

the Famlet monthly

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Dear Family,

The bruise on Crystal's chest has almost completely healed now.

She picked it up 15 days ago in Deep Creek Lake at some point during her 1,500-meter swim when a fellow triathlete (some lame-oid from an earlier wave who was swimming *breaststroke*) kicked her there.

Deep Creek Lake is in a lovely spot of Garrett County, the west end of western Maryland, a scenic three-hour drive from our house. Upon learning that Crystal and I had registered for this month's [SavageMan](#) Olympic-distance triathlon there, Grant signed up as well and proposed that our two families get a house out there for the long weekend (the following Monday was Rosh Hashanah—no school) and see if our parents and Pete would care to join us. They did, and it made for a very enjoyable time. Most of the accompanying photos were taken by Mom.

The race was great—perfect weather, good organization, absolutely nothing to complain about—except that they stuck all the men my age in the fourth and final wave—21 minutes after the initial horn. Being relegated to the back of the pack served simultaneously to heighten my anxiety that I wouldn't finish before the course closed (not that I was overly concerned about that, but it's always in the back of my mind) and to provide the soothing reassurance of knowing that I wouldn't get passed by any women (all of whom were assigned to earlier waves).

I was completely satisfied with my performance. You may or may not be interested in the following details: I lost a couple minutes to the field on the swim (partly because I'm not a very fast swimmer, partly because I couldn't maintain a straight course and was all over the lake—but at least I never resorted to swimming *breaststroke*), was about even with the field on the bike, and actually made up a little bit of time on the run. The course was brutal, with challenging climbs and descents on both the bike and run. I had no idea what a realistic goal time would be and kind of picked 3 hours out of the air. Despite my sub-par swim and two fairly slow transitions, I was delighted to finish in 2:57 flat, three minutes behind my little brother. Putting this in [perspective](#), the winner finished in 2:02:18; the median male finisher came in at 2:56:01; and the median time among 40- to 44-year-old men (my age group, which, it might surprise you to learn, had more participants than any other) was 2:50:35. So I was about average. Strictly speaking, I was a little slower than average, but I'm 40 now, happy with my life and comfortable in my mediocrity.

Next race: Richmond Marathon, November 10th. I may be comfortable in my mediocrity, but if I don't significantly improve on [March's disappointing performance](#), this one will probably be my last.

The rest of the weekend at Deep Creek was relaxing. On Sunday we attended the legendary Oakland (Md.) Branch. Our kids were the entire Primary, and Hannah, Lucy and Abby were the only Young Women. The branch didn't bother with Sunday School, just a combined Priesthood and Relief Society meeting immediately following sacrament meeting. Two hours and out. Best. Church. Ever.

Mom, Dad and Pete left early Monday morning so Pete could get to work (he didn't get Rosh Hashanah off) and the rest of us stayed to explore the state park, eat ice cream and take two runs down the ski resort's "Mountain Coaster"—essentially a rip-off of the Park City Alpine Coaster (described by someone on YouTube as "sort of like the old concrete alpine slides, only with 83% less risk of death or maiming"). All in all, a really enjoyable trip.

As it turns out, the triathlon wasn't nearly as exhausting as Hannah's back-to-school night the following week. This was the only back-to-school night I attended this year because of travel and other conflicts, but it was enough. Her school's so large I felt like I needed a Segway to get from class to class on time, but that's not what wore me out. What did was listening to a string of teachers describing the work required in their class, each of which sounded like a full-time job. Hannah's course load includes Calculus, AP Biology, AP Language, AP World History and French, and (because she doesn't have enough else to do) she's on the Yearbook staff. I don't know how she does it, and I can't immediately think of what there will be left for her to take next year in 12th grade.

Lucy's eighth-grade workload is analogously demanding. Tomorrow morning she leaves on a five-day field trip to New York City where she and her classmates plan to solve all the world's problems. Shouldn't be too hard; she'll turn 13 while she's there.

Both Hannah and Lucy spent a good chunk of yesterday outside the Giant at the corner of Randolph Rd. and New Hampshire Ave. (about a mile up the street from where our ward meets) soliciting food donations for the Capital Area Food Bank as part of our stake's contribution to a regional multi-state, multi-denominational day of service. It was fun seeing them in their bright yellow "Mormon Helping Hands" smocks you sometimes see at disaster sites. Somebody took pictures; I wish I had.

They're good girls. So are their sisters. Life's good for us. Hope it is for you.

Love, Tim, et al





Grant finished his mile in the lake fastest...



...Crystal was 90 seconds slower than Grant...



...and I was three and a half minutes slower than Crystal.

A pleasant bike ride through the Allegheny Mountains. (Crystal and I on top; Grant below.)





At the Finish Line:

Above: Crystal and me

Above Right: Lucy crosses with me (don't forget to subtract 21 minutes from the clock behind me). Looking like a dork because I forgot to take off my biking gloves before the run.

Right: Crystal strikes a pose

Below: Grant (second from left) collects his award for finishing third in the Clydesdale Division (described by the announcer as the "division for normal-sized people").



Sophie and Grace (pink sweatshirts) and their cousins, Pete, Ben and Alex (I think) celebrate Rosh Hashanah at Swallow Falls State Park (near Deep Creek).

