

Southwest Tour

International Folk Dance
Ensemble

Summer 2012



The Gathering

Attaches tes Bottines- French Canada

Steppin- USA

Keltatack- Ireland

Southern Reflections- USA

Orange Blossom Special- USA

Suzy- USA

Szaszesacasi Cigany Tancok- Romania

Mairi's Wedding- Scotland

Nagada Nagada- India

Bharata Natyam- India

Lucinici- Slovak Republic

El Cascabel- Mexico

Veracruz & Jalisco- Mexico

Magyorok Tancok- Hungary

Volyn- Ukraine

Ukraine, My Ukraine- Ukraine

Irish Blessing- Ireland

Hopak- Ukraine

The Team



Folk Dance Ensemble

Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah USA



Aaron Haines (band)

Favorite indoor activity: Tabling (climbing around a table without touching the ground)

Number one hated thing: buttons (I'm serious)

Name Change to: Roger, not Rager, but Rahjah (with a British accent!)



Alina Geslison (band)

Best Party: Pool party, good music, good food

Desires to learn: play saxophone, scuba diving, drive a motorcycle

Got in trouble as a child by: not practicing, taking off/running away as a small child



Alex Rudd (dancer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: sand volleyball

Most hated chore: raking leaves

Desires to learn: Stunt car driver



Amber Shepherd (dancer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: ultimate frisbee 4 shore!

Best Party: DANCE PARTY RAVE

Name Change to: Autumn

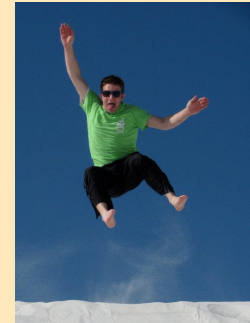


Alex Vincent (band)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: Playing music with people

Desires to learn: how to play the hurdy-gurdy proficiently

Name Change to: Ziggy



Brian Francis (dancer)

Favorite outdoor activity: Mt. biking

Best Party: sky diving, mt biking, white water rafting

Name Change to: White Panda



Brittney Leavitt (dancer)

Number one hated thing: fruit soup

Best Party: it would have twinkly lights

Name Change to: (last name) Wride :) one day!

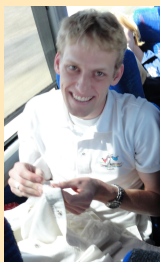


Danielle Murray (dancer)

Best Party: BBQ, bluegrass and big band music

Reincarnated as: Harry Potter character

Got in trouble as a child by: I told a lie in 1st grade about my Dad falling off a boat and being stabbed in the stomach by a narwhale on a whale-watching boat



Christopher Gallacher (dancer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity:

soccer/snowboarding

Best Party: Being surrounded by all of the great people who have influenced my life

Got in trouble as a child by: throwing tantrums



Doug Olson (techie)

Number one hated thing: Overrated stuff (like Twilight Novels)

Best Party: Words couldn't describe the sounds you'd hear

Got in trouble as a child by: Overnight firework trafficking, throwing tacos at cars



Cody Phillips (dancer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: Miranda-ing

Number one hated thing: haters. Back-off

Got in trouble as a child by: cutting people off while singing duets with them



Drew Wilde (dancer)

Best Party: Rolling in Turkish delight/throwing rocks

Name Change to: Clooney Pitt Gusling Hemsworth Wilde

Got in trouble as a child by: Staring. I still stare actually



Ed Tyler (techie)

Most hated chore: Tech Work

Number one hated thing: Folk dance blacks

Reincarnated as: Gerard Butler, Hugh Jackman, Thor



Ion Cervinski (dancer)

Number one hated thing: When I am told "don't worry about it"

Desires to learn: English grammar

Best Party: Eurovision party



Emily Kleinkopf (dancer)

Number one hated thing: losing in ping pong/peanut butter

Best Party: Star Wars/Lord of the Rings duel

Got in trouble as a child by: framing my siblings for doing bad things...I was kind of an evil child



Jarelle Case (dancer)

Number one hated thing: People who don't know how to walk in crowds

Reincarnated as: grass, it's always in the sun

Got in trouble as a child: for cutting my hair/stealing scissors



Erin Patterson (band) Reincarnated

as: An amazing volleyball player

Desires to learn: to speak Korean way better

Got in trouble as a child by: not doing chores and hiding out to watch movies



Jeanette Geslison (Director)

Number one hated thing: watching tv at the dinner table. Talk instead.

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: having a picnic, enjoying the beauty of nature.

Reincarnated as: Crown Princess Mary of Denmark"



Jessica Ranquist (dancer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: reading outside

Best Party: outside, water fights, yummy food, happiness

Got in trouble as a child by: not wearing shoes



Justin Kelly (dancer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: Pwning the noobs with the craft

Name Change to: Minerva McGonagall. Gender is irrelevant when it comes to honoring minervs

Reincarnated as: Link, the hero of time!



Jessica Shepherd (dancer)

Number one hated thing: When people walk really slowly in front of me

Reincarnated as: a gazelle

Best Party: WE would eat lots of ice cream and them go mountain biking. Actually switch that order



Kana Tyler (dancer)

Most hated chore: washing my hair!

Number one hated thing: My period! (But I love it cuz I can have babies eventually) Reincarnated as: Jeanette or Charlotte (Taylor's wig)



Julie Hatchett (Manager)

Number one hated thing: spiders

Name Change to: Sunshine

Got in trouble as a child by: being a tattletale



Katrina Pearson (dancer)

Number one hated thing: hair on clothes/anything

Best Party: My wedding reception

Desires to learn: to play the cello

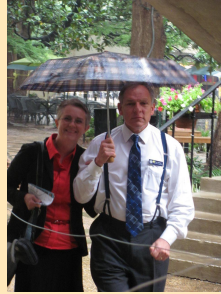


Kelsey Moss (dancer)

Desires to learn: to speak Elvish literally

Reincarnated as: Zac Efron's girlfriend (or a rockstar)

Got in trouble as a child by: kicking boys in inappropriate places (many timeouts at school)



Leslie Nuttall (Ron's wife!)

Best Party: Old Fashioned Garden Party

Name Change to: James

Reincarnated as: a chipmunk



Lynette Yorgason (dancer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: learning

Number one hated thing: vomiting, I have a phobia

Reincarnated as: a man



McKell Crandall (techie)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: rock climbing

Most hated chore: cleaning the blinds, who does that!?

Number one hated thing: hair on shower drain, twizzlers, BYU parking!



Mike Romney (dancer)

Most hated chore: he doesn't hate chores

Number one hated thing: When people do stupid things

Best Party: Awesome!



Nate Wiley (dancer)

(Answered as Dudley Dursley)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: bullying my cousin

Best Party: has at least 5 more presents than last year

Name Change to: just don't call me Duddykins



Nathan Shepherd (techie)

Number one hated thing: fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering Reincarnated as: this question is blasphemous
Got in trouble as a child by: I never got caught



Ron Nuttall (trainer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: parenting, gardening
Number one hated thing: answering emails
Best Party: no games
Name Change to: A little Jewish fellow



Nell Cunningham (dancer)

Best Party: Pink Princesses
Reincarnated as: a unicorn
Got in trouble as a child by: Being Bossy



Sam Alva (dancer)

Number one hated thing: I like most chores, except during cleaning checks
Desires to learn: how to tap like Gene Kelly
Reincarnated as: a Bollywood Soccer Player



Reed Carter (dancer)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: riding stuff, sports, the woods
Best Party: (said with a lisp) Cheezits everywhere
Desires to learn: To race motorcross



Stephanie Hartman (band)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: snuggling
Name Change to: when I was a kid I wanted to be Crystal Lite
Got in trouble as a child by: punching a girl while playing "power rangers"



Tanner Pearson (dancer)

Best Party: Texas Socks party

Name Change to: Shawmp Gilbert

Got in trouble as a child by: telling my siblings to leave me to die in trees



Thomas Call (dancer)

Number one hated thing: hypocrisy or slushy sidewalks

Best Party: nerdy

Name Change to: Emrys



Travis Coyne (techie)

Favorite indoor/outdoor activity: camping

Number one hated thing: Lakers

Got in trouble as a child: easily and frequently



Tyler Walker (dancer)

Number one hated thing: potatoes

Desires to learn: to make worlds

Got in trouble as a child by: always asking why



Scott & Karen Horman
(Truck Drivers)

