

Summers Scrapbook

2011

There is no better reminder of the magic of the holiday season quite like when you have a small child around the house anticipating all of the events that Christmas and New Years brings. This year for the first time we have our granddaughter Lily here to rekindle the joy and happiness of the season. So between tugs on my shirtsleeve where Lily is showing me the train going around the tree for the millionth time I'll try and type up this newsletter and catch you up on what we've experienced in 2011.

January

The month of January could have easily been classified as a Hollywood movie given the activities that the family endured during the month. The year began with Ashley and Lily flying back to Utah after spending time with the family. Whitney celebrated her 17th birthday with the family. Just two days after returning to school Trina's elementary school was locked down when a gunman opened fire at a mall just two blocks from the school. That ended peacefully enough but then a few days later another gunman went on a shooting rampage in Tucson. Dakota had a soccer tournament the next weekend there and it was a very solemn community. Jeff went in for another exploratory surgery as doctors tried to determine whether he had cancer. The initial tests came back negative, which was a relief for the whole family. The month ended with Dakota taking first in a soccer skills tournament and his team winning the Tucson Shootout (a name that had much greater meaning this year) tournament.

February

February began with Tiffany once again competing in track for Mesa Community College. She is high jumping and triple jumping. In just her second meet of the season she qualified for the Indoor National Track Championships in the high jump. She is doing amazing. Dakota is playing soccer and his tournament team took second place in the

Blackhawk Invitational. Jeff was invited by the Arizona Diamondbacks to attend a press preview of the new Salt River Fields Spring Training facility. He was among national and regional writers who cover the Major League Baseball team. Later in the month he was invited to an interactive preview of the Diamondbacks team with Trina. They spent the day walking around the stadium, clubhouses, and practice fields with the players and coaches. Jeff was having the time of his life. Besides all the baseball, Jeff's job has him travelling quite a bit with trips to Newport Beach, San Francisco, and Minneapolis.

March

In March Spring Training was well underway and Jeff spent a lot of time at the ballpark watching baseball. He has a friend who has season tickets and he was able to get several tickets to take most of the family to the new ballpark. Jeff's parents were in town for his birthday and he took them along with Trina, Mallorie, and James to the game. They sat right above the Diamondbacks dugout and Jeff even got a baseball with the help of James. Tiffany travelled to the Indoor National Track Championships where she finished in the top eight in the high jump. She came home very happy and excited to begin the outdoor track season. Dakota is following in her footsteps running track for Apprende Middle School. The month ended with a minor mishap. Whitney was driving Jeff's Honda to a school function and a boy ran into the back of the car. No one thought the damage was too bad and were surprised when the insurance company totaled the car leaving the family with one less vehicle.

April

April saw Jeff and Dakota take a trip to Denver Colorado to attend Opening Day with the Arizona Diamondbacks as they played the Colorado Rockies. They had amazing seats right behind the plate and cheered as the D-backs

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won the first game. They were really not prepared for a spring weekend in Colorado. For the first two games they were in shirtsleeves as the weather was beautiful. The third game they awoke to snow and sat shivering in the stands until the game was snowed out. When Jeff returned he bought a new car to replace the one Whitney wrecked. It turned out great as he was able to exchange the Honda Accord for a 2011 Chevrolet Camaro SS that looked just like Bumblebee in the Transformer movies. Jeff took his car from the dealership directly to the CamaroFest convention that was being held in Chandler. He had a lot of fun hanging out with other Camaro owners. Ashley and Lily came down to visit in April and Ashley announced that her divorce with Eli was finalized. Ashley has full custody of Lily and will be moving back to Arizona after the school year is complete.

May

Dakota has a soccer tournament in May in California. This is the first tournament where they have played California teams and they did well missing placing by a single goal in tiebreakers. Jeff surprised Dakota by taking a side trip to San Diego to see Petco Park. This is the third MLB stadium Dakota has seen and both he and Jeff plan on visiting all 30 at some point. Tiffany qualified for Outdoor Track Championships and goes to Hutchinson Kansas to compete in the high jump. She did well but was disappointed in the results. Jeff and Trina could not be more proud of all she has accomplished. As the month ends Trina, Tiffany, Whitney, and Dakota all are out of school. Dakota graduated from the 8th grade and will be going to high school next year; hard to believe. Just a day after school ended Trina and Whitney went to girls camp for the last time together. Just a week after his last soccer tournament Dakota is already in tryouts for next year's team. He not only tried out for his current

tournament team but also for the first time tried out for club soccer.

June

June was an extremely busy and eventful month for the family. It started with Dakota attending soccer camp. After his tryouts he was offered a spot on the San Tan Club, the Newcastle Tournament Team, and the Ahwatukee Foothills Soccer Club. He chose the latter and will be playing club soccer this fall. Jeff and Trina took Whitney and Dakota to the Grand Canyon as part of their trip to Utah to pick up Ashley and Lily. Everyone had a great time even if it was just a hole in the ground. Jeff and the kids gave Trina a very hard time about the hotel they stayed at in Kanab. It was a combination bomb shelter and roach motel but everyone survived. In Provo everyone helped Ashley clean out her house and load everything she and Lily would need to begin a new chapter of their lives in Arizona. Ashley was nervous at first but quickly settled into a routine and enjoyed having all the help with Lily. After leaving Provo the family took a brief trip to Idaho to see family. It was wonderful to visit with everyone if even for a short period of time.

