

Joe and Darlene Ritchey Family Report 2016

As we begin our 10th Christmas season in Western Colorado we look back at another great year of visits with family and friends and of course travels. January ASTM meetings were in San Antonio, which allowed us to visit to several missions, stroll along the River Walk, and take a city tour. February was largely spent snowboarding and around town, though the early season snow had tapered off. March included a trip to Phoenix and Tucson, part business and part pleasure. The highlights were visiting with Joe's cousin Bob and Barb and their daughter Andrea and son Charlie and going to a Cleveland Indian's pre-season game with Darlene's brother Bob, sister-in-law Louise and son Ryan.

With spring and the end of winter sports we enjoyed hikes to our favorite Grand Mesa spot Lost Lake. In May, James traveled with us to Ohio by car with stops at the Union Pacific Bailey Yard in North Platt Nebraska, John, Mandy, and Lilo in Des Moines, Iowa, and Mary Lou and family in Champaign, Illinois. The Ohio event was the high school graduation of Courtney and Joshua (Joe's brother Mark and sister-in-law Gail twins). This highlight was a convenient reason for our immediate family to rent a house near Darlene's brother Dave and sister-in-law Ilene and mom in Geneva on the Lake (see attached photo). Tim, Rachel, Gavin, and Shaelyn were of course there for the visit. The guys (and Courtney) went to a Cleveland Indian's game, while the girls watched kids.

While Darlene stayed for a little longer in Ohio, Joe and James returned out west. This trip was followed by Joe returning to Chicago to meet Darlene for June ASTM meetings. The drive home included stops at Springfield Illinois and the Lincoln Presidential Library, Hannibal Missouri to go in one of "Mark Twain's" caves and then a visit with Larry and Charlotte in Kansas City. The trip home ended with an overnight stay and train excursion in Georgetown, Colorado and Joe competing in a 5K run.

Love of mountains, trains, and history birthed a July trip to the Golden Spike, Elmo Powwow on the Flathead Indian Reservation, Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, the continental divide on the Oregon Trail route, former Riverton Wyoming uranium millsite, historic Cheyenne Train Depot, and Rocky Mountain National Park.

In August Darlene went to Iowa to help Mandy while John was at camp and to help with John's 30th birthday party, while longer training runs motivated Joe to compete in a 25K race on the Grand Mesa with co-worker Matt.

In October we traveled to Ohio to enjoy time with Tim and Rachel and family at their West Chester home, and then Darlene traveled to Geneva to celebrate her mom's (and twin sister's) 90th birthday.

The year was rounded out by a November trip via Amtrak to San Francisco to see nephews Ryan (and wife Jen) and Steven enjoying Steve's hospitality just off of the UC Berkeley campus. We then headed north again by train to Seattle to visit Olympic National Park and attend a three-day worship leaders conference with members of our worship team from Clifton Christian Church. Early snows this month allowed Powderhorn to start its 50th season two weekends early.