



March 2015

Issue No: 289

Grayson
Bradley
Benesch
Joins the
Family!



Welcome Grayson!

Hi Family!

Lauren, Holden, and I are pleased to announce the birth of Grayson Bradley Benesch! He was born on Sunday, February 15th at 8:53pm a healthy 6lbs 12oz, to an exhausted Mom, a very pleased Dad, and a waiting room full of excited (and also exhausted) Grandparents and Sibling. It was quite the experience to say the least.

Lauren had been feeling contractions all week. I would always anxiously ask, "are they real contractions or just Braxton Hicks" (false labor pains) to which Lauren would always shrug and say "I don't know, but they hurt!" 3 ½ years ago, in spite of weeks of Bradley Method birthing classes, Holden was a planned C-section, so this was our first experience with labor pains, and waiting, and cleaning the house, and waiting, and packing bags, and waiting, and more cleaning (the house was never clean enough – I blame Holden.)

On Friday night the 13th, the contractions started to come more regularly. We both were able to sleep that night, but not as comfortably as normal. The morning of the 14th, which was Grayson's actual due date, things were moving along to the point where Lauren was fairly certain it was the day. She booked her mom, Alix, a flight down from San Francisco that morning, and we tried to do everything we could to keep busy. My parents were nice enough to pick up Alix from the airport and we all met at our house in Rancho Bernardo. Contractions were coming around every 5 minutes, but only lasting 30 seconds or so. Still, Lauren was uncomfortable and had already felt like she had been in labor for a solid 12 hours.

Because it was Valentines Day, my parents eventually took off and went to a romantic dinner at Pei We. Not to be outdone, Lauren and I (and Holden and Alix) decided on our own ro-mantic dinner at Souplantation, which we were able to share with half of the families in Rancho Bernardo. It took about 5 minutes or so before Lauren said we had to get out of there. She was still having regular contractions, and the smells and sounds of the RB Souplantation were making the nausea even worse.





Now I have already stated that this was our first time at this labor business, and the guidelines for when to make the call to actually go to the hospital are cryptic at best (regular contractions every 4-5 minutes that are strong enough where you can't talk through them.) The iPhone app we were using to measure contractions was already giving us the scary warning to "go the hospital or call 911 if no one can drive!" Because we were a solid 30 minutes from the hospital, and I didn't want to have to name my son Subaru Impreza, we decided it was time go. Thinking back now, I'm sure the nurses who saw us excitedly walk into labor and delivery with smiles on our faces knew they would be sending us home. It took about 2 hours for the nurses to tell us that Lauren wasn't even dilated. At that point it was 1:00 AM, Lauren had been laboring for around 20 hours, and we both felt a little defeated on the long drive back to RB.



The next morning things got real. The contractions went from exciting labor pains to - don't touch me or talk to me this hurts. Around 11am after some serious nausea and again the fear that we would be having the baby in the car, we set off for the Encinitas Scripps L&D. After another 6 hours where the Bradley Method classes were put to good use, and a final 2 hours where modern medicine provided some much needed assistance, Grayson Benesch was finally born. I can't tell you how amazing Lauren was through the whole experience. Even without a full meal or decent sleep for 24 hours she still handled every contraction like a champ. I will never forget dancing to Jack Johnson and Bruno Mars trying to do whatever we could to get Grayson to join us.

I really want to thank our parents for keeping Holden happy and entertained through the 2 days we were at the hospital. We were probably the most nervous about how he was going to react to us in the hospital overnight, but his grandparents made it such a positive experience for him that it made it much easier for us to relax and enjoy the experience. He has taken to being an older brother better than any of us could have imagined. Also, thank you to Bud and Margaret who let the gang hang out at their house while we were dancing away, and who also stopped by and dropped off flowers (sorry that we were busy with

the nurse!) We are excited to see everyone at the next family event and to formally introduce Grayson Benesch!

Dustin



Grandpa Frank remembers growing up...

Editor's note: The following is a reprinting of Grandpa Frank's notes on Fremont Ohio, while many of us remember this story, we thought some of the younger generations could now learn to appreciate how life was back in the 1920s. In contrast Margaret has added notes about Mission Hills where the second generation of Riels grew up.

The Place and the Time Fremont, Ohio, 1921 - 1941

The Community

The structure of any small Midwestern town can be visualized by thinking of three concentric circles arranged around a small central area as in a target pattern. The "bull's eye" represents the downtown business area, the first concentric ring the residential area, the second the suburban area, and the outer ring the farming area. If a series of such plots were laid out in a, somewhat irregular pattern, with some overlapping of the outer rings, and the "bull's eye" areas labeled with town names, one would have a reasonably good outline of the rural Midwest.

