

THE CLAYTON CHRONICLE

The Scottsdale Scoop

ISSUE 185

DECEMBER 2006

DREAMING OF A WARM CHRISTMAS?

Our first Christmas in Arizona was a unique experience, mostly in the month or two leading up to the holiday. While we normally do a little shopping in October and get serious in November, that was not the case this year. By the time December started, we had only purchased eleven gifts, several of them left over from overbuying for Marnie's birthday and most of them very small items.

The first week of December was the same, with no progress toward gift-buying as we continued to procrastinate. Eventually we decided that one of the reasons behind our laziness must have been the weather. It was tough for lifetime (Ken) and long-term (Angie) Utah residents to realize Christmas is coming when surrounded by green grass, leaves, palm trees, and temperatures over 70 degrees.

By Christmas Day nobody would have known that we had gotten off to a slow start. Our tree was surrounded by our family gifts on Christmas Eve, and Santa added his presents by morning.

Once the presents were opened, we rushed off to the airport to travel to Utah. As a result, Christmas morning felt a little hurried, but we really wanted to be both at home and in Utah on Christmas Day, rather than doing either one early or late.

We spent the days after Christmas visiting with family and friends, and discovered that we were much more popular as returning visitors than when we lived there. Besides family, we met up with work friends, high school friends, and friends from our last ward. We literally ran out of time to see everybody we had planned to see before returning home on New Year's Eve.



Christmas in Salt Lake City

growing up

On December 4, Chad visited the dentist, Dr. Skaalen, for the extraction of his last baby tooth.

According to his orthodontist, Chad's lack of baby teeth qualifies him as an adult. As such, Dr. Williams explained, he should now be required to pay rent to live at home. Ken and Angie are still waiting for the first payment.

violin

Chad performed in a strings concert in December along with the rest of his class. Chad has been playing the violin since 2005 at Plymouth Elementary, and is the only 6th grader in the strings class this year.

They performed Dreidel, French Folk Song, Jolly Old Saint Nicholas, Jingle Bells, and a Tongan holiday song.

fun and games

We spent lots of time in Utah playing games with both the Clayton and Liscom families.

We received *Cranium Pop 5* and *Catch Phrase* for Christmas while we were there, and bought *Apples to Apples* after playing it at Dave Liscom's. The kids got *Cranium Hullabaloo* and *Cranium Whoonu* and enjoyed playing those with cousins.

WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?

MEET THE EGBERTS

DECEMBER 10

Our dinner guests this month were the Egberts, who came over after church two weeks before Christmas. Marnie celebrated by getting sick, but dinner and games must go on!

- ❖ Chris grew up in Cache Valley, graduating from Sky View High School in 1986. One or more of his older brothers may have played basketball with Ken's cousin, Jim Birch. Chris later served a mission in Japan and currently works for American Express.
- ❖ Nan served a mission in Chicago, Illinois and currently teaches special needs students at a school in Mesa.
- ❖ Chris and Nan still qualify as newlyweds. They were married in February about one week before we moved to Phoenix. They seem embarrassed to admit they met on the Internet.
- ❖ Alex is the oldest in Jeffrey's primary class. She turned eight and was baptized last May, shortly before Jeff.
- ❖ Nick is six years old, but will turn seven at the start of 2007.
- ❖ Chris teaches Sunday School at church and is also the chairman of the Perfecting the Saints committee. Nan had been serving in the nursery, but also helped out Angie on the enrichment committee. By the end of the month she had been called as a counselor in the Relief Society Presidency.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

By Chad

DECEMBER 24 through 31

The holidays had a little of everything: the good (presents), the bad (shaving cream) and the ugly (asthma).

Christmas started out at home, and it was very Christmassy. I got many great presents including:

- ❖ *Final Fantasy III* for my Nintendo DS: it is a very fun RPG in which the player takes on the role of the four "Warriors of Light" to banish the power of the evil Xande.
- ❖ Creative Zen Vision M: the equivalent of an iPod video. I still haven't figured out how to download videos, but I have many more songs than my old MP3 player could support—about 250 more.
- ❖ *Mission: Impossible* DVDs: three very action-packed starring Tom Cruise as Ethan Hunt.
- ❖ Jazz gear: Mia gave me a Jazz key and a certificate to go shopping for Jazz stuff. I bought a Deron Williams jersey. Grandma and Grandpa gave me a shirt and hat and another key. They also gave us tickets to the Jazz game the next night.

During the week I was able to have a sleepover with my friend, Jordan, but there was another kid who put shaving cream all over me while I was sleeping. I got a horrid awakening to blue shaving cream all over my body. It was fun the first night but then that kid was pretty much a jerk to me. I went another day and saw Easton and played some *Thrillville* with him.

One thing I didn't like about the week was I had several asthma attacks. Yeah for me! It's the cheeriest time of year and I'm coughing and having the worst time of the year. I don't know if it was the pet dander, the pets themselves, or the pollution in the air, but it wasn't too great anyways. I haven't had asthma trouble for a while until then.

We returned home and invited the Reinsteins over for New Year's Eve. Zach and I played *Justice League Heroes* on the PS2 and got to the third area.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AGAIN

By Jeff

DECEMBER 24 through 31

For Christmas I got a Nintendo DS Lite, Pokemon Ranger, Pokemon Blue Rescue Team, and Pokemon Sapphire Version. It's just perfect for a Poke-maniac like me!

I also got Magnetix, which are magnetic sticks and balls that you can put together to make stuff.

In Salt Lake I got Cranium Giggle Gear from Grandma and Grandpa Clayton. You use Giggle Gear to make your self look funny with masks, antennae, and hats. You can even talk into it and it alters your voice. I also got 2 CD's by Weird Al Yankovic. Some of my favorite songs are *Addicted to Spuds*, *Bob*, and *Genius in France*. I like Weird Al's songs; they are good.

