

Merry Christmas

Robert & Monika Marks

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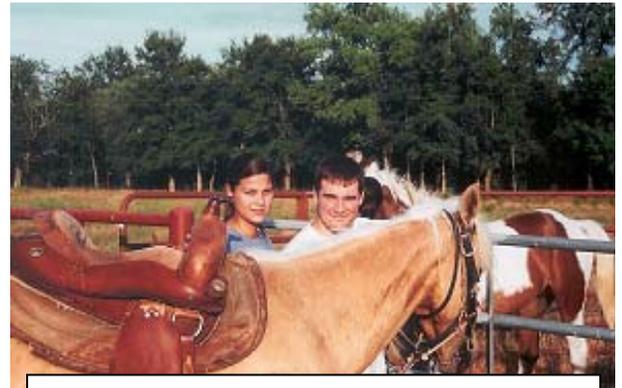
2006 has been a challenging and growth filled year for all of the Marks family. I, Monika, spent most of the year in Massage Therapy School and then most of the summer taking state tests and earning my license. My desire to help Joshua recover from his broken neck and help with his injured back motivated me to go back to school at McLennan Community College. I



Monika rubs Marilee the right way in her and Joy's office at the Super Slow Zone.

found out that I love helping people relax and improve their health through massage. During school I got to practice on my family and friends. Leslie and Marilee really like getting a massage and were very helpful for my training. Of course, Bob likes it too, and I can help him with his muscles as he has computer syndrome muscle spasms. So now after a massage, he can even work longer hours. It is hard to imagine that he could even work more hours, but he has managed to do it for Baylor.

While in massage therapy school, I met Joy, who has become a very special Christian friend and business partner. We decided to go together and open our Massage Therapy Business by sharing a room inside her Super Slow Zone Strength training business. We have had a lot of fun decorating our massage spa room with a Mediterranean theme. The tri-colored sponged ceiling turned out rather amazing. I work part time as my hands can only handle about 3 /day as most of my massages are e1 ½ to 2 hours long. I am also giving massages in my cottage at River Ranch. Marilee and Josh both got one today on my day off - Sunday.



Leslie and Jeremiah with the new horses at River Ranch.

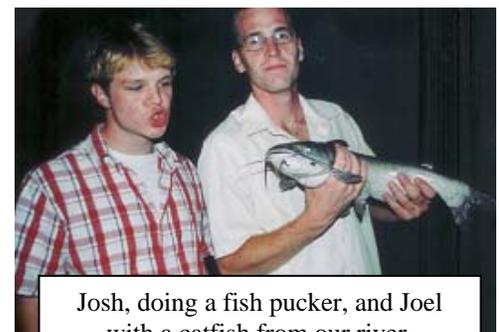


Marilee & boyfriend Michael at River Ranch.

Another aspect of my friendship with Joy is that I get to help mentor Joy's two daughters, Carrie and Christi. Carrie has been pasturing her horses at our ranch and you' all know how much I have been wanting horses. It has been fun to help feed and water them and some of us have gone horse back riding. I have enjoyed seeing Carrie learn to become more skilled in her horse jumping and dancing skills, all on bareback. Christi has been getting basic stamping lessons and making some cards with me. I am continuing my stamping and scrap booking hobby. This year I really do hope to work on Jeremiah and Leslie's Wedding Album. I finally have found

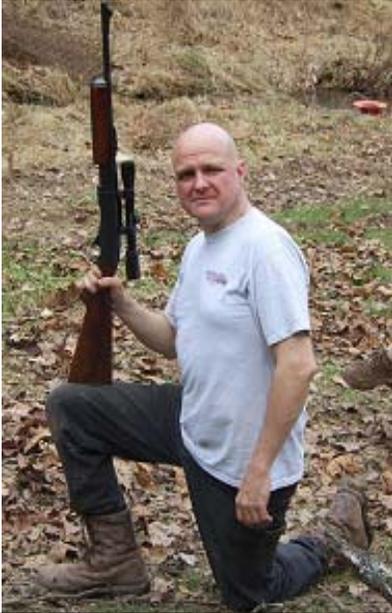


Monika explores our dry River Rock bottom at River Ranch.



Josh, doing a fish pucker, and Joel with a catfish from our river.

some friends to scrapbook with in Texas, but I really miss my scrap booking friends in Seattle and when I visited them we still had fun working on projects together.



The WV experience includes recreational firearms and target shooting with Ray.

