

# Moss Family

## Odyssey 08 Journal

*Day 1*  
*June 13, 2008*

*Brandon, Chelsea and Sheila flew to Kansas City, Missouri for Nathan and Jenn's wedding rehearsal. Greg drove over from a week long business meeting in Nashville, TN. It was fun to be with the Florida Wynns, Jon, Christina and Natalie for one more wedding celebration!*

*Day 2*  
*June 14, 2008*

*Greg, Chelsea and Sheila were wedding photographers for Nathan and Jenn's big day! Brandon was the videographer. The beautiful ceremony was held at Tri-City Baptist Church in Kansas City, Missouri. We're glad Nathan and Jenn will be living in Greenville so we'll see them often. After the wedding we began our Odyssey of the Great Plains and the Rockies. We drove through flood-ravaged Iowa seeing acres of farm fields under water. The town of "Weeping Water" seemed appropriately named!*

***Trip Trivia:*** *We added Iowa and Nebraska to our "states visited list." (#41 and #42)*

*Day 3*  
*June 15, 2008*

*Driving day in the Dakotas! Brandon and Chelsea read their way through South and North Dakota! This region is not highly populated! We only passed a few cars and even less people. Seems like there must be a ratio of 50:1 --- cows to people, that is! But even the cows belong to our Lord: "For every beast of the forest is mine and the cattle upon a thousand hills." (Psalm 50:10) These lonely states prompted Brandon to comment that he was "starving for civilization!" These are beautiful states with grassy plains, rocky bluffs and rolling hills. We took a brief tour of the "Enchanted Highway," which features the world's largest metal sculptures designed and constructed by a retired teacher/principal. We also visited Theodore Roosevelt National Park, home of the Painted Canyon Badlands. The colorful hues of jagged rock and petrified wood make this park intriguing. We ended the day in Red Lodge, Montana, a quaint ski resort town at the base of the snow covered Bear Tooth Mountains. After leaving Greenville*

*with a week of temperatures in the upper 90's, the 41 degrees in this mile-high city felt great!*

**Trip Trivia:** *Montana has interesting names for its places including Diamond Ring, Whoopup Creek, Cracker Box Road and Bad Route Road!*

*We ate at the only Cracker Barrel in North Dakota, in the cold, capital city of Bismarck.*

*We added North Dakota to our "states visited list." (#43)*

**Day 4**  
**June 16, 2008**

*Heading to Yellowstone - A cold beginning today with wind chills in the 30's. We embarked on the Bear Tooth Highway – by far the most scenic stretch in ALL of our travels! It was a taste of Switzerland in the state of Montana! Snow banks piled 10 feet high on the sides of mountain roads created arctic tunnels. We reached an elevation of over 11,000 feet! Landscapes like these caused us to remember that God is the "one who by His strength established the mountains being girded with His might so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs." (Psalm 65: 6-8) This magnificent highway is the northeastern gateway to Yellowstone National Park. Since this was a repeat visit to Yellowstone for our family, we tried to cover some new territory seeing the "Grand Canyon of Yellowstone" including the Upper and Lower Falls at Artist Pointe. We also enjoyed seeing bison and mule deer --- up close and personal! The end of this day included a brief stop at Golden Spike National Historic Site in Promontory Summit, Utah. This is the point where the railroads from the east and west met in 1869 to complete America's first transcontinental railroad. (This site commemorates an incredible accomplishment for our nation, but the site itself is less than incredible! Our family put it in the same category as Plymouth Rock!)*

**Trip Trivia:** *Today's travels ping-ponged through Yellowstone --- from Montana, to Wyoming, to Montana, to Wyoming, to Montana, and finally through Idaho to Utah!*

*We added Utah to our "states visited list." (#44)*

**Day 5**  
**June 17, 2008**

*Antelope Island, Utah – This island served as our viewing area for the Great Salt Lake, water that is five times saltier than the ocean! As we drove the causeway to the island, Greg spied clouds of black smoke coming from the bushes. It turned out to be swarms of brine flies! We stopped the van to change drivers so Greg could get pictures and felt like we were in the middle of a Sci Fi movie as the van was engulfed by the swarms of brine flies! Needless to say, we didn't change drivers! Then on to Salt Lake City where we toured Temple Square, headquarters for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and home of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and what is deemed one of the finest organs in the world. In the tabernacle we watched an impressive acoustic demonstration. We finished our day in the desert of Arches National Park with an array of unique geological sandstone formations. The extraordinary features of this park create an amazing landscape of contrasting colors and red rock landforms. Being able to hike right up to the "Northern Window" made it our favorite formation. This park provided a perfect place for Moss Photo! We loved Arches National Park and added it to our list of places to visit again some day!*

