

Sandy & Ryan Peterson



Vaughn & Tammy Peterson

William
Henry
Ella

Royce & Jen Peterson

Duncan
Brynn
Maren

Aric & Sally Peterson

Adeline

Heather & Curt Salisbury

Nicole
Isaac

Sabrina & Gary Strong

Grace

Traci



We
must carry
beauty
within us
or we find
it not.





Anna Royce Vaughn

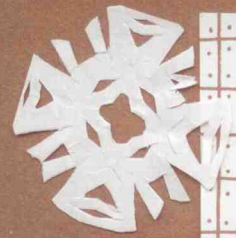


Our first visit to the cabin

There was no deck; the boys climbed the snow drift on the north wall

Peterson

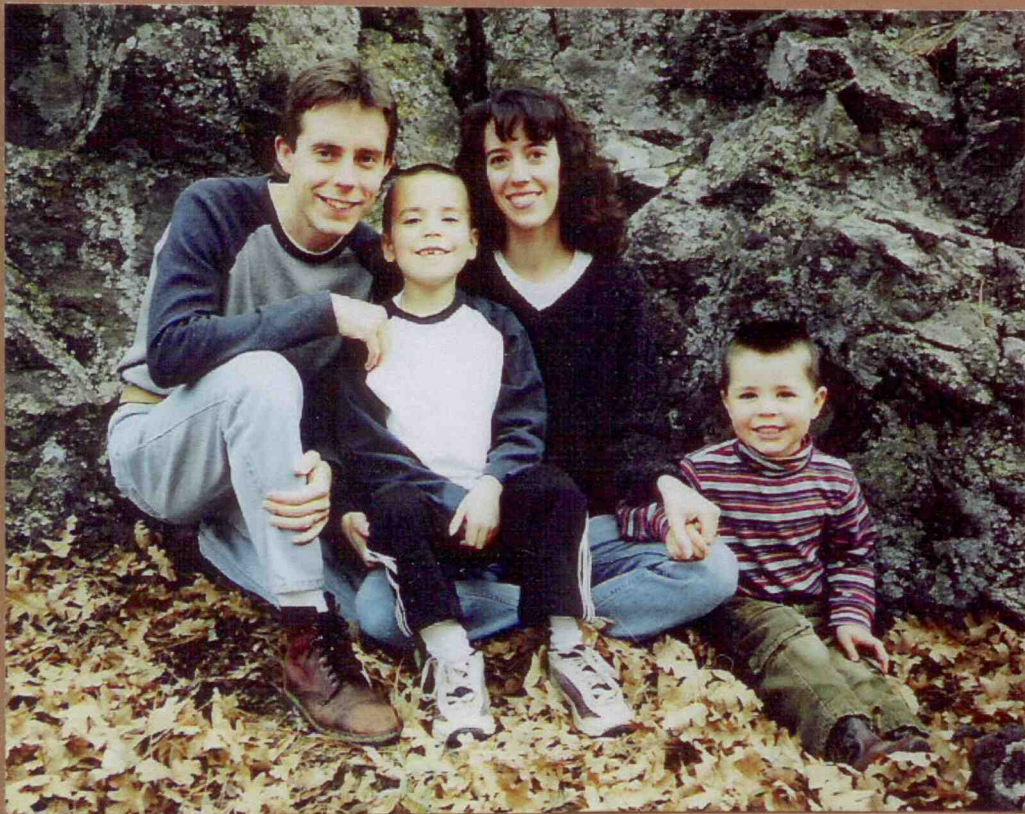
1982



Sandy Peterson



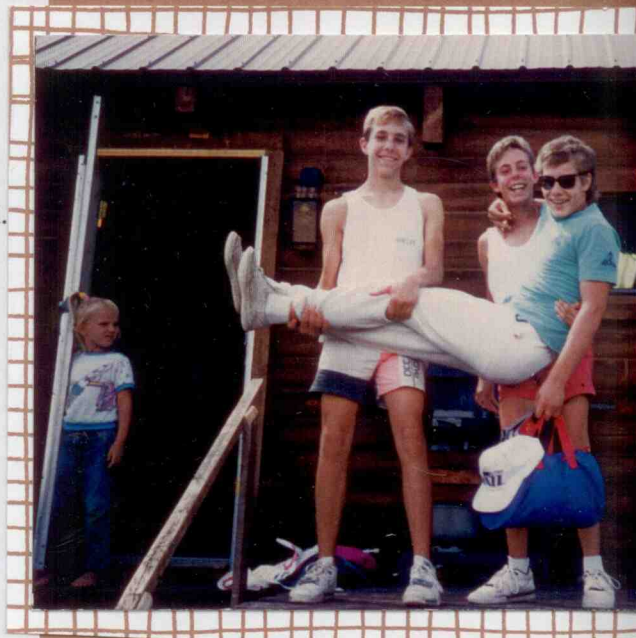
Notice Vaughn's socks!
Grandma and Grandpa brought
home Alabama socks for everyone
from their mission.



