

Summers Scrapbook 2008

With the aroma of turkey still lingering through the house the attention has turned from Thanksgiving and onto Christmas. It seems the holiday season gets shorter and shorter with each coming year. The boxes have been retrieved from the garage and the Christmas tree has begun its transformation from bare green foliage to a vibrant display of lights and ornaments. The local radio station has begun its all Christmas music format for the next month and it's time for me to sit down and recount the activities of 2008. I invite you to join me as we go back through the activities of the previous 12 months.

January

Ashley and Eli had come down to spend Christmas with us and were here to celebrate New Years as well. It was great having the entire family together. Whitney celebrated her 14th birthday on the second. It's hard to believe she is that old.

Mallorie left for Idaho to begin another year at BYU-Idaho in Rexburg. Ashley and Eli followed her as far as Provo so she did not have to travel alone. She did have to make the five-hour journey from Utah to Idaho alone. Mallorie has gotten over her desire to live in Idaho after having to deal with another cold Idaho winter.

The month ended with Whitney attending her first Stake Dance. Jeff and Trina are not yet comfortable that their youngest daughter is getting near dating age. In school Whitney tried out for the Honors Band and she made it in the flute section.

February

February began with Jeff and Trina receiving an order for custom lanyards that would be used during the Super Bowl festivities in Arizona. Trina was once again thrown into

the lanyard making business while Jeff designed custom cards for the guests.

Tiffany began high school track where she will be competing in the triple jump and the high jump for Corona del Sol. Her first track meet was at the end of the month and she was able to clear five foot, which was her personal best. The coaches are extremely excited to have her compete.

Mallorie attended the temple open house for the new Rexburg temple. She is living just down the street from the building and has watched it being built. After the open house she attended the dedication, an experience she will never forget.

March

March is always a busy month for the family and this year was no exception. Jeff once again is obsessed with baseball. He and the kids plan their annual Spring Training games across the valley. Trina surprised him with a new camera so he is now shooting what seems like thousands of digital pictures with his new Nikon D300.

Besides baseball Jeff is also customizing his Harley-Davidson Night Train Softail. No detail is going unnoticed as he is working on the bike nearly every night. It now has a new chrome front end, custom five-spoke wheels, a new seat (a requirement from Trina who refused to ride on the old seat that had little or no padding), chrome shifters, braided cables, and enough chrome nuts and bolts to blind someone when the sunlight shines on the bike. Jeff finally finished the bike and took Trina on the inaugural ride.

Tiffany continued with track this month qualifying for state in the triple jump and the high jump. She also took seventh in the prestigious Chandler Relays in the triple jump.

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April

Tiffany received the letter she was waiting for, she has been admitted to BYU-Idaho and will begin classes in January 2009. She and Mallorie are already planning on rooming together. To celebrate she takes third place in the Sun Angel track meet in the triple jump and follows that up becoming the city champion in that event.

Jeff is back at Chase Field cheering on the Diamondbacks from his new seats in Section 112 Row 8. He is once again taking each of the kids to games. Dakota happened to go with him and was selected to go out onto the field with the players for the National Anthem. He accompanied second baseman Orlando Hudson who autographed Dakota's jersey afterwards.

Mallorie came home this month with Ashley and Eli so Jeff took all of them to a game where they met Tony Clark and got his autograph.

Trina made a trip to Utah at the end of the month to attend Eli's graduation from BYU. Her mother and sister JoAnn came down for the event. During graduation it snowed and everyone teased Eli that they new it would be a cold day in Utah when he finally graduated from college.

May

With the arrival of May, Whitney accompanied the Honors Band to southern California where they performed at Disneyland. She had a great time and was able to meet some very talented musicians.

Dakota completed DARE training and graduated. This was not the only graduation this month. Tiffany graduated from Corona del Sol on a rain-filled night that forced the ceremonies indoors for the first time in school history. Trina's mother and sister came down to share in the event that was great fun despite the weather.

Besides graduation, Tiffany was also honored as the Most Valuable Female Athlete for spring sports and she also attended a banquet where she was recognized as the city champion in the triple jump.

Whitney followed Tiffany with promotion from eighth grade where she was honored as one of the top students at Apprende Middle School. She was given a scholarship and was part of the promotion program. As soon as school was out, Whitney enrolled in summer school to begin taking high school credits.

June

With the kids out of school (well all but Whitney), summer vacation officially started. Tiffany is again working at the West Chandler Aquatic Center as a lifeguard and swim instructor. Trina and Dakota are relaxing by the pool daily and enjoying the warm Arizona weather.

Tiffany and Ashley talked Trina into competing in the Grand Canyon State games where she high jumped along with Tiffany. Despite not jumping before hand Trina took first place for her age and Tiffany took second place in her age bracket. Everyone was impressed with Trina's talent but Trina said she had never felt so old in her life.

As the month ended Trina and Whitney went to girls camp leaving Jeff and Dakota home. That is a dangerous thing as the two boys remodeled the cabinets in the kitchen before Trina came home.