We continue to enjoy River Ranch. We are told the Middle Bosque River in our back yard also runs through President George W. Bush's ranch which is about 15 miles away. There was a drought this summer and the river dried. We are told this happens every twenty years or so.

Bob is still loving being a professor at Baylor, especially with all three of our children going there. Jeremiah has had a great year as he wins a lot of contests. He participated in a competition called X-Tax sponsored by Price Waterhouse and was a finalist in January in competition held in Washington, DC. Leslie got to go with him. He also has done some extra presentations to graduate students with his ethics protect. Leslie just started her Masters degree in voice this fall at the University of North Texas, in Denton. So this fall Jeremiah came to Waco on Monday

morning and left after school on Wednesday to be with Leslie. Last year, Jeremiah & Leslie enjoyed staying in our cottage at River Ranch. It was a very memorable year with highlights being canoeing in the river and enjoying the country life. However, all country life was not ideal as Leslie found out, while swimming in the river. A large 5 foot snake came charging

towards her. When she screamed, Jeremiah and Joel ran for the shot gun and shot off the snakes head.

Without the head of the snake we could not tell for sure if it was poisonous. For a while after that Leslie preferred horse shoes and resting in the hammock to swimming.

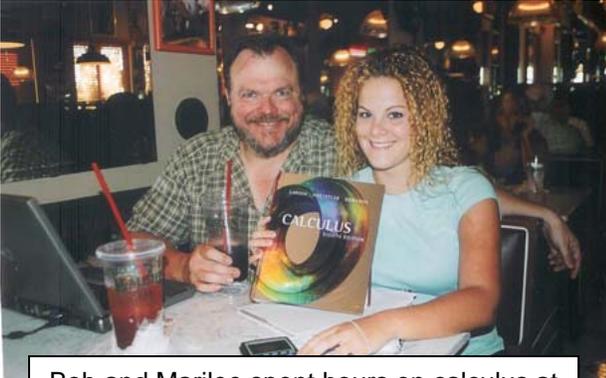
Jeremiah and Joel did not appreciate my opera singing rooster and made him bite the dust.



Jeremiah, Joshua and Uncle Ray in West Virginia with Ray & Bob's four wheeler. Four wheeling around the West Virginia hills is a wonderfully unforgettable experience.

Jeremiah, Joel and Josh really liked to play paint ball wars with our neighbors. Many nights have been spent playing Rook and Texas Hold `Em as well as watching movies with Bob's big new screen. Jeremiah worked part time at the Outback Restaurant and Leslie worked part time for a while at Bank of America. Leslie spent a lot of time practicing her singing and getting into graduate school. We will really miss them as we enjoyed having them here this year.

Joshua loves being at Baylor!!! He has started out in business. Josh really likes investing and he and Grandpa Charlie love to go to breakfast and talk about great stock picks and investment strategy. He loves to meet with Jeremiah, Joel, Bob and sometimes Marilee to eat at Penland cafeteria at Baylor for breakfast. Next semester he may move on Campus to meet more



Bob and Marilee spent hours on calculus at McAlister's, a local deli in Waco famous for their ice tea. Bob likes it because they have free wireless and bottomless refills.



Marilee & Jeremiah study at River Ranch. In the background, Leslie fishes.



Joshua and David Rouse in WV

people, but this year he has enjoyed being on River Ranch. This summer he flew back to Seattle twice to spend time with his friends. It was great to party with them as last year in the neck brace was a little boring. Josh is continuing to get stronger and enjoys working out on campus at the SLC gym. Joshua really enjoyed having a class at Baylor with Marilee. They have a friendly competition and sometimes study together.



In West Virginia, Joel makes small pieces of wood for the fire.

Marilee is a sophomore at Baylor and, under the influence of her brothers, has started to major in business too. Jeremiah helps them to pick the best professors and they all help each other study. Many times they meet in Bob's newly decorated office with his new large green leather couch and new furniture. (This was my spring project.) Bob has been tutoring Marilee and this summer it was a



Monika, David, Joel and Josh chilling in West Virginia.



High winds – probably a tornado - took the roof off of our barn at River Ranch. No one got hurt.

long stretch of pre-calc and calculus. Bob is so proud of Marilee as she has not been a calculus kind of gal, but she worked so hard all summer and did very well with her own special tutor. (Dad) Her only week off all summer was spent flying back to Seattle to see Tami, Christina and Tashley. Now Tashley is coming in January to start at Baylor. She loved it here, after visiting with us when we were moving into River Ranch. Tashley had

come with Monika and Marilee on the long Road Trip all across the country the summer before. Tashley visited us last Christmas too. We are really excited to have her come to Baylor.