The annual pilgrimage to Island Park was one that everybody in the Peterson household looked forward to, Even the fourteen hour drive had its perks. One year back in the days before seatbelts were invented (I should say before they were widely used), Dad got a truck topper from somewhere and installed it on top of his red company pickup. We piled all the gear around the sides of the pickup bed and lined the bottom with old carpet squares. After we threw in a bunch of sleeping bags and blankets, we managed to carve out enough space for all the kids to lie around back there in our own personal rolling lounge. We read books, wrestled, and listened to our White Lion tapes on a portable tape player, fighting now and then about who got to ride up front with Mom and Dad and for how long. We had a good supply of dry Lucky Charms to keep our blood glucose levels up. Once in a while we had to re-arrange the mitts, bats, suitcases, and other Nielsenhaven paraphernalia, but in general it was a very comfortable ride.

When we arrived at the cabin, we were always watching to see where the trampoline was set up (and that it hadn't been forgotten) and to make sure that nobody had parked on the baseball field. There was a specific buffalo depression that was really the only suitable place for home plate, and if that was blocked we weren't happy. Once the rolling lounge came to a stop, we would troop in with everybody else, making sure not to look too excited about seeing everyone again (must maintain the aura of coolness at all times). Once the initial awkwardness wore off, we were all set to fully indulge in the Nielsenhaven experience.

Of course nobody would admit it, but we all secretly enjoyed the evening sessions of skits and songs and talents. Coolness protocol required that we roll our eyes a lot and snicker at things, but most of the time we laughed because we were truly entertained. Of course, it was NOT entertaining to have to play the piano in front of everyone or even worse, to have to sing (lip sync) some primary song or something with your entire family. I clearly remember one particular episode, a rendition of Kumbaya performed on the guitar by I don't remember whom. The song would not end. We sang, "Someone's cryin' my Lord, Kumbaya"....etc. There were verses about someone laughin', someone singin, someone prayin', and someone smilin'. Then there were twelve more verses about that same person doin' all kinds of other things. Finally, we reached the break point. As the next verse started, Derek leaned in toward me and my two brothers, and probably Wade, too. With a look of complete sincerity, and a voice full of mock emotion, he sang, "Someone's BORED my Lord, Kumbaya....." We laughed until we couldn't breathe, and, at least for that verse, we weren't bored any more.

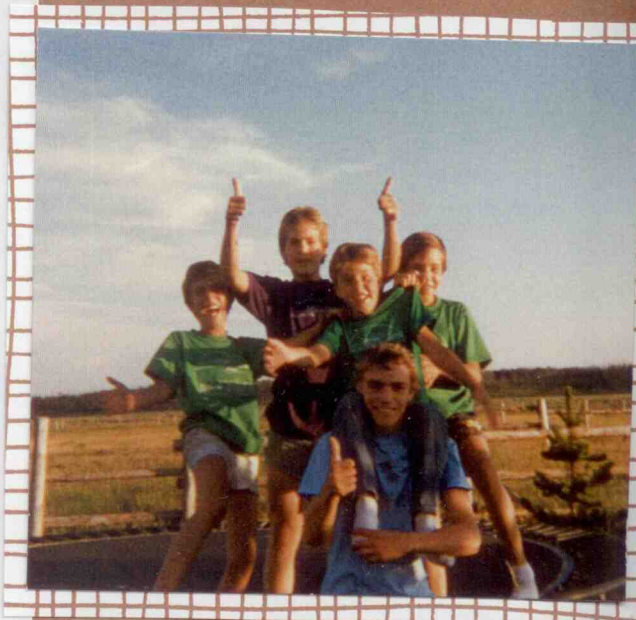


As long as we survived talent night, we knew that we had softball and trampoline to look forward to while the sun shined. Looking back from the perspective of a parent, I'm surprised that no one was killed during our cutthroat games of "Crack the Egg" and "Follow the Leader" and "Whose Spine Will Fracture First?". After that we would pester the adults to come play softball with us, reasoning that if we had submitted to talent night, the least they could do was play softball out in the weeds with us. Those softball games were great fun, although the only way to get out was to hit a fly ball. Anything on the ground was so unpredictable that there was no way in the world you were going to get thrown out unless you stepped in a gopher hole or some horse pucky on the way to first base. Luckily most of the horse pucky was pretty much petrified.

