



As you all know from prior RFNL issues, Michelle is off to Worcester, Mass. for graduate school. Recently we received the following report on her activities, which we print for all to read.

Fish out of Water

DISCLAIMER: My mom likes pictures and lots of details... therefore, there are lots of both. Skip what you are not interested in reading, but we all know that when moms are happy, everyone is happy.

As many of you know, I have recently moved to Worcester,



MA to attend the University Of Massachusetts- Graduate School Of Biomedical Sciences for the PhD program. I'm here to let you all know that it is true what they say about west coast parties—there "ain't

nothing like 'em". The east coast "fun" is very different from good ol' sunny San Diego. One example of this is the beach. It is approximately 2 hours to get to the "beach". I am using that term very loosely because it is really more like the bay (sea weed can't even body surf in the tide) and the sand is very rocky (ie: if you make the mistake of diving for the smash ball- like I did- you will start to bleed). Everyone I meet here thinks that I am insane to have left "Cali". They tell me that fall is beautiful. In fact- they say it is the ONLY reason to live here—apparently the other 3 seasons are miserable. It really isn't that bad though. The humidity is pretty crazy... especially with all of the rain we've been getting here (like February in SD). So I purchased *and installed* an air conditioner. Seriously, I think that may be a



milestone to be recorded in my life history because I never thought I'd ever reach the age where I would purchase an air conditioner. But really, it is nice here.

Little Havana (shirtless men all staring at cars with the loud Cuban Rumba music going and kids running around

barefoot) is on the corner of the street that I live on. You may think I'm joking... I'm not. Worcester is known for its diversity. Fortunately, the triple decker. (a house with three levels—each is its own apartment) is full of students that go to U. Mass. The important thing is that it is quiet around bed time. But the location of Worcester is good. I am about 45 minutes from Boston, 45 minutes from Providence, 3 hours from NYC, 1.5 hours from Hartford (CT), 2 hours from Cape Cod, 7 minutes from U. Mass and 10 minutes from Target.

The school is great... I love it already! It is an incredibly laid back environment that allows the SoCal girl to wear flip-flops in the lab (a hazard that is technically not allowed in SD either). Currently, I am doing a lab rotation in a lab that studies influenza. I really like the lab, but my rotation project involves more biochemistry than I like (genetics is more my style). The good news is that my current project was chosen due to the brevity of my summer rotation. If I choose this lab at the end of my first year, I will get to do the genetics that I enjoy.

Well, now for the fun stuff... on the 4th of July, I went into Boston with my neighbor friend Phong (shown in picture).



The display of fireworks was by far the most impressive that I have ever seen in my entire life!! I really can't describe them well enough except to say that they were so good that about 40 minutes before the big show, there was a 10

minute preview. We watched the show from the shore of the Charles River. The skyline of Boston is shown in the picture here. We had a great time!



The group that went was some of Phong's friends from church. We sat in the middle of the street playing UNO, eating Oreos and drinking homemade margaritas from Nalgene bottles while waiting for the show to start. At the end of the night, there was about a one hour wait just to get onto the subway. Well, we decided that we were going to walk from downtown Boston, through Cambridge to another area (the name of which I have already forgotten). It took 2 hours to walk...which we obviously didn't expect, but I got to see a

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lot of the city. Since then, I've been to Boston once-although I am going this Friday and then again on Sunday to meet up with a friend from back home for the afternoon. My roommate and best friend Whitney (as seen in a picture of us at the Boston

Common) and I and neighbor Phong went into Boston to putt around for an afternoon. Boston Common is a huge park and is absolutely gorgeous! But more importantly, there is a certain culture here that involves a special beer during the summertime. It is called "summer ale" and we wanted to fit in with everyone else, so we went to the

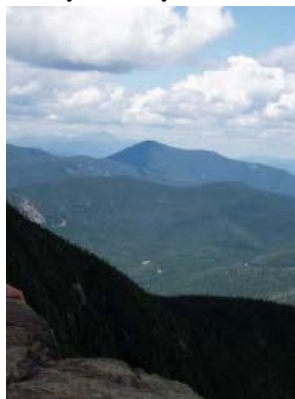


Boston Brewery to try this out. This beer is fruit-flavored. I got blueberry beer which had blueberries in it that never stop floating up-and-down in the glass. Whitney got

watermelon beer that had a chunk of watermelon on the glass (as if a lemon in ice tea). It was ok, but I'm more of a cosmo girl.