In addition I got \$50 gift card that I will use later to buy games for our Nintendo Wii whenever we can get one.

That week Marnie and I went to Calli's for a sleepover. We ate pizza and played a bunch and dressed up. Next we went to Mia's house for another sleepover, and the last night we had a sleepover at Alex's house. When you add in the nights we spent at Grandma's house, it was like a Jeff and Marnie road trip.

It was a great Christmas and I'm glad I got the stuff that I got. I'm also glad I got see my cousins for a few days.



Cousins at Christmastime: Alex, Noah, Raychel, Marnie, BJ, Mia, and Jeffrey

Q&A WITH MARNIE

DECEMBER 24 through 31

- Q: What did you get for Christmas?
A: A Dora princess doll from Grandma and Grandpa I think. I don't know. Maybe it was from Raychel.
- Q: What else?
A: A dolly. That's all.
- Q: That's all you got? OK. Where did we go on Christmas after we did presents?
A: On a plane to Grandma and Grandpa's. To Utah! Then we opened presents.
- Q: And who did we see there?
A: Raychel and Trevor and Mia and Kira and Noah and Dax.
- Q: Where did we sleep there?
A: [*points down and gets a little prompting*] In the basement. I slept in the car bed and on the floor.
- Q: Did you have any sleep overs?
A: Yes, at Raychel's. And, um...Kira's. And Noah's.
- Q: What did you dress up as at Noah's?
A: I don't know.
- Q: Arrrgh!
A: Pirates! How did you know?
- Q: Because Calli sent me a picture. What was your favorite part of Christmas and going to Utah?
A: [*a butterfly passes by*] A butterfly! [*Marnie runs off and won't return*]



Pirates Noah and Marnie and apparent prisoner Dax

AT THE MOVIES...

Night at the Museum

Ben Stiller doing what Ben Stiller does best, only in a family-friendly film.

Ken - ★★★½
Angie - ★★★½
Chad - ★★★★★
Jeff - ★★★★★

Marnie - "I liked it 'cause I liked the end of it - they were singing and dancing and there was a bad guy crying and he hugged the bad guy."

The Pursuit of Happyness

A very faithful rendering of Will Smith as he might have looked unshaven and in his pajamas during a job interview.

Ken - ★★★
Angie - ★★★
Chad, Jeff, and Marnie - didn't see

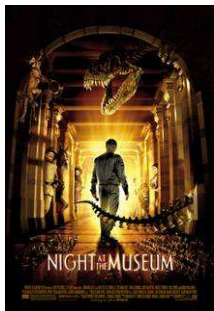
The Prestige

We don't follow movies like we used to, so when we had time to see some shows in Utah, Angie did a bit of research. Among the movies she read about was *The Prestige*. The plot centered around a man (Hugh Jackman) living in past, present, and future. The man was somehow able to move back and forth between these lives as he tried to save his wife from a disease. It sounded interesting enough, so we decided to see the show, inviting Dan to join us.

We were a little confused when a preview showed Hugh Jackman traveling through time to save his wife. Dan commented that it was strange that the theater would preview the film we were there to see. When the trailer ended, the name of the film was displayed: *The Fountain*. Angie spoke first: "Huh. I wonder what movie we're seeing."

The Prestige is actually about two competing 1900-era illusionists.

Ken - ★★★
Angie - ★★★
Chad, Jeff, and Marnie - didn't see



FROM ANGIE'S EASEL



This one is one of my favorites. There is even some cool texturing at the bottom of the canvas. I love the colors & the dead trees again. This is one I could paint again.



This one was sort of an inside joke - a still life with rotten fruit. I have always wondered how you can paint fruit over a period of several days without it rotting. It also looks like a smiley face.



This painting of nisperos was my first really serious still life. The shadows really bring it to life. I particularly like the seeds in the foreground and the nispero cut in half that looks good enough to eat.

We ate these all the time in the mission as they grow all over the Canary Islands. I believe they are called loquats in English. This painting hangs in the kitchen and always gets comments from visitors.

PHOTO GALLERY



"How did you know I wanted puppets for Christmas?"



That's no man-zier! Dan goes public with his cross-dressing.



Grandma Clayton and Trevor open presents



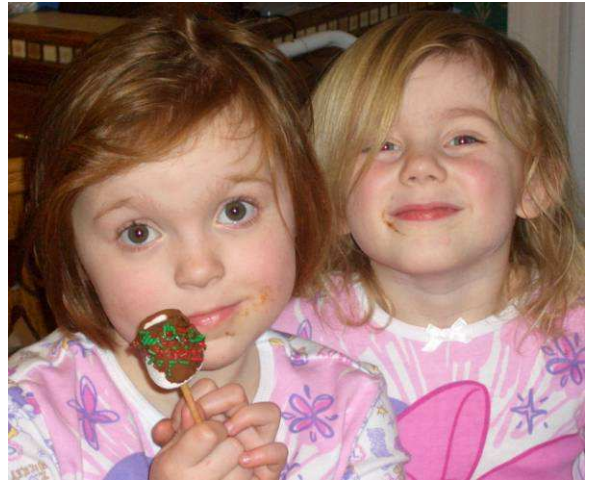
Angie, Chad, and Angie's brother Dave at game night. Dave is doubtless cheating.



Cousins Michelle, Deborah, and Emily smile for the camera during a game of Apples to Apples



The grandkids wait to open presents.



Raychel and Marnie enjoy fondue.



Dinnertime for Noah and Raychel



Dax gets some dinner.



John and Evy—all worn out