



Family Reunion - July, 2004 California!!



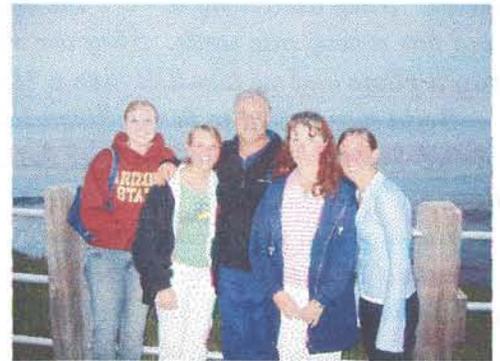
Opening presents
Front: Thayne, Brittney, Loreen, Aubrey,
Leslie, Lana, Dixon, Jancy
Back: Jaxon, Dave, Christie, Lisa, Jared,
Jeff, Caleb



At the San Diego Temple:
Jill, Larry, Lisa, Steve Leslie, Greg, Laura, Greg, Kelly, Lawson,
Loreen, Todd, Lana, Dixon, Aaron, Christie, Dave



Brianna, Dave Christie, Ondylyn, Lisa,
Greg and Laura playing cards.



Tiffany, Katelyn, Larry, Jill, and Heather



Steve, Dixon, Aaron, Loreen, Jill,
Tiffany and Larry playing Dominoes



At the beach with Brittney, Hannah,
Anthony, Aubrey, Laura, Tanner, Kelly,
Zachary, Meguire and Tiffany



Life is good for us. We had a great summer break, the highlight being our trip to California. We loved being with everyone and had a great time at Sea World, Disneyland, the beach and pool, and especially at the temple. The kids still talk about it most every day.

Laura took Brianna and Jeff home with her and brought them back to Arizona after a couple of weeks. We enjoyed spending time with her, Ondylyn and Zachary at Leslie's (we even caught a tarantula for Ondylyn's bug collection) and seeing the Wilson's new home. Then the Dye's came to our house for a couple of days. We had dinner at Larry's house and had a nice visit. It has been so great to live closer to family because we really missed it!

Caleb is so much fun! He turned 2 on Aug. 15. He got some of his favorite things - a Bob the Builder movie, a couple of tractors, and a stick horse. He loves to say, "It's mine. I got it Disneyland." All the kids had swim lessons over the summer and I was in a Mom-n-Tot class with Caleb. He did great and loved it. By the end of the class, I would put him on the side of the pool and scoot back about five feet, he would go into the water and swim under water to me!!! We were all so impressed. He also learned that he loves jumping off the diving board to Todd. No fear!

Aubrey is in Preschool and she is taking a tumbling class. She wants to be a gymnast when she grows up.

Hannah turned 7 on June 29th and had a Care Bear cake. Brittney and Hannah started school on August 12 (Brittney in 4th grade and Hannah in 2nd.) and are doing well. They are getting to know new teachers, friends, and a new school (this is only the second year for the school). The Principal is Mormon and we bought our house from his secretary (not Mormon). She is a neat lady and has kept track of the girls and helped them out. They don't get home until 4:15 which seems really late to me. Then with after school activities, the days just seem to fly! They are taking an Arts and Crafts class once a week for eight weeks. They are loving it - it's one of their favorite things to do! Hannah has lost a couple of teeth lately and has a very cute smile. They are still practicing the piano and we finally found them a teacher. We did buy a piano and we love it!!! It's a Yamaha and it's beautiful.

Todd was called to be the Financial Clerk in the ward. I was called to be the Assistant Secretary in the Relief Society. Our ward is huge but we have felt very welcomed and have felt the strength of the members here.

