

Dear Friends and Family,

Christmas 2006

Merry Christmas to you from the Potts' ! As this time of year rolls around we start thinking of the things we are thankful for. This year we've had great adventures, fun family times, and the blessing of family and friends. So sit back, put your feet up, and listen in on us letting the good times roll.

The year got rolling with great visits from both sets of grandparents this Spring. We sure enjoyed our time spent with them. It also enabled Bob and I to sneak off to Zion National Park (our favorite hang-out, besides the Potts' garage) and start the year off right doing a couple of canyons. Bob and I figured out that with all our canyoneering and camping trips we had been to Zion almost every month in the past year. It is truly a home away from home for us that we thank God for. Of the many canyons we



Bob in Behunin Canyon

did this year (Bob's on a first name basis with the guys from Zion Adventure Company gear shop!) a couple stand out as our favorites. For me Mystery Canyon in Zion National Park topped the list. The scenic hike

in, the gorgeous autumn color and the last rappel 120 feet right into the Virgin River in the dark! Walking out by headlamp through the Virgin River with the moon and stars shining overhead is etched in my memory. It was a great way to spend the first day of my 42<sup>nd</sup> year! Bob's favorite canyon this year was also in Zion and called Behunin. Named after one of Zion's first white settlers, Behunin is a huge canyon and definitely a step up from ones he had done before. Bob and his good friend Mike Brunson had a great time tackling this canyon's many rappels, most of them over 100 feet with the longest 165 feet. This gave the canyon a big feel that made for a great adventure for them.

One nice thing about these trips is most of them can be done in one day. This means we don't have to be away from our lovely children for too long. Plus it makes it easier to find a babysitter!

In March we headed up to Moab, Utah to visit our good friends Jim and Mari Germain at their bed and breakfast. They put us up in style in the family cabin and fed us wonderful breakfasts every morning! We even got a taste of the white Christmas we missed in Las Vegas. A total of 23 inches of snow fell while we were there! It made for great times sitting in the hot tub under the full moon, then rolling in the snow and jumping back in again (Hannah even did that)! We had planned for a week of mountain biking, hiking and some canyoneering but the snow called for a little



Lisa in Mystery Canyon



Making a Snowman in Moab, Utah

improvisation. Caleb wore socks for gloves and Bob pulled the kids around on a "sled" made out of flattened Home Depot box! We also met our friends the Kelsey's there. Bob enjoyed some mountain biking and canyoneering with Kim Kelsey and his family - after the snow melted of course!

In June we hiked the highest peak in the area, Mt. Charleston, with friends Steve Hamilton and Alisa Accosta. At 11,918 feet, this peak is always an accomplishment. I was especially proud to make it to the top as I had not been up there in a few years. We sure enjoyed a beautiful day doing something both Bob and I really enjoy. That same month we joined our friends Mike and Wendy Brunson and their family (Lily - 4 years old and Christian - 2 years old) for a camping and canyoneering trip in Zion. Hannah went down her first canyon with Dad and Mom on this trip. She did great! She was brave even when Daddy had to lower her down the rappel into some very cold water! Caleb had a great time burying his "go gos" (cars) in the Virgin River sand. It was a great family trip!



Hannah's First Canyon

At end of July we were gearing up for another special trip - but to Montana this time for Bob's parents 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. We spent the first week camping at Hebgen Lake, close to Yellowstone



Playing in the Sand at Hebgen Lake

National Park, with Bob's whole family. Hannah and her cousin Gina each caught their first fish. That was a special time for Grandpa and for Bob. Caleb's favorite parts of the trip were riding on Daddy's handle bars and burying his matchbox cars in the black sands of Hebgen Lake (do we see a pattern here?) Bob and I also got to go on a couple of fun mountain bike rides. One went up (and up and up - it seemed to me) to a fire tower that overlooked the the beautiful country below. It was a great week of camping together, eating blueberry pancakes (5 days straight for me - yum!), and celebrating the great family God has put us in. Our time ended with a wonderful reception for Bob's parents at the

Grantree Inn in Bozeman. Bob and I then packed up our pop up camper (which was starting to feel like home by now) and headed up to Swan Lake, Montana to my parent's cabin. We sure enjoyed the relaxing lakeside life, especially after a couple of busy weeks. My brother, Craig and his family were staying at the lake so the kids had a great time playing in the water with their cousins. Bob and I enjoyed my parents wonderful hospitality, a great tandem bike ride, and a 25 mile day hike in some beautiful wilderness just behind my parents cabin (but not all on the same day!). On our way home we



The Beauty of Glacier National Park

camped in Glacier National Park - beautiful and truly wilderness. We even saw a mother bear with three cubs just across from our campground! With final stops in Bozeman and Moab on the way home our 2500 mile road trip was a special time!