July

The Arizona Diamondbacks played host to the Major League Baseball All-Star game in Phoenix Arizona. Jeff had gotten tickets to each of the events at All-Star week. Tiffany is again working for the Diamondbacks as a lifeguard at the pool at Chase Field. She was working during the Futures game and the Celebrity Softball game and got to meet several celebrities including Nick Jonas. Whitney attended that game with Jeff and was very jealous of Whitney. The following night Jeff took Dakota to the Home Run Derby. They had a blast calling the shots and watching as Robinson Cano blasted home runs over the pool. The All-Star game itself was attended by Trina and Jeff. They were not just at the game though. They were chosen to be down on the

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field during the pregame ceremonies holding the giant United States flag that covered the entire outfield. It was a very special experience and one neither of them will ever forget.

August

August marked the end of summer vacation. Ashley was offered a job teaching second grade in the Kyrene School district and began the month getting her new classroom together. She is very excited to begin teaching again and is looking forward to the challenges of a new class. Trina is again working as an Instructional Assistant and is back to work getting ready for the school year. Tiffany is now studying Special Education at Arizona State University. Whitney starts her Senior year while Dakota starts his Freshman year at Corona del Sol High School. Jeff is majoring in baseball at Chase Field where his Arizona Diamondbacks are battling for a playoff spot so he's happy. Lily is quickly becoming accustomed to the Arizona heat and loves to play outside even if it is 109°. She and Ashley go running in the early mornings just so Lily can be outside. Dakota began soccer practice, his first season playing club ball.

September

September was a very interesting month. Mallorie and James travelled to Oregon to see his family while Trina took Jeff to urgent care with breathing issues. Jeff again had bronchitis, which seems to be almost an annual event. You know its bad when the urgent care nurses recognize you. Things were not all bad though. Jeff was invited by the Arizona Diamondbacks to be on a social media panel in the First Annual Diamondbacks Tweetup. He was there with other "social media celebrities" which included the CEO of the Diamondbacks, several media members, and some of the Diamondbacks players. It was a lot of fun for Jeff and was made even better when he was given press credentials and was able to go into the Diamondbacks locker room after the game and

interview players. Ashley decided that she was tired of borrowing a car and took a major step buying herself a car. She bought a Honda Fit and while it may not be as flashy as Jeff's Camaro it is still a great car that fits her personality. The month ended with the Arizona Diamondbacks winning the National League Western Division making the playoffs for the first time in four years. Jeff and Trina were there to watch as the team clinched.

October

Since moving to Arizona Ashley has been training. She wants to run a marathon and decided to run a 10K this month. During the race she became dehydrated and collapsed and was rushed to the hospital. The entire family gathered around her to make sure she was ok. It was frightening but things turned out ok for her. The baseball playoffs started and Jeff attended every game. Trina and Dakota both called a game. Dakota got the first game since he was too young to remember when the Diamondbacks were last in the playoffs. There was some concern about how deep the D-backs would go. The family had planned a trip to California during fall break but Jeff said they wouldn't be going if the Diamondbacks advanced. Arizona lost game five to Milwaukee in extra innings the day before the family was to leave. The trip went on as planned with the family spending a week in Disneyland including attending Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party, which Lily loved. The month ended with the family attending a balloon festival at Salt River Fields. Jeff went just so he could hang out at the Spring Training facility and dream of baseball season starting up again.

November

November began with Jeff once again travelling for work. This time he was in Newport Beach

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California giving a presentation at the Architecture Summit in front of several industry leaders and senior managers for Wells Fargo. The presentation went very well and he is being asked to do more and more in his job. Dakota is playing club soccer and is doing very well. He is playing defense this season and no one is scoring from his side of the field. The coaches are very impressed with his play. Now that he is in high school, club soccer will go on hiatus this month to allow players to play school ball. Dakota tried out for the Corona del Sol Junior Varsity and made the team as a freshman. Several of his teammates also made the team and they should be good this season if the practices are any indication. At the end of the month Trina is released from the Primary Presidency where she has served for the past three years.

December

December began with Dakota playing his first high school soccer game. He was extremely nervous going into the game but after settling in he did very well. They won the first game 4-1 against Desert Vista who was ranked in the state. Their second game was a coming out party for Dakota as he played extremely well stopping several shots and getting an assist from the defensive end. He nearly scored his first goal but it hit the upright. Ashley is again running and took part in the 12K of Christmas. She had a very good time and is now extending her distances so that she can run a half marathon in March. Whitney is applying to colleges and so far has been accepted at Northern Arizona University and Brigham Young University – Idaho. She is still waiting to hear from BYU Utah, which is her first choice. As the month ended Lily is getting everyone excited for Christmas. Each night she reminds us that Santa is coming.

As the year comes to a close I begin to look forward to the new year and all of the promise it

holds. So much is changing in our lives that I cannot even fathom where we might be a year from now (assuming those Mayan calendar makers were wrong and the world doesn't end on December 21, 2012. Just so you know, I plan on doing next year's newsletter on December 22nd just in case they are right).

While we have endured many challenges in 2011 we have become much closer as a family and I'm sure this will continue throughout the coming year. Each stumbling block that we find in our way is not something to discourage us from trying but rather an object where if we climb over we will gain a new vantage point to our lives. We are thankful to have our family and friends with us as we take the journey through mortality. May you find joy and happiness in all of life's journeys and may you stay close to the family and friends you have and welcome others that you meet along the path.

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