

Happy New Year!

It happened this year. The Santa Claus myth was dispelled. Our son, Robert William no longer believes. And, you'll never believe how Robert had this revelation.

Robert has had his doubts for the last few weeks. Evidently there was some talk about it at school.

Eventually he sought the answer from the fount where all information flows. Yes, that's right, Robert pulled up the computer, visited Google.com and typed in, "Is Santa Real."

He found a mommy blogger website where she attempted to answer the question of when it's the best time to tell your children Santa isn't real. (What's worse is her next post was all about how much you should leave for a tooth as the Tooth Fairy.)

Later that day Samantha and Robert were talking about this new revelation in the car. Samantha declared, "Daddy, I still want you to hide eggs for the Easter Bunny so I can hunt them."

To which Robert replied, "Oh man, I forgot all about the Easter Bunny." And that was the end of our holiday mythology.

Welcome to the 2009 Skrob family Christmas letter. Yes, it's late. But, this way you get to enjoy it now that the hectic holiday season is over.



We took our first two week vacation this year, logging over 2900 miles as we explored Colorado, South Dakota and Wyoming. Here we are in front of one of the boiling springs in Yellowstone National Park. (Please note: The steam did not mess up my hair.)





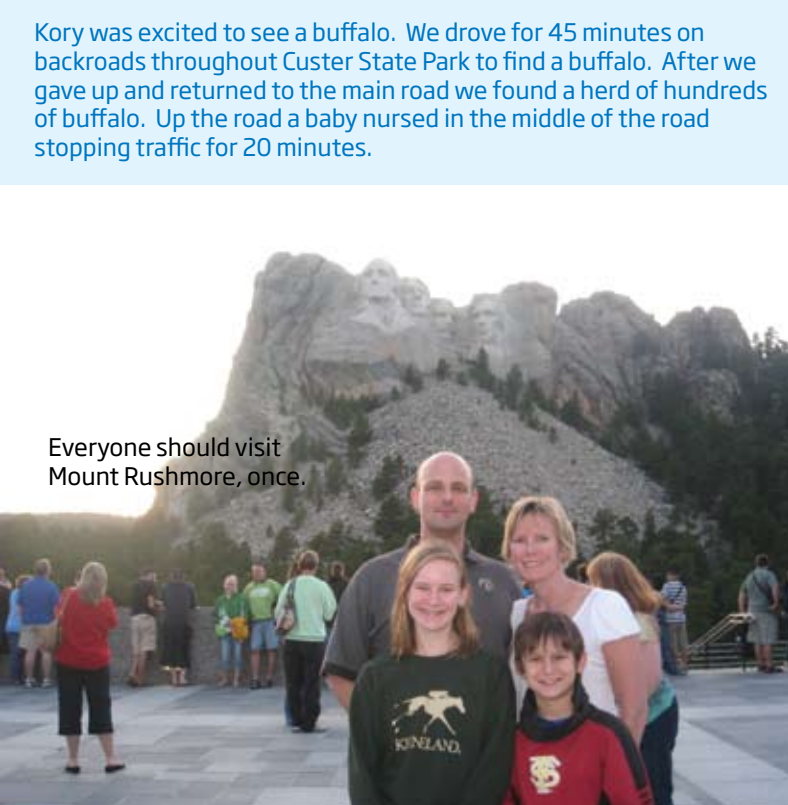
This map gives you an idea of the 2900 miles we drove this July during our first ever 2-week vacation. We started by flying to "A" Denver, Co. Then we visited "B" Mt. Rushmore and Custer State Park. "C" was our visit to the Badlands National Park and an overnight in Deadwood, SD "D." We made a quick visit to Devil's Tower "E" in Wyoming as we headed to Cody "F" for the nightly rodeo. We spent several days at Yellowstone National Park "G" while staying in West Yellowstone "H." We went to Jackson, WY "I" for a float trip before heading to Ouray, CO "J" to visit Kory's brother who co-owned a restaurant in the small town. Then, we headed back to Denver, CO "K" for a Colorado Rockies game and our flight home.



Kory was excited to see a buffalo. We drove for 45 minutes on backroads throughout Custer State Park to find a buffalo. After we gave up and returned to the main road we found a herd of hundreds of buffalo. Up the road a baby nursed in the middle of the road stopping traffic for 20 minutes.

As part of her Broadway Bound performing group at Young Actors Theatre, Samantha performed on stage at Walt Disney World this March. While performing was fun, Samantha primarily enjoyed visiting the park with her friends. Samantha turned 14 years old this year and entered her final year of middle school, the 8th grade at Trinity Catholic School. She's already making plans to be out of Middle School and driving to high school. Samantha has straight A's this year and spends a lot of time at Young Actor's Theatre where she takes dance and acting classes. Plus, she takes voice lessons. All told, it adds up to over 8 hours a week of after school activities.

