



# Ahhhh...basking in 50°F weather in December, 2012!!!

You wouldn't believe how warm it's been here. The pond had frozen over once ... with maybe ... 1-2 inches of ice. Now it's open so we can drink from it instead of drinking out of those NASTY watering tanks we have. BJ & Mike have been on my llama butt to get workin' on our Christmas letter. How am I suppose to tell what date it is if they don't hang a calendar out in the shed. You'd think humans would know better if they want somethin' done by a llama.

It's been (9) years and counting being the famed editor of this letter. Yeeep, me... Titcomb Basin 7<sup>th</sup> Wayfarer!!

Speaking of July .... (notice how I can just sweep you into a topic?)

.... We llamas didn't go to Cody AGAIN for their 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade. That's 2 years in a row now. Seems BJ doesn't want to bother with it when Mike's not around.

Had some people come to the ranch and want to take 2 of us out carrying stuff for them. Groucho (of course) and Seneca went out for 5 days into the Big Horns. I guess they did OK .... I'm not on their list of llamas to chit-chat with.

Ahhhhhhh ..... CATs!!! We llamas felt REAL BAD when Mike told us the news that **2-Socks** is no longer around. This cat was AMAZING!!! He'd go out hiking with us when Mike or BJ were training us.

We'd be hiking for 5 – 6 miles and he'd be scampering out ahead of us with Meiko (the St. Bernard that's no longer around). 2-Socks would sit in our feeder buckets and laugh at us when we were getting sheared. I got mad at him last year when I was cut and chased after him. He was small enough and fast that he got to the other side of the fence and I could hear him chuckling as he sauntered over to the garden area. He would also leave BJ & Mike mice presents at the door to their house thanking them for all they did for him.



Sooooo with no cats around the ranch for 6 months or so BJ & Mike had to go to some kind of shelter in Cody and bring two more of them to live on the ranch.

Their names are Kanga & Roo .... Get it? .....

Kangaroo??? I thought and still think BJ & Mike are a bit touched in the head. Kanga is kind-of a mishmash of colors while Roo is like a tabby cat I'm told by Mike. They seem to be the best of buddies



Hey there ... this is **Mike**. Still substitute teaching @ 4 school districts, BJ & I are still volunteer firemen for Burlington, still do Search &

Rescue for Park County, still the cheapest labor for the ranch, still handle the Search & Rescue for WY Civil Air Patrol, still work wildland fires, .... **and still** .... BJ's biggest pain-in-the-butt (this never seems to change, @ least what she says).

BJ & I keep attending the Riverton & Cody Fire Schools; training hard so a fire doesn't prevent me/us from bugging Titcomb each year.

Had a bunch of aircraft lost this year and only one save. Jackson Hole had a helicopter looking for a dead snowmobiler and ended up crashing; we were able to lead the Ground Troops into the area. Had 3 snowmobilers not show-up near Jackson Hole, BUT they screwed up and went into the Wilderness area, a BIG NO ... NO !! Found them trying to desperately dig out but were glad to see us.

The only fun I had this past summer ..... I attended, taught, and was the IC for the Colorado Wing GSAR School for CAP while BJ stayed home the first couple weeks of July. While BJ was in Virginia for 2 weeks in June I took care of the ranch. Cutting hay, baling, and stacking, I did it by myself. Ohhh ya ..... fixing OLD machinery is not as fun as it used to be. What's that?? No one is feeling sorry for me? Think I'll go and eat some worms .... Ahhhhhhh .... NO .... Soon going to be 30 years as a veggie type.

Had a job fighting wild fires this year, a week long gig, just in the area of Ketchum, ID. Most of my time was spent sitting around on stand-by or piling slash for winter burn. Not so Fun ... but got paid for it.

Had our kitchen totally redone this year. Had water damage leaking from our filter at the kitchen sink that got into the subfloor. All new cabinets, floor, sink, and a ceiling fan in the living room later exceeded our thoughts of a \$10,000 remodel, went 50% more. Got to live in the Guest Cabin for the month of January and a week of February.

I've found out a new computer system used by Cody schools for substituting is providing me more jobs working with students from High School English, Art Math, Business, to PE @ the Elementary schools, 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Most of the students seem to like me except when they change my demeanor to dark grey area or go to the "Dark Side" (Darth Vader) and have to deal with behavior issues. When that happens they end up taking the "Walk" ..... meaning the walk to the principal's office. Just need one out of the class to challenge .... Surprising how the rest of the class changes their demeanor ..... a substitute teacher that actually means what he says !!! What ?? an oddity!! All this gets me is enough \$\$\$ to take a longer adventure in 2013. Plan to fly out to eastern Pennsylvania to teach at a CAP ranger school called Hawk Mtn, then fly over to Oshkosh, WI and be part of the adventure with CAP's Blue Beret during EAA's fly-in. BJ will love it, **NOT**, that I'll be gone 5-6 weeks. Ohhhh, well, I'm always in the Dog House.

