



Hope Manor

Dear Family and friends,

I spent this summer trying to restore the ravages of three years of drought. Very little grass or much else remained. "After the rain washes away all the tears and all the pain, only after the rain, you live again." The chlorophyll hidden deep in dormant grass and weeds surged forth in the plants' veins as photosynthesis began greening everything up with about a million weeds per square inch. Pockets of Bermuda grass popped up randomly in the sandy soil. Weeds are a tenacious lot, springing up right behind me. There is a popping sound as the root escapes the grasp of that little Chinaman on the other side of the world and the weed falls free of the sandy loam, but after seeing a documentary on the Dust Bowl, and the loss of millions of acres of prairie grass broken out by the sodbusters, roots so dense, the prairie literally twanged as the steel plows cut through the thick underlayment in "a cacophony of wild music." A whole ecosystem was gone in a twinkling of an eye with the Dust Bowl close behind. Scientists are predicting a dire future for the prairie tied inescapably to the Ogallala Aquifer and the loss of the prairie grasslands. The aquifer averages 100 feet deep with 50 feet of that water gone mostly to irrigation. So the water that makes the prairie the greatest agricultural community of today is rapidly dwindling away. The realities of increased water shortages, exponential land fragmentation and intensified climate change, the devastation of a whole economic system and a second dust bowl looms ominously on the horizon.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/dustbowl/player/>

Kierra and I were playing dolls one morning. I asked her if she was going to tell her dolls a bedtime story or did she want me to. She said, "I'll do it. Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess. Her name was Kierra. That's me. A wicked stepmother turned her into gold.. Jake and the Pirates saved her life. The end."



“I’m not really Tinkerbell. It’s just a costume.”

It has been an interesting year, and like most of us who are getting older, filled with illness. To make a long story short—I had a heart attack, and when the doctor attempted to place a stent, he was not able to thread it in. The artery remains 100% blocked. I would have probably died had not been for collateral circulation where another artery took over the workload, and keeps the blood flowing. I guess the good Lord wasn't through with me. Richard was diagnosed with prostate cancer, and had a radical orchiectomy to prevent the production of testosterone. He also had cataract surgery. It seem as though every month has been filled with doctors' appointments, and more appointments.

Jon, Tammy and Shane Shane's Bro and Mother



Shane, Rickey's son, has had an eventful year. He loves to fish, and snared an alligator, and here I thought fishing was such a safe sport. And well, boys being boys, he kicked a window pane at an old abandoned house and cut a tendon. It turned out to be a pretty serious thing. He's been hobbling around on crutches and goes to therapy for at least six months. His mother is a Godsend, and looks after him well. Just recently, Shane has killed three rattlesnakes not far from his house. I asked his mom, Tammy, "Are you sure he was born in a

hospital and not in the woods?" I just know he is going to grow up to be a forest ranger or a game warden. I've never seen a kid who loves the outdoors so much.

Larry was here this summer and I had a house full of company. Tomaline and her friend, Elizabeth came and then my daughter, Tammy from Nebraska came. It was nice having them here. Since both daughters grew up in Plainview, a lot of their friends have been dropping by. It's been fun reminiscing about days gone by. Tammy and Elizabeth really got the ball rolling with a couple of containers of flowers for the porch. One thing led to another—ending with the planting a small garden. Right into December we are still eating tomatoes that were picked before this last freeze and brought inside to ripen. Amazing quantities of cucumbers, beans and okra were harvested.

Larry and I attended my high school reunion in Lubbock. There was a Jam Session at Qe Terry's house the night before. We were entertained by pro and amateur musicians, playing the music both Larry and I grew up with. It was an intimate group sharing memories.

We met Kathey Wylie who had attended Carroll Thompson Junior High and whose husband is a NHL player, Duane Steven Wylie. He even played a few games with Bobby Orr. We had a nice conversation with her. She knows many of the same people Larry knows. And who would have thought—way down here in Texas.

The highlight of the evening was Mike Querner, no stranger to the Western way of life. His family has been involved in ranching for five generations, and still works on local ranches as time permits. Mike has been writing and performing cowboy poetry since 1989. He is the president of the advisory board for the National Cowboy Symposium and Celebration held in Lubbock each September, the largest event of its kind in the U.S. He recited, Longevity, about faces in the campfire and another, Grandpa and Me. The evening ending at 10 pm, just before the sprinklers came on.