July

Just after the Independence Day holiday the family left for Idaho to visit. They met Ashley and Eli who followed them up to spend time together. While in Idaho Jeff and Trina had an opportunity to do a session in the new Rexburg temple while Mallorie and Tiffany did baptisms. It was an incredible experience.

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While in Idaho Falls Jeff went to the AT&T Store where the Apple iPhone 3G was introduced. He was lucky enough to get one and spent the rest of the vacation playing with his latest technology gadget.

The reason for the trip to Idaho was to be with Jeff's parents who were celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary. It was a special time and one everyone enjoyed.

As the month ended, Trina was called back to work for the Kyrene School District signaling the end of her summer vacation.

August

With August comes back to school time for many of the kids. Whitney is now a freshman at Corona del Sol. Dakota begins middle school at Apprende. Trina is again teaching at Sureno. Tiffany for the first time does not have school in the fall and she continues to work at the aquatic center. Mallorie has returned from college at BYU-I for her off-track period.

Mallorie was not home very long when she was able to find a job working for the Marriot Corporation. She is working as a night manager at the Residence Inn just down the street. Jeff and Trina are nervous about her working nights but so far there have not been too many issues to deal with.

Jeff is still hanging out at Chase Field where the Diamondbacks are in the play-off hunt for the second consecutive year. The whole family attended games this month celebrating 80's night and bobblehead giveaways.

September

September began with Jeff and several of his friends making a trip to Los Angeles to attend baseball games at Dodger Stadium where the Diamondbacks were playing

the Los Angeles Dodgers. The Diamondbacks gave Jeff the tickets and they sat with the player's families for each game. It was a lot of fun and they had some great conversations with the parents of Chris Young and Conor Jackson. Unfortunately the Diamondbacks did not play well and were knocked out of first place.

During a game at Chase Field towards the end of the season Jeff was selected for his seats to be upgraded. He and Trina sat one row above the Diamondbacks dugout. They received phone calls throughout the game from family and friends who said they were on television every time a right-handed batter was up to bat.

Dakota began playing soccer with practices starting at the beginning of the month. He is having a lot of fun and is now playing midfielder and sometimes forward. He is the best player on his team and is recognized by the league as one of their premier players.

October

As October arrived, Mallorie was once again travelling. This time she was going back to Idaho to visit friends at school. She had a great time but was ready to come home and get warm again.

Tiffany and Whitney went on the pioneer trek. This was Tiffany's second trek. During the first one she died along the way so she was eager to try and make it all the way through. It was hard work and both of the girls gained a greater appreciation for what the pioneers went through.

Jeff had an interesting month. Wells Fargo was named in a law suit and Jeff was identified as a subject matter expert in the trial. He had to fly to San Diego on several occasions to testify and to go through depositions. It was not the most fun experience but he did very well.

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As the month ended Jeff's parents came down to visit and attended Trunk or Treat with the kids. This is becoming an annual event that they enjoy together.

November

Dakota's soccer season completed in early November but not before he was named Most Valuable Player for his team. After the regular season ended he was asked to try out for the AYSO Tournament Team. He went through several grueling tryouts and was selected to this elite squad. So after one week without soccer he was back on the practice field with new teammates getting ready for the upcoming tournament season.

Whitney is taking high school band and had her first band concert of the year. She is again playing the flute and is doing very well. They had a concert at Tempe Towne Lake, which made a wonderful backdrop for the music. Jeff's parents were able to attend making it extra special.

The month ended with the family being together for Thanksgiving. There was much to be grateful for this year and it was especially wonderful having everyone together.

December

December has been a very humbling month for the family. It began with Jeff's parents leaving to go back to Idaho. That is always tough to say good-bye.

The family also received word that one of the girls Ashley ran track with in high school passed away. Susan Mortensen was an amazing girl who was taken away much too early. Everyone grieved at her loss.

The neighborhood had barely recovered from that news when it was learned that the person living across the street committed suicide, a result of economic troubles and having his house foreclosed. It was a shock to everyone.

All was not completely gloom this month. Dakota began playing tournament soccer and had their first games in Scottsdale at the San Tan Holiday Classic. The boys did very well for their first tournament winning their first game and ending with a 2-2 record.

With two kids going away to college Jeff gave the ultimate sacrifice giving up his Diamondbacks season tickets to pay for two girls going to school. It was a difficult decision but one he knew he had to make. He notified the team that he would have to let his tickets lapse.

On Christmas Eve he received a call from Diamondbacks President Derrick Hall who had heard about Jeff's sacrifice and decided he could not let that happen. The Arizona Diamondbacks renewed Jeff's tickets free of charge and also provided him with a parking pass for the upcoming season. The family is so grateful to the team and the caring nature of the Diamondbacks employees.

It has been a very eventful year and one we are grateful to have been a part of. We have experienced great joy and tremendous sorrow but through it all we have become stronger and more thankful for all the blessings we have had. We invite you to drop us a line and let us know what 2008 meant to you. In this holiday season it is sometimes difficult to take time to say thanks for your love and friendship but we are indeed grateful to everyone who has been a part of our lives this past year.

Jeff, Trina

Mallorie, Tiffany, Whitney & Dakota