

Welcome Baby Tess!!!!

These Are The Days...

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Now we all know what the BIG news is this issue however, something in me insists that we go in order...starting with December of last year.



Around the beginning of the month a new family moved into our ward, which isn't in itself a rare occurrence but this particular case is special. They are Jed, Ashley and Zeke Elder. Zeke is two years old and Ashley was due to have a baby girl just ten days after us. They moved into our apartment complex, in a third floor apartment just like ours. Ashley and I have had a good time getting together so that Noah and Zeke could play and we've enjoyed having them so close by.

Noah had his eighteen-month check up on the 6th of this month and he's just growing and growing. He was 24lbs. 14oz. and 34½ inches tall. He's right on track and Dr. Vaughn didn't seem to think that his head was big enough to warrant panic.



I can't remember when my doctors appointments were this month, but we continued to measure bigger that we should and I started to get really excited about having her early...but more on that later.

The Relief Society progressive dinner was on the 7th of this month. Jared helped me make about seven thousand pecan tarts and I had a good time visiting with everybody.

On the 11th of December Wendy, Ashley and I went on a little



girls only shopping trip. We left the guys with the kids and had a really good time finishing our Christmas shopping. Jed brought over his Xbox and they had a good time entertaining the kids.



Jared's work Christmas party was also on the 11th. We left Noah with my visiting teacher Sandy and rode into Denver with Anthony and Wendy. Noah apparently did really well and they said that they had a lot of fun with him. I had a hard time leaving him, but I guess it all worked out in the end. I can't remember too much about the food, but I do remember that they had really good macaroon cookies on the way out and I had quite a few of those. There were about a million people there so we didn't have time to do a lot of the cool things that they had there-like caricatures and carriage rides-since we had told Sandy that we would be back around 10:30 and there just wasn't enough time. We felt a

little bad dragging Anthony and Wendy home before they got a chance to do any of the fun stuff either but they didn't seem to mind.

Jared sang in a men's quartet at the stake Christmas fireside. They sang "Rise Up Shepherd," and sounded really good. The program was nice and we were glad that we got to see as much of it as we did.



We celebrated our 3rd anniversary this month too. I can't believe that it has been three years already. Jared took

the day off work and we ordered pizza after Noah was in bed. I love it when he gets to be home all day.

The ward Christmas party was on the 17th and it was a lot of fun. Santa and Mrs. Claus were there and I must say they turned out a brilliant performance...Noah was a little shy when he was on Santa's lap but as soon as he jumped down he turned around and hammed it up for the cameras. The food was good and we had a really good time.



Jared and I have decided that Christmas this year was the best that either of us can remember. We had so much fun with the whole thing. Noah got a basketball hoop and a ball pit from Santa, who

wasn't thinking about floor space when he went shopping...Jared and I got him a little piano and a few other things that I can't think of right now and he got a huge bear, a new quilt, new sneakers and a stack of books from his grandparents. He has had a good time with all of his new toys. Jared got me a new coat, really nice classic black pea coat, and I bought him a drill. We ran out of tape in the video camera but we still managed to get a few minutes of Noah opening stuff. All in all the whole day was just great.



On the 27th we started having problems with the outlet that is wired to the switch in Noah's room. The breaker kept tripping and we couldn't get it to stop. The maintenance guy, also named Noah, came and replaced the switch and the outlet and still couldn't get it to work...three visits later he said that if he didn't get it fixed this time he was quitting. Turns out that there is a small plastic tab on the top and bottom of the outlet that you have to pop out if it is wired to a switch, or something like that, and now we know. In the words of Noah the maintenance man, "I guess you learn something new everyday; or rather every three days."

We started off January with Sherry's birthday on the 1st. We sent a copy of a book called Letters that is a collection of letters written by Sister Hinkley to various people.



