

# 2014 Christmas Letter from the Petersons in Arizona!

To all our dear friends and family members:

We wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas season. We feel extremely blessed and grateful to our Savior, Jesus Christ, for his life, his love and his example. May your lives be blessed by the power of his love this coming year. We have had an amazingly eventful year this year. Here are some highlights:

**Matt:** He held a baby lion, yes and he got the bruise from the bite to show for it! He got his baby girl this year. He has enjoyed the special dates with Alicia given to him for Christmas last year. His favorite date was the cruise to the Mexican Riviera (ok, that was already planned, but was the “date” for January). Work is probably the best it has ever been, for which he is very grateful. His third book is still on the “to do” list. He got released as Scoutmaster and given the new callings of Eleven Year Old Scout Leader and Primary teacher. He enjoyed serving at the Phoenix temple open house.



**Alicia:** She keeps very busy running around as a mom of 6 ranging from almost drivers to not potty trained yet! She and Matt got to swim and play with dolphins! Her dream came true this year – she has her very own daughter! She and Matt got to be “Ma and Pa” on Trek this summer and had a blast! She felt like she was in heaven when she got to sing in a choir in the Celestial Room in the newly dedicated Phoenix Temple, just a few feet away from an Apostle of God. Matt and she both got to shake Elder Uchtdorf’s hand. She has 4 callings right now, 2 are unofficial: primary teacher, ward organist, ward choir director, scouting advancement chair. She still manages 7 rental properties part time.



**David:** He is loving high school and seminary. He was on the swim team this year and even got to go to districts his first year! David loves to dress up when he’s bored. He has become an expert at family history and has taken many of his own names to the temple. He thinks the Phoenix temple is the most beautiful. He completely loved being part of the Cultural Celebration for the temple. David auditioned and got a part in his first high school play – Get Smart. Theater Arts has been a highlight for both boys.



**Dean:** He also loves high school and seminary. He got to go to district finals for swim team and even lettered in swim this year.



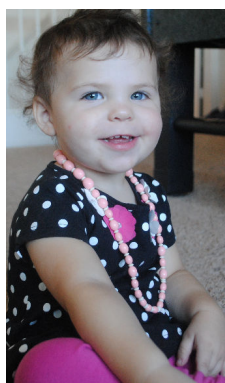
Dean is the Teacher’s quorum president. He had a great time this summer at the Manti Temple Pageant with the family. He also loved dancing and singing in the Cultural Celebration. Both David and Dean got to go on Trek this year and had a great time. Dean’s trek family got to listen to him sing “Pioneer Children Sang as they Walked and Walked...” in his sleep. He was truly living (and sleeping) the experience. And he loves Alora so much!

Trent: He loves to read. All his classmates know him as “the reader”. Trent received the priesthood, passes the sacrament and goes to the temple. He is working very hard on all his scouting stuff. He is just 3 merit badges and an Eagle project away from becoming an Eagle Scout. Trent plays percussion in band and is often seen tapping something to his own beat. Trent also loved singing and dancing in the Cultural Celebration and his highlight was giving the PROPHET a high five! He is becoming quite the babysitter and even changes Alora’s diapers.



Jacob: He finished 4<sup>th</sup> grade with 6 weeks of homeschooling with his mom – lots of fun and just what he needed! He really loved the field trip to many historical sites in AZ. He is loving 5<sup>th</sup> grade this year with a fabulous new teacher. He loves to play with Alora and can keep her happy with distraction quite often. Jacob has a natural talent for the piano. He also has a natural talent for tumbling which he just started classes for. He’s doing things in the first few weeks that take other boys many months to master.

Jared: He has experienced many new things this year: Going on rides at Disneyland, Sea World and Universal Studios. Turns out, Jared is a dare devil! Being baptized on his 8<sup>th</sup> birthday by his dad. He had his own personal baptism at 7am on the same Saturday as the Cultural Celebration. Going to his first temple dedication – the day after he was baptized! Becoming a Cub Scout. His first pack meeting was the Rain gutter Regatta. He did a great job blowing that boat! He is excelling in school and is in an advanced reading group with only 3 or 4 other kids in the class.



Alora: She turned one this year and was adopted 5 days later. Just two days later on May 10<sup>th</sup>, she was sealed to our family for eternity! Such a glorious day! She is the joy of our lives. We can hardly believe we have a girl in our house! But then we see the necklaces, shoes, pink, lace, mood swings, and emotions and then we remember we have a GIRL! She runs everywhere, says hi to everyone she sees, can say all the animal sounds including “What does the fox say?”. She counts to three, knows her body parts, likes to comb and put mousse in her hair, loves to go to nursery at church. She also loves to color on walls, but loves to clean it up even more! She can often be found scrubbing a wall or floor or a face.

We feel unbelievably blessed this year. We have had so many fun outings and family experiences. We are amazed at the outpouring of blessings our Father in Heaven has given us. We especially are grateful to have an eternal family that now includes a little girl!! Lots of love to all of you!! --Matt, Alicia, David, Dean, Trent, Jacob, Jared and Alora Peterson. Our family website should be updated very soon! Check us out in pictures: [www.mattsfamily.com](http://www.mattsfamily.com)



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