The hikes were great, too. We'd always get to eat the famous Nielsen gorp (was that what it was called?) that consisted of pretzels and peanuts and Fruit Loops and M&Ms and probably two or three other ingredients. I'm not sure who made that stuff, but it was great. We'd put on our cool plastic shades with the cheesy neon sides and our shorts and head out. Looking back, I don't remember exactly where it was that we were hiking, but it was always a good time.

All told, Nielsenhaven was always the highlight of the summer. It was great to catch up with our cousins and remember what a fantastic family we had (have). Thanks to all who made it such a wonderful time, even whomever it was leading that Kumbaya song.

---Vaughn Peterson

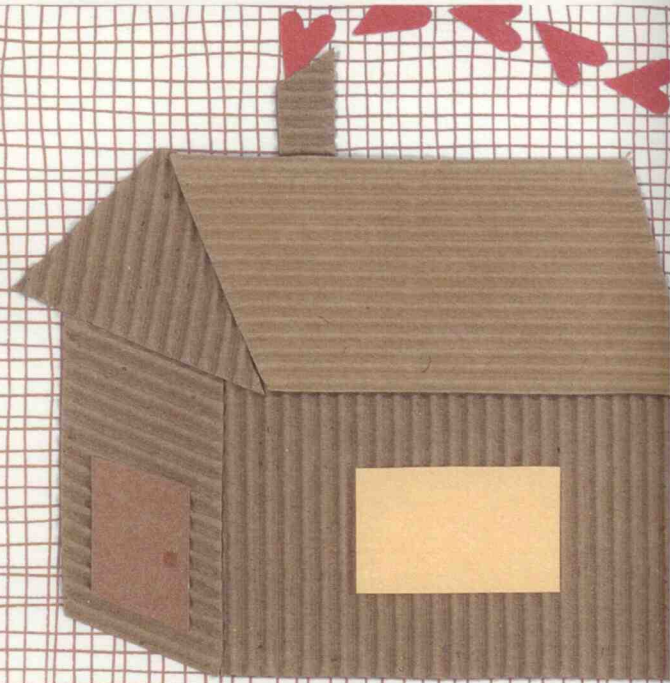


LIFE'S AT IT'S BEST

WHEN YOU'RE WITH

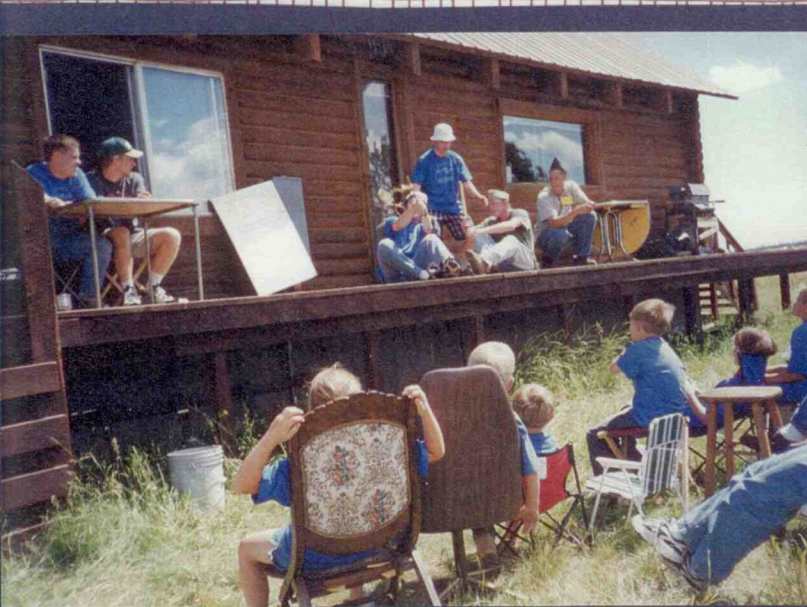
FAMILY

by Heather



3 DAY LONG SLUMBER PARTY

Sacramento meeting at the cabin



Watching the airplanes fight the Yellowstone forest fires and the moon turning an eerie red.

Silly skits

Hiking



Family pictures on the stairs and all the funny comments that go along with them!