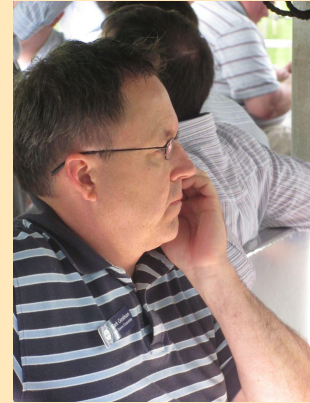
Lame people who did not turn in a survey... ;)



**Ben Christensen
(band)**



David Lewis (dancer)



Mark Geslison (band director)



Mikayla Ellison (dancer)



Taylor Jones (dancer)



Heidi Johnson (dancer)

PAC TOUR HISTORY SCHEDULE

Farmington, New Mexico

April 27 (Fri): Mikayla & Thomas
28 (Sat): Jarelle & Reed
29 (Sun): Heidi & Ion

Alamogordo, Texas

30 (Mon): Taylor & Brian
May 1 (Tues): Emily & Chris
2 (Wed): Brittney & Justin

Midland, Texas

3 (Thurs): Kelsey & David

Corpus Christi, Texas

4 (Fri): Danielle & Tanner
5 (Sat): Katrina & Aaron
6 (Sun): Alina & Cody

Loredo

7 (Mon): Jessica R & Mike
8 (Tues): Stephanie & Alex Rudd

San Antonio

9 (Wed) Amber & Scott
10 (Thurs): Jessica S & Drew

New Orleans, Louisiana

11 (Fri): Kana & Nathan S
12 (Sat): Erin & Tyler
13 (Sun): Lynette & Alex V

Houston, Texas

14 (Mon): Mckell & Nathan W
15 (Tues): Nell & Ed

Dallas, Texas

16 (Wed): Mikayla & Doug
17 (Thurs): Jarelle & Ben
18 (Fri): Heidi & Sam
19 (Sat): Taylor & Reed

Texarcana, Texas/Arkansas

20 (Sun): Brittney & Ion
21 (Mon): Kelsey & Brian
END :)

BUT WAIT! Shows before tour...

Twin Falls, Idaho
February 17, 2012

We left early to head to Idaho! On the way there, we passed Snake River and the beautiful canyon. Once we arrived, we set up and then had a lot of waiting-around time as some of the group went and did a workshop for the Twin Falls High School Show Choir. We taught them a dance and they loved it! Later in the show they were our biggest fans, sitting in the front row and cheering often.

The PERFORMANCE AREA made a big deal out of the event, using about 30 minutes before the show to give awards and introduce people in the audience, including Ed Austin. The performance was well received—we were given a **standing ovation** for the entire Hopak tag! Afterward, we were told that we were better than Riverdance and anything an older gentleman had seen on Broadway. **Jeanette even let us know that she was not embarrassed of us in Irish!**

The next morning our host families dropped us off so we could begin the drive back to Provo. Along the way, we stopped by the gorgeous Shoshone Falls for some pictures. **T, our bus driver**, got us home safely and we all went on our merry little ways.



Ogden, Utah
March 3, 2012

The day began with us parting from our tour families in Nevada and getting back on the bus for a show much closer to home—Ogden, Utah! On the way, we stopped by the salt flats for a restroom break, and somehow the band all felt like running around in circles in the desert! Probably just getting the bus jitters out, but it was prime entertainment for anyone who saw it. Many jitters released and jumping pictures later, we swarmed back into the bus and soon made it to our Ogden venue.

It was set up like a labyrinth of hallways inside and reminded us of the HFAC back home. At the end of one of the hallways, we discovered a large dance studio where we were able to run our numbers. We worked especially on Mexican since **Pepe**, our student choreographer, would be in the audience that night!

Leaving our white labyrinth below, we filled the Ogden stage awash in blue with our warm-ups to block our dances. **Somehow, our blocking evolved into a blue human tramway with several folk dancers lined up on the floor lying down and gently rolling Kana, our Bollywood star, across the stage over their bodies.** And the Hawaiian Queen thoroughly enjoyed it too, laughing and rolling along.

Finally it came time for our show and we geared up for the “gritos” we knew Pepe and the Hispanics in the audience would listen for. And it turned out great! Pepe came to say “Hi” backstage after the show and was really touched to see his very own choreography performed for the 1st time on stage. And luckily, we made him proud! Viva Mexico!



Farmington, New Mexico

Friday April 27, 2012

Today we were very happy to leave Provo at 10 in the morning instead of our usual 6 or 7. We all settled in for the long bus ride to Farmington, New Mexico. After several sets of announcements concerning food, bus activities, etc., we had our first group scripture study. Danielle led us in a discussion on the nature of God based on the teachings of Ammon to King Lamoni. The discussion was great, but I especially appreciated Katrina's comment about our ability to know ourselves better through coming to know our Heavenly Father. It's not just learning about him that helps us know, it's coming to know him through searching his scriptures, listening to his prophets, praying to him, and listening for guidance from him. As we learn about our Heavenly Father, we better understand who we are, who we can become, and what we are capable of.

We had a couple of stops along the way to Farmington, the most memorable one being right next to the **Hole in the Wall Café**. Some of us broke out the Frisbee and soccer ball and passed them around while others climbed around on the rocks and explored the area. Ron said that he was talking to a man who was at the stop while we were there and the man asked who we were, where we were from, etc. Ron told him, and the man said, "*It's not often you see young people look so nice. It's good to see.*" We were only in our warm-ups, but we made an impact on someone without even dancing or singing for them. It was a nice first impression to make as a team on our tour, and hopefully we can continue giving good impressions wherever we go.

Movies are an essential part of every bus ride, and we watched our first tour movie today: "The Blind Side." I've wanted to watch this movie for a while, and I thought it was significant that we watched it before any other movie on this tour. It's about a woman who made a huge difference in a young man's life by believing in him, caring for him, and helping him achieve. As performers representing BYU, we have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the people that watch us. I don't know how profound of an influence we will have in everyone's lives, but I heard a story from a returned missionary from Prague about a man who watched last year's International Folk Dance Ensemble perform in his country and immediately sought out the missionaries and asked, "What do I need to do to be a part of this church?" So, you never know what sort of effect you'll have on others.

We arrived in Farmington around 7:00, unloaded our luggage into our hotel rooms, and then went to dinner at Golden Corral. Many people, after watching us for a while, finally asked us who we were. One person thought we were a tennis team, another person, after seeing one of us talking to a sister missionary that was there, said, "***There's Mormons everywhere!***" It's true, we're always being watched, especially when we wear matching clothes.

After dinner, we all just did our own thing. Several of us went running while others played Frisbee, soccer, card games, etc. Some of us realized that we had forgotten certain essentials, so we went to nearby convenience stores. Other than that, it was a pretty uneventful evening, and then we went to bed!

Saturday April 28th

This morning we all enjoyed breakfast at the La Quinta hotel before checking out at 8am. We then drove on the bus to the **Aztec Ruins** located in Farmington, New Mexico. It was a chilly morning with cloud coverage, but we still walked around the ruins for a few hours. It was National Park week so we received free admission. We learned about the history and culture of the Anazai people. We spent many hours at the ruins – our tour leaders especially loved the tour and were the last group to return.

At 11 o'clock we were dismissed for lunch per diem. The group separated to Qdoba, Wendy's, and Walmart. We tend to overwhelm small town restaurants when 20 of us come in, but they are still hospitable and serve us quickly and kindly.

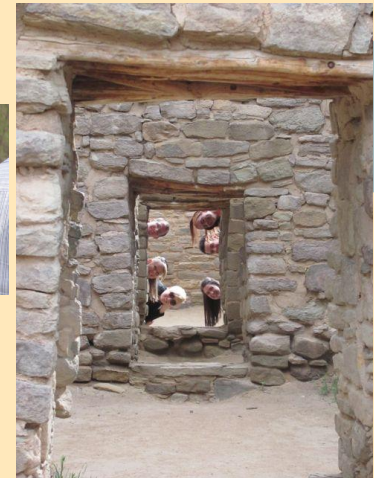
After lunch we headed to our venue, Henderson Fine Arts Center at San Juan College. We were a few minutes early and quickly discovered that we were locked out of the theatre. After roaming around for a while we found the dressing rooms and eventually met up with the theatre crew.

We had dinner at the Institute building across the street from the venue. We enjoyed a pasta and salad dinner with delicious cake for dessert. We sang Irish Blessing to Barbara Rice, Jill Carter and her daughter before leaving to get ready for the show.

