

Dear Friends and Family,

Christmas 2011

The days are getting chillier, even here in Southern Nevada. As the leaves turn so our thoughts turn towards family and friends. We have a real appreciation for all of you, especially in this transition time for us. Our house is on the market and we are waiting to see which direction God will take us. All these changes give us a true appreciation for things that do not change - God's unending love and the love and support of people around us. For these things we are truly grateful.

In many ways this year has been a great one for our family. We have done a lot! In October alone we kayaked, road biked, mountain biked, and took a group out rock climbing!

Our kids are growing up and doing great. It is hard to believe Caleb just turned eight and Hannah will be eleven in



Our Family after a trip through Keyhole Canyon, a slot canyon in Zion National Park



Hannah, Caleb & Christy in Lassen National Park

Hannah is a blessing - she is positive, pleasant and a real go-getter. Some new things Hannah did this year were: scuba dive, have her picture in the American Girl magazine, and do a 100 ft. free rappel with her Dad in Pine Creek Canyon, Zion National Park. Way to go Hannah!

Our handsome boy Caleb is now an eight year old - can you believe it? He is doing great in 2nd grade with almost all A's. Caleb still loves anything Lego, and took his first trip to Legoland over Thanksgiving. He also enjoys drawing pictures, riding his bike, playing with Hannah and wrestling with our dog, Christy. In fact, wrestling with Christy got him a first for this year - his first stitches! He tripped while chasing her, hit the wall, and spent the next couple

January! Listening their teachers' glowing reports about them makes us very proud. Bob and I couldn't have asked for better kids!

Hannah is a thriving 10 year old who loves to read. For a school graduation gift this past spring Bob gave her a Kindle e-reader. She is a voracious reader and a bit of a techie - so it's a perfect fit. Recently she read Little Women and is currently working on Sherlock Holmes! She is doing great academically with almost straight A's. Fifth grade is more challenging this year, but as usual Hannah has risen to the challenge. She really likes her teacher who is teaching them sign language and even a bit of Japanese!



Our Thanksgiving Trip to Legoland



Hannah on a Photo Shoot with Dad

of hours in the emergency room. Some other firsts for Caleb this year include whitewater rafting and single track mountain biking. Caleb was also handpicked to sing in a special musical production for Grandparents Day. He is not at all shy and enjoys being in front of a group. Caleb also loves telling jokes and riddles and jumping out and surprising me when I come down the hall. He is a sweet and conscientious boy who is fun to be with.

Bob upgraded some of his camera gear this year and has really enjoyed using it. He particularly likes getting out for early morning photo shoots and has even won a number of awards. Hannah has become Dad's photo buddy and has won some awards herself. I am enjoying doing more sewing this year and have even branched out beyond quilts into sewing clothes and purses. Hannah and I have fun sewing together and going to quilt stores.

Bob's job this year has been an adventure in itself with budget cuts and restructuring. We feel that with all the challenges at his workplace, it is time to check into options elsewhere. So, we put our house on the market to see where God will lead us. This was an extremely hard decision considering Bob's 20 years of investment at the University and our wonderful network of close friends here in Southern Nevada. Our house is under contract and if it closes we will soon be moving back to Montana and extended family. Therefore, we may have a new "base camp" for our adventures come this time next year. Either way we plan on enjoying the ride!

Some of our adventures this year include:



Goldstrike Canyon - February 5th

We have hiked this canyon for many years now. It is challenging as it involves a lot of scrambling over large boulders as you make your way down to the Colorado River. There are numerous hot springs and pools along the way. Hannah was proud to do this hike on her own this year for the first time. The first time she went on this hike was when she was one year old - riding on Dad's back of course!



Keyhole Canyon - March 12th

Another great group outing, this time rock climbing. The weather was perfect. Our friends Mike and Wendy Brunson and Paul and Summer Mudd helped us lead this trip teaching a fairly large group how to rock climb.



### Road Trip through the Desert Southwest - May 5 -11

Bob and his good friend Mike Brunson head out to canyoneer in the infamous Blue John Canyon, Utah. This site was made famous by the recent movie - 72 Hours. They ended up doing a number of other canyons and a 900 mile road trip through Moab, Canyonlands and Monument Valley. An awesome time for the best of friends!



Rappelling through Jughandle Arch, UT

Antelope Canyon, AZ



Camping at Hilltop Campground, Mt. Charleston - June 10  
We had a great time camping as a family in the mountains just outside of Las Vegas. Great discussions, water fights, dutch oven cooking, campfires and an awesome boys-against-girls scavenger hunt. The boys won - but only by a hair!



Mt. Charleston Peak Hike - July 16th  
An almost annual group hike of the local 12,000 ft. peak. Had a great, fairly large group this time. Bob surprised me by secretly arranging for my good friend, Alisa Acosta and her boyfriend Mitch to join us on the hike. I had not seen her since she moved to Reno a couple of years ago. I was so surprised! What a treat to hike together again and talk every step of the 17 mile loop! Thanks Bob!



