



2006 - NOT TOO BAD A YEAR FOR WTR

It's that time of year again and Mike has been on my case to put my thoughts down on the computer. Have I forgotten my manners? I'm Titcomb Basin 7th Wayfarer. I'm the best-est ever llama editor Wayfaring Traveler Ranch has ever-ever had. I've been doing this Christmas Letter thing for 4 years now. Soooooo I'm Gooooood! Just ask BJ or Mike Carlson, my human owners, I'm sure that they would agree.

We've lost a pretty good llama on the ranch this year,

Harpo Wayfarer. Harpo was out in the pasture with my dad, Bridger. My dad said he saw Harpo lie down and stretch out prone. A little bit later I heard BJ & Mike whistling for him to get up. Harpo will usually get up if something startles him, but this time there was no reaction. Then I saw Mike out next to Harpo trying to lift his head. Now, if you knew Harpo, you know that he would not let Mike get that close to him. So I knew something was go-in wrong. The next thing I saw was Mike out lifting Harpo up with the tractor. We all ran to where Mike came through the gate. Harpo had a different smell, and nuzzling him had no reaction. Then my mom, Titapa, put her neck around mine and I could tell she was crying.

I tell ya, Mike must not have liked us this past summer because he was gone a lot. Both he and BJ were gone the last week in June to some Civil Air Patrol Encampment in Guernsey, WY. I guess they helped supervise the cadets that attended. BJ was what they call a TACO (Tactical Officer). She would always follow a flight of cadets around making sure they were being good or helping out if the cadets were feeling bad. Mike, I guess, had it easy. He did something called Transportation & Logistics Officer. I guess he was like that "Radar" guy on the M.A.S.H. TV series that Mike & BJ let me see when I'm in the house. They even got to fly in a "Black Hawk" helicopter and a C-130 plane while they were there. Now, for me, Mike has tried to get me in his Cessna plane and I'm not buying it. Those machines scare me.

BJ & Mike came back for a few days and there was a bunch of activity. They had all the packs out and got a bunch of us fitted with the packs. They were stuffing all our wool they cut from us last year in the packs so they would look full. But our wool is a lot lighter than having to do normal packing stuff. Then on the 3rd of July BJ & Mike started loading us into the llama trailer. There were eight llamas in the trailer when Mike wanted me to get in. But you've got to be kidding me! All those bodies in there and you want me to jump in and get squished, I don't think so!! Mike said I was being stubborn. I didn't think so. How would you like to be in a small confined space with a lot of bodies pressing up against you? Then Mike pulled a fast on me. He unloaded 4 or 5 llamas. Then he said for me to jump in now. Hey, no problem, there's a lot of room now! Oops, I made a mistake. Mike had the others jump back in and did it get crowded! Then, the last to jump in was Zasu. If you were a llama you would not want to mess-a-round with him. And, of course, he does anything Mike asks. Zasu jumps in and starts pushing us up so Mike can shut the



door. I yelled at the other llamas to make room but I'm the youngest one and they all told me to "shut-up". It was not comfortable on our way to Cody for the "Stampede Parade" that we were to be in. When we stopped I looked to the front of the trailer and saw there was enough room for another llama, boy was I mad then. When BJ & Mike took us off the trailer and started to put our packs on, I was a bit more then PO'ed and spit at him. In my absence of thinking I should not have done that because Mike can get more madder than Zasu. He hauled me off to the back of the trailer and started loading me in. I was saying, "Oh please, please, please can I be in the parade!! I'll be a gooder llama. Mike was persistent about me getting and staying in the trailer, but he kind-a softened up and let me go with the other llamas. Cause last year I didn't go with them cause I was a bad llama and had to sit in the



trailer for "time-out", and then I wasn't picked to go on July 4th and I want to be in this parade. So Mike hooked me up in a string with the other llamas. BJ had 5 of us and Mike had 5. We were all walking around just to do something before the parade started and the next thing I knew was Mike was coming back to unhook me from the other llamas in our string. I'm starting to cry, figuring he was going to take me back to the trailer and leave me there, but Mike calmed me down and said it wasn't me but Mt. Osborn who was not cooperating. He hooked me

in with the rest of the guys and took Mt Osborn back to the trailer and left him there. From then on I made sure that I didn't mess-up my chances to stay in the parade. Turns out we got 2nd place for the "stock" portion of the parade which got us \$200 to spend. Is that a lot???