Bob & Monika in Chengdu.

One of the big surprises this year was that Marilee actually took intermediate ballet at Baylor and loved it! She did not love the tests but she loved the dancing. Last month she became certified as a Palates and Yoga instructor and hopes to get paid to teach classes at Baylor at the slick. Marilee quit her job at Hallmark in the spring and chose to work at the Texas Roadhouse Steak Restaurant to try to earn more dollars per hour. This fall, Marilee moved into her first apartment with some friends into a lovely place right on Campus near the business school. She even painted her own bedroom. I love meeting her for lunch and she especially likes coming to my massage office for a massage and next door to the Hair Studio for manicure and pedicures. When she isn't dating or



Monika on the Mount Rainer hike with Ginene.



Jeremiah, Leslie and Joshua with Sweetie and her puppies.

working, she actually manages to come home quite often.

For spring break we loaded up Bob, Monika, Josh, Marilee, Jeremiah and Leslie, Grandpa Charlie, and Joel as well as Marilee's boyfriend Michael and drove straight to the farm in West Virginia we own with Bob's Uncle Gene and Aunt Eula. It was like stepping back in time as it felt like summer in Waco and winter in the mountains of West Virginia. Michael loved driving the curvy winding country roads. Uncle Ray and Josh's good friend David Rouse met us there. David is in the military and is between tours of duty in Iraq. He kept us spellbound with war stories, including his foot chase and capture of wanted Iraqi. We loved building giant bonfires and riding the four wheeler all over the muddy trails. We got stuck in the rut a few times as the spring rains had brought a lot of erosion. Grandpa Charlie really enjoyed meeting Bob's Aunt Betty and discussing politics as they are both strong Republicans. This was his first time to see the farm and he also enjoyed reading a book by the fire in the cozy cabin. Marilee made Michael his favorite dessert, cheesecake, for his birthday celebration. Ringo, our dachshund, was really the awesome dog on the



Bob giving a talk at the conference in Chengdu.

sometimes riding on the four wheeler. Bob got everyone laughing while playing the guitar and having Josh help him compose some interesting lyrics. I particularly enjoyed Joel as we went exploring with the four wheeler on all of the mountain top trails and we got to see some amazing views since the leaves were still gone and you could really see the lay of the land with the valleys and mountains. Jeremiah and Uncle Ray especially liked target shooting. All of the guys stayed up so late playing card games. Bob's Uncle Junior and Aunt Justine visited us. They are incredible people and we are blessed to be related to them.

While the others stayed at the cabins, Bob and I drove to Ohio to see Bob's Uncle Gene and Aunt Eula and had a wonderful overnight visit. They are an awesome couple. We jabbered continuously during our visit. On the way home we were able to stop and see Aunt Justine and Uncle Junior at their home in Charleston and enjoy dinner and see some of Bob's favorite cousins. We were heartbroken that our time was so very short and we could not visit everyone in the family.

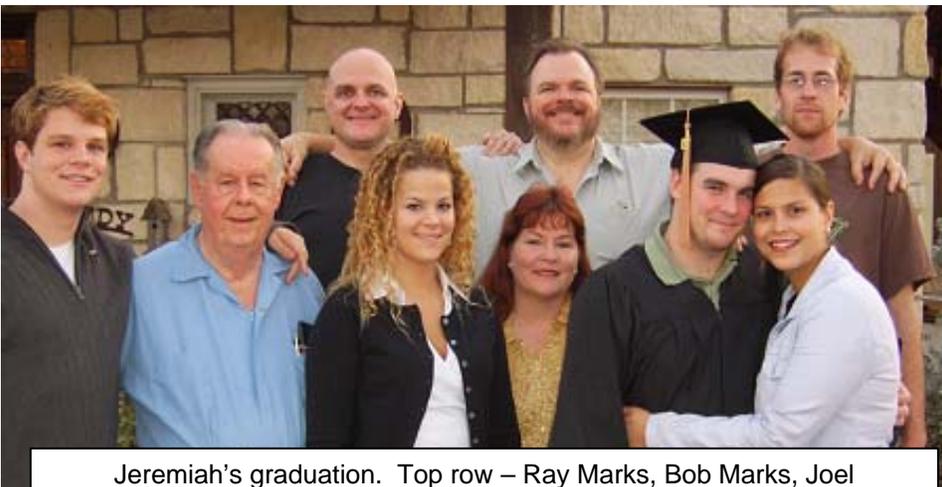
Bob is excited to be working with Bill Dembski on some projects. Bill is one of the most visible people in intelligent design, and debates scientific materialists all over the world. In April on Easter day, Bob and I drove to Perry, Idaho and Bob gave a paper on Intelligent Design



