

Dear Pops & Mom,
Hope you two are doing well. I am excited about coming down for a visit in September. I purchased my plane tickets and will arrive around noon on Saturday and leave early Monday morning. I was going to try to stay with my friend Alison who lives in Long Beach but she and her husband may be moving to Florida. He is applying for a job with a boat builder there called Ocean Alexander. They build beautiful big and very expensive power boats. Alison hopes to be moved by early September. So I will probably hit up my friend Bill and possibly stay on his



Swim practice every morning

boat Moontide in Newport Harbor as I am sure the motor home and spare room are spoken for. I got an email from Glenda that said we are going to dinner on Saturday night and to church on Sunday. A perfect low key way to celebrate your anniversary. It will be good to see the family. I hope they can all make it.



Unfortunately I didn't get a picture with Andrea and her favorite fire-person Courtney. They were very cute together!

I had a wonderful 2 weeks with Andrea. She had a something scheduled every day with swim practice, swim meets, and ice skating lessons but we still found lots of time to play. One hit was cooking and working on our food presentation. But by far Andrea's favorite was the day we were on our way to the grocery store and made a U-turn to follow a fire truck. Lights, sirens and all. We were very safe and stayed way back until we reached the fire. 4 fire trucks showed up to put out a fire in a back yard and Andrea was a little timid but finally met and shook hands with some of the firemen. She also decided she



Lunch designed by Andrea.

liked going to garage sales. She would get out of the car with her high heeled pink flip flops, jewelry, and little white purse to haggle with people over the price of a stuffed animal or toy. Very cute! We took her two rambunctious cousins 10 year old Hayden and 6 year old Asher to a tour of the Denver Mint. After



This kid loves any animal and is not afraid to touch them... yuk

(since we were downtown) we walked a few blocks to the tallest building in Denver and took the elevator to the top floor. Kids this age are so easily entertained!



She is a little wobbly but tries hard.



Finally a visit to the aquarium and our two weeks were over. It was great to have that great kid to myself. I am looking forward to when she is old enough to fly to Mexico by herself. She doesn't think she is ready for that but I think she will be pretty soon.

Swim meets every Saturday.

After visiting with Paul and Denise for a few days I headed to Aspen. We needed to pick up the boat frame, make it work with the tubes, break in the motor and be ready by June 29 to go rafting. The frame was built by a company in Kanab, Utah so it was quite a trip to pick it up and get it back to Aspen. Then Tim had to buy a trailer to fit the boat. He decided on a trailer that was used for 4 snowmobiles with ramps on the front. It is really too long but works perfectly. The snowmobile ramps on the front keep the rocks and mud from hitting the inflatable tubes. We put it all together and took the boat to Vega Reservoir to motor for



Time for the champagne christening and breaking in the new motor.



Ouch!

the 4 hour break in period. After the first boat ride I sewed custom straps to hold the tubes to the frame. They are wider and a little more heavy duty than the straps you can buy at the local river rafting stores. They looked so good I ordered more strap material and buckles and made some long ones to crisscross over the heavy deck hatches. While in Denver I had picked up



The boat travels deflated on the trailer to squeeze it narrower to meeting the maximum legal highway width.



I was curious when the permit asked if I wanted to reserve a screened cabin at the put in. I did and thought it was going to be a neat little place to have to myself. Well... at 5 pm the mosquitoes showed up and they were terrible! 4 of us slept in this little room!

the spare parts from the Honda dealer as well as other spares and necessary parts from West Marine. This was becoming quite the ordeal and a far cry different from what we had first imagined over a year ago.

In January I got a permit to do Desolation and Gray Canyons (Deso) on the Green River in June. The original intent was to do a 3 week trip from this canyon down to Lake Powell which is a trip requiring 3 different river permits from different



Inflating the boat and getting it loaded took some time on the maiden voyage. The funny part was that with the high water the boat wouldn't float off the trailer so we tied it to a tree and drove the trailer out from under it.

agencies for different portions of the river. I had it all lined up but the year ended up to be very unusual with water levels at record heights. The final canyon of the trip was to have been Cataract Canyon which is usually run around 20,000 cfs (cubic feet per second) but at the end of June



Comfortable boat, room for my chair, and with its 25 horse 4 stroke Honda outboard it goes fast too!

was running well over 80,000 cfs. I went ahead and got the permit for Cataract just in case the boys changed their minds but they were definitely thinking that it would be too high to run.



Two days before the trip I was cutting a piece of wood with a utility knife and sliced my hand pretty bad. I went to the emergency room for stitches and told them I was going rafting so they showed me how to wrap it in this huge bandage to immobilize it and to keep it dry.



The deck has four 50 pound aluminum hatches that have to be lifted, slid across, or removed to access the gear below. That doesn't slow me down when I want to reach my wine though!