Community History

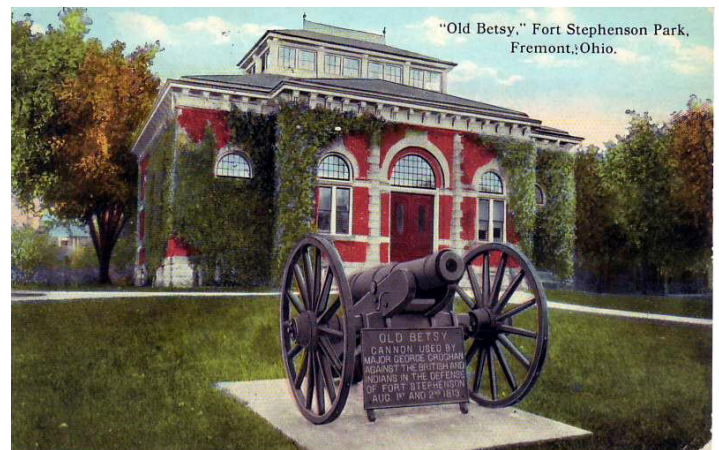
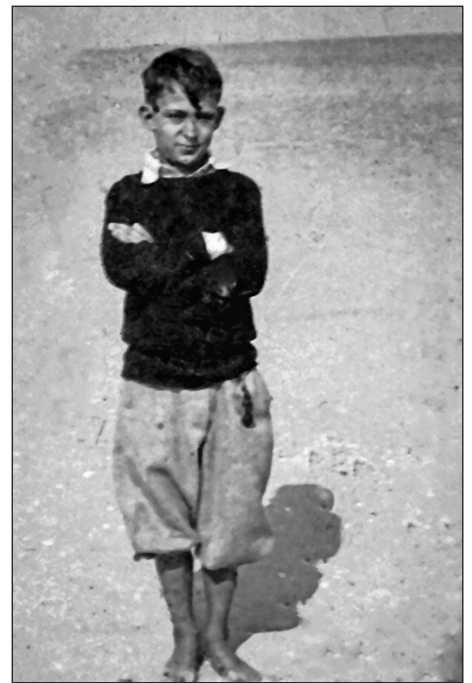
As one who is familiar with American history might suspect Fremont was named after the explorer John C. Fremont, sometimes called the "pathfinder" for his exploits in defining pathways from the Midwest to the Western United States. However the original settlement was Fort Stevenson built during the war of 1812. In 1813 a force of about 1,000 British and Indians laid siege to a force of about 150 Americans led by Maj. George Croghan. In addition to the 150 defenders, Maj. Croghan had at his disposal one cannon referred to as "Old Betsy", so the story goes.

In order to confuse the enemy it is reported that after firing a few rounds from one position Old Betsy was quickly moved to a new position and a few more rounds were set off. The cannon was then moved once again, to a third position, and several additional rounds were fired. This process of moving, firing a few rounds, and then moving at random to a new position was continued, and after a while the enemy was deceived into thinking that they were

facing a heavily fortified position. Consequently, they prudently decided to withdraw. Old Betsy, her place in history assured, now occupies a prominent place in the center of a small downtown park which represents the original position of Fort Stevenson.

The same park contains a monument to Maj. Croghan, along with one of the more important buildings in my youth, the public library. The street fronting the library apparently is named Croghan Street, and a block further downtown is a local bank named after the gallant Major. To my knowledge, this concludes the sum total of significant history in Fremont.

Fremont's only other claim to fame is that it once was the home of Rutherford Birchard Hayes, the 19th President of the United States. Although not a native of Fremont, President Hayes worked there briefly before entering politics and returned there to live out his life. He and his wife are buried in a lovely large park called Spiegel Grove. The park also contains a museum and large stands of elm, maple, and oak trees. It was a favorite playground of mine, and will reappear as the setting of many activities of my youth.



Mission Hills, the home community of the Riels



The Riels grew up in a lovely home (built in 1913) in the heart of the Mission Hills Historic District. We provide a bit of history that might be news even to the Riel children.