The men and women had a common area at the venue to do hair and make-up. While getting ready, Kana had some great songs playing to get us pumped for the show. She turned on "Without You " and shot a scene for the music videos. Everyone was dancing and waved at the camera while passing, even Jeanette came in and joined the party. An old PAC member, Jeremy Gohier, surprised us by coming to our show from Kingman, Arizona. Our show started at 7:00pm tonight rather than 7:30, so our devotional started at 6:30. Christopher gave the first devotional of our tour by discussing the blessing and privilege we each have to be dancing, performing, and touring. This was a good reminder for each of us as we start the tour. Ron led our warm up outside in a grass lawn. We were thankful to have Ron with us to be taking care of our bodies.

The show was **almost completely sold out** with only a few seats empty, even in the balcony. Our performance went well without any major problems. The technical crew functioned perfectly their first time without Mark Ohran. The band performed very well, sometimes playing a little quick and keeping the dancers on their toes.

After the show we tried to strike the set quickly to get home with our host families. The strike went relatively fast with the help of Jeremy Gohier and our new truck driver Scott Horman. After the strike was done we met our host families in the front lobby. We each separated for the night and went home with our host families.



Aztec Ruins

Host Mom: so how did you guys end up in Farmington?
10 year old daughter: yeah...cuz....really....

Our host mom hasn't been to church for 3 years, but she loved our show and loved us, so we were able to have many conversation in which we were able to bear our testimonies. Our dad really appreciated it and we were happy to be able to give something back to them.

Host Dad: I expected a bunch of sissy dancers. You guys are athletes!

Dancers: So what were your favorite dances?

Host dad: The "It's a Small World" dance

Dancers: <blank stares>

Host dad: Haven't you ever been to Disneyland?

Katrina: Oh, yes, I've been

Host dad: Then you know the "It's a Small World Dance!?"

Tanner: Oh, haha, Volyn...

Katrina: I prefer to call it the Gingerbread Man dance

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

Sweets & **SOURS**

S- Kana CHOKED
DAVID and made HIM
PASS OUT

S- CODY FELL ASLEEP
IN THE GIRL'S DRESSING
ROOM

S- ALEX'S FLY WAS
DOWN ALL OF GYPSY

S- ALINA KEEPS
FORGETTING HER
VIOLIN...KINDA
IMPORTANT

Sunday April 29th

Since today was Sunday, we stayed in Farmington and spent most of the day with host families. We attended church with the host families in various wards. Some lucky people (Justin, Brian and Alex Vincent) were even offered the keys to drive a convertible Corvette to church. Despite their deep humility, they were quick at grabbing that opportunity. The church meeting itself held some adventures for our teammates. In the Farmington's third ward the dancers were **spontaneously asked to sing a musical number in sacrament meeting**. Thomas and Doug even got to speak during the priesthood hour. Their spirit was strong and deep reaching to the priesthood.

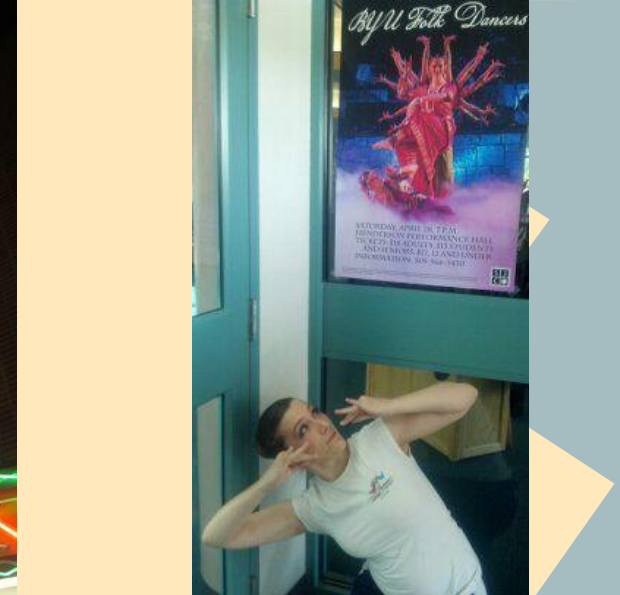
Having a lot a free time today, our team got to spend a lot of time with the host families, getting to know them better and enjoying their company. The Lacey's and the Teares' like to listen to inspirational music during the Sabbath day. We discovered that both families were listening to music recorded by Mark Geslison, the director of our band and Jeanette's husband. We were excited to find that Mark's music reached so far and touched those people. The Lacey's stated the album called "For the Beauty of the Earth" is their favorite music to listen to on Sundays.

Janelle and Mikayla had the unique opportunity to visit the **Navajo reservation** with their host family. Brother Larsen served a mission in the Navajo reservation and had many friends there. He introduced the dancers to his very dear friend, She-ma, which means grandmother in Navajo. He described her being as a second mother to him. She-ma showed the girls some Navajo ruins on her propriety and even allowed the girls to explore the place and keep some pottery pieces they found among the ruins.

Mike Lacey, the bishop over one of the wards in Farmington, invited his ward to his house for a **barbecue** after church. With the families that came were also 10 of our dancers. We got to enjoy a great dinner and find out more about the church members in Farmington. After the dinner we played ping pong together with the host families' children. It was a great time.

We ended the evening with a fireside for the church youth. The team met early to practice the singing parts. Since this was our first fireside, we were a wee bit nervous. However, we managed to pull off quite a decent performance. The members enjoyed it a lot and the spirit was strong during the fireside meeting. We received many compliments from the youth after the fireside was over. Hopefully we helped strengthen their testimonies through our inspirational stories and songs.

After the fireside was over everyone went home to spend the night with their host families. Our team enjoyed the relaxing and inspirational Sabbath day. It was a neat experience to get to spend Sunday with the host families and to give a fireside for the local church.



Alamogordo, Texas

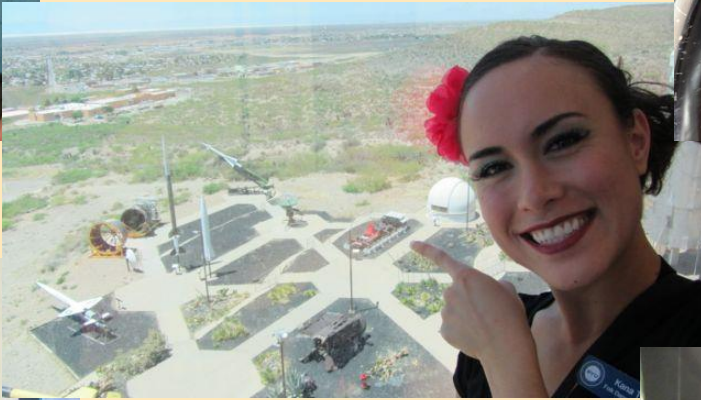
Monday April 30th

It all started that morning when the alarm clock went off. I knew as soon as I heard that abhorrent noise it was not going to be a good day. The sun had barely come up and over the horizon when I felt its presence. Its dark shadow, which shrouded my soul with anxiety and fear. I had heard of thing like this happening, but had never experienced in person. As I crammed the contents of my suitcase back into place I had a brilliant beyond brilliant idea to scream and run for the door, but I didn't. Instead, I sat down with my family and ate a wonderful, warm breakfast, the chlorine from the hot tub the night before still lingering on my skin. Immediately, I felt the presence of the dark shadow return. I decided to save myself and make for the bus. No one else seemed aware of this dark presence as I boarded the bus. . . . So I decided to just forget about it and put the past behind me. As we made our way to Chaco Canyon, excitement filled the bus. Because excitement was so high, Ron decided to use his hypnotic skills to lull us back into a light slumber. It was rather pleasant. Minutes later, a giant mushroom cloud engulfed Chaco Canyon. Our hearts fell and our countenance drooped, we knew that **Chaco Canyon had been destroyed**. So yeah, we didn't get to go. Our happiness was restored with a nice ice cream bar and an action-packed film (MI:4). And then hours passed. Lots of them. After reaching a lethargic state in which death was present upon the bus, we reached our destination, Alamogordo. We exited the bus, only to be greeted by a wild pack of black cats. They showed us the way down the dark alley to stage right, for there was only a stage right. We quickly unloaded and left the majority of the team to do the dirty work while **Jeanette's tributes** were selected to teach ballerinas to prashotka, jig, spin with a man, and windmill. Oh my! What wonderful training for the games. Upon their return, dinner had been graciously placed for them on the table in honor of the games. With bellies full of pizza, fruit, and possibly prune juice (you just never know), they separated and returned home with host families with the word of the day still engrained in their mindsexhorborated. I dunno. And then. . . . **things happened**.

