

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Looking back, 2010 has been a year full of new things and adventures to share.



The first new thing that comes to mind was the addition of a puppy to our family. Bob brought home this tiny ball of fur the day before Christmas. Christy was only three weeks old when we got her and she could not even lap milk. Bob spent many nights up feeding our "little baby". She has grown into a wonderful little dog. She loves to go on walks with Bob and I, roughhouse with Caleb, and be mothered by Hannah. She loves new people so much we have to watch her so she doesn't kill our guests with kindness!

The end of April Bob went on another adventure with his friends Kim Kelsey and Earl Hall. They planned on floating the Escalante River in southern Utah, in inflatable kayaks. The Escalante River is more of a creek than a river and is seldom runnable most years because of very low flows. In fact, the river guidebook is titled "Running the Escalante River – or Pushing, Pulling and Portaging Your Boat Down the Escalante River". The 85 mile float trip runs through some of the remotest desert



landscapes in the United States and ends in beautiful Lake Powell. It is definitely not for the faint of heart. So this was the perfect trip for our bold adventurers! As Gimli the Dwarf in the Lord of the Rings (one of our family favorites) says "Great chance of failure, little chance of success – What are we waiting for?!" After watching the river flow carefully and talking to rangers Bob, Kim and Earl decided to head out and try it. When they arrived in the town of Escalante, Utah, they learned

Bob and Kim Kelsey on their Escalante River Trip



that not only would they have to deal with low flows, but also thorn-covered Russian Olive branches that had been pushed into river from heavy snowfall the previous winter. Since thorns and inflatable kayaks don't mix Earl spent the first day walking down the river clearing branches while Bob and Kim shuttled vehicles to Lake Powell. After finding out what they would have to deal with the guys decided it would be better to launch 20 miles downstream where there was more flow and no more Olive trees. After a day of hauling gear, boats and paddles down a steep three mile trail to their new put in, Bob and Kim spent the night camped on the river bank while Earl stayed in the truck at the trailhead. Earl's night ended up being quite an epic. He caught the stomach flu during an unexpected snowstorm!

Making Dinner on River Time

After that, Earl decided it would be best to head back to a motel and heal up while Bob and Kim continued on. Bob and Kim had their workout each day just keeping their boats moving down the shallow, rock-strewn river. But the solitude was well worth it and in the six days they were on the river they saw only two other people. They had a satellite phone for emergencies and an occasional call back home. The towering sandstone walls of the canyon were spectacular. As Bob wrote in his journal "the Escalante is truly a spectacular canyon with soaring sandstone walls, sharply contrasting green trees and brush, with a ribbon of water down the middle". One view that left Bob breathless was the sight of Steven's Arch as he came around a river bend. Awe-inspiring moments are a big reason why we keep heading outdoors. On May 6th Bob and Kim came in sight of Lake Powell and were picked up by Earl and another friend, Dennis Smith. A very fast and bumpy boat ride in Dennis' bass boat brought them back to civilization. It had been a



Steven's Arch

memorable adventure.



Bob and Lisa in Alaska

A new adventure for our whole family this summer was an Alaskan Cruise with the Boobar side of the family. My parents were so generous to take all the family on a cruise in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary. I had been to Alaska as a teenager, but neither Bob or the kids had been there before. We started off in the wee hours of the morning, June 23rd, from Las Vegas with an exchange of anniversary cards – the cruise doubled as a celebration of our 20th anniversary as well! We drove 700 miles to Baker, Oregon the first day and on to Seattle the second. There we met my parents, siblings and their families. It was great walking around Seattle with them the day before boarding the ship and sailing for Ketchikan, Alaska and the inland passage. Being on board the ship was exciting for the

kids and they especially liked the bunk beds in our cabin! The ports we stopped at were Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway and Vancouver, British Columbia. In Ketchikan we hiked through the big pines to a great park service visitors center where the kids became Jr. Rangers (one of our favorite current activities). Then we had caribou hotdogs for lunch and enjoyed the local shops. In Juneau Bob bought tickets for a whale watching tour and stop at the Mendenhall Glacier. The tour bus took us through Juneau to the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center. From there we hiked to a beautiful waterfall gushing from the glacier. It was good to be hiking in the Alaskan woods after being on board the ship. From there we got back on the tour bus for the next leg of our tour – whale watching. Our driver took



