

WTR_CHRISTM

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The time has come to put some memories to the "0's" and "1's" of this massive machine Mike calls a computer. If you can remember from my past attempts at Christmas letter writing I was quite immature. Now as a 3+ year old I have matured into a very elegant lady. Ohhhhh, I'm sorry. I forgot to introduce myself. I am Maggie 1st Wayfarer, the first llama born to the Wayfaring Traveler Ranch owned-



operated by BJ & Mike Carlson. It was Mike who asked me to write, from my perspective, this year's Christmas letter. I find myself a bit reluctant because I just don't seem to have much to say. I think it better if I act as a mentor to an up and coming cria llama by the name of Titcomb Basin 7th Wayfarer. He is a young prodigy, like myself, who can turn the smallest of activities into the most wondrous stories. So I introduce to you young Titcomb Basin.

Hi everyone, it's me! Titcomb! I kind-a think this is a stupid to do this, but Maggie is pushing me into this. She has me sitting at this machine and showing me which of these buttons to push. Ms. Maggie says there is something neat about the thing where it checks my spelling so you can follow along. She also says I'm supposed to tell about all the things that happen here. I can do that!

Well the MOST important thing was ME!!! Yep, without me you won't know what's going on here. My mom, Titapa Wayfarer, said I was born on a Monday.

Yes, Titcomb. You were born on a day the humans rejoice for the relief from using so much of their math abilities. Mike says this only occurs every year, at this time, in the United States. He calls it the "Ides of April". So, Titcomb, each year you will celebrate your birthday on April 15th with all sorts of llama treats.

Does that mean I get to celebrate now because I didn't know about this before? Can I get a bunch of stuff right now?!

No, Titcomb. You will have to wait until next year. Would you please get back to telling all these folks about what's been happening at the ranch?

OOOOOk. But can I have some corn and llama feed? Huh?

Huh? Huh?

That, you'll have to take up with Mike or BJ. Now on with it young cria!

Yuk, older llamas sure are pushy. In my short time as a Llamaaaaaa I've found you should never trust anyone of them over the age of 3. They all have different things going on other than us crias. Welllllllll, lets see.

Hey! Have you seen the ranch's most famous mouse catcher?

Kalico is her name. She's kind-a neat. She comes out to the corral where we come in to eat and sleep. I think she must own the ranch because she walks all over the place. She has come up to me and we've touched noses. The other cats, Misha and Searcher, don't do that. Anyway, I found out, from my mom, that Kallie didn't feel too well in the month that is real cold. Mom says that it's



called January. She didn't come out to the corral for her daily visits. Mike told me she was pretty sick. Something called a Vet said she was veeery sick with diabetes. I guess that's pretty bad stuff that would require daily shots for the rest of her life. Maggie told me all about the shot thing. BJ said that it would be unfair to Kallie so she mixed a bunch of different things together like goats milk and other things called herbs. Kallie didn't want to have any of it. So it was up to Mike to force it down Kallie's mouth. I kind-a had that same thing happen to me when I was born and it's no fun so I

kind-a know what Kallie was going through. But hey!, she got better and that's why we can touch noses.

Another thing that happened was Mike took the plane he owns to a place called Mississippi in February. Feeewww! Did I spell that "M" word right Maggie?

Yes Titcomb, you are doing a very good job. See how all that practice I've had you do is paying off?