The first person to own land in Mission Hills was Captain Henry James Johnston. He was the Captain of the Pacific Coast Steamship Company's S.S. Orizaba. The Orizaba was a wooden side-wheel ferryboat steamship that operated between San Francisco and San Diego beginning in 1865. Johnston looked up at the barren hills overlooking the harbor and thought it would be a great place to retire. On February 2, 1869, Captain Johnston bought 65-plus acres for \$.25 per acre, a grand total of \$16.25. Considering it to be more land than he needed, he immediately sold half of the property to his first mate Ormsby Hite for \$7.50. These lands are today known as Mission Hills.

Captain Johnston didn't live long enough to retire, dying on December 28, 1878 in SF and left the property to his wife Ellen Johnston. Ellen never visited San Diego, and the land passed on to her daughter Sarah Johnston Cox Miller who did settle here and named the land Johnston Heights in honor of her father. In 1887 she built a Victorian house on the highest promontory of the land. She named the house Villa Orizaba after her father's steamship, and incorporated parts salvaged from the old ship many, still remain in that house today.



Until 1907 the house stood amidst scrub chaparral with only a few small dairies and chicken ranches around it. An economic depression in the 1890s had thwarted efforts to develop the property into a residential neighborhood. Sarah's son Henry Leverett Miller wasn't a fan of his mother's Victorian house. He moved the house to its current location and remodeled it about 30 years after it was built. It is the historically designated Prairie style house you see today at 2036 Orizaba Street. Henry Leverett Miller continued efforts to develop the land. He changed the street grading and the street names and redrew lot lines. He changed Johnston Road to Sunset Boulevard and named his new subdivision Inspiration Heights. He is responsible for the stucco pillars along Sunset and the iconic palm trees lining the street, all meant to promote his new subdivision. We lived a few blocks off of Sunset and growing up I always wondered what was inside those mysterious pillar structures. At least I can say they "inspired" curiosity.

One of the passengers brought to San Diego on the S.S. Orizaba was Kate Sessions. She arrived in 1884 and became a schoolteacher at what is now San Diego High School (the School that Richard and Eddie attended). After being locked into a locker as a prank by mischievous high school boys, Kate decided to nurture plants rather than children. She is responsible for most of the planting in Balboa Park, but she was a heavy investor in early Mission Hills property. She began buying land here in 1903 and spent the next 24 years living and/or working here. Did you know that a trolley was part of the story?



Sessions was instrumental in convincing John Spreckels to extend the downtown trolley line into Mission hills running down Fort Stockton. John D. Speckles turned a failed streetcar business into the San Diego Electric Railway Company. He was convinced that his success would depend on more riders and more fares, so he allowed his railway to expand where the real estate builders wanted it to go and Mission Hills was one of these places that was starting to grow.

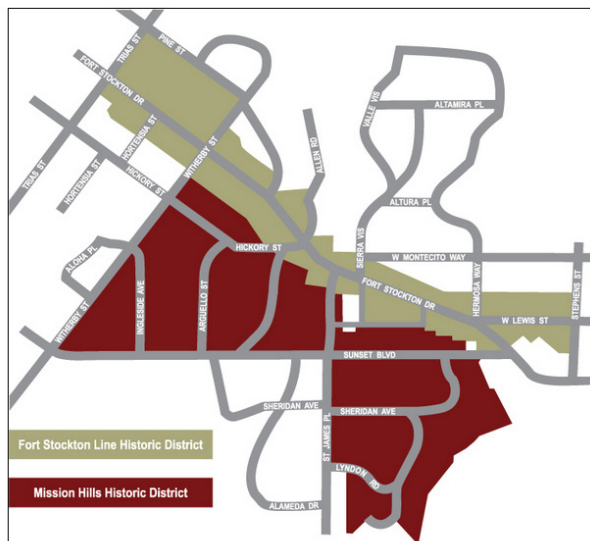
The streetcar was new technology and became a fixture of this neighborhood until their retirement in 1939, a little over a decade before the Riels would settle in Mission Hills in 1954. This increased the value of the property Sessions owned and made the neighborhood a desirable place to live, one of the first streetcar suburbs. Later she founded the Mission Hills Nursery, which is still an active business. The Riel kids walked past and often through the nursery on the way to and from school.



George White Marston came to San Diego in 1870 at the age of 20 and became a store clerk. He and a partner opened a general store in 1873, and when they split the business in 1878, George kept the dry goods portion. By the 1890s, Mr. Marston was a wealthy man and an influential civic-minded citizen who served on the City Council and ran unsuccessfully for mayor. As a Progressive, he worked to prevent developers and land speculators from taking over City Park (Balboa Park). George Marston purchased the land for Presidio Park, built the building and gave it to the City. His generosity and spirit left an indelible mark on all of San Diego, but Mission Hills particularly. The Riel kids would regularly go to Presidio Park to play on Sundays. Ask your parents to tell you about, rolling down the hills, ice sliding and the changes to the park.