Potts Summer Road Trip - July 23 - August 5th  
Our annual summer vacation was a road trip through Northern Nevada and California with an extended stay in Lassen National Park. We stayed with our friends, Jim and Mari Germain in Lake Tahoe at their cabin for a couple of days then continued on to Weaverville, CA to stay with

our friends Michael and Nadya Novak. It was such a treat to meet their beautiful baby girl Zuri. We set up our pop-up camper up on their yard and almost lived in the swimming hole in their backyard. Hanging out at "Camp Novak" was a vacation highlight. Hannah and Caleb both did their first single track mountain bike rides here as well. Hannah's



Bob on the Summit of Mt. Shasta, CA

quote on her more advanced ride was "I sure hope my guardian angel's not on vacation"! Bob and Michael, along with some other friends drove to Mt. Shasta and climbed this 14,162 foot snow covered volcano. As a family we rented a raft and paddled down a beautiful section of the



Rafting on the Trinity River, CA

Trinity River. Our little dog Christy even went with us! After we hit our first rapids Caleb said "This is all fun!" Michael and Nadya were such great hosts - we are grateful to have friends like them. After Weaverville we headed to Lassen National Park and camped four nights there. We sure enjoyed this lightly visited national park. This was truly camping - campfires and quiet starlit nights with only owls hooting and frogs croaking. We hiked to Echo Lake and the sulfuric hot pots of Bumpass Hell. Bob and Hannah even climbed the dormant volcano of Lassen Peak. After a great vacation we returned home to base camp in Henderson with a whole memory bank of wonderful



On a Hike to Echo Lake in Lassen National Park experiences shared together.

#### Zion National Park Camping - Sept. 2 - 6

A great camping trip over Labor Day Weekend. We went down Keyhole Canyon as a whole family and then the next day Bob took Hannah down a more advanced canyon, Pine Creek Canyon. Hannah did very well with her dad's help - she did a 100 ft. free rappel on her own! We also had fun riding bikes around the campground with our cute little puppy riding along in Bob's backpack. That sure brought smiles from fellow campers!

#### Henderson Trails Photo Contest - Oct. 1st

Early on Father's Day this year Bob took Hannah on a



Hannah's Award Winning Photo



Colorful Kayaks on the Colorado

special father/daughter photo shoot. They entered their photos in the Henderson National Trail's Day Photo contest. Bob and Hannah each walked away with a fistful of ribbons. Bob was also awarded the "Best of Show" and Hannah received the "People's Choice" award. Way to go Potts!

Black Canyon Kayak Trip - Oct. 8th

Another annual group outing that is always a hit is our kayak trip down the Colorado River through Black Canyon. We put in near the base of Hoover dam and paddle a beautiful 14 miles downriver to Willow Beach. The weather was great for the 22 people and one dog (Christy!), even the wind was at our back. We stopped along the way to hike to natural hot springs and into a steamy sauna cave. Caleb and Hannah rode in double kayaks with mom and dad. This year was really the first year they made a significant paddling contribution and they did awesome! Christy was a game little river dog riding on the bow of one of our kayaks. As always it was a great day spent on the river.

River Mountain Loop Trail - Oct. 15th

Bob and I rode the newly completed 35 mile River Mountain Loop Trail on our road bikes early one Saturday morning. It was a great ride, although a challenging

one. Initially I thought that we were going to be riding our tandem bike and was a bit dismayed when I found out I would have to pedal the whole loop without Bob's help. This paved trail circles the River Mountains which separate Henderson, NV from Boulder City, NV. It is an awesome and scenic trail with great views of Lake Mead for a good portion of it. We saw a number of coyotes as we whizzed by on our bikes. On the last hill from Lake Mead to Boulder City we even rode with riders who were participating in a triathlon. I was glad for the encouragement of the bystanders who thought we were in the race too. Their cheers helped me get to the top. It was a great day out with my favorite

guy doing something that we both love!



Caleb Rock Climbing at Red Rocks

Rock Climbing - Red Rocks, NV - Oct. 22

We spent the day rock climbing at Red Rocks with Paul and Summer Mudd and a number of friends. It was great spending the day out helping some first timers learn the skills of rock climbing. Our kids also did just great and Christy had a fun day sniffing around the rocks. It's great to be a blessing to people in a setting we love.



Having a Blast at Legoland!

Thanksgiving Trip to Legoland and Wild Animal Park - Nov. 24 -27

For Thanksgiving this year we drove to the San Diego area and spent a couple of days taking the kids to their first amusement parks. Bob's Aunt Marge was so kind to let us stay in her house in Escondido, CA. We spent

our first day at Legoland and had a great time riding the rides, being amazed at the mini-world scenes built entirely of Legos, and taking the kids on their first roller coaster ride. The roller coaster was the highlight although it almost scared the pants off some of us! We had a great time spent together. The next day we enjoyed a lower key day seeing all the animals at the Wild Animal Park. It was a special weekend for our whole family. Thanks Dad for taking us!

Well friends, that about wraps up our year. We are grateful for all the times spent together as a family and with friends enjoying life. Throughout the process we are thankful that God is "faithful forever". Whatever happens that is for certain.

Your friends,



The Kids as Princess Leia and Luke Skywalker for Halloween



Christy Loves Hiking - Especially Riding on Dad's Back!



Bob and His Girls out Mountain Biking



Bob hiking to the summit of Fortification Hill in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area