The day after the 4th of July Parade Mike took off and we didn't see him for 1-1/2 months, so I'll let him tell you what happened to him during that time.

Thanks Titcomb! Well folks, I'll try to keep a looooooong story short. I took off in N5545R early in the morning and flew down towards Montgomery AB, a 2 day trip, to attend a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) College. Low and high clouds prevented me from my 1st destination of Guernsey in the SE corner of WY. Instead I had to land in Casper WY, gas up, and wait for the clouds to burn off. They didn't really burn off on the low side so I had to put some distance between myself and the ground and there were a bunch of clouds in between; something BJ never likes when she flies with me. Made it to Ballie, AR where I wanted to be



but just a few hours behind my schedule. The next day was hazy. Got up to 5500 ft and cruised along. Thought I'd make it to Montgomery. Some low & high clouds obstructed my way along with a thunderstorm making my Storm Scope go wild. Got within 1 hr of Montgomery and decided it wasn't worth it. On the third day I get to Montgomery. For the next ten days I wore many hats (i.e. Transportation Officer, Public Affairs Officer, Admin Officer, and any other things that needed to be done). This was the same school I went to in October of 2005 as a student, but now I'm on staff. At the end I'm the last one around. I scrounge a ride from the security force at Maxwell Air Force Base to my plane. It takes me 8 hours of flying, dodging billowing cloud formations, and arrive at Oshkosh WI a week before the EAA Fly-in. This is another CAP event. I got to be a TACO of a great bunch of young adults (12) that ranged in age from 17 - 21. We spent our time marshalling aircraft to and from their parking areas. Went out searching for Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELT's), Guarded the War Bird parking area and Ultra-light air field, and one group got to provide security for that "Indiana Jones" actor guy. Our days were 12 or more hrs long, but we still had time to visit the event and see the sights of Oshkosh. Food wasn't the best and I came down with a bout of Gout. As you can see from the picture we all get to wear a beret, which is an honor in CAP. With EAA over I tried to fly

over to my sister's place near Red Wing MN. A series of storms between me and there kept me grounded for a couple of days. Spent a few days with her and got to see a bunch of my nephews and nieces. While there I was able to attend a meeting of my old CAP unit in Red Wing when I was but a wee lad of 17. From there I flew up to the NW corner of ND and visited my cousins. They put me to work piloting a combine with a 36-foot header just-a-cut'n the heck out of the Spring Wheat crop. I was always in touch with BJ each night, but she finally had enough and I was told to get my butt home. It seems that I had to get back in time to transport a bunch of her cadets to a Ground Team Training Seminar



over in Gillette, WY for the weekend. So for a month-and-a-half I've **CAP**'ed my life away, and have been told to keep my butt on the ranch for a while. Needless to say, since my absence BJ has managed to create a huge "Honey Do List" which I'm now just seeing the light of day towards accomplishing.

WOW! And I thought you said you were going to keep it "short". Humans, ya just can't believe them all the time.

The garden BJ & Mike put-in this year did pretty well. Mike had Thunder & Lightning helping out also. They pulled something called a "plow" and got the dirt all turned over and helped with something called a harrow. BJ went wild this year and planted 24 tomato bushes, and there was a bunch of someth'n called winter squash which grew over, under and through the fence. I don't think that stuff tasted that good, but the horses seemed to keep it trimmed up to the fence. At least they didn't bust down the fence like they did last year, but they did make Mike real mad when they busted the fence that surrounds the house that BJ & Mike live in.