The Progressives believed in residential areas surrounding parks and were proponents of city planning by a landscape architect named John Nolen. Although Nolen's plan for San Diego was never implemented because of resistance within the City, the Progressives took Nolen's ideas and began buying up property in Mission Hills to develop the area using his guidelines. This meant a hierarchy of street widths that followed the natural terrain of the land.

Mission Hills was officially born on January 20, 1908 when subdivision map #1115 was filed at the County Recorder's Office. But it was the confluence of many events that created it:



Map shows the two approved historic districts.

- The land was ripe for development near to the crowded urban area of San Diego.
- Modern thinkers with the money and influence to do so, wanted to create a model community.
- The 1915 Panama-California Exposition brought visitors who settled, and craftsmen to build beautiful homes
- Emerging technology (the automobile, the trolley, electricity, improved plumbing, water and sewer, and the telephone) made suburban living attractive and accessible.

Mission hills was developed in the early 20th century and most of the houses are still from that era, often carefully preserved and restored. If you walk around the the area, you will see that many of the houses have historical markers on them. The Riels lived in 1877 Lyndon Road from 1953 to about 1980. The house has a colorful history that Dad shared in a past RFNL. Later, on July 15, 2007 the Praire style home that the Riels grow up was declared an historical building...and not just because we lived in it. You can see the plaque on the side of the door if you drive by.





Last fall David and Megan asked me if I would take their engagement pictures, honored, I happily accepted. When I asked where they would like to do this, suggesting maybe the beach, Balboa Park, the mountains, etc., I found out that they wanted a more non-traditional look. They wanted some-thing more unique, so I suggested the Mud Caves in Borrego Spring State park. After checking out some photos on-line they felt it was the perfect place.

While you can reach the caves with a truck or even a not too low to the ground car, it is best visited by the use of a 4-wheeled vehicle. Fortunately we have a Jeep! So off we went (Karla too) to take some pictures inside and around the caves.

We had a great time and the pictures didn't turn out to bad either. But, how can you go wrong with such an attractive couple to shoot. There are more posted on face book and even a video but you will have to get that from Megan. So... Who's next???



Saving the World

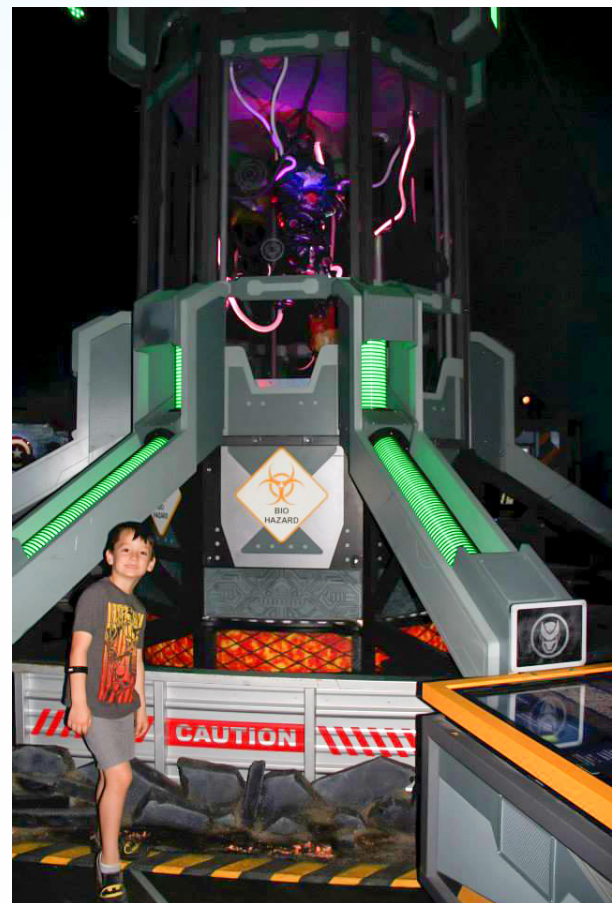
By Bruce Hartman

Since this past Valentine's Day the world is a much safer place to live thanks to Matt and Corbin!

