

# the Famlet monthly

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## Dear Family,

Evidence in support of the notion that Mormons are a little weird is not particularly difficult to come by. But if you ever run short of examples, you can't go wrong with the quadrennial Pioneer Trek youth conference. This was Hannah's year to go, and I asked her to sum up her experience in a paragraph. Here's what she turned in:

*Whenever someone asks me about Trek two sentences are invariably uttered early in my whining. "It was an experience," and, "It was so, very hard." Those are both very true. It was hot, humid and rainy every day and wearing heavy, time period clothes certainly added to the heavy, sticky feeling. And even if that feeling had been absent, hauling a 1,250 pound handcart over a mountain without any semblance of a trail most of the way would have been nearly impossible. Needless to say, it was a spiritual experience. I spent most of my time trying to talk to people in my family to distract from the pain I was feeling literally everywhere and am now closer with these people than I am with many of my friends. The bond you develop in an experience like that is like nothing else and I can only compare it to a family except there's much less arguing. You develop feelings where you genuinely care for each other more than yourself. Were it not for my "brothers and sisters" I would have given up after mile five when it had been pouring rain for over an hour and showed no signs of letting up, we were all hungry and more tired than we thought imaginable and were informed we were a third of the way to camp. A camp where food would be waiting for us and we knew we would have a place to lay our sleeping bags in the dirt for a few hours until it was light. All I have to say is that I am so grateful that I have pioneer ancestors that were willing to do that, because I'm not sure I would've been able to do it in their place and it is a truly humbling experience. I'm glad I went, but never again.*

Hannah returned home from Trek so ill that she could scarcely get out of bed to go to the doctor. We were scheduled to fly to Seattle the following morning, and the doctor offered to "write a note" if Hannah didn't feel up to flying (as if that would have helped matters—silly doctors). Fortunately, Hannah was well enough the next morning to get on the plane, and we were off to 12 glorious days in the Northwest. We split our time between Grandma and Grandpa Kent's house in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and Grandma Carolyn's and Grandpa Pat's house in Wenatchee, Wash. We had a great time with all the grandparents, plus Uncle Rick and Aunt Liz (two of Crystal's four siblings) and Rick's two children, Sid and Josie. It was also fun seeing Crystal's step-sister, Tawny, for the first time since the completion of her mission in San Diego. The trip is probably least painfully summarized in pictures, which I'll provide, but I also asked each of my daughters to write a paragraph about their favorite part of the trip. Hannah took mild exception to the specific request in penning the following:

*I honestly can't think of a favorite part, not because I didn't enjoy anything but because if I pick one part to be "my favorite" then it doesn't do the others justice! It's kind of like I'm afraid of offending my other memories that are subsequently corralled in the "good, but not as great as \_\_\_\_" category. Regardless, the weather was spectacular all around. It was a little hotter in Wenatchee than Coeur d'Alene but it wasn't noticeable due to the astonishing lack of suffocating humidity! Everything with water and swimming made me happiest, including boating and swimming in Coeur d'Alene's lakes and Wenatchee's rivers and sliding at Chelan's awkwardly named "Slide Waters" waterpark. It was fun and brought back memories, but really, that attempt at creativity does more harm than good. Finding myself faced with the risk of sounding suspi-*

*ciously like my father by going off on a tangent I'll cut off now and make him write his own letter, I loved seeing all of you and hope to see you again soon! <3 The rest of you that I didn't see, time for you to come visit me. Bye!*

Lucy was somewhat more specific in her response:

*Not many people get to say anything near as awesome about their Grandma as I can. Here are a few examples: My Grandma is an Iron Man, she owns six poodles, and she makes the best lasagna ever. Now, I have found another reason to brag about my Grandma: she went cliff diving with me.*

*So, when walking on the floating boardwalk over Lake Coeur d'Alene, Grandma Carolyn pointed out a few people jumping off the cliffs into the lake. We decided to ditch the group to try cliff jumping ourselves, so we climbed up the mountain to find a few good spots. We jumped three times. The first time, Grandma decided to go before me to make sure the water was deep enough. She was poised to jump...and then her cell phone rang. Kinda funny, actually. Anyway, we jumped, climbed back up, and went to jump again. The third time we jumped, there were a bunch of twenty year old dudes near our ledge. They saw Grandma climbing down to the spot, and one of them said, in utter disbelief, "Are you jumping?" We said yes, and when we asked if they were as well, one said "Hell no!" We decided to show these guys how to man up, and just before I jumped, I heard someone nearby say "The little kid and the oldie..." Basically, it was awesome.*

When Lucy describes her grandmother as an "Iron Man," she is referring to the fact that grandma has completed multiple [Ironman triathlons](#). What kind of woman in her late 60's competes in Ironman triathlons, you ask? Apparently the same kind of woman who feels that the best way to test the depth of a body of water is by plunging into it from a great height.

Sophie liked a little bit of everything:

*I had a lot of fun in Idaho and Washington. The first day I was at my grandpa's house in Idaho we went to a "Triple Play" place where there is rock climbing, bowling, miniature golf, and all sorts of things like that. They also had a dog name Lala, who would never, ever stop playing fetch. I also made a new friend at church. She was really nice. My favorite thing in Washington was when we climbed Saddle Rock. It wasn't as exhausting as I thought it would be, but it was fun anyway. Also, I like seeing all of grandma's dogs. When we finally got home it was around 12:10 [Sunday morning—we connected through Dallas, an airport from which no plane in history has ever departed on time. —Ed.] I had a great time at grandma and grandpa's houses.*

And finally, Grace's entry:

*My favorite part of the vacation was the water slides [at Lake Chelan in Washington, near Grandma Carolyn's house —Ed.]. My favorite was the racing one where you ride on blue boards down a slide to the finish. It's very steep.*

Most important, I sense that everybody truly enjoyed being with everybody. I have the good fortune have having in-laws that I genuinely admire. No matter what we do, it seems, it's just pleasant being together. Between our family excursion to the Northwest and my multiple trips to Minnesota for work, I've logged more running mileage in the Pacific and Central time zones (60 miles and 33 miles, respectively) during the first 25 days of August than in Eastern time zone (24 miles) where I ostensibly live. With no travel planned for the coming week, Eastern time will pull comfortably into second place by month-end, but nothing can compare with the sheer pleasure of running in the Northwest, where the crisp, dry, early-morning air makes every step a delight.

School starts tomorrow. Happy fall. Love, Tim et al





At the airport



Grace always got the window seat.



Left—Sophie and Grace with Sid and Josie in downtown Coeur d'Alene.  
Below—Lucy tubing behind Grandpa's boat on Hayden Lake.





**Left**—With Aunt Tawny at the Spokane River Falls.  
**Below**—At Higgens Point (on Lake Coeur d'Alene)



Hannah mowing Grandpa Pat's yard.  
(She enjoyed it more than her face  
lets on.)



Aunt Liz and Sophie



With Grandma Carolyn atop Saddle Rock in Wenatchee.