If you can keep a secret I don't like all that practice stuff. I like to run and jump with my other llama buddies. Anyway, Mike has taken me to the plane and it'ssssss bigggggg! He tried putting me inside but I put out all my four legs as wide as I could so I wouldn't go through that hole opening in the side. Mike said his trip down to that place was kind-of-fun. He and a friend, Jim Henderson, would fly during the day and sleep out at the different airport places at night. He flew into some bad weather and had to spend an extra day getting to that "M" place. While both of them were down there they learned how to work with draft horses. Mike said he needed to brush-up on how he was going to work with Thunder & Lightning. Maggie told me that she introduced you to them in the past Christmas letters along with that goofy Cheyanne. I guess he learned a lot because 2 weeks after I was born I saw him trying to put these black things called harnesses over T & L. I don't think they liked it much. Anyway, while Mike tried coming home he ran into more bad weather. Thunderstorms kept them from getting all the way the 1st day. The 2nd day he had strong head winds. The next day I guess it got real cold, near 0°F. Mike said he had to plug the plane in to warm it up before they got going again. I guess this 3rd day was slow again because of the head winds. They got to a place called Guernsey, WY, and slept in the hanger of the airport. The next morning they woke up to a lot of snow. Luckily, Jim is a retired military type person and was able to get them into the military base and stay warm there, because it was another 2 days before they could take-off to get home. Sounds like some kind of neat adventure.

All my uncles say I'll have a whole lot of adventures as I get older. Like Zasu and Esparado went with Mike to Los Angeles, CA, the week after I was born. They said it took them 2 days of driving in the van to get there. And, just south of Salt Lake City, they stopped and camped out for the night. By the next morning Zasu said it had snowed on them about 8 inches. By the next night they camped just east of L.A., in the desert, and it was kind-a warm at night. When they got there Esparado said there were other llamas that they had to compete with. For two days they trekked up and down and did all things they were supposed to do. Zasu said Esparado was the best of all the llamas there. Mike couldn't find any human to go with him so he arranged it so that someone from the L.A. area would take Esparado out on his 2 days of qualifications. Esparado said that two different people took him out, and they had never handled llamas before. Esparado didn't think it was so big of a deal; he just followed them wherever they went. Mike said that both Zasu & Esparado had the lowest of resting heartbeats of all the llamas AND humans. I guess they did real good because they are now the only llamas in Wyoming having a national PLTA (Pack Llama Trails Association) rating of Advanced and Master Packer awards. Great going **ZASU & ESPARADO!!**



Sometime around Mike's birthday he and BJ left for a week and took Radar and Bola with them. They went to a state called Idaho for some more llama pack trials. I guess that Radar & Bola did OK. They now have to find three other trials to go for their Master Packer rating. I asked BJ if I could go along next year. She said that if I'm a good little cria Santa may take me to a Pack Trial. Santa! Who's Santa?! I want you and Mike to take me. These humans are weird.

Mike had some customers come and take Groucho and Harpo out on a trek to the Big Horn Mts. Their name was Swidler. They had a son that was 6 yrs old who went with them on a 5-day outing. Groucho said this young boy, Griffith, was brave enough to lead them down the trail. Harpo thought Griffy was pretty good at hiking down the trail. The Swidler's said they had a great trip and Harpo & Groucho did a good job. I can't wait to pack!, but Mike says I can go out with the big llama guys next year. I get to wear all the pack gear stuff, how neat!

Now Titcomb. I think you'll be a bit too small to do that stuff next year. Maybe the next year would be more appropriate.

Ahhhh, Maggie! Mike said I could!

Mike will most likely let you go out with them on training runs without the pack so you can become accustomed to walking in a string and see if you can keep up.

But Maggie, I know I can keep up. I know I can do it!

Did you see Turret, Tenacious, Seneca or even Sensay-Su go out with full packs this past summer? They were the age of what you'll be next summer.

No, but Mike said I was his favorite llama, and have a great future ahead of me packing!

Well, young man, just to let you know Mike says I have been his favorite llama since I was born. I don't think a young cria like you can take over that most prized position in the herd.



Hey now! The two of you can stop right there! Maggie, that is not appropriate behavior for an adult llama, you should know better! You, of all llamas, should know better after last year when Turret, Tenacious, Seneca, and Sensay-Su were born. You even wrote about it in last years Christmas letter. This sounds like what I hear from freshman students when I substitute at the High Schools. You are llamas and I expect you to be better than human freshman.

See, Maggie. Ha! Ha! Ha!

Now, Titcomb. You are a good cria llama, and BJ & I both enjoy you but no more than any of the other llamas. Speaking of other llamas, why don't you tell everyone about your new buddies.