If you were to consolidate all the evil and dastardly deeds in the world, past and present, from the likes of the 3rd Reich, ISIS, al Qaeda, Hezbollah and the Obama Administration you would not reach the terrible threat level that descended down on the Del Mar Fairgrounds for two weeks this past February.

For those of you that were unaware, ultimate "Bad Guy" Red Skull, one of Hydra's worst of the worst, created a group of super "Bad Guys" known as the Adaptoids. This army of Adaptoids was able to steal and replicate the superpowers of the entire Marvel Superhero gang including: Spider-Man, Black Widow, Captain America, Hulk, Thor, Iron Man and my personal favorite, Wolverine. This rendered our superheros powerless against the Adaptoids leaving open the possibility of Hydra taking over the world!

Super Corbin, older brother Matthew, along with Super Grammy and Pop-Pop embarked on a mission to protect the planet. As S.H.I.E.L.D.'s newest recruits, we swung with Spider-Man, smashed with Hulk, and flew with Iron Man in their electronic wizardry inside tent domes spread over two acres of the Fairgrounds parking lot. As agents of S.H.I.E.L.D in training we went through "boot camp" and at least 6 or 7 various levels of training from flying to smash-



ing. Some of the lines were a little long but well worth the wait by Matt and Corbin's recount. We took a break at mid-day for a little rest and refueling with a Diet Coke and a plate of nacho's only to get right back to the action.

The finale was a 4-D motion theater where we had an epic battle with the Adaptoids. All the new recruits were called upon to raise our arms clad with the power bands we were given to wear all day. The power from our arm bands was focused through Iron Man and he was able to explode the head of the Adaptoid with his powerful beams of something and the planet was saved! At that very moment we all became full-fledged Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D... Yes, even Birdy!

After hours of rigorous training and ultimately saving the world (no big deal) we headed into Del Mar for a well deserved late lunch at a Mexican restaurant after which we headed south and delivered the new agents of S.H.I.E.L.D home to their parents. It was a fun day spent with our two west coast grandson's! Oh... and btw, no experience like this is complete without a stop in the Marvel gift and souvenir shop sporting tee shirts, comic books and action figures at OMG prices! But hey, they're worth it!



Quick Getaways: Catalina

By Bruce Hartman



I decided to book something new and different for three days of the week following Presidents Day. For Francis Parker School this is referred to as "Ski Break" (like they don't already get enough time off, they decided they need to close the school for families to go skiing. Don't get me going on this subject!)

Anyway, I booked a couple nights on the island of Catalina. Birdy and I have never been there so I thought it might be a fun getaway. I found a place with mini-suites at an incredible rate. I was careful to include the fact that I have limited mobility and required a ground floor room and use an electric scooter to get around. This apparently fell on deaf ears. Upon our arrival we found that there were stairs everywhere and I could not even get to the lobby to talk to them. Birdy and our very friendly taxi driver talked the hotel into a complete refund and, for the moment, we found ourselves homeless!

As I said, our cab driver was the nicest man ever and offered to take us to a couple places he thought we might like and that he knew were accessible. The first place we went was booked up. I was beginning to worry a bit, but onward



we went to the Hotel Metropole. They were very accommodating and had a room ready and waiting for us, thank God! With a huge sigh of relief we checked in and dropped our bags in the room and unpacked for a few days of fun. The Hotel Metropole had a customer rating with twice the number of stars as the original place I had booked and was smack-dab center of town. It was also twice the price...but worth every penny of it! Birdy is a bit of a princess when it comes to hotel rooms (I know, shocker, right?) so this was a win all the way around!

Catalina is a cute little town that is exceptionally clean and well kept. It is a fun, inexpensive tourist trap from end to end. Gift shops and specialty shops abound as well as restaurants of every flavor. We had lunch right away and decided to rent a golf cart for a couple hours to get our lay of the land. That was a lot of fun to see the



entire (inhabited) part of the island driving through the “commercial” area where the Vons Grocery warehouse and the island power plant are hidden away. Then we went up in the hills to the “suburbs” where many local workers live in converted WWII Quonset hut barracks. Further up the road you find yourself among some of the beautiful million dollar plus homes with awesome views of the ocean and the town. Then back down the hill into town where you find all the cute cottage sized housing crammed together side by side...much like old Ocean Beach back in the day. There are very few cars on the island since everyone uses golf carts to get around...there are literally hundreds if not thousands of little gas powered golf carts everywhere.

