

Summers Scrapbook

2019

With Thanksgiving being later this year, it has condensed our Christmas activities into fewer days meaning that we have more to do in less time. Any hopes of a nice relaxing holiday season left somewhere around Labor Day. While the rest of the family have already retired to bed with dreams of calm and tranquil peace filling their lives, I am scrambling in the office to try and put the newsletter together. It feels as though I am in a race against time and I am wearing concrete shoes. Rather than succumb to the stress I'm hoping this stroll down memory lane will be relaxing. So grab a blanket and a cup of hot chocolate as I try to go through all the activities we've had in 2019.

January

Whitney celebrated her birthday with family. Dakota was still home from college for winter break, so he got to spend her birthday with her which has become rarer as they have gotten older. Dakota then hopped a plane back to Idaho for Winter semester. He is doing well in school but struggles since many of his friends are going to BYU Provo. His currently declared major is business psychology but during break he was questioning whether that was a field he wanted to settle into.

February

February arrived and with-it spring began in the desert. The Arizona Diamondbacks held their annual FanFest at Salt River Fields and of course Jeff and Trina had to be there. This year Jeff's dad also attended with them having fun seeing all the various activities. Shortly afterwards pitchers and catchers reported, and Jeff spent a lot of time at the ballpark watching baseball.

March

Lily celebrated her ninth birthday on March 2nd and Jeff celebrated his birthday a week later. As is always the case, Jeff went to a Spring Training game for his birthday with Trina, Whitney, and his dad. They had a lot of fun seeing the new players and rooting for the Diamondbacks. A couple of weeks after that Spring Training was winding down and everyone was preparing for Opening Day. Jeff had planned on taking his dad to the first game, but he went back to Idaho just before the season started so Trina could go to the game. Jeff tried to tell his dad that Trina wasn't going to look at that as a positive. She already went to more games than she cared to do, and he was just adding another one.

April

In April, Syrell celebrated her sixth birthday. She is growing up so fast. She is finishing up kindergarten and really enjoys school. According to her teacher she is doing quite well. Easter again fell in April and the family once again came over to the house for what has become an annual Easter Egg hunt. This year Whitney and Tiffany helped hide the eggs, so it gave Jeff and Trina a bit of a break. Dakota came home from school this month. He has now completed two years of college. He has decided not to go back to BYU-Idaho and instead may try to apply to Utah Valley University in Provo. Dakota was home for his birthday but left for California shortly after that for a summer job selling pest control services.

May

As always May is filled with a lot of activity around the house. Ashley and Mallorie both have birthdays within two days of each other and James has a birthday a week later. Somewhere in all of that is also Mother's Day which makes this month feel like a perpetual party. By the end of the month Mallorie is out

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of school for the summer. This means that Trina is no longer babysitting Teigan and Ryker for this school year.

June

Jeff has begun a new hobby. He is now writing software for the Apple iPhone and iPad. By this month he has three new applications that are complete and available in the App Store. One deals with Machine Learning teaching the computer to analyze photos from the phone's camera. The other two are education games. Trina has been his beta tester. She is a slave driver and always has quite a few new features to be added to each iteration.

July

Dakota has returned from California. The summer job did not go well. He discovered his personality is not suited to door-to-door sales. While he didn't make the kind of money he was hoping, it was a great experience for him and taught him some valuable life lessons. As a result of this job and the unsettled nature he forgot to apply for school before the deadline passed. He applied but will need to start school in January rather than September. Besides UVU, Dakota also applied to BYU Provo and was accepted. He has decided to attend BYU instead. He is very excited to start classes.

August

Although Dakota doesn't start school until January, he is moving to Provo this month to try and find work to get enough money for school. He has an apartment with Kyle who was a companion on his mission. They have stayed close since they got home and are excited to room together. Mallorie is back at school which means Trina is again baby-sitting Teigan and Ryker. Lily has started the fourth grade and Syrell has started the first grade. They are all very excited. Besides all of the back-to-school activities Cole celebrated his third birthday and Ryker celebrated his second.

September

This month Jeff flew up to Idaho to spend a week with his dad. There were some things he needed to do around the house and he also wanted to make sure his dad was doing well. They had a lot of fun together. Besides working around the house, they also went out and looked for fall colors. It was still rather early for that, but they went to several places that the family used to go when Jeff was small. It was good to bring back those memories and celebrate time with his dad. Jeff and Trina tried something new this month. They got tickets to professional drone racing being held at Chase Field. They both had a lot of fun although Jeff was a little freaked out to see what they had done to the field putting up drone targets and course markers. He said it felt like the drone people had desecrated holy ground. Dakota found a job in Provo working for a school for autistic kids. He loves the work and the children.

October

As October began baseball season ended. The Arizona Diamondbacks again finished just out of the playoffs meaning Jeff has another long off-season before Spring Training next fall. Jeff did get Arizona Fall League tickets again this season, so he took Trina and Whitney to several games. Whitney loves going to the Fall League. It is held at the Spring Training facilities and focuses on the best minor league prospects from each team. The Diamondbacks players played for the Salt River Rafters who ended up winning the Arizona Fall League championship. As the month ended it was again time for Halloween. Ashley went all out again creating Ghostbuster costumes. Cole was the ghost Slimer and Lily was the

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Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man. Syrell was Bo-peep, Teigan was Jessie from Toy Story and Ryker was Woody. The best costume was Whitney's. She created the uniform from A League of Their Own and she was a Rockford Peach. It was awesome.

November

November has been an interesting month. For the first time ever, Jeff entered National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo). The goal is to try and write a book during the month of November. The average novel is approximately 50,000 words so to accomplish this an author would need to write 1,667 words per day. Jeff wasn't sure he could do this but gave it a try. He had completed his first draft by November 23rd with just over 53,000 words written. The working title is called "Not Just a Game" and it is about how baseball can teach you life lessons. He will need to edit in December or perhaps in the next year but at least he has a first draft. Dakota did not come home for Thanksgiving. He went to Colorado with Emma who he has been dating. She was in the same mission as he was although they didn't meet in Georgia.

December

December looks to be an extremely busy month. Jeff is busy working around the house getting the Christmas decorations up. Trina and Whitney have a Christmas craft show they are a part of. They are showing their Origami Owl jewelry. Trina is also showing Norwex cleaning kids and they both have done several handmade items. They had a lot of fun at the show and Trina did pretty well. Dakota will be coming home for Christmas and he is bringing Emma with him. It should be a very fun-filled month. Jeff's dad has come down from Idaho and will be here for Christmas. Teigan is especially looking forward to having great-grandpa around; she really loves spending time with him.

It has been quite a year filled with many ups and downs. Through it all we have been humbled at all we have seen and grateful for all that we have been given. While time seems to pass more quickly, we always try to stop and take a breath and give thanks for those around us.

We are looking forward to 2020 and with it new hopes and dreams. While there will undoubtedly be trials and tribulations those will only help to make us stronger. We hope this newsletter finds you in good health and we encourage you to stay connected and join us for what looks to be an exciting new year. Until we meet again, may God bless you and those around you. May you have His Spirit to be your constant companion to help you in times of need and bless you with joy and happiness.

Jeff, Trina, Whitney & Dakota