Yeh!!!! I kind-a got a new bother to play with. There's this llama called Mandarin Chocolate who had a baby cria. Mike & BJ named him Granite Peak 8th Wayfarer. His dad is Zasu. That's him standing next to BJ when he was just a few days old. Compared to me he is kind-a tall and skinny. He was born June 16th. Now he's my height and I'm two months older. He and I get along real good. Our moms and the other llamas are always getting after us for being so crazy. We run and jump around and bug Seneca and Sensay-Su. I found out that our moms told them that it was their job to look after us. They are kind-a neat. They play games with us.

Then, later I got a sister. Her name is *Torrey Creek 9th Wayfarer*. Her mom is Dark Rain; that's Seneca's mom too. Her dad is Zasu. She sure looks like me only she has her right leg white while I have my left leg white. I guess Mike got a little confused when he saw Torrey. He thought she was me only



smaller. I thought it was a great day when she was born, but Mike said it was kind-of a sad day. He said that a lot of humans died a year-a-go in New York on this day. I guess some goofy humans flew planes into some big towers that had these people in it. I told Torrey about this and she is sorry that it happened.

We got some newcomers to the summer. Zipper is kind of a big guy who guys in the NE pasture. Then there are Shasta and her daughter Marble. Shasta and Marble stay with us. They are kind-a off by their selves, but are being accepted by the rest of us. Heck! I don't care. The only time they get mad at me is when I try to get some hay or corn in their area.



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There were some things called parades that a lot of the ranch llamas went to this past summer. I guess the guys that were born last year got to go to a bunch of them. Mike said he wanted to take me out to the Meeteetse Parade, but BJ said I wasn't quite old enough and still had to be with Titapa



my mom. I think she was wrong, but BJ promised me that next summer I can go to every one. There was this guy named Jordan that came out and helped BJ & Mike at the parades. He and a friend would lead a string of us down the street. I guess Breeze Boy, he's a white llama that is about the same age as Seneca, saw his former human owner at the parade, but didn't recognize her right away.

I guess there are a bunch more things I could tell ya, but Maggie is kind-a clearing her throat. I guess I'll have to take the hint.

Titcomb I was not hinting anything to you. I just think you should wish everyone a safe Christmas and look forward to a unique New Year.

That's OK, Maggie. Mike says I can save up all my stories for next year's letter. I haven't experienced this Christmas thing yet, but maybe that Santa guy might come and bring some cool things. Neat! Until next year, unless you come and visit us, I'm done writing.



From us guys at the Wayfaring Traveler Ranch

From us, the Llamas:

(Me) Titcomb	Maggie	Mandarin Chocolate	Tymico	Jenny	Tenacious
Dark Rain	Seneca	Katarina Spit	Turret	Nichaja	Titapa (my Mom)
Zasu	Mt. Osborn	Bridger (my Dad)	Radar	George	Esparado
Ethan	Bola	White Knight	Coco Man	Sinara	Chico
Harpo	Groucho	Black Knight	Spunky	Magnus	Howard K
Sensay-Su	Zipper	Torrey Creek	Shasta	Marble	
Breeze Boy	Lilly	Granite Peak			

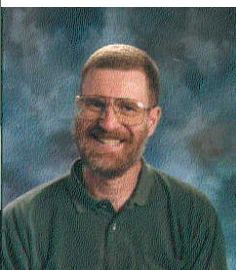
From the **BIG** Birds: Gertrude and Heathcliff

From the barking Hippos: Meiko and Koncho

From the mouse catchers that lay around all day: Kalico, Misha, and Searcher

From the BIG duo: Thunder and Lightning. And, the goofy Cheyanne

Ohhhhhh yyyyyah, can't forget those two human beings that keep us in llama feed: Mike and BJ



P. S. From BJ and I, may you all have a happy and joyous Christmas & New Year. Well, do we have some pretty smart llamas? Don't you wish you could have smart llamas like ours? Visit our website www.tctwest.net/~wtr and you can see much more of the insanity at the Wayfaring Traveler Ranch. Bye!

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