**Day 6**  
**June 18, 2008**

*Rocky Mountain National Park – This is one WILD park! We saw lots of mule deer, elk, moose, and marmots. Trail Bridge Road winds from beautiful Grand Lake to Estes Park peaking at an elevation of 12,183 feet. This park prides itself in not having guardrails so the guests have an unobstructed view! It was SCARY driving on this glorious highway to the sky! It was blustery and cold at the peak, so we briefly viewed the spectacular snowy scenery and then headed into the Alpine Visitors Center.*

**Trip Trivia:** *Trail Bridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park is the highest continuous paved highway in America. One third of this park is alpine tundra above the tree line where the temperatures are too cold for trees to grow.*

*We added Colorado to our "states visited list." (#45)*

**Day 7**  
**June 19, 2008**

*Denver, Colorado – We had stand-by tickets for the Denver Mint tour but it was full for our time slot. In the end, we appreciated having the extra time at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs. It was more than a zoo; it was an experience we won't forget! This zoo was even better than the San Diego Zoo due to its interactive nature. We were able to hand-feed giraffes! It was also the first day a newborn baby giraffe was on display for visitors. From the zoo we headed to Pike's Peak by way of the Cog Wheel Railway in Manitou Springs, Colorado. This is the world's highest cog train climbing to 14,110 feet at Pike's Peak where you can see four states: Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. Best of all, it snowed on us while we were at the summit! This is the Peak that inspired Kathryn Lee Bates to write "America," and a choir on tour performed a beautiful arrangement while we were there. Breathtaking cliffs and amazing views made this a great train trip --- of course, the falling snow made it really special!*

**Trip Trivia:** *We added Kansas to our "states visited list." (#46)*

**Day 8**  
**June 20, 2008**

*Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum – This memorial honors the victims, survivors and rescuers who were affected by homeland terrorism on April 19, 1995. The two-block outdoor memorial is a beautiful tribute. The museum is a powerful interactive experience which takes visitors on a chronological tour beginning with an ordinary day, progressing through the days and months after the tragic bombing as the people of Oklahoma and our nation responded. We heard the bomb blast as we listened to a recording from a board meeting on that fateful day. From there we felt the chaos as we viewed images and news footage of the frantic moments following the explosion. The sensitive design of the museum embeds artifacts salvaged from the ruins with stories from survivors and rescuers. The "Gallery of Honor" is an emotional exhibit room in which the families of each victim have placed personal items in a small glass box with their loved one's picture. Our visit to this museum and memorial proved to be sobering and inspirational. We felt the impact of violence and will remember those whose lives were forever changed.*

**Trip Trivia:** *We added Oklahoma and Arkansas to our "states visited list." (# 47 and #48.)*

**Day 9**  
**June 21, 2008**

*Driving home day – No matter where or how far you roam, it's always good to head back home! We thank God for His traveling mercies. Once again, God has been so good! We had wonderful weather throughout this entire trip even through states that had recently experienced flooding and record numbers of tornadoes. We were awed by God's creation and shared good times together as a family. One more awesome Odyssey! The following verses are a fitting reflection from this trip . . .*

*“Thy mercy O Lord is in the heavens and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains. O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.”*

*Psalm 36:5*

**Trip Trivia:**

- *We traveled in and out of three time zones: Eastern, Central and Mountain.*
- *We traveled through 18 states on this Odyssey 08.*
- *Our family has now toured the 48 continental United States! We're eagerly anticipating Alaska and Hawaii!*
- *Brandon sent/received 128 text messages and spent a total of two hours on cell phone calls to Kamri! (Time spent texting and talking --- priceless!)*
- *Total number of pictures Greg took: 2357*
- *Total number of miles driven: 5519*
- *Most miles driven in one day: 1007*
- *License Tags we saw: 44 and 5 Canadian Provinces – Brunswick, Manitobo, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan*
- *When it was all said and done, we came in \$19 over budget! (If only I hadn't bought that cute little jacket in Kansas ☺ but it was worth it!)*
- *The vast majority of this trip was spent at an elevation of at least a mile high!*

*“But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did. A land which the Lord thy God careth for: The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year unto the end of the year.” Deuteronomy 11:7, 12*