the ward now.

August

August was a very busy month around the house. It is time for Mallorie, Tiffany, Whitney and Dakota to go back to school. Mallorie is now a junior at Corona del Sol. Tiffany is in the seventh grade at Aprende Middle School. Whitney is now in the third grade. And Dakota is finally old enough to go to school. Jeff and Trina feel especially bad about this and at meet the teacher night they took Dakota's teacher some flowers as a pre-emptive apology for all the trouble he is going to cause her. Mrs. Asta was amused and just a little scared after meeting Dakota for the first time. August was also when Ashley went back to BYU. It was an emotional time seeing Ashley go away to school again. She is a sophomore this year and she is a Resident Assistant (RA) at Helaman Halls. She really enjoys it and could hardly wait to get to school.

September

During September, Jeff and Trina made what has become an annual trip to Orlando to Walt

Disney World. Jeff once again drug poor Trina to yet another pin convention. This trip had an interesting beginning. When leaving for the airport to begin their trip, Trina fell down the stairs injuring her ankle. Jeff carried her to the car then when they got to the airport he got her a wheelchair to get her to the plane. Once in Orlando, he bought her an ankle brace and then made her walk completely around Walt Disney World for eight days. Her ankle was black and blue but she was a trooper and never missed a step. It was a wonderful vacation as the two of them were able to spend quiet time together something that rarely happens with five children. At BYU, Ashley was involved in an RA conference where they gave a presentation to national judges. Their presentation was awarded second place. She was very excited. Jeff and Trina were very proud of her accomplishments.

October

As the weather began to get cooler, well as cool as it gets in Arizona in the fall; the family began to get ready for autumn. October means one thing around the house, Halloween. This year the kids once again went all out. Mallorie dressed up as a princess, Tiffany was Velma from Scooby Doo. Dakota was a fire fighter while Whitney was the bravest child of the bunch. She dressed as Smurfette complete with blue make-up from top to bottom. To this day Trina still finds patches of blue make-up somewhere on that girl. Jeff and Trina's luck continued to take a turn for the worse when the Suburban began to act up once again. Jeff decided he had enough and while Trina was at work one day he went out and bought a new car for her. At least he says it was for her even though he drives it more often than she

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does. The kids especially like it when dad gets in these moods as they now have a car with enough electronics in it to keep them entertained for an entire trip.

November

November began with a plea from Ashley to come home for Thanksgiving. She had thought she would stay at school during the holiday break and come home for Christmas. When she changed her mind and asked if she could bring home a friend, Jeff and Trina became a little suspicious. Ashley flew home with Eli Combs in tow. Jeff picked them up from the airport with the DVD "Meet the Parents" playing in the new Suburban. Trina always said there was nothing subtle about Jeff. Eli was immediately welcomed to the family when Dog Dot Com ate his retainer. Jeff thought for sure after those four days he would never see this boy again but Eli showed some resilience and continued to date Ashley even after meeting the family.

December

December opened with Jeff and the kids eagerly putting up the Christmas tree. Eager may be too strong a word. The kids hounded Jeff until finally in an effort to maintain what sanity he had left him quickly threw lights on the tree and let the kids have at the ornaments. While in the midst of this decorating extravaganza, they received a phone call from Ashley announcing she had big news. She had just gotten engaged to none other than the same Eli Combs who had just survived what Mallorie was referring to as Black Thanksgiving. You have to give a guy credit that can deal with four intensive days of this family and still have the fortitude to want to

marry into this family. This seems to be just the beginning of what looks to be an exciting upcoming year. The first thing Jeff did upon hearing the news was to break out the Arizona Diamondbacks schedule to mark off days when the wedding could not happen. He has given up hope that they will wait until the off-season. Mallorie also had big news as she finally received her driver's license. Now she is mobile and dangerous. About the only person more excited than Mallorie is the insurance salesman.

Looking back over the course of the previous twelve months, it is amazing to see all the changes that have occurred in our lives. The Lord has seen fit to bless our family not only with good health but with many other things as well. We give daily thanks for all that He has given us and pray that we may continue to accept His guidance in our lives. We also feel fortunate to be able to share all of our experiences with family and friends such as you. Your friendship has enriched our lives beyond measure. We hope that you will continue to share in our lives and let us know how you are doing. We pray that we will be able to continue down this path of mortality with you as our traveling companions. Although this journey through the past year has been fun to recount, we are looking ahead to what we are about to embark upon excited at what lies ahead. May you be blessed this time of year and may all of your dreams become realities.

*Jeff, Trina, Ashley, Mallorie,
Tiffany, Whitney & Dakota*