

# 2009 – A 10 Year Anniversary of the misadventures of the Wayfaring Traveler Ranch Menagerie



Why Mike keeps com'in to me to write this here Christmas Letter I'll never understand. I keep tell'en him to give Stroud Peak, Maggie, or one of the other llamas a chance.

For those that don't remember me, I'm **Titcomb Basin**, the rip-roarenest llama editor the Wayfaring Traveler Ranch has. That includes those two humans BJ & Mike.

Mike says that WTR has been in existence for 10 years as of August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999. I guess that I'll have to accept what he says as truth because I wasn't born until April of 2002. Mike says that it was a special day the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, but he never explains to me why. Anyone out there know why the 15<sup>th</sup> of April is soooooo important?

Welllllll, I guess this is where I'm suppose to tell ya what's al been happen'en around here. Let's seeee ..... Only a couple of llamas got to go out on a pack trip this year. Groucho got to go out with some returning customers, the Swidlers, and Spunky and Bola got to go out with Mike & BJ on some C.A.P. outing. Both went to the Big Horn Mtns. I think Mike & BJ intentionally forgot to bring me along. None of us got to go to the 4<sup>th</sup> of

July parade in Cody this year. I guess I'll have to blame Mike for it. He wasn't home practically all summer. And, because BJ didn't want to experience all the fun time of loading us into the trailer, putting packs on us, and walking in the parade, she just said NO!!! (I had to add a few of those !!! things because I can't repeat what she really said). I guess we llamas' will have to convince him to stick around next summer so we can go.

As I was tell'en ya Mike was gone alllll summer. Well, not totally the whole summer, but 7 weeks is good enough. He went out on a whole bunch of Civil Air Patrol stuff. I think his head swelled up because he was promoted to the rank of Lt Col in CAP, and because of that he could take off and let us fend for ourselves. Luckily enough BJ has enough fortitude (I was told to use that word) to stick around and take care of the ranch. Some how Mike finagled a trip to Singapore with CAP for late May, but because everyone got scared of this Swine Flu stuff they cancelled the trip on him. He was supposed to have been back the middle of June for a week, instead, he takes off in his plane to a Search & Rescue School in Columbus, IN, to teach for 3 weeks. He spent some time flying to Red Wing MN to see his relatives then flew over to Oshkosh, WI for that EAA stuff they have. With 3 weeks there and his time coming home dodging weather we didn't see him until the middle of August. We were wonder'in if he was ever going to get back & cut hay for us. When he does make it back he's work'in on that machine that cuts hay. Seems he was hav'in a hard time fixing it so he has a neighbor come in and do it. He was hope'in once the hay dried in the field he'd have that same neighbor come and make bales of the stuff. Well, it seems that same neighbor had as much problems as Mike did with equipment breaking down. So Mike had to go out with his small baler and got about 1/3 of the way through when another neighbor said he would come over and make the 3'x3'x8' bale we normally see here on the ranch. When BJ & Mike picked up bales off the field and stacked it in the Stack Yard they make sure we're not around, so they locked us off in the West pasture while we stood there watching them work soooooo hard. I keep tell'en Mike that I'll drive the Pick-up while he loads the trailer in the field. He just gives me a dirty look.

Sooo, with Mike not going to Singapore we still had the two of them shear us llamas. Luckily it wasn't my turn this year so I got to laugh at the guy's as they were finished, with their wool cuts look'en pretty naked. Ha, ha, ha.....

It's been 2 years since that dog Josie came onto the ranch. Now she thinks she is the toughest ranch hand there is. She is generally laying just beyond our reach in the yard over-look'in the hay field. She thinks that since she has seen a red fox in the field she has to chase it away.

We had a person from South Korea stay at the ranch during January & February. She was part of a group of teachers that came over to have some intense training in speaking English. I'm sorry but I think she was a little

weird because she never understood me. I mean .... come on folks .... don't you think I speak well? Every time I tried speaking to her she would just ignore me. Mike & BJ don't have any problems. I've noticed this in other humans that come to the ranch; that they have the same problem. For a while there I thought I was the one having the problem. Jenney wasn't use to our winters here. She stayed inside the Guest House a lot.



I've got to break-in here Titcomb; Hi there folks, *Mike here*. Thought I'd put in my 2 cents worth. It was my 40<sup>th</sup> School Reunion; everybody's looks have changed, I don't think I've change that much?..... This year I took on another volunteer job .... I've joined the Park County Search & Rescue Squad out of Cody, WY. Now I get to hump a back and don't have to get stuck with administrative stuff like with CAP. Have been out rescuing a dog that broke through thin ice to looking for folks in a snow storm here last October. Still Substitute teaching

when they call. Quit the Eleutian folks because I wasn't going to be around in the summer. Titcomb explained the basics of my summer, a missed trip to Singapore, teaching @ a SAR school, and the EAA fly-in. At the fly-in I worked with a GREAT flight of CAP cadets marshalling aircraft, providing security, and searching for that elusive missing overdue aircraft (at least we got one). I was there in 2006 with a good group of cadets but 2009 was a laid back time for me, the cadets made it a pleasure and fun time (except that one Wednesday when 2 of them ended up at



the medical unit). Took a stuffed llama with me (Herbie Llama) and some how had his picture taken and given the rank of Lt Col along with a security badge. I would threaten the cadets to leave and have Herbie take over for me. I made a mistake .... they thought that would be a great idea.