So I spent the entire trip bandaging, re-bandaging, protecting it from splashes, applying ointment, and trying to deal with only one hand. How does a one handed person eat a burrito? Button their pants? Wash their hands?

Despite my handicap the trip was wonderful. The river was running very fast and Tim is very good





at motoring through the rapids. Being on that big boat feels safe and is dry. There were four of us on the trip. Tim, Mike, Mikes friend, and me. Just 2 boats and 4 people. We had rain, thunder, lightening, a big hail storm, lots of current, and many washed out rapids. The water was so high

A hailstorm made the whole canyon look like it had just snowed. The hailstones were big and hard and beat open yogurt containers left out on the table.



a lot of the usual campsites were under water and some had too much current at the boat landing to park the big boat so we had very unpredictable days which is usual for river rafting I suppose.

While those Colorado boys are running for their rain gear. This Oregonian is using an umbrella for what it was intended!



Petroglyphs and a beaver. Very pretty and very busy canyon.



So... one day we were sitting on this nice little beach in the shade intending to stay for the day and then do the final 12 miles of the canyon to the take out the next morning. Right in front of us was this huge driftwood log blocking the beach and the boat landing.

After our morning coffee the boys decided to set it adrift because the river level is so high that when the water falls this log will block the boat landing for years. It sounded easy but took all day as they pushed, pulled, dug and rigged a z-drag (a combination of lines, pulleys, and fancy knots).



Wishing for dynamite or a big saw they finally gave up and started the motor on the boat. With quite a bit of jockeying and effort they were finally able to pull it off.



Unfortunately they were unable to pull it out in the current so it continued to circle in the eddy until it came right back to the same beach. They tied it to a tree for the night and set it free just before we left in the morning. We hoped it would find its way down river.

After doing Deso we decided not to go all the way down to Cataract Canyon. Not only because of the high water but because we only had a borrowed 6 hp outboard for a spare motor. If something were to happen it would be very scary in those huge rapids with only a 6 horse! While on the river we had met up with the Deso river rangers. They said due to the high water there were many cancellations. So we went to the river office in Price, Utah and secured a permit for three days later

giving us a little time to tweak the boat, do laundry, get groceries, and time for me to go to the doctor. I had taken the stitches out of my hand but it just wasn't healing and didn't look good. I found a clinic in Helper, Utah (wow - talk about a small town) who confirmed that it was infected and gave me a prescription for antibiotics. He said I should not keep it covered, and use it... hum... that is the opposite of what I was told in Aspen 10 days before.

So we called Al Kukla who had intended to meet us and do the Cataract portion of the trip and told him to meet us at the Deso put in. I had met Al on a trip over 10 years



In addition to the huge rapids in Cataract Canyon from the high water levels they were concerned about this dam just below Green River Utah. It is usually not this intimidating.



Sitting on an ammo can chopping dinner.

ago with Dale. It was good to see him. It was fun doing the river again and knowing where there were camps and what to expect was great. It rained some but there was sun too. A nice relaxing time. The best part was arriving at that beach and seeing that the log we worked so hard to free the week before was gone!

I even found the time to read a book... something I never seem to fit in!



So now I have a dilemma. What to do with my time between now (mid July) and the end of August when Morgan will be in Portland from Germany. And of course there is the Verhoeven Anniversary gathering in September that is not to be missed. I could go stay at the Ogiers for the 6 weeks but they have their own life and I really need to resist becoming "that" mother-in-law. Tim came up with the perfect solution. Stay in Aspen, help him remodel his house and help him to get rid of stuff he and his wife had collected over the years. Not only does he have every room in his house full he has a storage unit to boot! Working for room and board and a couple all expense paid raft trips sounded too good to be true.

I flew into the project in my usual obsessive compulsive way. I (or we) re-carpeted almost the whole place, tore out walls, sheet-rocked, plastered, sanded, painted, scraped, repaired, refinished, oiled, wired, plumbed, cleaned, sorted, moved, donated, recycled, made trips to the dump and got completely worn out.

I finally emptied most of his storage unit, sorted through what seemed like hundreds of boxes, arranged his house, and filled an entire room with stuff he doesn't need. Have you ever seen one of those household or extreme makeover shows on TV? That is what it seems like. Next Saturday I am going to have a yard sale and sell what I can and then donate the rest.



This was last weekends project. It used to be a kitchen and is now a utility room... we took out walls that were over logs, patched, cleaned, painted, re-carpeted... lookin' good!



I don't think one guy needs all this!

Next week I am going rafting again. One of the guys from last year's Grand Canyon trip has a permit for the Gates of Ladore (a river Dale and I did in March every year). Tim and Mike will be going as well and a couple others from that Grand Canyon trip. Should be plenty of Grand stories told. Unfortunately the river doesn't allow motors so we can't take the new boat but rowing is good too.

Looking forward to seeing you in September!
Take care,

Love,

Patsy



