

Dear Family and Friends,

Christmas 2012

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you! As before, we're using this opportunity to send you an update on our family, and this year we've a lot of new things to report.

This time last year, we were in the process of selling our house and moving up to Montana. Bob was retiring from the University after working there for almost 20 years. There was even a possibility we would be moving before Christmas, but between slow home sales and processing bureaucracies the closing date was pushed to January 6th. We reserved a U-Haul for Saturday, January 7th, but that week Bob received a call from the Governor's office asking him to interview for a newly created position in the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED). The interview was very flattering and they urged him to help them out. Bob accepted the position a few days later and it has been a roller coaster ride ever since. Fortunately the home sale got pushed back even further, but we had already agreed to sell our house. So, we spent the next couple weeks re-enrolling the kids in school, packing up, and looking for a rental home since we now had no house!



Our Family in Yellowstone National Park



Our New Home

Finding a suitable rental turned out to be quite a challenge. We spent six days driving all over with our wonderful realtor and friend Frank Nason looking at dozens of homes and could find nothing suitable. I was on the verge of tears and we were almost ready to give up and go back to "Plan A", moving to Montana. Then, the very next day we found a great house in a good neighborhood and signed the rental agreement. The house is only an eight minute drive from our old house, and is actually closer to school and Bob's new workplace. I would laughingly tell people - "Yes, we moved north - eight minutes north!"

Bob's new job has been quite an adventure. An exciting roller coaster ride with lots of new things associated with it. His travel time is actually shorter than going to the University, because he is on the freeway most of the way. His office is located on the top floor of the state government building, right next to the Lieutenant Governor's office and has a big picture window overlooking downtown Las Vegas. He also wears a suit when he has meetings or presentations, or slacks, dress shirt and tie otherwise. He is looking sharp in his "professional" duds! The kids think the best part of his new job is asking Siri (the female voiced computer assistant) on his new iPhone all kinds of silly question like "What color is your hair?"

It really has been a change for him getting used to the jet-



Bob on his way to present to the Governor and the Economic Development board.



Our New Mini Cooper

home with one of our own. It's been fun for our whole family zooming around in our own little race car. I learned how to drive a stick again and every day it makes me smile just taking the kids to school or driving to the grocery store. When we got it licensed, we decided to get custom plates that read "MC SQRD"; kind of a double play on MC for Mini Cooper, but also for Einstein's equation for energy. This is a car with a lot of energy. Thanks Bob!

I have also been going on a bit of an adventure of my own teaching cooking classes at a senior recreation center here in Henderson. The kids' new school (another new thing) this year and the center are just a few minutes apart. It has been great to pass on some of my skills especially one of my favorites, baking artisan bread. I'm having so much fun baking new breads at home, sharing them with our family and friends, and then teaching others how to do it too. I will be teaching more classes this winter and into next spring. Hannah (the techie girl) has even set me up with

a blog for my cooking and crafting. The low tech girl (me) is slowly coming into the 20th (or is it the 21st?) century!



Hannah, Grandpa Potts and Christy

set life. Soon after he was hired he flew in a private jet to northern Nevada to personally present to the Governor and the economic development board! Bob has gained the respect of his co-workers and colleagues around the state for his thorough knowledge of the state and his support of the people around him. He is an asset to any setting he is thrown into and always comes out on top. We are proud of him!

Along with all the other new things, we also got a new car and what a fun car it is! Soon after the sale of our house Bob took me on a date night to test drive my favorite car, the Mini Cooper. It wasn't long after that we were driving



At Sew Street Market with Hannah

This summer we were able to take a summer vacation, in shifts, to Montana. We flew Hannah up to Bozeman a week early to spend a special time on her own with Grandpa and Grandma Potts before the rest of the family arrived. Caleb and I left a bit later flying up to Great Falls to visit my parents. On the flight Caleb decided he wants to grow up to be a pilot. Bob drove up to Bozeman a week later with our dog Christy to pick up Hannah in Bozeman, drive up to Great Falls to visit, and then return back to Bozeman together for a bit more time with his folks.

After leaving Bob's folks we took the long way home to enjoy a couple days in Yellowstone National Park. We visited the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone with its awe-inspiring water falls, splashed in the swirling white water of the Firehole River, checked to make sure that "Old Faithful" is still erupting on time, and watched the kids hold their noses while hiking through the sulfur spewing



At Old Faithful

mud pots. Those are the kind of family memories that stick with you the rest of your life! Being back in the national parks as a family was truly a highlight.

With all the changes this year some things haven't changed. Bob and I still enjoy our daily morning walks with our dog Christy and getting out for regular tandem bike rides on the great trail system that runs right by our house. Getting outdoors together and having adventures with friends is still high on our list.



Helping Grandpa Potts Clear Trees

As in years before, spending time in Zion National Park is one of our favorite things to do. Because of all the changes in our lives we didn't get to visit Zion as much as we have in the past, but we did get away for a couple of great canyoneering trips. The first was in April where we met Bob's cousins, John and Kristie Potts and some of their family, for a trip through Pine Creek Canyon. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for them and a great chance for Bob and I to have a getaway together. One of the fun "asides" of that trip was the ride up there in our fast little car – there really is a reason the speedometer goes up to 160 miles per hour!



At Observation Point in Zion National Park

Our second trip to Zion was for my birthday in October. Bob took me and a couple of friends, Mike Brunson and Peter Christiansen, on a trip through Mystery Canyon – one of my favorites. It was awesome to spend the day rappelling and hiking through the gorgeous reds and golds of Zion in the fall. What a special birthday present to spend the day with my favorite guy in my favorite place!



Last Rappel in Mystery Canyon

Although we didn't have quite as many outdoor adventures this year because of Bob's job schedule, we still managed to go camping and on a number of hikes and rock climbing adventures in the surrounding area.

Bob and Hannah also continue to enjoy photography. Again this year they submitted photos in the annual Henderson Trail Days photo contest and came home with a boatload

of awards. Between the two of them they won thirteen awards - six blue ribbons, four red ribbons and one white ribbon. In addition, Hannah won Best of Show and Bob won the People's Choice award! Each award came with a huge enlargement of the winning photo mounted on foam board. Needless to say, our new house looks like a gallery; it's a good thing we have plenty of wall space to work with!

Thanksgiving this year was spent with Grandpa and Grandma Potts. They flew down from Montana and we had a wonderful, heaven-touched time with them. We had many wonderful conversations and car rides through the desert together, but there were a couple of times that really stand out. One of them was seeing the Irish Tenors perform in Las Vegas' new world-class performing arts center, The Smith Center. It was a remarkable evening of outstanding music and talent. The other was shooting off rockets with the kids in the park next to our house. How fun it was to see them race into space and then watch the kids running after them as



One of Hannah's Winning Photo's -- "Around the Bend"



Thanksgiving Dinner on the Patio

they came floating back to earth on their little parachutes. Caleb's rocket even had a see-through payload compartment that was the perfect size for one of his Lego men "astronauts." Our dog, however, didn't like them too much and would hide under Grandpa's lawn chair the moment the kids started their

countdown. That was all fine and well until Grandpa leaned so far back trying to keep his eye on the rocket, that he fell over backwards and onto the ground! The next time Christy hid under Grandma's chair. What a special time together as family.



Shooting Rockets

Well, with that it's time I brought this year's letter to a close. Thanks so much for taking the time to let us share our adventures with you. May you enjoy God's very best this Christmas and in the New Year!

Bob and Lisa
Hannah, Caleb, and Christy