

Dear Family and Friends,

Christmas 2013

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! We are happy to update you on our growing family and our growing sense of purpose for being here in the Silver State.

Bob's job with the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) continues to be an ever-changing adventure. He is often found wearing a tie and meeting with or presenting to Nevada's leaders in business and industry. His advice and thoroughly researched data are sought and used by many of the movers and shakers in the state. Just recently he was invited to sit on a prestigious panel of top Las Vegas leaders. He was honored with a picture and quote on the front page of the paper! Though we are not sure where this will lead we know God has a purpose in it. I keep thinking - "When you hitch your wagon to a star, you'd better buckle your seat belt!"



Our Family in Lassen National Park



Hannah joining Dad for a Day of Presentations

I am in my second year of teaching cooking classes at a senior recreation center here in Henderson. It has been fun and successful as I continue to expand my classes and cooking skills. The classes work well with the kids' school schedules and keeps me creative. My family also has the benefit of trying my new recipes! I've always enjoyed working with the "older crowd" so I'm enjoying that. The scary thing is that in October I will be 50 and old enough to actually take classes myself. Kind of scary to be in the over 50 crowd!

As always, we enjoyed getting outdoors again this year. In March our whole family rode in the inaugural ride of The McCullough Hills Trail, a mountain bike trail in the desert mountains behind our house. This was our family's first mountain bike ride all together. Hannah and Caleb did great on the eight-mile ride. It was great to have them race us through the hills after all the years of carrying or pulling them in trailers!

At the end of May we packed up our camper and headed to Zion National Park for a canyoneering trip. Bob got all the gear set up and took us down Pine Creek Canyon. This was Caleb's first time down a canyon this big. He rappelled by himself on the smaller rappels and then Bob lowered him down the last 100-foot free rappel. Our family had a special moment on this trip when Bob baptized Caleb in a beautiful pool at the bottom of the big rappel. Caleb came out of the water just glowing! What a perfect next-step-of-faith setting for our outdoor adventuring boy!



Canyoneering in Zion National Park



Bob on Half Dome in Yosemite National Park

guys had a successful trip and even got to help some other hikers along the way; they finished with a great sense of accomplishment completing this epic hike. It was a bit daunting to cram 800+ miles of driving and a 22 mile hike into only three days, but it was well worth it. My best memory was driving out of Yosemite Valley under a full moon – I wouldn't have wanted to be anywhere else!

In July we were able to get away for a family vacation to Lassen National Park in Northern California. We spent a week camping, hiking, playing in Summit Lake, and enjoying quiet nights under the stars. We really enjoy Lassen as it is not nearly as busy as most National Parks; kind of like National Parks used to be.

Within a week of being home from our Lassen vacation, we were on our way again, this time to Montana. Bob kindly drove



Geocaching in Red Rock Canyon

In June we took a short three day trip to Yosemite National Park. Bob, and two of his friends, Darryl Seale and Jim Sundali, were heading there for an incredibly scenic, 22 mile day-hike from Lake Tenaya, over Cloud's Rest, to the summit of Half Dome (via the cable route) and finally finishing in Yosemite Valley. This trip was part of Darryl's "bucket list" for his 60th birthday. Because the trip fell over our 23rd wedding anniversary (and they needed a shuttle), the kids and I came along. As they hiked we spent the morning touring the shops in Yosemite Valley and had a marvelous time playing in the Merced River for a couple of hours. It was great to be among the towering granite cliffs and soaking up the sun, river, and sand. Bob and the



Hannah and Caleb paddling on Summit Lake in Lassen National Park

the kids and I up to Montana to spend three weeks with both sets of grandparents. Bob had to work, so he flew back to Las Vegas and then flew back three weeks later to drive us home. The kids and I had a good time visiting with Bob's folks in Bozeman, Montana. We missed Bob, but had a good time swimming at the Bozeman Hot Springs, doing crafts, woodworking with Grandpa Potts, and visiting the Lewis and Clark Caverns. We also took a beautiful trip up to Swan Lake near Kalispell and stayed with my folks at their cabin. We had fun swimming in the lake (Caleb even snorkeled in the rain), water-skiing, and visiting beautiful Glacier National Park. Hanging out on the beach and skipping rocks at Lake McDonald will surely be a highlight of that trip.

