

Summers Scrapbook 2023

Another year has passed and I am again sitting down wondering how time got away from me so quickly. I feel as though I was in this same spot writing about the activities of 2022 and now, I am tasked with doing the same for 2023. Trina and Whitney are in the other room decorating cookies for Santa as we prepare for Christmas eve followed by Christmas day. I must be over-the-hill as my kids suggest because it feels like time goes faster each and every year.

While I look for the brakes to try and slow my life down; I invite you to take a pause in your own lives and find a comfortable chair and a cup of hot chocolate and join me on a journey back through this past year and all the activities we've experienced in the last twelve months. As always, we encourage you to reach out and share with us what has been happening in your own lives. Writing this newsletter always shocks me how much we are able to fit into one calendar year.

January

As is tradition, we celebrated the new year and the day afterwards celebrated Whitney's birthday. This year was more special as Dakota and Brinley were here for Christmas and stayed for Whitney. They will head back to Provo to go back to school. For Dakota, this will be the final year of college, he plans to graduate in December. The month was filled with grandkids sporting events with Ryker playing soccer, Teigan playing volleyball, and Syrell playing basketball.

February

With the calendar turning from January to February, things really picked up. Syrell, Teigan, and Ryker are still busy with sports. Jeff and Trina try to go to most of their games meaning every weekend is spent at a basketball court, volleyball venue, or a soccer pitch. February also marked the beginning of Spring Training which has Jeff very excited. The Arizona Diamondbacks have a young athletic team which pushes the excitement even further.

March

March is always a busy month for the family. Spring Training is in full swing for the first part of the month. This year besides Spring Training, the World Baseball Classic is being held with several games at Chase Field. Jeff and Trina have tickets to see some of the best baseball players in the world. Trina is especially busy as she is creating Seat Cushion 5.0, the latest iteration of Jeff's design. She does amazing work and gets asked almost weekly at the ballpark where people can order these cushions. So far she has resisted turning this into a business.

April

April saw Ashley and Aaron come down from Montana. They try to come each April to participate in Pat's Run. It was great seeing them although we did miss Lily and Cole who had to stay home for school. This year Whitney also ran in Pat's Run as part of a company team for Sites USA. Whitney facilitated the team and trained hard to make a great showing. The family celebrated Easter with the traditional Easter Egg Hunt in the house and backyard. With temperatures already rising, part of the eggs had to be hidden inside so that the chocolate would not melt. Jeff is under the weather and suffered from bronchitis that he struggled to overcome. Whitney has become a huge soccer fan and this month she, Trina, and Jeff went to State Farm Stadium to see the USMNT play Mexico. It was a lot of fun.

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May

As is always the case, May is an extremely busy month filled with activity. Both Ashley and Mallorie celebrated birthdays in the middle of the month followed by James birthday and ending with Teigan's birthday. Teigan turned eight so this was a monumental birthday for her. Besides all the birthdays, Jeff and Trina also made a trip to Idaho to take Jeff's dad back to spend the summer in Idaho Falls. While in Idaho, Dakota and Brinley came up to visit so it was fun to see them in person for the first time since Christmas. Bank of the West was purchased by Bank of Montreal and the month ended with Jeff being told his entire group would be laid off at the end of the year. It was a somber announcement but Jeff doesn't seem too worried. Hopefully things will work out.

June

June started with Jeff and Trina taking the grandkids to the Diamondbacks game. Jeff had gotten extra tickets from the team. Everyone was extremely excited to go to a game. Syrell and Teigan decided they wanted to learn how to keep score so they sat on each side of Jeff as he taught a new generation the art of scorekeeping. June was a special month for Teigan. She chose to be baptized. Dakota and Brinley came down for the baptism which made Teigan very happy. Jeff and Trina celebrated their 42nd wedding anniversary this month. Hard to believe it has been that long and they are still in love. Tiffany had her birthday this month and four days later Wrigley celebrated her birthday.

July

July began with a frightening phone call from Brinley who was in tears. Dakota is again working as a wildland fire fighter. He was out on a fire in Utah and began to have trouble breathing. The temperatures between the air and the fire were high and he suffered heat exhaustion. He and another fire fighter had to be airlifted off the mountain via helicopter. It was scary but he was fine. He called Jeff and Trina once he was at the hospital. All he could talk about was how cool it was to ride in a helicopter and an ambulance. That was not the only health scare. They receive a call this month from Trina's sister JoAnn letting them know that Margie was admitted to the hospital. She was having stomach problems and spent time in the ICU but was finally released. As the month ended, Syrell, Teigan, and Ryker all went back to school. It didn't seem like summer break lasted very long this year.