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=grandpa+and+me+by+mike+querner&mid=318DBD3DD6BD9EB7B719318DBD3DD6BD9EB7B719&view=detail&FORM=VIRE1>

We spent Saturday afternoon at the Texas Tech Museum and the Ranching Heritage Center. Larry commented that he thought the Paleontological Exhibit might be better than the one at the ROM in Toronto. Not bad for a "little ol' West Texas town, eh?

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Museum_of_Texas_Tech_University

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Ranching_Heritage_Center

This is a combined reunion of all the Lubbock High Schools, Estacado, Monterey, Dunbar, Coronado, and Lubbock High. I thought there might only be a few that I would know since I did not actually attend Lubbock High. At that time, the freshman classes were housed in the junior highs. We moved to Olton during the summer of what would have been my sophomore year, but a lot of the kids I went to elementary and junior high wound up at Lubbock High.



Lubbock High Grads

I think those of us who attended the Jam Session might have been a bit disappointed at the actual reunion. It was a much larger affair at the Holiday Inn, and although it was fun, too, it did not have the intimacy of the night before. A special guest was Pete (retired military) and Mary Parra who had graduated from T.S. Lubbock High in 1946, the year that most of us in my class were born.



Larry Twyla & Kierra

On land that once grew native buffalo grass that fed the thundering herds of cattle owned by the famed XIT, largest ranch in Texas, each July 4th, Springlake, population 108 at the 2010 census, hosts an on-the-house hamburger and hot dog cookout, culminating in an impressive fireworks display in the deepening twilight while the curtain of night closes on day

and stars begin to twinkle like diamonds against an ebony backdrop; fireworks that rival displays in the larger towns and cities.

It began with a parade up US Highway 385, turning on US Highway 70 and ending at Springlake Park. We watched from the home of Jimmy D. and Ruby Fulenwider as the horse-mounted color guards proudly carried both the United States and Texas flags, furling in the ever-prevalent West Texas breeze and against an azure blue sky. There were a number of floats decorated by the locals, and vehicles of all description, from the kiddy electric cars to ATVs, farm equipment, commercial trucks, and including fire trucks from Springlake and surrounding communities, Earth, Olton and Amherst. Springlake's oldest fire truck led the group with a distinctive and very loud siren.

Smoke clung around the volunteers, stinging the eyes while they cooked up pounds and pounds of hamburger, hot dogs and French fries on "redneck grills" made from 55-gallon barrels. The mouth-watering scent of grillin' wafted through the gathering crowd, preparing the palate of some 300 to 400 hungry men, women and children for some of the best food on Earth.

Local entertainers belted out old favorite country/western songs during most of the festivities. Donated baked goods and other items were auctioned off to fund this annual event. Some of the prized cakes and cookies went for unheard-of-sums in excess of \$500. These items are donated back to be served with homemade ice cream.

There are no people on Earth like these. Through the good times and bad, from the ordinary citizens, to the bank president, to the mayor, to the City Council, to the pastors of the churches, to the school board, to the teachers, to the Lions Club, they are always ready to roll up their sleeves and lean a hand. My 29-year-old granddaughter, Jarrette Glenn experienced firsthand the downright friendliness and genuine camaraderie of these people. There was the buzz of conversation that only paused long enough for the invocation, a long-standing tradition at all events. It was like attending one huge family reunion, visiting with family and old friends. Jarrette spoke in one breathless sentence, "Why did we ever leave here; and I want to move back." Many of the attendees remembered her as a small child tagging along with Earth Weekly News Editor, Bobbie Goodwin and Assistant Editor Twyla Woodring, also Jarrette's grandmother.

This 4th was especially significant for Clayton family with the discovery that through the Williams' lineage, George Walton was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Walton Larry Power's family came to American before immigrating to Canada in 1826. Larry's ancestor, Oliver Wolcott was also a signer of the Declaration of Independence. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_Wolcott

Reminiscing with Monda Daniel—

I had a chance to visit with Monda at Jarrette loved her father-in-law and Jarrette had a clown with flaming red Chamber of Commerce banquet, one up on his lap. With indignation, that? That is MY Raiford!"



a local church. I told her how then mayor of Earth, Raiford Daniel. of Raiford's granddaughters climbed Jarrette exclaimed, "Just who is

I don't know what to think of all these grandkids who insist on having babies. My Granny Rosa Angeline Williams Clayton always said, "When children are little, they step on your toes, but when they grow up, they step on your heart." Krystal is expecting the birth of a boy, my 9th great-grand around the 1st of March.