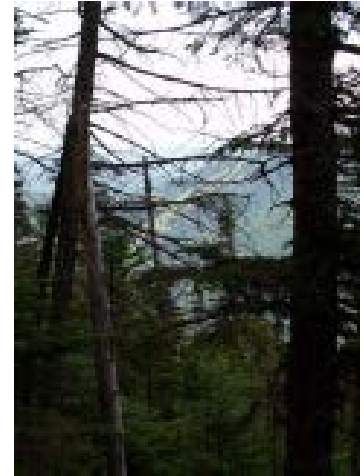
My most recent adventure involves the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Pretty incredible view huh? It ranks with the King's Canyon in my book. The main difference is that the trees are much smaller, but much more dense. It's actually pretty funny how we ended up going on this camping trip. I am currently in the market for a church.

Well, one of the churches that Whitney and I visited had a group of people our age that were headed up to New Hampshire for a camping trip. We decided

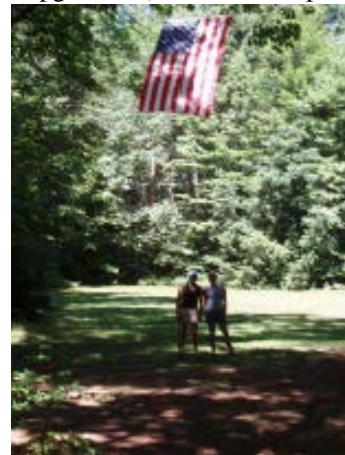


that we had nothing to lose by going so- after only meeting these people twice, we signed up to go. (One thing you should realize is that when you are over 3000 miles away from everything and everyone you know- you get friendly with people you've never met before quicker than you might at home).

Well, within 3 minutes of arriving at camp site (make a mental note that we had no shelter set up) we were hit with a torrential downpour. This is NOTHING like the rain that you get in San Diego. It poured and poured for hours with thunder and



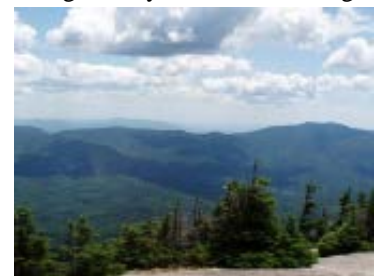
lightning to boot. We were able to set up a canopy in about 15 minutes but we got very wet and were not the happiest campers while the gusts of wind made the cold seem colder. Fortunately, the rains let up for about an hour and a half so that we could set up tents and play some Frisbee in this "ball field" at the entrance to the campground. (You can see a picture of Whitney and me



at the entrance to this field with a beautiful flag hanging at the entrance).

The rain was worth it though, because the next day was perfect. Zero humidity, perfect temperature in the mid-70's and incredible visibility from the summit of

Mt. Osceola. I've put in two pictures of the summit because it was breathtaking. Really—I can't wait to go back. The nice thing is that the White Mountains are only about 2.5 hours away and there is a lot of hiking nearby. The trails are pretty incredible as well.



After the hike (3 hours up and 2 hours down for

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a grand total of 12 miles and 2000 foot elevation change) we went swimming in a glacial ice melt lake. It really wasn't very cold and it saved my \$2.00 that a shower would have



cost me. The good news is- I made a couple of friends on the trip—so it made it all worth it. But that is the attitude that I have these days- I have

nothing to lose... so I'll try just about anything!

Well, now I've been home from the trip for about two weeks and I'm back to the grind. I go running at an amazing park with a one-mile trail. The

picture I've included is a good representation of what a good portion of the trail looks like. It's nice to run some laps there because it is so beautiful. On a heavier note-being so far from home, I am learning a lot about myself and about life outside of a comfort zone. It is my encouragement to all of my friends and cousins



to take chances and try new things that will take you far away from home. Not necessarily permanently, but for a time. It is worth things that are of greater value than of gold. I am not saying that this is easy, but it is a challenge that is shaping my character to something that it would not become if I had not taken this chance.

For those of you who do not have my contact information: here it is. Feel free to call, visit, mail letters or whatever... at any time. My apartment is huge, I have free nights after 7pm on my cell phone (I'm 3 hours ahead of you) and am always excited to hear from loved ones. **Michelle Hartman 55 Stanton St. #2 Worcester, MA 01606 Home 508-791-1236 Cell 508-579-2137 E-mail: mleehartman@yahoo.com** Love, Michelle **"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:7**

More about Curtis Hartman

As we reported in the July RFNL, Curtis and Susan briefly visited San Diego, and joined us at lunch on Saturday. We enjoyed seeing both, and learning more about future plans.