June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, will be a special time for me .... That should mark the official time for retirement when Uncle Sam starts sending those monthly checks that I've been investing in all these years. Now just have to figure out the medical coverage for the next 4 years until that Medicare stuff kicks in. Maybe got 10 more years before I start slowing down. Knock on Wood!!!

We found this great cabin about 3 miles back in the mountains. We went there over Christmas and Easter. Hauled gear in by sled and pack, skied and snowshoed. All 3 dogs loved it. They saw a moose and decided they were tougher. It worked up until the moose turned around and decided brawn was





better than numbers. Those dogs can motivated.

**BJ here**, not much else to say as things are basically the same as last year – the year before and the year before that .... work, Civil Air Patrol, gardening and trying to keep up with 2 puppies who are now FINALLY growing up. We did not grow produce to sell at the Farmer’s market again this year so our garden was reduced. It was a hot and dry summer and that really affected the garden crops. We still got enough carrots, beans, squash and tomatoes to last us through the winter and my freezer is full.



run when

I am enjoying my newly remodeled kitchen and even staying in the guest house during the remodel was not too bad. The main problem was trying to remember everything we needed from the start. I made a lot of trips to retrieve items that were forgotten. Our new living room ceiling fan was put to good use during this hot summer.

As always, I am still very involved in Civil Air Patrol. I was fortunate to find a CAP member to take over my duties as Squadron Commander of Cody. CAP’s National Commander said (ordered) those that had 4+ years as a Commander needed to step down. This was my 11<sup>th</sup> year as a CAP member and 9 of those years I was a Commander of the Cody Cadet Squadron. I’ll still be working with cadets but won’t have to worry about the over-all picture. Now I have to start saluting Mike again, as if that’s going to happen. We just had a recruiting drive this fall and brought in new cadets and senior members. It continues to be a fairly rewarding volunteer job although I threaten to quit several times a year. Guess I will stick it out for a while yet.



If all goes as planned this will be my last year of work in the public schools as a speech pathologist. I hope to retire at the end of the year. This year has probably been the best year so far as I have full-time help and my caseload has finally dropped from the mid 60’s to the low 40’s. Several of my students moved over the summer and some are now being homeschooled. I am looking forward to not having to do paperwork, scheduling and all of the other not-so-fun aspects of the job. I will miss working with the students and staff. It is hard to believe that this is my 14<sup>th</sup> year in Cody. The longest I have been at a job before was 8 years so this is certainly a



record. I am not sure what I will do next fall but most people say they are busier than ever once they retire so I will see if that happens to me.



Take care everyone. Happy holidays! I am off to Virginia on Christmas Day to visit my mom and sisters for over a week. Looking forward to the visit.



Now that all these humans have finished with their renditions I can get back to the MORE important STUFF. Those puppies are NO Longer puppies .... They are 3 years old and still seem to be growing. Sasha is on BJ's right and Torin is on her left. They've TOTALLY taken over for the Saint's. When we llamas have a disagreement we end up spitting at each other. These guys hear us and come into the corral and try to break-us-up. When they do it to me I break off my confrontation with the llama and go after them. Ha ... ha ... ha ... they end up making a bee-line out of the corral. They think I'm kind-of a "pissy"

llama. If they only knew it's all a ruse. But, that's OK .... I'm not going to tell them.

THEN THOSE HORSES!!!! When they go into the pond to cool off the pond must rise 6+ inches.

Time to go. So..... from us llamas: **Maggie, Tymico, White Knight, Seneca, Turret, Nichaja, Titapa, Granite Peak, Stroud Peak, Mt. Osborn, Sinara, Esparado, Klondike, Sensay-Su, Bola, Groucho, Spunky, Howard K, Coco Man, Shasta, Bridger, Zorac, Chinar Wing, Breeze Boy, Torrey Creek, Jenny, Sir Rado, Magnus, Mandarin Chocolate, Ethan, and Tenacious.**

From that small dog **Josie**, and the two strange brothers **Torin & Sasha**

From the feline family **Kanga & Roo.**

From the **GONZO duo: Thunder and Lightening**, and that **Cheyenne**

**And**, can't forget those Lt Col's **Mike and BJ** who keep this menagerie together.

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

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**See ya'll guys.**