We like our new home (here is a picture) and are adjusting to life in Arizona. We have had lots and lots of exciting adventures with irrigation, animals, etc. I would put in the picture of when I got a black eye from slipping in the bathroom, but there just isn't room. Actually, I don't want it in print because it looked terrible. We live on an acre and irrigate every 15 days (day or night - whenever we are assigned). We have lots of grass and tall trees, something I didn't expect in Arizona. I mowed the lawn in record time on Saturday - one hour on the riding lawn mower. Not bad. We are hoping to put in a winter garden but will for sure put one in next year.



New Addresses and phone numbers:

Todd and Loreen Coons
15722 E. Willis Rd.
Gilbert, AZ 85296
(480) 988-1499

Greg and Leslie Wilson
123 Grierson
Fort Huachuca, AZ 85613
(520) 459-3330



Lawson and Kelly:



The kids started school last week. Cason is in junior high now - weird! Tanner is in 4th and Thayne is in 2nd. They are all enjoying school so far. Landon will start preschool and he is way excited about that!

Landon got his cast off and his pins out of his arm. He still favors that arm a little but is using it more and more.

Tanner and Thayne will be starting soccer games again soon. They've both been practicing for a while now.

I am really enjoying my calling in young men's. I always enjoyed the elders quorum callings I had but this calling is a lot more fun!

We were able to work things out so I could quit my 2nd job with Konnections. That is a big relief to us. It will make our evenings and Saturdays a lot more relaxed and hopefully help us to be able to get more things done around the house and all.

We sure enjoyed the family reunion. We were sad to come back home when it was over. Big thanks to Larry for doing such a great job planning a great family reunion!!

Love you all and hope everyone is well.

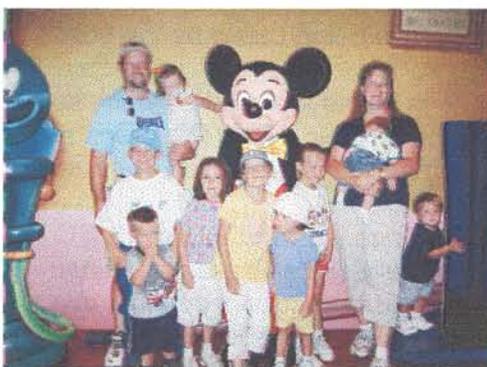
Lana and Aaron:

Our biggest news is that Aaron got put in as Branch President of the Pavillion Branch on Sun., August 29. It will be a good thing for our family. We talked to the kids about it at FHE the week before and told them not to tell anybody. When we got to church one of my friends came up and said that Jaxon had told her that Aaron was going to be the new Stake President. He hadn't told anyone else but he was just busting.

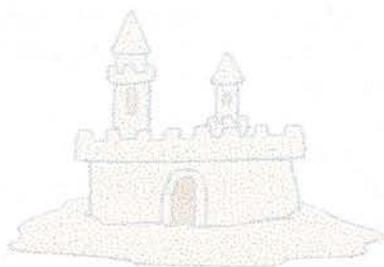
The kids started school on the 24th and they both really like their classes and their teachers. Their schedule is the same - they leave at 7:30 and get home at 4:30

The kids finished out well in their rodeos. Jancy got four buckles and a saddle from the Utah Youth Rodeo for All-around Cowgirl ages 7 and under. She got a trophy that's up to her shoulders for All-around Cowgirl 5 and under. Jaxon won two buckles and a saddle for All-around Cowboy for 7 and under. Jaxon won two more belt buckles for rodeos here at home.

We love you all.



Lawson, Meguire, Jaxon, Broox, Hannah, Brittney, Aubrey, Jancy, Lana, Dixon, Caleb, and of course, Mickey!