Our Kindergarten Girl

We arrived back home in Henderson in time to get cleaned up and get ready for Hannah to start Kindergarten. Hannah is a great five, almost six, year old. She loves horses, dinosaurs, tying knots, and reading mysteries. Hannah is pleasant, enthusiastic and a pleasure to be around. She is doing great in school and is truly a shining star there. She loves to go to Sunday School, make crafts, and play with her brother. This summer she learned to swim and took her first swim unassisted in Jim and Mari's hot tub in Moab, Utah. Hannah also likes to enter contests and already has her own "winner's wall" in her room. She won 3<sup>rd</sup> prize in a "write your own story" contest at the library and first prize for a carved pumpkin and a Halloween poem in a school contest. Just recently she road all the way to Lake Mead (25 miles) on the trail-a-bike behind Dad! We are so proud of our beautiful girl. She is a "winner" in every way!

Caleb is a super little three year old. He is sweet, enthusiastic, and all boy! He still loves airplanes, monster trucks and cars (anything with wheels or wings) as long as it goes fast! His first movie in the theater was "Cars". He knows all the characters and loves racing around the coffee table on the race scenes. Caleb now rides a bike too and loves riding it around and around the garage. He is getting to be quite the talker too. One of his favorite lines is "Me Too!" and he doesn't like to be left out of anything. Caleb is also developing quite a sense of humor - his latest trick is learning how to cross his eyes. He loves doing that to make people laugh (and Mommy grimace!) Caleb also enjoys climbing on rocks,



Joyful Caleb



Ready to Go Rappelling with Dad

playing super heroes with Hannah (with capes and everything), playing in the sandbox, rearranging Daddy's workbench and reading books with Mommy. He went rappelling for the first time out at Red Rocks strapped on to Daddy's back - he loved it!! He's all boy - and a sweet one!

Our Fall has included our annual kayak trip down Black Canyon below Hoover Dam and a great time rappelling in Red Rocks Recreation Area. Our kayak trip was a great day of fun and friends, and in answer to our prayers, the wind

at our back! Our kids both went again (Caleb's second time) and we had a number of families with kids go too, including the Brunson's and the Boyetts. . Everyone did great. It was so fun paddling down the Colorado as my little boy took his nap in the bow of my boat - what a privilege! In November we spent a great day hiking and rappeling in Red Rocks Canyon with Brunson family. The dads took the kids rappeling by attaching them on their back to their rock climbing harness. It turned out to be a blast! Hannah got down from her first rappel saying "Daddy I want to go again!" Caleb had been a bit cranky from missing his nap, but the moment Daddy got him geared up in his harness and helmet - he was all smiles! Wendy Brunson and I had fun just snapping pictures. Way to go Dads and kids!



A Fun Family Day in Valley of Fire

In looking back over our year I realize that it has been one of enjoying God's blessings with family and friends. Speaking of family, we enjoyed a wonderful visit over the Thanksgiving holiday with Bob's folks, and are looking forward to seeing my parents here in January as they take a snowbird trip to Lake Havasu City, Arizona. We are truly grateful for the great family God has given us and the wonderful group of friends that he has blessed us with. We pray that our great God would bless each of you as you have been a blessing to us.

Have a wonderful Merry Christmas!

Love,

The Potts Family

For the latest update on our adventures and family - check out our website at [www.nevada.edu/~potts](http://www.nevada.edu/~potts)

P.S. If you are looking for an adventure, we would really love to take you with us on one of ours. Just give us a call! (702) 558-0419

This sonnet by John Donne talks of the paradoxes involved with the God of all the universe being contained as a human within a virgin's womb. This poem is to be read, and re-read, slowly and thoughtfully in a quiet place - which would be good for us all at this season of the year!

### *The Annunciation*

*Salvation to all that will is nigh;  
That All, which always is all everywhere,  
Which cannot sin, and yet all sins must bear,  
Which cannot die, yet cannot choose but die,  
Lo, faithful virgin, yields Himself to lie  
In prison, in thy womb; and though He there  
Can take no sin, nor thou give, yet He will wear,  
Taken from thence, flesh, which death's force may try.*

*Ere by the spheres time was created, thou  
Wast in His mind, who thy Son and Brother;  
Whom thou conceivest, conceived; yea thou art now  
Thy Maker's maker, and thy Father's mother;  
Thou hast light in dark, and shutst in little room,  
Immensity cloistered in thy dear womb.*

*John Donne*