Sweets & **SOURS**

S- DAVID THREW
HIS STICK AT THE
KIDS

*Sw- Jessica R. snatched Lynette's
necklace off of her neck before it fell
to the ground*



Space Center

Tuesday May 1st

It began with the elementary show in the Flickinger Theatre. It was a brand new line up having never been done before. Unfortunately, there was no room to change on the side of the stage so we had to do the majority of the changes downstairs. No worries, it still went well besides a few mishaps. We had to use our own narrations instead of the pre-recorded narrations. The kids really enjoyed it. Heidi introduced Mexican and invited all of the kids to yell “ESO!!” when they got excited. **They yelled “ESO!!” throughout the entire Mexican suit** including the band number. They also had a nice scare when **David catapulted his Hungarian stick straight into the audience**. Luckily it did not decapitate any children. Slovak was an adventure when some of the guys were late on stage. Cody ended up lifting Tyler instead of Sam lifting Tyler making him into a giant. Brian, who was on Sam, had a hard time reaching Tyler’s head.

After the show, lunch was provided by Mrs. Ray. We then all had free-time. The majority of the students decided to go to the **Alamogordo Space Center**. Ron was able to tell us some stories about space travel and working with NASA right before the tour. We also really enjoyed the mock simulation of landing a space shuttle. Brittany, Ion, and Justin all blew up their ships. Jeanette on the other hand landed hers with perfection. The exhibits throughout the museum were really fun to see and you could even visit HAM’s grave, who was the first chimp to go into space. After the space museum, everyone broke out into their own groups and toured around down town Alamogordo. Some went to the zoo. Alex Vincent and fellow friends saw the black bear catch a bird and eat it right in front of them. Ion also found some Mulberry trees and ate a handful of berries. Others went and got ice cream. A fairly big group also went to **Wild Bill**. At this shop Bill, the shop owner, had violins, drums, a guitar, and even an accordion. So of course members of the band, which included Erin, Aaron, Alina, and Scott, started jamming and played Bill some tunes. Towards the end they played the Ukrainian song and Cody was able to play the accordion although it was a lot smaller than what he was used too. They also played Korobushka and all of the people not playing started dancing the rec night dance. It was quite a party.

We then had dinner at the church, which was provided by the two relief societies in Alamogordo. After dinner we finished blocking and setting up for the show. The show went fairly well. Unfortunately **Alex Rudd got really sick half** way through the show and had to be taken to the hospital. The band thought it was one of the best shows they have ever done because they had already been with their host family for a day and so they felt they had someone to perform for. Despite having to go downstairs to the sauna of death to get changed, the majority of the costume changes were made successfully. After the show our strike time was one of the best we have ever had. After, we all went home to our individual host families. It was a good day in Alamogordo.

*One audience member told me members have been looking forward to our performance. That members from Mexico came to Alamogordo and are even going to the El Paso show.

*HOST FAMILY'S 94 year OLD DAD SAID THAT AFTER THE SHOW HE WAS PROUD TO BE A MORMON

*At the grocery store: Kana (looking at Ice cream): "ohh! I like that fat boy"

Scott: "Thank you!"

**A man and his family followed us all the way back to the theater from the ballet workshop to tell us how excited Alamogordo was to see us perform. He said many of the elementary school kids and the local college students were excited as well. He said, "the whole town is freaking exploding with excitement!"*

*Our host family had three great kids (Austin, Hunter, and Dillon) who stayed up for us after the show to meet us. Normally very shy, little Dillon played the piano for us and we all had a fun time outside playing watermelon football in their pool. 8 of us sang "Brightly Beams" for them and they were so touched we ended up singing many favorite hymns to the family.

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings



El Paso, Texas and White Sands

Wednesday, May 2, 2012

Today we met bright and early back at the Flickinger Theater before driving out to **White Sands National Park**, the perfect folk dance playground. Though we were extensively outfitted with host-family sleds, saucers, and soap (we were looking to go fast!), it wasn't long before most of the team had abandoned the typical gear for a more . . . folkie dune experience.

Our guys gathered close around the willing and adventurous to **birthday-throw-launch** as many teammates as they could from off the top of one of White Sand's highest dunes. Even Jeanette took a turn flying through the air! After as many dancers, musicians, and techies were launched as were hoping for a turn, we moved on to other epic dune activities. Of course we took advantage of the chance to film some on-location music video footage. We also had an **intense footrace** across the sands and up to the top from the base of another dune. Naturally, hilarious violence ensued.

When it eventually came time to move on, we met back outside the bus for some intense **power cleaning** that we hoped would help us each pass the notoriously difficult sand-checks of Ron, Leslie, and Julie. It worked out well in the end; by the end of the day, we had only brought on the bus one fourth of a cup of sand among all of us. That was three fourths of sand less than any other tour Mike had ever bussed out for a day on the dunes.

Once we were nice and clean, we drove out to El Paso, TX, where Sam filled us in on some local bits of trivia. We eventually came to our venue, the sombrero-shaped Abraham Chavez Theater. It was one of the largest venues any of us had ever performed in, and (best of all) we were given access to ten different dressing rooms, each with its own shower that helped us finally get the last bits of sand that we had carried over from the dunes. Unfortunately, we were informed after reaching El Paso that Alex Rudd would have to fly back home for a while to take care of the medical problems that had manifested on the previous night. We're all thinking about him and hoping that it won't be long before he rejoins us on the road.

We had a wonderful relief society dinner with local YSAs at the nearby Institute building, and had our first on-tour taste of **Texas barbecue**, which apparently goes very well with Little Caesar's pizza. Tour Lesson #273: It turns out everything goes well with Little Caesar's. Oh yeah. Then we had a show. You know. No big deal. It's whatever. It's our life.

After a very quick and efficient strike, we finally split up and headed out with host families for some much-needed rest for our minds and bodies.

“I think the only word that can describe the show is: perfect”

* The stage manager said to a few guys back stage that it looked pretty funny watching a bunch of blond-haired white boys dancing Mexican - he was Mexican - but said it was done very well.

* A little girl named Eliana said our dances were “beeauutiful.” When asked which one was her favorite, she answered “yours,” even though multiple dancers asked her.

*A family from Germany stopped a few of us after the show. The mother said that we performed the dances so accurately - and they would know because they’d seen them all performed by natives. She was also impressed by the amount of respect we had for each country as we represented them. Also, the kids were all wearing traditional German clothing. So cute!

*Members from the ward paid for all the youth to go to the show. There are not a lot of kids here who leave for college so they end up marrying a nonmember. Those who have a ‘testimony’ of BYU wanted the youth to see our show and get excited about BYU. Thus many Anglos paid for several different youth. These people are blessed.

*A friend from high school said “Wow! This is the closest I’ll get to Broadway! There were about 50 people I knew who had their mouths open trying to find the words to describe what they were feeling. Some common words that made it out were “Awesome! Wow! Perfect!”

**Many of the PAC boys sang a powerful and beautiful rendition of the hymn “Brightly Beams” for Sam and Justin’s family. The look on their faces was priceless.*

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

Sweets & **SOURS**

Sw- Sam said “sweet to all of you being born”

*Sw- Brian landed in Ion’s costume box
after tripping*



Midland, Texas



Thursday, May 3, 2012

The day began just as early as the rest. We all met at Brother Dinsmoor's house where our pictures were taken with our host families. Then we hopped on the bus to head to Midland. Then we proceeded to sit there for a few hours. Nuthin' new there... Justin's mother had made us all cookies, so we divvied those up amongst ourselves... Then, napping ensued.

We arrived to the venue an hour late – if it weren't for the time change (and getting a little lost) we would have been on time. Blast. We hurried to get those that were helping with the lecture demonstration onto the bus and on their way, while the rest of the team began loading in and setting up the stage. The venue was only about a year old, so it was top-notch! A lot of things were made easier for us because it was such a new venue. (Which is good! Because if we'd run the snake, there probably wouldn't have been enough cord to reach all the way back **BECAUSE THERE WERE 1,800 SEATS!!** This was the biggest venue we were scheduled to perform at all of tour. It was truly a gorgeous theater.)