Zachary, Laura, Greg, Ondylyn, Hannah, Brianna, Jill, Anthony, Tanner



Lana, Kelly, Lisa, Jared, Dave, Christie, Laura, and Ondylyn



Dear Family,: How great it was to see pictures of all of you at the family reunion. Thanks, Lawson for getting those to me so quickly. I've printed *many* of them. The best part was when I was scrolling through the CD the first time. I was on the phone with Lawson, telling him thank you and I came to the temple pictures. Oh, my gosh! The feeling I had inside when I saw all my kids and kids-in-law (and one grandkid and in-law) was so overwhelming! I started crying and babbling - it wasn't pretty! Thank you all of you for: 1) Loving each other. 2) Getting together [ALL together]. 3) Letting all my grandchildren get to know their *aunts, uncles, and cousins*. 4) Talking to me on the phone so I could feel part of it. 5) GOING TO THE TEMPLE! You are such a wonderful bunch and I feel so humble and thankful to be your mother. It looks like it was a great reunion! I missed being there so much, but I was so happy the whole time! It was good you went to California this year. We probably couldn't afford it! Its sure tough being on this fixed income. By the time we get home well be plum broke! But, it has been worth it.

Plus, wonderful news! The sale of the Bountiful house is supposed to close on Thursday Sept 9 or Friday Sept 10. Were praying that nothing happens to mess it up. Were sure ready to be done with that house. There for a while I thought it must be ours like till the end of the world or something. Hopefully the Gilchrights will love it as much as we have! They can have it!

We've had a great summer. It was unusually mild, compared to Dallas summers. We have taken two apartment inspection trips. One to the areas east and south of Dallas. Places like Lufkin, Nacodogoches, Longview, Tyler and Marshall. We stayed in an empty missionary apartment in Athens. Boy, was that an experience. We ended up spending 8 hours + on Saturday cleaning the apartment instead of sight-seeing like we had planned.

On the next trip we went east and north. We stayed in Gilmer again in an empty apartment. Only this time it was a nice, clean one and we loved it. We went to Quitman, Mount Pleasant, Wills Point, Idabel, Oklahoma, and DeQueen, Arkansas. It was great. We love being with the young missionaries. And they like us!

Lynn reminds me of two experiences we had with senior couples on that trip. In Mount Pleasant we had lunch with the missionaries and the ward mission leader and his wife. The couple told us that while living in Utah, they were called to serve as senior proselyting missionaries in that area. When their mission was over, they went back to the SL Valley and soon decided that they could be a lot more useful in Mount Pleasant, Texas and so they put their house up for sale, pulled up roots and moved to Texas. They have been living here for several years. Well, that's nice. I guess.

In DeQueen, we talked to the Branch President who told of a couple who, likewise were there on a proselyting mission. They had a home in Maine but put it up for sale and returned to DeQueen to live. Yes, I said, DeQueen - I *know* you have never heard of it. And they hadn't either before being called by the Lord to serve there. And now they call it home. Can you believe it?

Many young missionaries have hopes and desires of returning to live here in Texas where they were so *happy and made so many friends*. I'll bet its partly because, for the first time in their 19 to 21 years of living, they were really close to the Lord and the gospel and gave of themselves in unselfish service. Hmmmmm must be a lesson there somewhere.

We're beginning to think about the fact that October 21 marks 18 months since we went into the MTC. We're sort of trunky in reverse. Its going to be so hard to leave here. Especially since President Fisher would really like for us to stay. He kept hinting and finally came right out and said he had a proposal. We could have one or two months off and then return to Dallas. He'll be released in July 2005 and would really like to not rock the boat. But I didn't think it would be a good idea for us to leave just as a new president came in. I said, President, you wouldn't *really* want to do that to a new mission president would you? He raised his eyebrows in a typical way and said, I wouldn't? We thought we'd probably stay. Who can say no to their Mission President? I didn't think I could. But when we prayed about it we got the *distinct feeling that we should come home*. When we talked to him, we said that unless he could issue a call, or tell us the work would suffer, or that he was *sure* that Heavenly Father really wanted us here, we felt we should go home. He told us that he couldn't CALL us and that it was just selfishness on his part. He feels we've done a good job. And that's a big reward!

SO, we are coming home. We need to plan when and all about it. So let us know what you think. We love you all.