Alaska's Mendenhall Glacier



*Our Rail Ride from Skagway to White Pass*

*on a rocky point! Our whale watching tour was definitely a highlight. In Skagway we rode the old-time steam train to the top of White Pass. This was one of the famous passes miners crossed to get to the gold fields during the Alaskan Gold Rush. It was fun to see and photograph the wilds of Alaska out the window as the train chugged up the mountain. The train took us across trellis bridges, past waterfalls and all the way to the U.S./Canadian border. Afterward we enjoyed walking around the historic town of Skagway. While on board the ship it was great to spend time with my family swimming, eating together and playing games. Bob also enjoyed all the photo opportunities. The ship's captain took us on a side trip up the Tracy Arm fjords to the Sawyer glacier then deftly spun the boat around giving Bob a chance to take some great pictures (<http://hrc.nevada.edu/potts/vacations/2010roadtrip/2010roadtrip.html>). The Alaskan cruise was a new adventure for our family and a truly great one!*

*us to beautiful Auke Bay where we boarded a triple-deck whale watching boat. It was great to feel the brisk wind in your face and see the huge glacier covered mountains all around. The scenery alone was well worth the trip. We arrived at the whale watching area and thoroughly enjoyed watching humpback whales surface all around our boat. In all we saw 30 - 40 humpback whales blowing and slapping their tails. Our tour guide then took us to another area to look for Orcas, or "killer whales". There we saw a pod of Orcas with a mom, dad and baby surface right next to the boat! That was a special moment. We also watched bald eagles and sea lions playing in the water. We even saw*

*our dream retirement home – a beautiful lighthouse nestled*



*Caleb Learning to Drive his Grandpa's Tractor*

*After the cruise we headed to Montana to spend the 4th of July with Bob's family and celebrate his Dad's 80th birthday.*

*We stayed in his parents' camper and had a great time hanging out with them. We also got them to watch the kids one day while we went on a hike to of one the peaks in the area. The wildflowers and views of the green fields and valleys below were amazing! Our fourth of July/80th birthday celebration in their backyard was wonderful. We saw many friends and extended family and later enjoyed lots of fireworks. Family is truly a blessing!*



*Lisa Hiking among the Montana wildflowers*

*camping trip to Zion National Park. Hannah climbed almost all the way to the top of Angel's Landing; a Zion classic.*

*Hannah had a couple of hiking firsts this year as well. In January she joined her Dad on a group outing to Fortification Hill near Lake Mead Recreation Area. Hannah really showed her character making it to the top without a complaint. As she wrote in the log book at the top "It's not easy. Hannah Potts – a 9 year old". Then, during a recent*



Hannah and her Dad on Angels Landing in Zion National Park

The weather had been rainy so the last exposed part of the climb was a bit too treacherous. Bob and Hannah called their summit spot "Little Angels" and took some beautiful photos to remember that special time. We are so proud of our "little angel"!

Caleb also had some new experiences this year. He is in first grade now and has transitioned to the all day schedule marvelously. After his second day at school he told me "Mom, I haven't thought about you all day!" To a mom, that is success. He also has his front teeth again after going without them most of the year. Bob helped him build his first model rocket and he is very excited to launch it. He is a sweet boy, but all boy!

Bob definitely has had a year of new things. He decided to submit a few of his photos to a local contest and, won two blue ribbons! He also has a new boss at his work. Bob says it's kind of strange;

he goes to the same place every day, but in many ways it's like a new job. He still does what he did in the past, but his new boss has ramped up his responsibilities and public profile. It has been a busy time for him making the transition. But through it all he is still tandem biking with his wife and making slingshots for his kids. He's quite a guy!



Caleb and our new puppy, Christy

In addition, "base camp" (our house) is getting a facelift. Bob has been busy painting the inside of the house and garage and it looks like new! We are also re-decorating, upgrading lights and will soon be putting in new countertops and wood floors. This is our fourth year sending the kids to Lake Mead Christian Academy where I work part-time in the kitchen. I'm glad to help out this ministry and to be near the kids if they need me. We are so thankful to be a part of such a great school.

For all our "new" things, we are exceptionally grateful for the things that have stayed the same -- our wonderful family, God's unchanging love, and you as friends. As the old poem says "Make new friends and keep the old, one is silver and the other gold". That's an investment that never diminishes. Thank you for being a part of our "blessed" life!

God's Best and Merry Christmas!



Still in love after all these years (toting the new "baby")