In the meantime there was a small group that went and performed and taught a couple of short dances to some elementary school students. When we arrived we were about 15 minutes late so we were in a rush to get in and start performing. As we walked in the teacher guided us to two restrooms that were really small with just one toilet that we all had to change in. There were 4 men; Reed, Sam, David, and Justin and 5 women; Emily, Taylor, Brittney, Jarelle, and Amber. This made for some pretty cramped quarters to change in. The performance was interesting. Indian went just fine and then Jarelle taught the Indian salutation to the students and a couple of different hand signs. We took only a piece of Volyn which caused a little confusion at the end of the performance when the music slowed down unexpectedly during a part of the dance that doesn't look good slow. Then Jeanette taught Korabushka. The kids had a lot of fun but were a little rowdy. Then for La Bamba, Emily and Amber forgot their dresses so they wore their slips with their aprons. To say the least it was a pretty funny sight having the slips come up to their knees as they are swishing their slips. But the small group doing La Bamba also had a meeting about how they were going to start the dance but forgot to tell the solo couple, aka Jarelle and David. Therefore the beginning was a bit shaky because we were all doing something different. After this dance Jeanette taught Cumberland squares. This was very fun with not much room and little boys not wanting to hold hands. The last dance was Steppin which was the best one that we performed but was kind of funny because halfway through the dance a lot of the students got up and left because it was towards the end of school. Thus ended our little adventure.

* A girl came to the merchandise table and asked if we had any shirts that said "future BYU folk dancer" She said she wanted to come to BYU and try out for the team

* Drew slid through the diagonals in Indian and shot finger guns at the audience

** On the bus Kelsey thought a spider monkey was a spider with 10 legs, 2 of which looked like a monkey's arms. It was funny. Mike showed her a picture on his phone...it was not a spider. Monkey all the way.*

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

May 3 Cont.

When the lecture demonstration group came back to the venue, they dumped their stuff and we headed to dinner at the Stake Center, again provided by a nearby Relief Society. Gotta love 'em! We all enjoyed cold cut sandwiches, fruit salad, chips, and cookies. After singing to the chubbiest (and cutest) baby known to mankind, we headed back with full stomachs to the venue to finish our prep for the show.

The tech crew experienced quite a set back about half an hour before the show began. The projector was having difficulties, and on top of that, they tripped a breaker backstage during the band's sound check. Because of this, the tech crew had to re-set the show and eliminate a few fancy lighting things due to the shortage of time. But they pulled through!! The lighting and sound worked just great throughout the show.

At devotional/announcements before the show, we were informed that about **1,200 tickets had already been sold** for the show – This was our biggest audience yet! We knew they would be a great one!! Their great excitement and energy gave us the adrenaline needed to make it through the show. After three nights of shows in a row, your body really takes a beating! The audience (again) loved our Mexican songs and dances – we could hear them shouting gritos right along with us!

Striking the set was slightly different than normal. We had a show the next morning at an elementary school, but due to regulations, we were not going to have the truck with us to carry all of our stuffs. So we had to (quite literally) stuff all of our necessary costumes and props for the show the following morning into the sheets from our costume boxes and take them home with us to our host families. This complicated cleanup a little bit, but we still made it out at a semi-decent hour. Then, after we **signed the wall backstage** (right next to Lord of the Dance!!), we headed with our host families; We have all been immortalized in Midland, Texas!

We all were treated to separate experiences when we went to our host families. Mikelle and Brittney got to have a sleepover with Nathan and Jessica Shepherd – literally. Naturally, we were all fed when we came home to our host families. There was a water shortage in Midland, so we were all sure to take short showers to keep down the water bills for our host families. With full stomachs and clean bodies, we all were able to get at least a few hours of sleep.

Sweets & **SOURS**

*Sw- Mikayla
successfully tied her
shoes during the
portrait of French
Canadian*

*Sw- tech crew waved their arms
during Irish blessing*



Corpus Christi, Texas



Friday May 4, 2012 - Midland à Corpus Christi, TX

7:45 am: We drive to Cameron Duel Language Magnet Elementary School and **danced on a stage that was smaller than Reed's head.**

9:32 am: **Taylor's head gets stuck** in the curtain on the Nagada spinning towers. "It was terrifying," said she.

9:43 am: Kana runs into Kelsey, who subsequently **spills the Ukrainian salt** on the steps to the stage. Very slippery.

9:45 am: **Justin giggles like an 8 year-old** during two-man causing Mike R. to laugh throughout the remainder of the dance.

(Side note) The girl's dressing room was cooled extra, while the men's was not. In fact, the air conditioning didn't even work.

11-8ish pm: 8 hour bus ride

Stars Wars- May the 4th Be With You

Quiet time-Tanner sang everyone a lullaby

Taylor gave the devotional

Pull into Golden Corral in Corpus Christi, ate food, then went to Best Western Grand Hotel

10-and on pm: Some went to the **beach** to swim, and some went to the beach to swim and **get stung by jellyfish.**

Also, some went to the carnival-very expensive

Girls' night- anti-climactic

*** May the fourth be with you! (said by Jeanette at least 80 times)**

* Jeanette turns around and sees Christopher and Justin playing a hand slapping game. “huh, two boys are playing a hand-slapping game. It’s usually little girls who play that”

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

May 5th, 2012 – ¡El poema del Cinco de Mayo! – Aaron Haines and Danielle Murray

Members of the band went on a run before breakfast.

They found four different churches and a seesaw made of iron & stone

On the eleventh floor all went to eat the buffet of breakfast.

They had a Belgian waffle machine that made waffles in the shape of Texas.

Others awoke whenever they wanted

For we didn't have to report to the bus until fifteen after noon.

A group of girls went to the beach at 9am and read their books for the waters were where the jellyfish haunted

The boys however played a game of soccer, they did not look like buffoons.

The sand was rough with shattered shells

Jessica Shepherd spent her time scouring the shore

She now has a lovely collection of beautiful shells to sell

"Wouldn't you say [her] collection's complete?" Nay, she wants more!

While playing in the water, a group of people decided to have a chicken fight

They divided into three teams of two

And they reached a towering height, the tech team won the fight

Mikelle & Doug, Alina & Aaron, Thomas & Sam; they were paired through and through.

All right, this poem is done. Bon voyage!

Sweets & **SOURS**

*Sw- Mike the bus driver
bought Katrina grapefruit*

*Sw- Doug gave Nach
Libre quotes to the
band during La
Cascabel*

S- EMILY CHEST BUMPED kana
SO HARD IN HOPAK THAT SHE GOT
OFF BALANCE

May 5 Cont.

Upon arriving at the venue at Del Mar College we were greeted by an amazing tech crew. The tech crew had completed all the tasks our tech crew had sent ahead. We had record load in and load out times! We have not done them faster this tour. It was fantastic! The load out was done before the girls had gone home with their host families.

After dinner, Aaron Haines and Nathan Shepherd went in search of some snacks because Nathan had the tech crew snack assignment. There weren't many stores near the college that sold food. After a long search, they almost went into a store called Diana's. But as they got closer it looked, a little shady as the marquis read, "**beer, wine, and set-ups.**" It may have been a brothel or some other kind of unsavory place. Eventually they found a nice little Mexican restaurant where they ordered chips and salsa from a lady from Jalisco. How exciting! Nathan spoke with her in Spanish.

The show was low in attendance due to many factors: it was our first time performing in Corpus Christi so not many people knew who we were, it was *Buc days in Corpus Christi, and there was a Cinco de Mayo parade downtown. There were roughly 400 people at the show. There was a sense of calm enthusiasm throughout the show. Aaron Haines was especially disappointed in the low attendance number. There was controversy before the show as to if there would be 200 or 1100 audience members. He was hoping for the 1100. One of those in attendance was a Catholic priest by the name of Father Michael Jordan. He was accompanied by Sister Mary, a nun, and the performers could hear **Father Michael screaming "Bravo!!"** emphatically throughout the show. He and Sister Mary absolutely loved it.

Unfortunately, illness struck again! Or as I like to call it, "the gator plague". It comes to those we least expect, strikes violently for a day, and then fades away until it finds its next victim. Today, **Jessica Ranquist was taken by this illness.** She spent most of the afternoon and evening resting (bless her soul) and did not dance in the show. Thomas Call and Jarelle Fuller were also not feeling well. **Jarelle spent the night in the ER.** Ron and Leslie accompanied her.

Katrina Pearson was not feeling well either, but for different reasons. She decided to reveal her cause of illness by telling dancers randomly at un-expecting moments that **she is pregnant.** Surprise! The Pearsons are expecting a baby in December! Oh Happy day!

Jon would like it to be note that he was not tired during the Gypsy dance. He also found a clog tap on the floor and then through much sleuthing discovered it was Nell's.

*Buc days= Buccaneer days. Buccaneers=pirates. Pirates lived in Corpus Christi for many years.

* A venue tech remarked how nice it was to see a performing group where everyone is so nice to each other. He said that he could tell that we genuinely liked each other and are all friends. He said that is really unusual in performing groups.