This late fall I've been at home catching up on Ranch work. In September I did get a chance to fly a new C182 CAP plane to San Antonio, TX. BJ nominated me as WY Wing Senior Member of the Year, it was approved, and I was also awarded the same for our Region (Rocky Mtn), which put me up for dibs for National CAP member of the year. Our Wing Commander asked if I wanted to go to San Antonio for the Fall Convention. He even said he'd pay my way. I didn't really care too, but after he said I could fly him there in the new plane I jumped at it.

Sentimental me .... 40 years ago (1969) was a special time for me (and I hope BJ). Yep folks, we met and became an item. It's been an interesting ride. If asked if I would do it all over again I'd say ..... YEP!! But, wait just one minute, things have been changing!!!! Gone is my Red/Auburn hair to brown, the beard from Red to white (and both hair & beard have gotten shorter), no need for glasses, and I've shrunk a 1/4". And, as you can see, BJ has matured right along with me. Notice, please, BJ's hair got longer. Yah ... babe!!



I have been planning my next summer of adventures. BJ says I can't be gone the whole summer again (ah ... shucks). So I've sent in my application into CAP for the Singapore gig again, and, that's it!!! If the WY Wing - CAP puts on another Encampment both of us will be attending that. BJ has threatened to go on some

cruise alone. Sorry ..... that isn't going to happen without me tagging along .... assuming it's to Alaska, any place else I'll stay home. But, I guess it is her turn to get away as she has been EXTREMELY understanding the last few summers ..... (wait a dog-gone minute ... I didn't put that in, BJ's the culprit!!!).



That is right – I have been. **BJ here**, for my customary comments. It has been a fairly quiet year. I am still working as a speech pathologist in a Cody elementary school. Last school year ended without much excitement but this fall I came back to a caseload of 65. I ended up with 19 new kindergarten students on my caseload, on top of the other students I already had. I only lost about 4 fifth graders to the middle school so it really upped my numbers. I spent the latter half of Sept and most of October in meetings. Paperwork – the bane of our existence. I got pretty good at it though and managed to keep my head above water. Luckily, I did not have any cancellations from parents so all of my meetings took place as planned. Now the meetings are spaced further apart so I have a breather.

I am looking forward to Christmas as I will be going to Virginia to visit my sisters and mom. Judy will come from Minnesota and we will all congregate at Sharon's. I hope for good flying weather and no complications. Last year I spent a day and night at the Denver airport due to missing my second flight. My luggage arrived a day after I finally arrived in VA. I guess that is what can happen when you fly in the winter. I haven't decided what I plan to do in the



summer when Mike has graciously agreed to tend to the ranch. I will for sure get back to VA but I will have to do some research on what else I might want to do. I went a little stir crazy this past summer and if it wasn't for a visit from friends Linda and Bruce Larsen and Ja Tanskul (our pseudo daughter) I would have been alone all summer (except for the guests at the guest house). Ja spoiled me and cooked Thai food every day, helped out with garden, other chores, and we had a great time laughing and spending time together. I even got a chance to get to the mountains for some hikes and an overnight.

I'm back again!!! (Titcomb) Mike says "... I'm like a bad habit". We had one llama pass away on us this year. **Black Knight** just wasn't moving one day. The guys and my dad were all standing around the shed in the NE pasture trying to get him up. He was a notoriety here at the ranch. He was one of the first llamas at the ranch (Black Knight, Zasu, & Zorac) and he was in a Regional paper publication. You'll have to come to the ranch and read all about him. He was also on the 1<sup>st</sup> pack trip Mike & BJ ever did.

Time to go. So..... from us llamas:

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

From our Saintly Saint Bernard: **Koncho** (who is 10 yrs old now), and that small dog **Josie**

From the fat cat – **Misha** (she's got to be 25 yrs old now) , and the lean/mean **2-Socks**.

From the **GONZO** (not so smart) duo: **Thunder and Lightening**, and that **Cheyenne And**, can't forget that **Lt Col Mike and Major BJ** who keep this menagerie together.

**Last but not least, from the BESTest editor WTR has ever... EVER had: Titcomb Basin 7th Wayfarer**

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**See ya'll guys.**