They will be back in San Diego as soon as Curtis graduates from the MI School at Fort Huachuca. We now have pictures from the graduation ceremony, as shown on page 5. Also, the going away party, when Curtis leaves for South Korea, will be on Saturday, August 13,

A bum Fathers Day in July

The July Fathers Day celebration turned out to be a bummer because Grandpa was sick, and hence a no-show. Because of the short notice a few showed up at the Mandarin Plaza restaurant, but Grandpa stayed at home. We were sorry for the problem, but there were some fathers there, so they celebrated. A few days later, when Grandpa had recovered, he and Grandma enjoyed a dine out dinner treat from Richard, Liz, and JJ. We thank them for a nice evening, which made up, to some degree, for the regular celebration which was lost due to illness.



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Robert and Karla tour the Great Northwest

We have the following report from Robert and Karla about their vacation trip. It is a continuation of the June RFNL story.

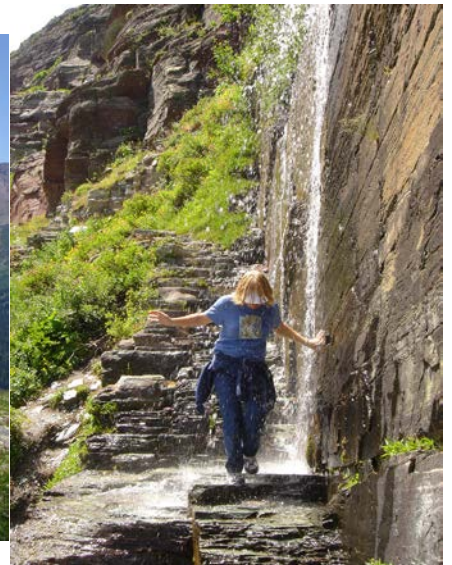


The next 2 days were travel days as we wound our way through the mountaintops of Oregon, Washington and Utah. We spent most of our time off the interstates and on the scenic highways of each state. It's kind of like having a 3D movie of America flashing before your eyes. At almost every corner we turned we were treated to new and wonderful sights. Once in Montana we entered Glacier



National Park, which is an Alpine like

park with large and small lakes, lots of rivers and wonderful waterfalls. We hiked 7 miles to visit the lake and falls shown below. Since our RV was too long to go over the "Going to the Sun Road" (21' restriction) we drove around the park (rather than over it) to the east side where we camped for the night. The next day we visited the Many Glaciers portion of the park where we hiked over 11 miles of up hill (both ways!) to see waterfalls, glaciers and a frozen lake. Half way up the mountain you had to walk through a small waterfall to continue along the trail. The picture below shows how Karla did it with style. After three hours of climbing we came upon a beautiful frozen lake with icebergs and a waterfall from the run-off of the glacier high above. Even though it was a hard climb it was well worth the trip. Best of all was that the remainder of the hike was all down hill and only took two hours to complete. Even though the area had lots of grizzly bears roaming about we were lucky enough not to run across



any. But we sure kept our eyes out for

them when we saw a sign at the beginning of the trail that basically said:

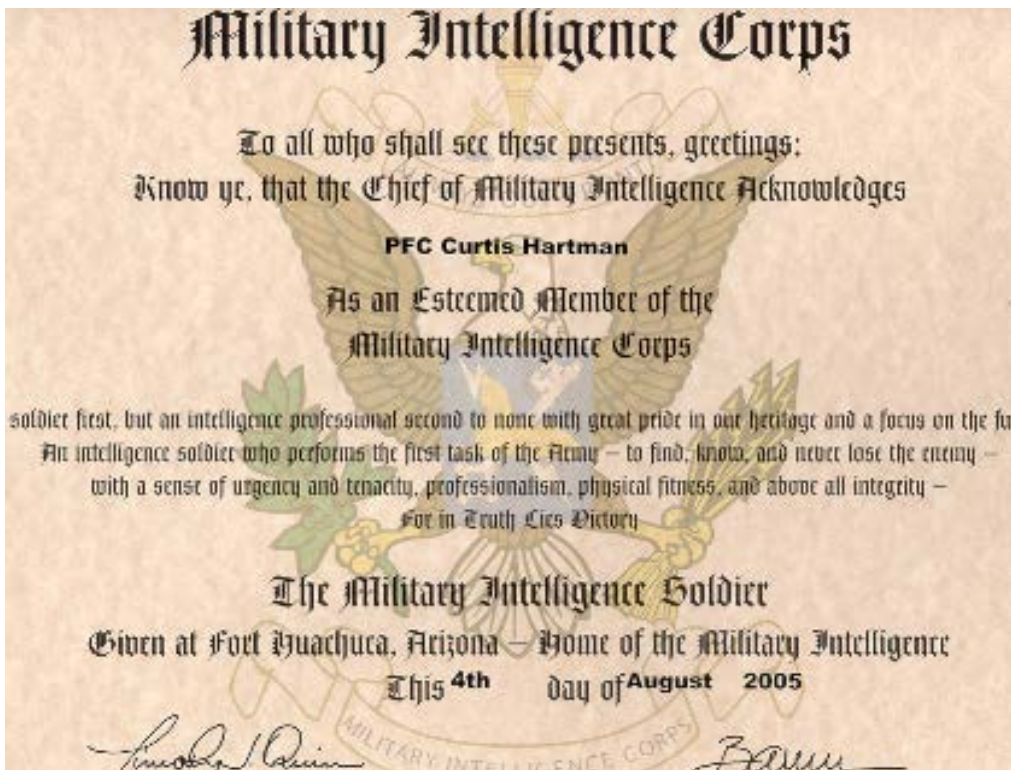
WARNING - ENTERING GRIZZLY COUNTRY... Bears have injured and killed visitors and may attack without warning and for no apparent reason... There is no guarantee of your safety.

Kind of gives you that feeling like "are we sure we want to do this?" Anyways, the photos give you an idea of the climb we made. We started our hike just to the left of the third lake and climbed over 1,600 feet in 5.5 miles. Karla did great! All of her working out at the gym has paid off and she should be proud of her accomplishments! Once back at our home on wheels we had a well-deserved lunch (Grandpa special Hot Dogs and beer, Diet Pepsi for me) then started our trip back home.

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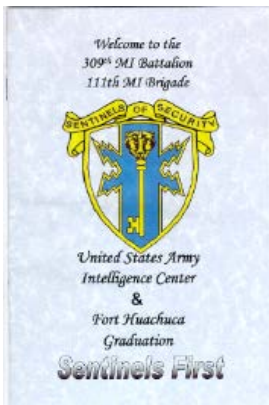
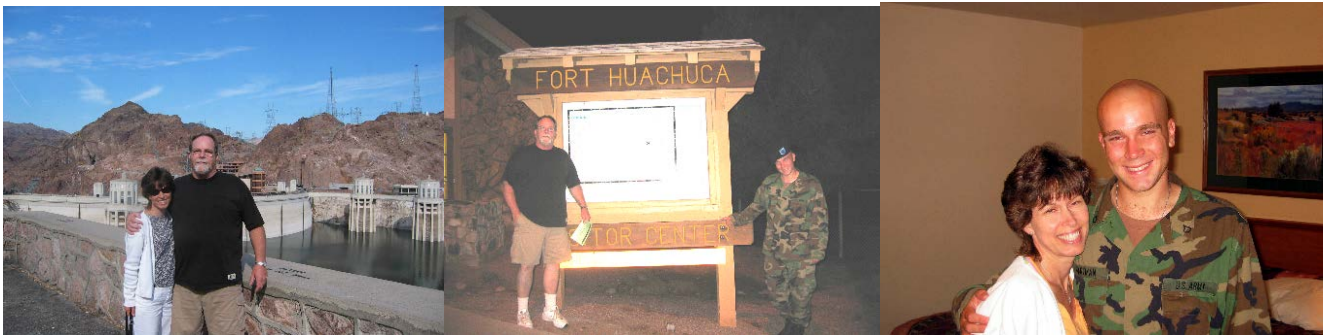
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PFC CURTIS HARTMAN GRADUATES FROM U.S. ARMY INTELLIGENCE SCHOOL – JOINS MILITARY INTELLIGENCE CORPS

As you can see from the two documents illustrated on the prior page, Curtis has successfully completed the requirements of the Counterintelligence Agent Course on August 4, 2005, and has joined the U.S. Intelligence Corps. Birdy and Bruce drove over to Fort Huachuca, Arizona, to enjoy the ceremony. They were joined by Susan and her parents, and all were thrilled and proud to see Curtis receive his diplomas and get ready for his first assignment, in South Korea. Birdy took lots of pictures, some of which we reproduce as follows.



We all are looking forward to seeing Curtis and Susan on the 13th, so we can get all of the latest news on their plans. And finally, of course, we wish them all the best in the coming exciting years.