Arch Bonnema, Monika and Bob holding pieces of Noah's Ark (!?!).

at a conference. We met some other very famous I.D. people. I loved staying at one of the most interesting and unique hotels that we have ever stayed at. Each room was uniquely decorated for a certain person or peoples who were important to the area. It was wonderful to get away with Bob for a few days as life was getting stressed as Bob had been working non stop for several months. He is about to publish a Graduate Engineering Text book which he is trying to trim down since it is over 800 pages.

In May we were also hit with over 100 mile Tornado winds on our Ranch. The lightening bolts were amazing to watch. We were protected in our storm cellar. When the storm was calming down, I thought the guys were kidding when they said that the barn roof had blown off and flew across the river. We had a lot of damage and loss to the barn items. Many large trees were taken out. Luckily, we were all safe. On the positive side, I had needed some motivation to clean out the barn anyway.



Jeremiah's graduation. Top row – Ray Marks, Bob Marks, Joel Newhouse. Front row is Joshua, Charley Jewett, Marilee, Monika, Jeremiah and Leslie.

In July Bob and I went back to China. This time we went farther west into the interior to Chengdu. It's a small city of ten million. Bob was a keynote speaker at a neural network conference. We stayed in a beautiful hotel and our China experience this time was completely different than the first time. China is building, growing and becoming more modern and more prosperous.

Bob and I were able to speak about Christ to some Christian groups while there. Christian conversions in China, we are told, are greater in sheer magnitude than in the whole history of the church.

In July we went to Vancouver, Canada, where all of the Past presidents of Bob's professional society, including Bob, were able to meet together. It was a relaxing week. Bob was able to visit with some of his Seattle friends there, including Mohamed El-Sharkawi with whom Bob has collaborated for years and Bill Combs who Bob worked with on fuzzy sets. Mike Healy, a friend of Bob's at Boeing and Tom Caudell who is now with the University of New Mexico, spent some wonderful time together. Another highlight was a visit from Brian and Leslie Ricci who drove up from Seattle to spend some time. Brian, one of Bob's heroes, is Metro director for Campus Crusade for Christ in Seattle. Brian jump started Bob's ministry to university students and faculty. We spent a wonderful evening together and lughed until our jaws hurt.

I had the most wonderful relaxing vacation in Seattle. Leslie and I both went to her Mom's special 50th Birthday Celebration. It was great to stay with several of my friends. I especially loved going to Mount Rainer and climbing up to the glacier at Paradise with my good friend Ginene. Alice and I had an awesome retreat at her cabin in Ocean Shores where we scrapbooked well into the night. I had a great time giving massages to my friends, especially Karen Higgins as she is very interested in massage training. Spending the weekend with Signe was great in spite of her difficult eye condition. We had a pleasant hike at Snoqualmie Falls. Of course I also really enjoyed seeing Lucy and painting rocks with her and seeing her dance scrapbook. It was wonderful to see Christina, Tami and Mathew and give them massages. It was hard to say good-bye.

Bob and I went to a campus training weekend in Dallas, run by Nick Repak. Nick heads Graduate Resources, the arm of Campus Crusade aimed at graduate students. Bob works with Baylor University Ministries to organize Christ based events for Baylor graduate students. A highlight was meeting millionaire Arch Bonnema who financed and went on the expedition to find Noah's Ark. I know it sounds far fetched, but you've got to read the story. [Google "Bonnema" and "Noah's Ark" if you're interested.] This sounds like the real thing. Really.

When I returned home I was greeted with 4 new dachshunds. Jeremiah did a great job managing the new puppies. Who said that there is no such thing as love at first sight has not seen these puppies.

Jeremiah received his Bachelor of Business Administration from Baylor University on December 16th. Leslie's Mom Anne and Anne's brother Bob flew to help us

celebrate this great accomplishment. As of today, Jeremiah is still considering getting another major in business finance. a He has also been offered a chance to go to graduate school at Baylor for an MBA. He is also interviewing for a new job. We are so very proud of him.

Have a glorious 2007 and be of good cheer. He is risen!



Marilee, Joshua and Jeremiah all went to Baylor autumn semester 2006. What a blessing!!