

Summers Scrapbook

2020

I would love to say I have been so busy with all of the activities of this holiday season that I have not had much time to stop and think about our annual family newsletter. But this year has made sure that we each have time at home with family. Our days are filled with remote conference calls, checking on family and friends, and calculating the odds of completing the year with at least one remaining toilet paper roll or bottle of hand sanitizer. This year has been an adventure that none of us will forget. I invite you to grab a large hot chocolate and get comfortable on the couch as we take a walk through the memories of 2020. Please make sure to social distance on our journey.

January

The year began on a high note, Whitney celebrated her birthday surrounded by family. Dakota was still at home to celebrate with her which doesn't happen as often as either of them would like. The day after Dakota boarded a plane for Provo Utah where he started at BYU. This is something he has been looking forward to, so everyone is very excited for him to begin this new journey. Jeff used this month to install a new exterior lighting system that allows him to change colors of the lights by season. Trina thought that was overkill, but she is enjoying how the backyard looks with the new system.

February

As February arrived, so did spring in Arizona. Spring means only one thing as far as Jeff is concerned, baseball is back! The Diamondbacks held their annual FanFest this year at Chase Field. Jeff took Trina and his dad to the event; they had a lot of fun. Jeff also bought tickets for the three of them to go to Opening Day at Salt River Fields. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate, and the game was cancelled. Little did any of them know that was just foreshadowing to what the whole season would be like.

March

After missing out on Opening Day, Jeff was able to go to a game on his birthday which is a family tradition. Trina, Whitney, and Jeff's dad went as well. It felt good to be back at the ballpark. Shortly after that, the COVID-19 virus engulfed Arizona like it did the entire world. Spring Training was cancelled as was Opening Day of the regular season. Jeff accepted a new job as a Principal Enterprise Architect for Bank of the West and his first day of work would also be his last. He went to the office for orientation then the next day the governor of Arizona announced a stay-at-home order, so Jeff stayed home where he worked from his office.

April

April is normally Opening Day for baseball season. Jeff and Trina were excited to go this season. Trina had made new seat cushions for the upcoming season. Then a week before Opening Day MLB announced it was shutting down baseball as a result of the pandemic. Jeff was severely depressed. This is the first time in 21 years he has not been at Chase Field watching the Diamondbacks. Easter was this month, but it too was different as a result of COVID-19. Stay-at-home orders were still in place and family gatherings are discouraged. This meant no Easter egg hunts for the grandkids, no egg coloring, or having everyone over for Easter dinner. It was a very odd holiday but one that set a precedent for the rest of the year.

May

As May arrived, Whitney and Trina are working on Tiffany's baby shower. Due to the pandemic the in-person shower had to be cancelled so they are instead having a virtual shower. This is a fairly new thing

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brought about by necessity. The shower was broadcast on the internet with people invited to join. Whitney did an amazing job of setting things up and everyone had a lot of fun. Gifts were shipped to the house and Tiffany opened them on camera. There were games and things. It was fun seeing Tiffany go through everything. Jeff was just grateful that the wi-fi held up with all the traffic. This month Trina had to fly to Idaho to take care of her mom and Jeff's dad. Everyone was worried about Trina traveling during the pandemic. Fortunately, things worked out well and she stayed healthy.

June

June is celebrated with Father's Day and Tiffany's birthday. Father's Day was relatively subdued as a result of the pandemic. Jeff was able to use his new smoker making pulled pork for sandwiches. He made lots so they gave some to each of the kids to try. For her birthday, all Tiffany wanted was to have her baby. While that didn't work out quite as well as she wanted, Tiffany did not have to wait long. Wrigley Dawn Testa was born on June 28th. She weighed 9 lbs. 1 ounce and was 20.5" long. Both mother and daughter are doing well. Michael on the other hand has tested positive for COVID-19 so it has been a challenge to take care of Tiffany while simultaneously making sure Michael is ok. Fortunately, he never did have any symptoms. Everyone is sighing a big sigh of relief.

July

July was interesting. Dakota made a surprise visit from Utah. He came home to see everyone but also to meet Wrigley. He is so excited to have a new baby in the family. Trina was especially surprised to see him. It just does not feel the same without him around the house. Major League Baseball which had been shut down because of the pandemic re-opened this month. Normally this would make Jeff very excited but because of the health issues around the country; no fans are allowed in the stadiums. The regular 162-game schedule was shortened to 60 games. Despite all of this Jeff is still back to his normal self, watching game even if it is only on television. School normally restarts the end of this month, but it is being delayed as the country continues to try and get in front of this illness plaguing the nation and the world.