Our family has also enjoyed a new sport this year - geocaching. Geocaching is a GPS (Global Positioning System) guided treasure hunt. Using your GPS you download the locations of "caches" and hunt for them. Each cache consists of some sort of hidden treasure box (often an ammo can or small plastic container) containing a log book and small treasure items

(known as *SWAG*). When you find the cache, you log it on your *GPS* and then sign the registry. There are caches hidden all over the world (by last count there are over 2.2 million). Trackables are a special type of *SWAG* that are picked up by geocachers to be placed in other geocaches and then logged on the internet to track their travels. One of our family's trackables has traveled to England and is currently in Venice! Caleb even got a *GPS* for his 10th birthday and is an expert at using it. It is a great family activity that can be done anywhere.



Geocaching is a great family activity

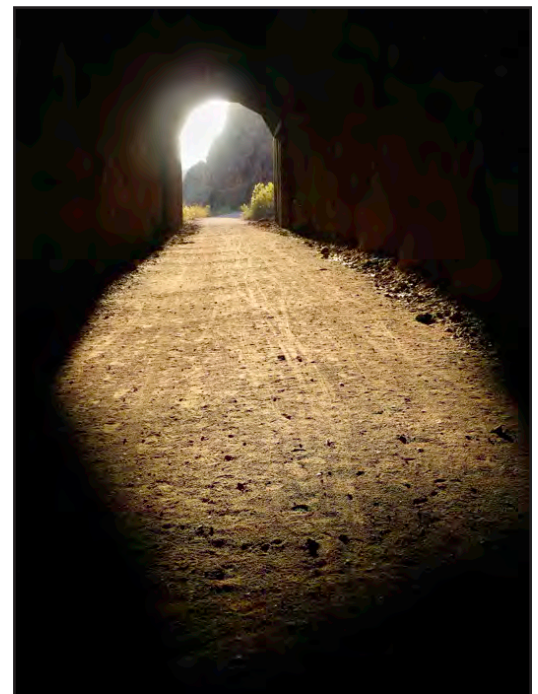
Our kids are growing and becoming more beautiful (or handsome) every day. Hannah is now taller than I am which

is a little strange whenever I reach up to give her a hug. Caleb is attending a new school this year (Calvary Chapel Green Valley Christian Academy) and enjoying his wonderful 4th grade teacher, Mrs. Plummer. He is excelling there and is a fun, enthusiastic and conscientious guy. Hannah is on the adventure of home schooling. She is in 7th grade, but is working on a literature-based high school level curriculum. She has shown herself to be a very mature young lady as she balances study time, homework, and volunteering in the church preschool program. Currently she is studying the 20th century and gaining an understanding of the many issues that shaped this important time in history. I have really enjoyed reading and discussing it along with her!



Lisa Rappelling in Yankee Doodle Canyon

Bob and Hannah also continue to enjoy photography. They submitted photos in the annual Henderson Trail Days photo contest again this year and came home with many awards. Bob won Best of Show and Hannah won the People's Choice award among others. Each award came with a mounted enlargement of the winning photo. I think they need to ramp it up next year and enter a national photo contest!



One of Hannah's Winning Photo's "Light at the End of the Tunnel"

This Thanksgiving Grandpa and Grandma Potts flew down from Montana to spend the holiday with us. Thanksgiving Day dinner was served in the sunshine among the fall leaves on our back patio. It was a great time of family fun playing Uno, geocaching around our neighborhood, shooting off rockets in the park, making puzzles, and just hanging out together. It was great to have them with us.

For Christmas we will be home this year, then off to Monterey, California on December 27th to attend the wedding of Bob's nephew, Alex. My desert-dwelling bones will be happy to see the ocean once again. It will fun to take the family to see the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Cannery Row, Big Sur and some of the other beautiful sights in that part of California.

Well, I'm almost out of page, but not out of thankfulness for how God has blessed us this year. Successes, great schools, a special church, and good friends are some of our blessings here in Nevada. It is once again becoming a place to call home. Thanks for taking the time to let us share our adventures with you.

May you be blessed with purpose and peace in the New Year!

Bob and Lisa
Hannah, Caleb, and Christy



Thanksgiving Day with Grandpa and Grandma Potts



Caleb and Hannah in Yosemite National Park



Even the dog comes along