*The Catholic Father also brought with him a woman who works with him. She is from Vera Cruz and is a dancer who has done Mexican folk dancing and has dabbled in Irish, tap, and Indian also! She couldn't stop telling me how beautiful it was over and over and how we were blessing the lives of many with our dancing.

* A man kept yelling "Bravo" very enthusiastically throughout the show. I met him afterwards. He was Father Michael Jordan, a Catholic priest. He and Sister Mary, the nun who came with him LOVED the show. They couldn't stop raving about us. Apparently he heard about the show from a newspaper advertisement.

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

* One man commented to me about how beautiful the fireside was. He also said he didn't understand how we didn't get emotional from the beautiful stories because he just loved them and could really feel the Spirit

***An elderly lady named Toni was beaming after the fireside and said she was so grateful the Lord could use us as his disciplined instruments so that the Spirit could imprint our dances and music into her memory. She said now she would replay it over and over. She felt she was part of a beautiful movie and that it was now so real in her mind that she was living it through us!**

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

Sweets & **SOURS**

*Sw- Ion's shoulder
hurt so instead of Taylor
sitting on his shoulder
she sat on his head in
Hopak portrait*

*Sw- To the Pearson's for
getting pregnant!*

S- TO THE PEARSON'S
FOR TELLING PEOPLE IN
THE MIDDLE OF
DANCES

*Sw- Kana for successfully unbuttoning Justin's
top button on stage during Southern/picking
his nose/putting lip gloss on him*

Sunday, May 6, 2012: Corpus Christi, TX (Alina and Cody)

Today was a day to spend with our respective host families. We attended church with our families and had some interesting experiences. There was a fairly large group of students attending the Corpus Cristi 3rd ward. During sacrament meeting two young kids got up and shared some unexpected wisdom. One little boy around eight years old said 'When something gets you down, you've got to learn that its not the end of the world. The Lord still has faith in you.' Another little girl around ten years old said "It doesn't matter what skin color, what eye color, what hair color you have, what matters is that we are all here to serve the lord." This particular ward had just been split and this was their first week as a new ward. Needless to say they were missing people from important callings, and they turned to us **BYU students to fill in in the Nursery and Primary**. This included sitting with the kids during primary and coming to help in their class. During primary time, in the CTR 4 class, when shown a picture of Christ getting baptized, and when asked what Christ was doing, one little girl said "He's getting sanitized!"

Several of our sisters were able to attend Relief Society in the same ward. There was one sister there who was at church for only the second time after being less active for many years. During sacrament meeting, she bore her testimony about the importance of coming to church, and at one point she told Kana how grateful she was that our group came to Corpus Christi. Kana and the others felt very blessed to have been in that particular ward on this particular Sunday for such a special, uplifting experience.

Saturday night, Alex Vincent and Doug Olsen's host dad asked Alex about song writing, and wanted to hear one of his songs. Alex played one of his songs called "Don't bury me with my guitar." Alex ended up explaining how he wrote it because a friend challenged him to write a song about the Plan of Salvation. The next night, their host family invited two of their non-member friends to come over and eat Pazookis. The host dad (Grant Todd) invited Alex to share his song again and the story behind it. After explaining it and playing it, Alex and Doug along with the **senior missionaries discussed the plan of salvation with the non-member friends**. They all stayed up discussing together until after eleven o'clock at night. They left the investigators with some scriptures in the Book of Mormon to read and pray about.

May 6 cont.

Earlier that afternoon, **Bishop Volkasek** invited Alina and Erin over at three thirty to jam with him. He happens to be an avid and **talented bluegrass musician**. He plays guitar, mandolin, and some fiddle. They **jammed for an hour and a half** or so before we were to meet up at the church before the fireside. He was just so happy to play music with two other bluegrass musicians and just kept telling them how happy he was to be playing with them. They had so much fun playing that it was decided to get more people over after the fireside for some more exciting jamming. Many people came including musicians and dancers to enjoy a fun evening at the bishop's house. We ended up having Alina and Erin again plus Scott, Stephanie, and Jessica Ranquist on guitar. Among the others there we had Amber, Lynette, Justin, Mckell, and around ten thirty Ben and Nate Wiley showed up. We were just ready to be finished up but ended up playing another half an hour when Ben came. There was also the Stake president and his family present plus some friends of their sons. Lynette and Erin's host mom came with them and made fajitas for everyone.

Our fireside was a success, and we were happy to see that the chapel was nearly filled to capacity with members of all ages and their friends. Jeanette decided that we should end the program by singing *Irish Blessing* instead of *Parting Glass*, so we rehearsed the new addition before the fireside started. Mikayla Ellison and Sam Alva each gave a talk, and David Lewis and Amber Shepherd each shared a special story about their respective ancestors. We noticed that many members of the congregation were so touched by the stories that **tears came to their eyes**. We've all really enjoyed our time in Corpus Christi and have met some truly wonderful people during our time here.



Loredo, Texas

Monday, May 7 Laredo

The day before we arrived in Laredo drug lords across the border brutally murdered 26 people and used them as a political statement. Because of this, several of us were pretty nervous to arrive, especially after being warned many times by the members in Corpus Christi. However, the only unrest that we found that day was the thunderstorm that night.

Ok, so a quick rundown of the day is we arrived at the civic center and loaded in our equipment. We then had a gazillion hours to wait to go to the City Council meeting. Some people went shopping, others played soccer in the 100 degree weather.... Yeah. For lunch most of us went to authentic Mexican places, one of which managed to get Julie really sick (yay México).

The **City Council** was an interesting experience. Justin and Gorgeous (Jarelle) were dressed in Szatmar costumes to represent the group. Little did they know, they would be asked to perform a little bit of the dance... Which Justin has never performed. All of us were piled in the council room like sardines along with the 2nd grade girl's basketball team, and high school football team, etc. It was in that meeting that most of us, if not all, found out that our performances here would be a fundraiser for the Boy Scouts of America in Laredo. After the meeting, Joe, our presenter, told us that because we were present in the meeting, the city council decided to co-sponsor the event and let us use the civic center for no charge. This saved \$2100.

From there we headed over to a **YSA activity** where they provided dinner for us and we provided games and a show. The dinner was great and included a variety of different Mexican dishes. After dinner and mingling we got everyone out and learned a scatter square dance, heel toe polka, and suicide square. Everyone had a great time! Then we did a mini performance where we performed Steppin' and the band played a few fun songs. We ended with Simple Gifts and testimonies; it was fun and spiritual evening for everyone. We then divided up and went our separate ways with our host families... most of which are Mexican and speak little to no English!

Fin

Sweets & **SOURS**

*Sw- Ion for making it through
border patrol*

*Sw- Alex V and Ben for
dancing snaggishly in
Indian*

*Sw- Justin outed Cody
in cricket crew of
Indian because he
missed the previous
show*

Tuesday, May 8 Laredo

Tuesday started with a moderately early cast call @ 8am at the civic center for the elementary school show. After a lot of rearranging (take out Boil Them Cabbages, add Kariska...), we finally created an hour-long program instead of the 45-min one we thought we were doing. The Boy Scouts of America started the show off with a flag ceremony and Stephanie sang the National Anthem. After that ceremony, a young group of k-6th graders performed a musical number with xylophones including a bass xylophone! Then they performed a cute Mexican dance number too. The show went well with around 2000 children in attendance. One funny incident was when Mikayla's beads exploded in Hopak and we had to clean them up afterwards.

After the show, we ate a light lunch of tuna sandwiches, ruffles, fruit and potato salad, and lemonade. Julie gave us the option to either hop on the bus and head over to the mall or stay in the theater and have some quiet time.

At three, the **Laredo community college dancers** and band came to the civic center and warmed up. They then practiced their numbers while we watched them. We had a question and answer session with both BYU and the community college including questions of why people were in the groups, what they plan on doing after, similarities and differences in the programs, and why they felt it was important to understand other cultures through music and dance.