There were a few humans that visited the ranch this year and liked looking at us and tried to come up to us and pet us. But Mike informed me that we didn't make as

much money as last year so there will be less corn for us to eat as treats this next year. There were only 4 llamas that got to go out on a pack trip this year for only a few days. I tried to have the humans pick me but BJ said "No" for me to go. We did seem to have enough water this year to grow hay. There were (66) 3'x3'x8' bales that came off the field. Last year there were 91 and the year before that there were only 13. So if something goes real bad we'll have something to eat for the next year. But BJ & Mike put water on the field this summer and fall and it grew soooo good that we are now out hav'in a good time eat'n.

BJ keeps telling me she wants to retire. I asked her what that meant. She explained to me that it would be like the life Misha, the black fat cat, has on the ranch. Get to lay around all day and let Mike do all the work. Now I haven't said anything to Mike about this, I wonder what he'd say about what BJ said?

Hey Titcomb, it's my turn now. I think you took some liberty in what I said about retirement, so watch your words. I do not have plans to just "lay" around but would really like to be able to have more time for volunteer work. Right now Civil Air Patrol takes most of my free time and there is a lot more I could do with just more time. Besides, even though I really like working with my students, it seems that each year gets more stressful with the paperwork, testing and meetings. It is not as fun as it used to be and I would really like to try something else. The Wyoming Legislature gave all the teachers a very generous pay raise in order to get the standards up to a competitive level with the nation. The unfortunate part of that pay raise is that the retirement system here takes the last three years of employment as a basis for the retirement amount. That means another two years of working at least. Guess I can get through that.

Although it seems as if I might be complaining (a little, I guess), both Mike and I have a lot to be thankful for. We are healthy and almost have the ranch paid for. We will probably have a mortgage burning party in the spring, around April or May. Then we won't have that monthly payment looming over us. If the stock market stays stable then retirement may be in the future. I am also looking at starting a business with Melaleuca to supplement my income. This company is based in Salt Lake City and has the most awesome toxic free products that are reasonably priced. When I get a chance to have some breathing room from work I hope to approach people to see if they would like to add wellness products to their life.



Now it's my turn again (Titcomb). From us guys (llamas) at the Wayfaring Traveler Llama Ranch

(Me) Titcomb	Maggie Tymico	Jenny	Tenacious	Mandarin Chocolate	
Dark Rain	Seneca	Turret	Nichaja	Stroud Peak	Titapa (my Mom)
Zasu	Mt. Osborn	Sinara	Radar	Esparado	Klondike
Ethan	White Knight	Bola	Coco Man	Bridger (my Dad)	Zorac
Groucho	Black Knight	Spunky	Magnus	Howard K	
Zipper Torrey	Creek Shasta	Chinar Wing	Breeze Boy		
Sir Rado	Lilly of the Valley		Granite Peak	Sensay-Su	

From the barking Hippos: Meiko and Koncho

From the ranch manager **Kalico** and the ones that lay around all day **Misha** and **Searcher**. Then there is **2-**



Socks, who keeps bringing dead mice up to show me, Yuk!
*From the GONZO duo: **Thunder** and **Lightning**, and **Cheyenne***
Ohhhhhh yyyyyah, From the BIG Bird: **Gertrude**
And, can't forget **Maj Mike** and **Maj BJ** who are OK even though they try to get us to do their stuff, and are sometimes MAJOR pains.

See ya guys. Have a great Holiday season and think about coming out and see us. From the BESTest editor WTR has EVER had: **Titcomb Basin 7th Wayfarer** ► Wayfaring Traveler Llama Ranch • PO Box 98, 1100 Lane 38 • Burlington, WY 82411-0098 • (ph) 307-762-3536 • E-mail: wtr@tctwest.net. Visit our website www.tctwest.net/~wtr and see more llama stuff at the ranch.