

Dear Family:

This month's edition comes to you at the mid-point of our family's week-long trip to North Idaho.

The purpose of the trip was to attend Brent and Brenna Fowler's wedding reception, spend some time with Crystal's family, get family photos with all of Crystal's siblings and their families (fun! fun! fun!), and hopefully squeeze in a little golf.

Brenna Fowler (née Dunn) is Crystal's stepsister (a term I use for clarification purposes only—we're both extraordinarily fond of her). She and Brent were married in the Salt Lake Temple in April. (We attended, without the kids—I think it got a couple of sentences in *Famlet* Vol. 9, No. 5.) The candlelight garden reception was held last night at Crystal's father's home in Dalton Gardens (just north of Coeur d'Alene). Everything was lovely and I ate too much, but the kids had a ball and it was a good time.

The event also occasioned a rare reunion of Crystal with the four siblings she grew up with. With Liz's return to the Lower 48 (i.e., the real states), and Carrie's move to Southern California for medical school, they are not as scattered as they once were. But they remain fanned out on both coasts, so everybody relishes opportunities such as this. Our girls love their aunts and uncles and the feeling would seem to be mutual, so it's really been a lot of fun. The required family picture-taking is always torture, but somehow we're managing to keep this in perspective.

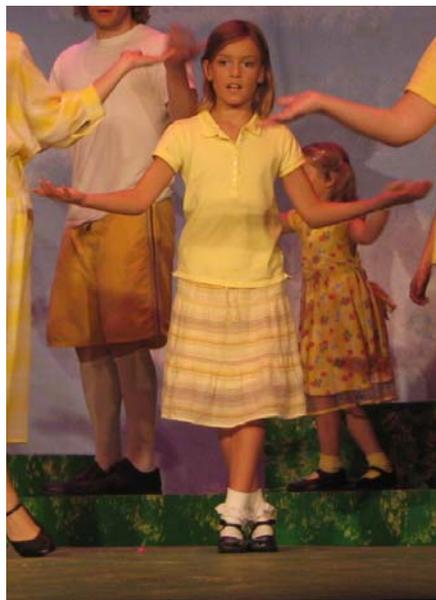
The crush of relatives descending on Crystal's father's house meant that our family has been compelled to stay in the spacious lakefront home of some good friends of Crystal's mother, the Kimballs. The property features breathtaking views of Hayden Lake, unfettered access to their private dock, and—most important, I suppose—lots of empty bedrooms vacated by grown children. Our gracious hosts welcomed us Wednesday night with a spaghetti dinner and then took off for a four-day camping trip, essentially leaving us with full run of the house. (We've stayed out of the master suite, but that's about it.) I don't think we've figured out how we're going to thank them yet, but it's going to have to be something really nice.

This is my first week and first Sunday away from the ward since becoming the bishop. I've been a little antsy about it, but am reassured that everything has been left in the hands of my two very capable counselors, either one of which would make a fine bishop. (If my calling has proven anything, it's that *anyone* can be bishop.)

Love,
 T, C, H, L, S & G



Crystal (the Sour Kangaroo) and Lucy (the Young Kangaroo) giving Horton the business in "Seussical"



Hannah the Who.

It's also the first weekend in a long time that hasn't been dominated by "Seussical," in which Crystal portrayed the Sour Kangaroo, Lucy was the Young Kangaroo, and Hannah was a Who and a Fish. Rehearsals ran four nights a week, plus a good chunk of every Saturday for most of July (which meant I got a lot of quality time at home tending Sophie and Grace). But the

finished product reflected the effort. (To quote my father after the opening performance, "That was no road show.") It was the perfect musical for our stake to put on. Word is the decision was between "Seussical" and "Fiddler on the Roof." One stated reason for not doing "Fiddler" was that we didn't have enough male vocal talent to pull it off. This is probably true. I'm also not sure how convincing a bunch of Mormons could be in "Fiddler." I wonder if it wouldn't be like the local Temple Emmanuel trying to do "My Turn on Earth" (not that they would have any interest in doing so, but you know what I mean). Everyone really wanted to do "Seussical," anyway.

Changing subjects (Crystal felt we needed a segue here), Lucy learned an exciting lesson about the power of electricity about a week ago when she stuck a metal barrette into one of the outlets in Hannah's bedroom, severely burning her thumb and forefinger, which immediately became black and blistered. (Based on my extensive Boy Scout training, I judged them to be second-degree burns.) It was one of those gray areas where, had it been during business hours, we probably would have taken her to the doctor as a precaution. But we didn't think it rose to the level of a late-night emergency room run. (Someone's leg needs to be hanging off before I'll make one of those.) Still, Lucy, who is given to histrionics for the most minor injuries, was in absolute agony, running around the house screaming, "Please let this be a dream! Please! Wake up, Lucy! WAKE UP!" We treated the burn and gave her some Ibuprofen. She asked her bishop for a blessing (sorry, I had to work that in), which I gave her, and then we prayed together that Heavenly Father would heal her and that the pain would go away enough for her to relax enough to fall asleep. She told me she believed Heavenly Father would answer our prayer. I told her I did, too. She fell asleep a short time later. When she awoke the following morning, the blisters were still there, but Lucy said they weren't really bothering her anymore. We said another prayer that morning to thank Heavenly Father for answering our prayers the night before.

I am grateful for a Heavenly Father who, to borrow from President Hinckley, "miracle of miracles and wonder of wonders, [is] interested in us, and we are the substance of [His] great concern." I'm equally grateful for my family's testimony of the restored Gospel, and for all of you, too.