Robert William is doing well in 5th grade. At 10 years old he's asking how he can start his own business or get a job. He made honor roll and still found time for his afterschool activities. Robert enjoys twice weekly



Everyone should visit Mount Rushmore, once.



For days Samantha talked about finding a jackalope, a cross between and jack rabbit and an antelope. Then in Wall, South Dakota, outside of the Badlands National Park we found a big fiberglass one. Samantha felt vindicated as this was "proof" that jackalopes are real.

gymnastics classes as they help him keep his “abs.” Robert auditioned and was accepted for company at Young Actor’s Theatre this year. While there is a bit of a introduction in the first year he’ll still get to perform. Then next year he’ll get to try out for more shows.

Kory has taken on two full time jobs, neither of them paid. She’s the President of the Trinity Catholic School Home and School Association. This means she has to listen to a bunch of complaints without any authority to change anything. Her second job is chair of the backstage committee at Young Actor’s Theatre. This means she has to go to all the dress rehearsals, create a schedule of volunteers and field various complaints from parents, kids and staff. Again, without any authority to make any changes.

For me, I’m working hard at doing less. Over the last 5 years I’ve added a lot of activities in my businesses, hosting a radio show, publishing magazines, taking on new clients and marketing new services. In 2009, I focused on doing fewer things with more effectiveness. Also, I focused on doing only the things that made money. While it sounds simple enough on paper all of these



This will take your breath away. Although Kory had plenty of breath as she kept telling us to get away from the edge.



We visited Ouray Colorado to see Kory’s brothers Andrew and Peter. Andrew was co-owner of a restaurant with Peter helping him in the business.



Robert William demonstrates what they do to shoplifters in the gift store at the Devil’s Tower National Monument.



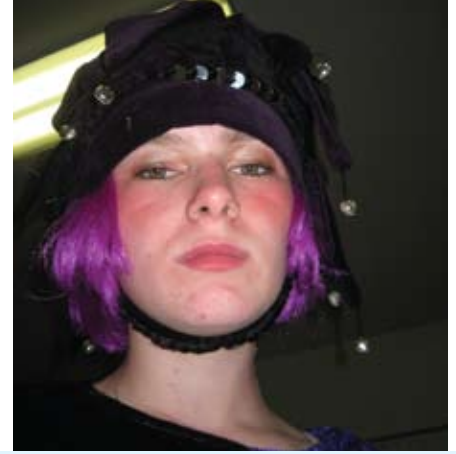
Before heading to Yellowstone we stopped at the Buffalo Bill Dam just outside Cody WY. As Robert William stated, we used the dam bathroom, visited the dam giftshop and posed for a dam photo.



Here are Samantha and Robert posing for Halloween. Robert dressed as a tacky tourist, although that's how I normally dress. Samantha was a pirate, that is if a pirate wore designer clothing.



Robert joined Young Actors Theatre's Kid's Company and gave a pre-show performance. Here he is as a member of the royal court.



While Samantha wouldn't mind purple hair, this was actually for a performance. Samantha earned the role of a court performer for the Young Actor's Theatre production of Once Upon a Mattress.



Robert learned how to roller blade this year with skates he asked his mom to buy for \$9.00 at Goodwill. Note: No poles were damaged in the taking of this photograph.



While it's silly to tell you about our daughter's braces, Robert has enjoyed policing her on what she should and shouldn't eat. We did not tell the orthodontist about the 12 scoop ice cream sundae.



You read all about Kory coming home from the beach in 2008 with 3 kittens. Today they are big lazy cats that sleep about 20 hours a day. Fiyero is the male at the top, Glinda is the girl with the pink nose and Elphaba is the second girl with the brown nose.

decisions involve commitments, people and hours invested that have to be eliminated (with the projects canceled.) But, I focused on working efficiently in 2009 rather than working so many hours.

Kory and I got away without the kids almost every quarter. One of those trips was a hectic trip to New York City where we went to 6 shows over 4 days. We visited our friends Bill and Cindy Talbert in Miami in October to go to the IndyCar Miami 300 race. This quarter we took our trip at home, rather than going on a trip.

Most predict that 2010 will bring better financial times. We hope the best of times for you. May 2010 be your best year ever. Please feel free to email us at Kory@Skrob.com.



As we end this decade I thought it would be good to take a quick look back to where we started. Here is a snapshot of Samantha and Robert at the end of 1999. It's been a blessing to watch them grow up.

 Kory-

 Samantha

 Robert