August

August started with Ryker celebrating his birthday. He is growing up so fast and is quite a character. He is now in first grade and is gaining confidence in being in school. Normally this month Ryker starts soccer but the temperatures are still so hot that he decided to play basketball instead. Teigan has also switched from volleyball to basketball. Syrell is trying out for a club team to play basketball as well. Jeff and Trina are spending a lot of time at Chase Field watching the Diamondbacks play. The team is overachieving and it looks like they might make the post season for the first time since 2017. Not everything was good news this month. Jeff was having problems with his left leg which was making Trina nervous. They went to the doctor who immediately sent Jeff to the hospital with a potential blood clot issue. Everyone but Jeff was stressed out. All he could think of was that this better not impact him going to baseball games. After numerous tests and seeing specialists they had a plan of treatment which did not result in surgery or any other issues. He does need to see a kidney specialist since his levels were elevated and was diagnosed of having chronic kidney disease stage 3. Not the best news but it could have been worse.

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September

The month of September was a myriad of highs and lows and represented in some cases huge changes for the family. The month started with Whitney going on vacation to Montana to spend time with Ashley, Aaron, and the kids. They had a great time taking Whitney around and showing her all the sights near Helena. Jeff and Trina were mainstays at Chase Field watching the Diamondbacks play meaningful games in September for the first time in five years. Arizona would end up as the final wild card team in the National League. This would be the start of an amazing run. The month ended with the Bank of Montreal laying off over half of the Bank of the West employees including Jeff. He enjoyed his time working there but is ready for a new challenge.

October

As the calendar turned to October, Jeff ordered a new Mac Studio computer for his development work. His existing iMac is over eight years old so it was time for a new computer. Jeff also spent the month rewriting and updating most of his web sites including his personal site, blog, and his baseball sites. They are much cleaner and faster. Trina is the second counselor in the Primary after ward changes and is working hard on the Primary Program that occurs this month. She was very stressed about it but it turned out beautifully. The Arizona Diamondbacks played exceptional baseball winning the Wild Card series against the Milwaukee Brewers and then National League Divisional Series sweeping the Los Angeles Dodgers. They then took on the Philadelphia Phillies in the National League Championship Series winning in seven games to get to the second World Series in franchise history. Jeff was very excited but came down with COVID and had to miss two games of the NLCS. He gave his tickets to James who took Syrell and Teigan each to a playoff game. They had a lot of fun. Jeff recovered in time for the World Series taking Whitney to Game 3. Jeff had vowed to take her after she was too young to go in 2001. They had a great time at the game creating memories Jeff will remember the rest of his life.

November

When November arrived, the Diamondbacks were still in the World Series. Jeff took Trina to Game 4 and took Michael to Game 5. This was the first playoff game Michael had ever been to, so it was fun for he and Jeff to experience this together. Unfortunately, the Texas Rangers defeated the Diamondbacks putting an end to a rather magical baseball season. Jeff is already looking forward to next year and hopes the Dbacks will be able to repeat. Most of this month was spent preparing for the holiday season. Dakota and Brinley came down for Thanksgiving and helped decorate the house for Christmas. It was fun having most of the family here, that doesn't happen too often so when it does Jeff and Trina enjoy every minute. Jeff has been getting calls from various companies wanting him to come to work for them. He has been busy interviewing most of the month. The job market seems strong, so everyone is hoping he can find a job quickly.

December

When the calendar turned to December; Jeff, Trina, and Whitney were on a plane leaving for a vacation that had been planned for two years. They were going to Orlando to spend ten days at Walt Disney World. You would think it were three kids going on vacation rather than adults as excited as everyone was. The holiday decorations were up at all of the parks as well as the resorts. They spent their time travelling from park to park and went from early morning until late at night. Jeff was tracking his steps as he was curious

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how far they walked during a Disney vacation. The total was 190,296 steps which equated to 85.2 miles. No wonder Trina and the kids refer to their Disney vacations as the "Disney Death March". During the trip Jeff was able to visit Star Wars Galaxy Edge and he made a custom light saber. He was like a kid on Christmas morning. While on the trip Whitney came down with a cold. She felt miserable but was a trouper and continued on the Disney quest. When they returned to Arizona, Jeff and Trina both came down with Whitney's cold. They were only home three days before they flew to Idaho to celebrate Margie's 95th birthday. Unfortunately, Margie had fallen the week prior and broke her hip. She seems to be mending but it will take time. When Jeff returned from Idaho he had another interview and just before Christmas accepted a job as Lead Enterprise Architect for Early Warning Systems, the company who developed Zelle. He will start his new job on January 8th.

It is amazing all that we've done this past twelve months. It is no wonder we're so tired by the end of the year. This past year has been filled with so many blessings that we cannot even begin to number them. We are so grateful for all that we have been given. We are also thankful for the trials that have been placed in our lives. These have given us an opportunity to be humbled and learn from difficulty. As a result of these troubles we have been blessed with new things in our lives that have made us closer as a family. Perhaps the best part of all of these experiences has been that we have done them together. There is nothing greater than having someone by your side during all of these activities. We are grateful to our friends and family who have been part of our journey this past year. It has filled our lives with joy being able to share with others all of these things we are doing. We invite you to continue to be a part of our extended family and come along with us in 2024 as we start a whole new set of adventures. In the meantime we pray that you will have health and good fortune and be surrounded by those who love you. May you be kept safe this holiday season and throughout the new year. We ask the Lord to bless you and your families throughout the coming months.

Jeff, Trina, & Whitney