Staying there for a week after the reunion with my family, visiting Yellowstone-the beauty of the park: mountains, trees, and animals, etc.

FRESH AIR

DEREK'S INDIAN DANCE

TRIPS INTO WEST YELLOWSTONE

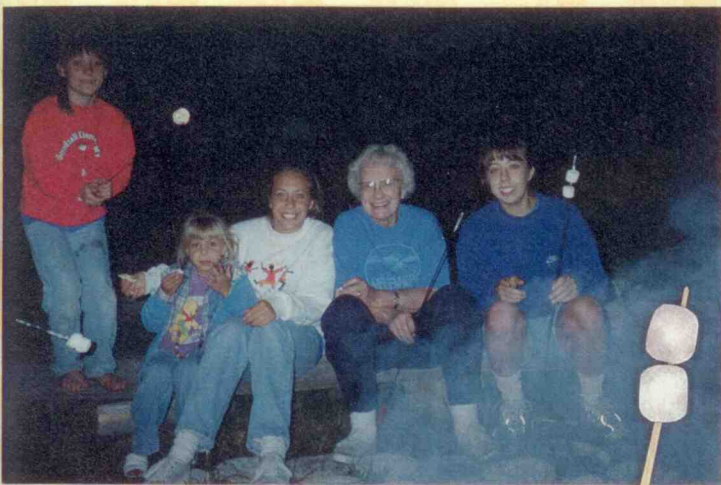
Swimming in coffee pot and going to the top of Sawtelle

EARLY MORNING FISHING TRIPS



SIGNING UP TO TAKE A SHOWER

UNCLE DEE'S PANCAKES OF COURSE!



Enjoying each other's company around the campfire, eating smores

"THE FAMILY MEETING"



Knowing all my cousins

How accepting and friendly people are to one another.



LAYING ON A BLANKET WITH AUNT JUDY AND OTHERS AND STAR GAZING

TALENT SHOW



SERVICE PROJECTS AT THE CABIN

Aunt Kenda (who was Queen of French braids) doing my hair!

PLAYING GAMES

DRIVING UP TO THE FLAGS

LAUGHTER

MUSIC



THE HIKE

A Memorable Hike-written by 12 year old Sabrina Peterson

Yellowstone National Park is one of my favorite places to go on vacation. We go there almost every year. We go there for a family reunion. My grandparents (maternal) have a cabin about twenty minutes out of the town of West Yellowstone. They built it about eleven years ago. It was built about a year after I was born. It has a deck and it's really pretty when you look off the deck at the mountains and all of the scenery. Inside, we have a bearskin, cougarskin, and a deer and antelope heads. My Grandpa and a few of my uncles are hunters.

One summer at our cabin, one of the activities planned was a hike. I thought it would be fun, so I decided to go. I was about eight at that time, and had long, brown hair. I loved horses, but also loved any animal that I saw. I still do.

The day of the hike came, and I was very excited, of course. My mom couldn't come because my younger sister was too little, but my older siblings, cousins and aunts and uncles were all going, so I wasn't scared. Along our way my uncle Steve, the leader, put up some fluorescent orange flags so that no one would get lost on the way back down the mountain. We all stayed together on the way up. When we got almost to the top, we found some snow. It was still up there in July! So we had a small snowball fight. We had a picnic and some people began going back, while some sat and visited. I decided to hike back with my older sister Heather and my cousins her age. We were walking back when my legs got tired. So, stayed on the trail and sat on a rock while the others kept going. We thought someone else would be coming soon. While I was sitting on the rock I remember hearing all kinds of noises and I was scared.

After a while, I saw my cousin Michelle coming down the trail. I asked if I could walk with her and she said yes. We were walking and we didn't see any of the orange flags my Uncle Steve had put up. Later we realized that someone had taken them down. We kept walking and thought that we should have gotten to the point where our families would be to pick us up. We came to a fork in the trail and didn't know which way to go. We did our best to decide which way to go. It didn't take too much longer after that to realize we were lost. I started to get scared. Michelle was very calm and suggested we kneel down and say a prayer. So we knelt in a dried up little brook bed and asked Heavenly Father to help us find our way back to our families so we could return to the cabin. Right after our prayer, we heard an engine. So we followed the sound over a little hill and we saw the last car leaving to go back to the cabin. I knew our prayer had been answered. It was very memorable to me because of the simple truths I learned that day-that Heavenly Father loves each of His children and is mindful of them, and that He will answer our prayers if we but turn to Him.



story by Sabrina
Stro