August

The first day of school this year was postponed to August 5th. Lily is now in the fifth grade, Syrell is in the second grade, and Teigan starts kindergarten. Normally the kids are excited for school but not this year. There are no in-person classes yet as the country continues to struggle with COVID. All of the kids are in virtual classrooms and attend via video conference. Trina finds herself back to teaching as she helps the kids in their virtual classes. Cole had his fourth birthday this month and Ashley continued her tradition of making amazing cakes. This year it was a working robot cake that they could drive around the living room. Everyone had a great time at Cole's party even though he couldn't invite as many people as he would have liked.

September

September normally means the end of baseball season. This year is no exception except for the fact that the season only started in July making this regular season feel more like Spring Training from a length perspective. The year did not go well for the Diamondbacks, so Jeff is pretty depressed that not only is the season concluding but that his team ended in last place. Normally the weather starts to cool off meaning less than 100°. This hasn't been the case this year meaning that everyone is still trapped in their homes avoiding the heat and the corona virus. The number of cases of COVID reduced to a level that schools

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reopened for in-person classes. Teigan and Syrell are both very excited to be going to school. Classroom sizes have been reduced and all the kids must wear masks and socially distance at the campus, but they don't seem to mind as long as they get to be back in class.

October

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the country. With cooler weather and schools now back in full strength the number of new cases of corona virus are on the up-swing and there are questions whether there will be a second shutdown order. Jeff and Trina are taking care to stay socially distant and not going anywhere. There was one exception, Jeff decided that this would be the perfect time to replace Trina's car, so he purchased a 2021 GMC Acadia Denali. Paper signing was all done remotely to stay safe with only the trade-in of the old car and picking up the new one being done in person. Trina loves her new car and Jeff is excited because it has more technology than the last one. Halloween, like the other holidays this year, was disrupted by the pandemic. There were very few kids trick-or-treating. Mallorie and James brought their kids over and Wrigley spent her first Halloween inside and safe. Trina and Whitney make sure that the kids had a good time despite the challenges.

November

Jeff's dad is now down in Arizona for the winter after flying down with his brother Mike. He is currently staying with Rod but wanted a place of his own. There are a set of condos across from Rod and one became available, so he decided to purchase it. Jeff spent most of the month going through property purchase activities. The goal was to complete the purchase before Thanksgiving but that didn't happen. Ashley and Aaron came down from Montana to celebrate Thanksgiving. They are now living near Helena. Everyone was very excited for them to be back in Arizona even if just for a visit. Dakota came home for Thanksgiving. BYU decided to not go back to in-person classes for the remainder of the semester meaning Dakota is staying through Christmas. It has been fun for everyone having the whole family together.

December

December started with the closing on Jeff's dad's condo. Now Jeff and his brothers are working with dad to get him moved in and make sure everything is properly functioning. This will likely be something that goes on for the remainder of the year and beyond. Although Dakota is now in a virtual classroom, the other kids are still doing in-person classroom learning. Jeff has been decorating and doing all of the Christmas shopping. Trina thinks it is his way of dealing with the stress of a pandemic. The positive side is Trina has had to do none of the usual shopping. She did go buy two new palm trees to replace the two that were lost as a result of the extremely hot Arizona weather this year. Trina really loves her yard and has put Dakota to work while he is home planting, weeding, and managing the yard work. He has been a good sport helping her as much as he can.

Thinking back over the past twelve months, I don't think any of us anticipated what 2020 would bring. It has been an incredibly year that has taught us the value of human interaction and that normalcy is more fragile than we expected. We as humans are capable of adapting to an ever-changing world, we just need to be humble and accepting. Like many others we have struggled with the changes required to keep everyone safe.

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Despite all of the struggles this year has brought we are above all grateful for the small things. We are thankful to have jobs and careers that will allow us to continue to work when those around us could not. We are grateful for our health. Despite being in the midst of a pandemic we have endeavored to persevere. I cannot even fathom what 2021 will look like. It is my hope and prayer that we can overcome these trials and look back at the coming year with a sense of accomplishment. So, while we have not had as much contact with family and friends this year, we are hopeful that next year we will once again fill our lives with memories and adventures with all of you. May God bless everyone and may you feel His love for you in your daily lives.

Jeff, Trina, Whitney & Dakota