We ate McDonalds provided by the Boy Scouts. Then we got ready to perform our show. **Doug rapped** and sang during our band sound check and it was so fun. The few community college members were in the audience during sound check and were so supportive. The show started the same way as the morning show only with the community college as preshow entertainment. Since there were around 20 musicians it was extremely difficult to get everything offstage in time but we all helped out and Travis mopped the spit on the floor. We took out the Hungarian suite and Volin to shorten the program due to the community college entertainment. As expected, the **Mexican numbers were a total hit**. Many people in the audience were anxious if Jalisco could actually tie the bow with their feet! So much support and excitement!!! The theater seats two thousand and it was almost full so this was definitely our largest show so far. The band had a great reception during intermission selling t-shirts and cd's. They had an incredibly hard time getting back after intermission due to all the pictures and signatures audience members wanted from them hehe

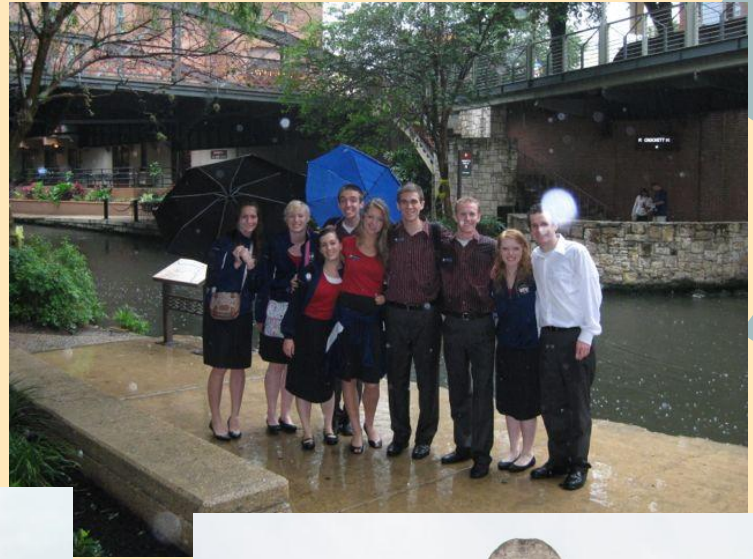
* ION HAD TO STRIP FOR THE SECURITY GUARD...

* A teacher stopped and thanked us for the school show. Then she started crying as she explained that the children she teaches come from violent environments and need more of these “good feelings” they felt. She told us to share our dance and joy with everyone.

* I talked with some of the girls who performed before us in Loreda. They told me that if everyone there was as nice as us then they wanted to come to BYU.

* **BEST AUDIENCE** so far during Mexican! They were amazing. After the show I was nearly mobbed by everyone and felt like a celebrity. That's all.

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings



San Antonio, Texas

Wednesday, May 9th Laredo/San Antonio (Amber and Scott)

Wednesday morning we had another show with the elementary schools. The show went really well. The kids loved the show and enjoyed screaming “eso!” After the show we struck the set quickly with no problems and got ready to depart to San Antonio. Before we all got on the bus there was a stray dog that was ugly but cute that came up to us. Different people tried to go pet it or feed it but it kept running away. Then another dog came and Julie said it was his wife, or his “honey!”

On the drive out of Laredo we had to stop at a **Border Patrol** station. They came in and checked with each person to see if they were United States Citizens. **Ion, who is from Moldova, is only a resident, so he had to get off the bus** to show her his student visa. While he was off the bus they also checked him for tattoos that were associated with different gangs. After seeing that he was no threat we were able to continue on our journey.

We got to the church in San Antonio around 4:30, giving us an hour of free time before dinner. Some people slept, some people played volleyball or Frisbee, others read. Our coordinator for the evening was Debbie Bassett. For dinner we had lasagna with salad and garlic toast, with jello and cake for dessert. After dinner, everyone quickly changed into costumes for the activity with the stake.

The dancers did 4 dances with the band playing a song in between each one to give time for changes. The first dance was Steppin’. Jeanette was debating whether or not to do it on the gym floor because it would damage the floor. So, they ended up dancing on the carpeted stage, which was weird because we couldn’t hear any of the footwork that was being done. The rest of the dances went well, and the crowd really got into it.

After the last dance, Jeanette had everyone stand up and started to teach the Scatter Square dance. **Everyone was dancing**, adults, the youth, little kids, and the dancers. It was so fun! And **everyone in the band switched instruments!** Scott played guitar, Ben played cajon, Alina played mandolin, Alex played bass, and Erin played fiddle, while Stephanie and Aaron went and danced. The second dance was the Virginia Reel. Then, we all sang Simple Gifts and Irish Blessing, then Drew bore his testimony and Kana said the prayer. The night then ended with all of us going with our host families.

* A lady came up to me to thank me, saying that we had done so much for the children of Loredo. That many of them will never leave the town or go more than 100 miles away. She said they absolutely loved it.

* A 17 year-old boy told me that seeing this show changed all his future plans. Rather than looking into the Navy, he now is sincerely going to try to go to BYU and join folk dance. "Each dance gave me more and more chills. It was unbelievable."

* A lady came and thanked me with Sis. Lambert at her side and said we were so special and unique because we weren't united just physically onstage but also spiritually. She said it was visible in our dancing and that she wishes Loredo had us every year.

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

THURSDAY MAY 10

Today started as any other day, except that it was **Taylor Jones' birthday!!!** That means we all went about our regular activities but with the knowledge that the day was going to be just a little more special.

We all woke up in our respective host family homes and had various options for the day. Some went to the **Alamo** and the **Riverwalk** earlier while others went to the **San Antonio temple**. Though some we were told as a group that performing a session in the temple wouldn't be an option, special circumstance allowed for some to do so! Other temple patrons performed initiatory ordinances and worked in the baptistery. However, all were taken by the beautiful stained glass windows, woodwork and various other architectural and symbolic elements of the small, but incredible temple.

The group later met up in the Alamo area of San Antonio and did some shopping, site seeing and eating. By this time, the 40% chance of rain had really settled in and many were regretting the decision not to bring an umbrella. Those brave enough faced mother nature and became wet creatures with sad soaking feet. The beauty of the Riverwalk area kept most outside however, and we all left San Antonio with vows to return to that wonderful scenery in more favorable circumstances.

The next leg of the journey took us to the road to Brehnam, home of the famous **Blue Bell** ice cream. On the way we stopped at one of the more interesting convenience stores. The hodge-podge of items on the shelves were described as "kitschy, weird, gross, frightening, hilarious, strangely useful, stunning and ridiculously over-priced." A couple highlights were Jeannette and Alina dressing up in the poofy blue jackets and the eerie-eyed cats. On the bus we enjoyed a lively discussion of the Garden of Eden for scripture study and the Bollywood film made famous by our rendition of the dance portrayed **Nagahra Nagahra**. The scene was watched twice due to the fact that Drew was asleep for the initial showing and moving on without him seeing it was poor form.

Before making it to our performance spot, Julie decided that we would run to the Blue Bell Ice Cream Factory Parlor! We made it 10 minutes before closing and rushed in and ordered and we on our way out within the allotted time frame. It was a truly a spectacle and we all enjoyed that hand turned taste that is so famous throughout the south.

Next we finally made it to our venue location and learned it would be a cramped show due to the limited space. We made due and danced Steppin, the Gathering, Slovak and Bollywood. The band entertained as well playing Fox and Orange Blossom Special. The crowd, though relatively small was outstanding and made up of bright-eyed youngsters on the floor. It was easy to dance for such gracious and amazing people.

After the show spirits were high and various dance parties broke out, including a **surprise dance attack on Jeannette** which was highly enjoyable to watch and participate in.

La Quinta was an hour up the road and upon arriving at the hotel a **late night swim party** ensued. Water towers were built and frivolity was had; however due to our excessive ruckus the jamboree was short lived. New parties were started in various rooms, some ordered Dominos, others watch our show and had **Miranda night** and others went to bed early in order to catch up on needed rest.

* Friendliest people in the world. An older lady stopped me at the mall and asked me “Are you from Loreda?” I said, “No, Ma’am.” She said, “That’s what I thought. Welcome to Loreda!”

* After the show, 2 women came up to me and spoke in Spanish assuming I knew it too since I sang *El Cascabel*. Felt neat that I sounded that authentic.

* After the first school show one kid asked to take a picture with me. Then a teacher asked for a picture with her class. After that, I just stayed in one spot as classes lined up to take photos. One little boy came up with his class for a photo and said, “You sir, are amazing” (sounds like the Validation guy!)

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

New Orleans, Louisiana



Friday 11 May 2012 (Leaving Texas/Entering Louisiana) Kana and Nathan S.

Case Study:

BYU International Folkdance Ensemble Enters Louisiana

Hypothesis:

Group of dancers and musicians will not be adequately prepared to experience Louisiana and will marvel at its peculiarity upon crossing the border.

Procedure:

Successfully relocate 50 participants from the BYU International Folkdance Ensemble from Texas to Louisiana by bus.