I, personally, think they should name him Archibald Hector. LOL

Kalven Aldean Leigh



Well, grown up or not Michael is still a huge fan of the Bat. Have to admit, I kinda like him, too. Tomaline surprised him with a Batman costume for Halloween. Can't say that I've anyone seen so excited. He wore it to take Kierra trick or treating.

Emaryl is growing up to be such a pretty young lady. Well, she is just 10-years-old December 3. But sometimes she looks so grown up. Monster High—that's all I heard in the days prior to Halloween. MommaTina did a good job of making her look like Frankie, scars and all, and JaKoby, a karate-kicking, star-throwing Ninja.



It's hard to believe our little JaKoby is in kindergarten, terrorizing the school with all his mischief. He hated getting his hair combed, and wanted his hair cut. He looks so cute, but I miss the curls.

Larry—

This past year has seen some low points as well as some high points in my life. I travelled down to Texas to be with Twyla going down in May and staying in Plainview until August 7th. I'd never spent a summer down in Texas and the highest temperature that I'd ever seen was 93 degrees F. while living in New Brunswick back in the 1970s. Well, for at least one entire week in Plainview, the temperatures were into the 100's and one day it even got up to 107 degrees F. I remember the car door handle was so hot that it burned your hand opening the door and the seat belt buckle was almost too hot to buckle up. The economy in Plainview has taken quite a licking with the one of the main employers, Cargill, closing down which led to the closing of the baseball batting cages, one of my favourite hangouts as well as the steakhouse in downtown Plainview and Hastings where I bought most of my books, my music CD's and the DVD videos. This was also the first time while being in Texas that we never got down to Lubbock and my favourite, the Cactus Theatre, for some great entertainment. It wasn't a total loss as we still managed to get to the Clayton family reunion in Earth, Texas, meeting many of Twyla's relatives. We spent a weekend in Lubbock for Twyla's high school reunion and Twyla, Mike and I went to this great go cart track and to an IMAX 3D movie, *Pacific Rim*. I missed the entire summer lacrosse season and from now on I think I'll be only going down to Texas in the winter time for Christmas.

After two seasons of being the point streak administrator for the semi-professional lacrosse league, CLAX, I decided to step down, but some positive things that happened in my life were receiving a Life Time Pass for two from the Ontario Lacrosse Association that will let me into games in Ontario all summer for free. I also had cataracts removed from my eyes. After wearing glasses since I was 12-years-old, it's incredible to walk around without them. I remember as a kid playing lacrosse and hockey, how I'd go to the players' box and my glasses would fog up. For at least 5 minutes I couldn't go back on the ice or floor because I was completely fogged out. Another positive thing was at the end of February after turning 65-year-old, I receive both the Old Age Security as well as Canada Pension. The Go train is half-price for Seniors. If only I could just stay age 65, it would be enough for me, except for the alternative, so I guess I'll just have to keep on getting older.

For 30 years, my late brother, Lewis, and I had spent endless hours working on the family tree and were stuck at 1797 with our great, great, great, great, grandfather, Andrew Power, coming from Ireland. I had my DNA done and a gentleman from Michigan was able to link me to three more generations in Ireland, to Chester, John and Thomas in 1670 so we can now trace the Power line back for 11 generations of Power's men.

Merry Christmas to all from Canada.

Larry



JaKoby, Kierra, & Emary!

We are God's Workmanship

Every precious creature and every flower and tree are God's workmanship—and He made you and me! Every morning sunrise and every starlit sky are part of God's eternal plan—and so are you and I! And every year that passes is one to celebrate, because the Lord who made all things makes all things turn out great! How wonderful is God's creation and how grateful I am for each you—one of His most marvelous works.

*May the joys of the season fill your heart with peace and good will,
Twylla, Larry, Jarrette, Michael and Kierra*