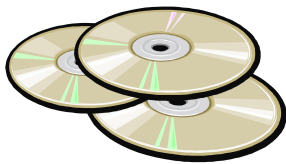
For New Years Eve we got Olive Garden takeouts and

watched something on TV, neither one of us can remember what. Dinner was

really good even if it gave me horrible heartburn and since we went take out style we got appetizers and dessert too.

Our block time changed to nine this year...I am not fond of nine o' clock church and that is all that I have to say about that.

I had my 36-week check up on the 6th of January. This was the appointment that she had said that they would do an ultrasound and start thinking about an earlier induction if I was still measuring big. I was excited to say the least. Surprise surprise everything turned out perfectly normal. Which was really for the better. So we made an appointment to be induced just a week shy of her due date and kept on waiting...



We took the tape with the home movies to Sam's Club and had it put onto DVD in hopes that we would be able to edit it ourselves on the computer. Unfortunately we lack both hardware and software as well as the money needed to buy either. But on the plus side, it is nicer to have them on DVD and maybe someday we'll have all the stuff we need to make fancy home movies from our stuff.

Sometime this month we started to notice that the cat was really chewing on herself and as a result her hair was starting to come out. In fact she was almost naked from her armpits down, as you can imagine she looked really stupid. We got some stuff from the vet that was supposed to help with the itching and promised to bring her in when we were done having a baby.

The elder's quorum started playing basketball on the 14th of this month. Jared has had a good time with it so far. For some reason unknown to all the sisters in the ward they are playing on Friday nights...for the next couple months. Wendy came over and we visited while the boys played basketball.



Happy birthday to Dad on the 17th and Stacy Jean on the 15th; I sent Stacy a card and we got Dad one of the self mixing Pampered Chef pitchers him to make cold chocolate milk with.

It's A Girl...

Now to the big news...Tess is here. Dad came out on the 24th and stayed at home with Noah and Jared and I headed to the hospital early the next morning. The whole thing went really fast. The doctor broke my water at 12:30 and Tess was born just an hour later. I was up and about just a few hours afterwards and we went home the very next day. So here's the specifics...

Tess Eliza Crookston
born January 25, 2005
at 1:36 PM
6 lbs. 15 oz.
20 1/4 inches long



She's been an absolute joy so far and I am feeling great. She's a much better nurser than Noah ever was, even though we had a little trouble getting her started...She sleeps pretty well during the day, but she doesn't seem to like the bassinet. We'll work on that...

She is just the prettiest little girl. We had forgotten how little they are and Noah seems like a giant now. It was just like people had said, 'you go to the hospital to have a baby and while you are there your toddler gains twenty pounds and grows six inches.' He seems like such a big kid now. He has been really good with her so far, even though he wasn't really interested at the hospital. He gives her kisses and knows who the "baby" is but he is still having a little trouble pronouncing Tess.



Mom came out the Thursday after she was born and we got to hang out for a little bit. It was really nice to have them

here and the help was greatly appreciated. It made our lives a lot easier to have Dad here to look after Noah so that Jared could be with me. We were all sad when they had to go and Noah really misses playing with Grandpa.

We took Tess in to see the pediatrician on the 28th and she was doing really well. He said that she was a little jaundiced but not enough to cause concern. Everything else looked great and she is doing really well.

Exciting Noah News

As far as highlights on Noah's latest doings...



He has started running, everywhere, really fast.

Which has its ups and downs.

Among its downs being that his head tends to get ahead of him and slam into things. He's getting to be a typical little boy with his bruised up shins and forehead. You can't help but smile while he runs around in true little boy fashion shrieking at the top of his little lungs.



Noah can count to six all by himself and knows a few of the letters of the alphabet, namely B, C, D, G, I, O, P, T, W and Y.

He has also started doing a really cute thing where he sort of scolds himself. When he does something that he knows he isn't supposed to he says, "Noah." He sounds just like Jared and I, the same tone and inflection and everything...it is so cute.



Noah also brought his first piece of fridge art home from the nursery a few days before Christmas. Jared and I were thrilled to death with it! We love having fridge art!

Well folks I think that that about does it...and only 7 days late. Until next time.