The second day we went on a (fake) submarine that was awesome! It is really just a boat made to look like a sub. You are below the surface of the water peering out large porthole windows. They run out to the reef and kelp forest where you see more fish than you can imagine. The water is so clear and so full of sea life that it is hard to believe you are only 20 miles or so away from our So-Cal coast line. We were so happy that we decided to do this ever-so-touristy adventure...truly a highlight of the trip. Next of course, it was time to eat again! You can call

us anything you want except “late for lunch or dinner”!!!

We did a lot of shopping...but that goes without saying, remember I was with Birdy who operates under the guise that we have to find just the right thing for Listy! This scam has been in place for the last 30-some years so it isn't going to change anytime soon.

On the last day we decided to do the golf cart again since we enjoyed seeing everything so much. We cruised the entire island for three hours and took in some awesome sights (a huge deer just happened to stroll right in front of us but moved too quickly for Birdy to get a picture of it). Did I mention the restaurants? Oh yeah, we had to have a crab salad and an order of fish & chips! We did a lot of walking/scootering and really got to know the town well.

Finally, in the late afternoon, it was time to board the Catalina Express Ferry for Dana Point and enjoyed happy hour on-board with a small bottle of wine and a bag of pretzels. We were also lucky enough to get a peek at a Fin Whale that was cruising by our ship on our voyage home. Look at that, whale watching without having to pay for it! The drive home from Dana Point was clear sailing and we were home in only a bit over an hour. We had a really great time on our mini vacation. I would recommend Catalina to anyone. It is relatively inexpensive and a lot of fun right in our own back yard. One might say... "and a good time was had by all."



Congratulations Jeff!

Jeff will be receiving recognition from the San Diego Democratic Party in the form of a "Chair Award Recipient" at the 35th Annual Roosevelt Dinner & Awards Ceremony, this year titled "Setting the Stage." The Party's biggest event of the year, "Setting the Stage" will unite over 700 activists, candidates, elected officials, and volunteers to celebrate 2014 and look forward to 2016. They will be presenting awards to standout Democrats of the last year and also commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. The event will be held on April 11th at the Hilton Bayfront in downtown San Diego.

Honor JEFF BENESCH Chair Award Recipient
35th Annual Eleanor & Franklin D. Roosevelt Dinner



Saturday, April 11th, 2015
Hilton San Diego Bayfront
One Park Boulevard, San Diego, 92101
6PM Reception & Silent Auction
7pm Dinner and Awards Program

Mark your calendars for the San Diego County Democratic Party's 35th Annual Roosevelt Dinner. This is your opportunity to meet Democrats from across the county and our elected officials. This is a fun-filled gala held at the beautiful Hilton San Diego Bayfront hotel. As a club member, you can buy

To celebrate the last day in February, and because it was a Saturday, the Riel lunch gang spent the afternoon at the zoo. Even though it was a bit cloudy the sun did peek through once and awhile. It was a nice outing and Grandma Edith, who really enjoyed herself as it brought back many memories of the Riel family Sundays that were spent at the zoo.

Below is a picture of the menu where Corbin wrote a report about their trip. He wrote, "I went to the zoo with grame and hr mom and Lise (Listy) and Jef and End (Ed) and At Carl (aunt Carol).



This report now makes Corbin our youngest RFNL reporter ever!

FAMILY SHORTS

News from the Mehan Family...

It is not really news that Bud and Margaret made the trip back to Colorado to see Michael, Ashley and Baby Em. It is hard for them to go much more than a month without hearing the laughter and seeing the bright round blue eyes of Emily (Parental laughter is pretty cool too). And they had a wonderful time playing with Emily's new toys, taking her to the park, and teaching her to walk. They were having so much fun that they sometimes forgot some of the minor details, like scheduled naps, although Emily didn't seem to mind all that much. It is so lovely to watch your kid play with their kid. This is one of the joys of grand parenting that we did not anticipate.



There was great news that we received from Michael shortly after we left, and after he left for Boston. You might recall that Michael, who lives in Colorado, works as a Senior Scientist at Boston Heart Diagnostics. He travels there a week out of every month. At the company wide meeting, they honor one employee per quarter and one employee for the year. Michael was the Employee of the Year singled out for the work he does in his department and across the company. In his department he developed a cardiovascular risk algorithm based on the Boston Heart tests. These procedures generate risk scores which appear on the report given to patients to help them make sense of, and make decisions about, their health. Michael has also solved problems for colleagues outside of his department. He initiated the automation of the quality assurance process, performed statistical analyses, and developed a way to demonstrate clinical utility for sales and billing. We are very proud of Michael -- and we are so in love with his family.