Materials Needed:

- 31 dancers
- 7 musicians
- 5 technicians
- 1 personal trainer
- 1 personal trainer's wife
- 1 artistic director
- 1 tour manager
- 1 music director
- 1 bus driver
- 1 bus
- 1 round of oysters
- 222 gallons of gasoline
- 1 movie to replace *Princess and the Frog*
- 1 Oak Ally Planation
- 16 Southern costumes
- 1 alligator claw back scratcher
- 26 quality hotel rooms

Data:

- We didn't have *Princess and the Frog* so the movie choice defaulted to Return of the King
- *How to Train Your Dragon* got vetoed...again.
- Alex Vincent reverted back his Southern instincts and led a group to Checkers for lunch.
- We visited **Oak Ally Plantation**, an old Southern plantation along the banks of the Mississippi in Vacherie Louisiana and were amazed by the 28 300 hundred year old Oak trees aligned in two rows leading up to the striking 19th century mansion.
- We enjoyed a tour given in the local dialect (aks instead of ask) by a kind middle aged lady dressed in the traditional Southern Antebellum attire.
- The dancers put on their own Southern costumes and enjoyed a photo shoot with the gardens and mansion in the periphery. (photographing cue: 1, 2, 3, Abolition!)
- While discussing the tessellation pattern in the restroom Doug developed the brilliant idea of using tangrams for an album cover.
- Doug further realized album cover perceptions by photographing the band under an enormous yet curvaceous oak tree.
- Kana did not enjoy being scratched by an alligator foot back scratcher.
- Travis introduced us to oyster eating and taught us the basics of slurping the slippery, slimy, succulent sea creatures.
- We were fortunate to stay the night in The Ramada Inn, the nicest hotel in which we had lodged thus far this tour.

Conclusions:

By way of observation, although not fully prepared, the BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble was able to successfully adapt to Louisiana culture, but not without a cost. Sour faces were made, words were not understood but memories were made as we entered this foreign and peculiar state.

* Alex met a sweet street performer from Montreal who sang him and his posse a french tune

*** After the show Amber was in the lobby when she heard a voice say “Whoaa.” She looked to her right and there as a girl (age 8-10) who was just staring at her. “That’s a lot of make-up” she said, “and bling.” Amber laughed and agreed. She then asked the girl if she liked the show. The girl responded “I could never dance, I’d rather play football.” haha**

*Staff member at Magnolia school, “I was having a bad day and you all turned it around!”

* “HEY!” (and he points) - client

* *Martha McKay*, our host in New Orleans, wants us to know our visit did so much good. She brought an investogator, *Corrine*, who was able to get a bigger picture of Mormons “that there are more of them and they do good and are happy.” After the show she said “I think I will get baptized in July.” The team’s goodness was felt.

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

Oak Alley Plantation



Saturday, 12th Louisiana, New Orleans –Erin Patterson and Tyler Walker

Saturday morning we checked out of the hotel and were on the bus by 7:30am. We had to get to an early start because we had a full day of site seeing and an evening show to put on.

We first went on a fun swamp tour at **Cajun Pride Swamp Tours**. Our swamp tour guide was this super funny dude that had lived and worked his whole life in the Louisiana swamplands. We saw lots of alligators and our guide fed them chicken and make them jump up and snatch it out of his hand. Needless to say everyone was taking tons of pictures and enjoying themselves, but we all got a surprise when our guide opened up a cooler on the boat and pulled out a **2-year-old gator**, who was approximately the length from your elbow to your fingertips. He then taught us how to hold it and said we could all pass it around and have a chance to hold it. Everyone had a fun time.

Next, we got back on the bus and headed to the **French quarter**. We had around 2 hours there to grab lunch and do some site seeing and shopping. There was an open market that was popular and a good place to find alligator heads and the like. Jonathan Wood had told us before tour about the café du monde where we all had to go and get beignets, a kind of deep-fried pastry covered in loads of powdered sugar. Yum!

There were only a few street performers playing because it was still early in the day but they were all really good. The standard of street musicians in New Orleans is stinkin' higher than any other big city I have visited, even in Europe. A lot of us just wished we could have heard more of it.

After our time on the town we headed to our venue for that night. We were able to unload all our costumes and equipment into the theater just before it started pouring rain. We set up and then headed to dinner with the local YSA at a near-by chapel. We got treated with some awesome **Jambalaya and King's cake**. Yum!

We finished setting up, dressing up, and warming up after we got back from dinner. Then it was show time!

The show went great but we had a couple funny little things happen like during the band's Ukrainian number. The band all wears Ukrainian Hootsel outfits and the two fiddleers, Aaron and Alina have this cute choreography they do while they play. At this one point Aaron spins around really quick and the big wide belt he wears totally popped off! That would have been okay to work with but the funny thing was that he had his wireless microphone pack clipped into it so that when he tried walking this big black belt was being drug along. Aaron and Alina were good at just changing up the choreography while everyone else in the band tried not to bust out laughing!

After the show we all were assigned host families and headed out.

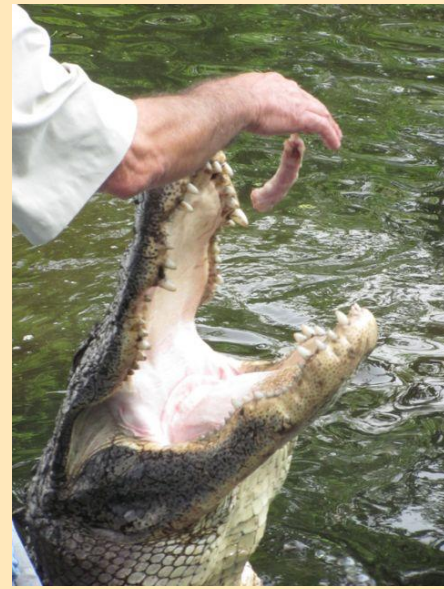
Sweets & **SOURS**

S- EMILY'S
awkward
CHIPMUNK
ENDING POSE IN
BOLLYWOOD

S- JEANETTE
FORGOT THE
VERA CRUZ
RIBBON!

S- SLOVAKIAN FAIL.
COMING IN
HALFWAY THROUGH
THE DANCE AND
SWITCHING PLACES
IN THE CIRCLE

S- SWAMP TOUR
GUIDE FOR
DISSING
EDUCATION



Cajun Swamp Tour



SUNDAY MAY 13th

Today, everyone stayed with their host families, because we had no fireside. I blame mothers. Here are some cool things that happened:

*Two of us went to a branch so small that including us, two missionaries and the EQP, there were **6 people total** in Elders quorum. 20 minutes of that meeting were used to reading (in detail) the exhaustive list of what should and should not be planted at this time of the year. Best priesthood ever!

*Emily Kleinkopf and Danielle Murray were **forced to eat one-half gallon of Blue-Bell ice cream** in one afternoon by their host family. Yay!

*Dad: "whose son are you anyway?" Son: "Dad, take some responsibility for yourself! If I'm weird, it's your fault!"

*Mikayla Ellison and Lynette Yorgason stayed with a recently singled mother (her husband had left her two weeks prior). When they were informed by her of this in the car on the way home, they were concerned and didn't quite know what to do. They both resolved, however, to take special care of her on Mother's Day. Their host mom relayed to them why she had wanted to host them, if she served she could get her mind off her situation. Both Mikayla and Lynette thought throughout the Church services for a way that they could make the day special, but nothing came to either of them. Throughout the rest of the day they simply talked to her about just about everything under the sun and ate a wonderful meal that she had assured them they would overeat. And they did. It was pot roast from heaven! In the end they realized she really just needed and wanted was to serve. So just by being with her they helped. She quickly added both of them on Facebook and her recent status was stating that hosting **BYU dancers had given her the shot of energy in her life that she needed.**

*Some dancers were taken around New Orleans again by their host families. Nell Cunningham said her family took them to the French Quarter, had them at the edge of Bourbon Street and had them look right and left, then move on!

*Reed Carter and Drew Wilde were staying in a hotel in New Orleans instead of a house because their family owned it. Sweet deal!

* The Elder's Quorum President in Brenham, Wayne Millsap, cooked an entire dutch oven dinner for us during one of the heaviest storms on our tour. Despite heavy rains and a tornado watch, we had a good turnout all packed into the small chapel!

** We went to a small branch for church in New Orleans. There were six men at Elder's Quorum (including us, two missionaries, and the EQP) The first twenty minutes of the meeting was devoted to reading (in detail) the exhaustive list of what we should and should not be planting at the time. Best priesthood ever!*

* Emily and Danielle were forced by their host family to eat a one-half gallon of BlueBell ice cream in one afternoon!

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings



Houston, Texas

Monday May 14th-- Leaving Louisiana and (re)entering Texas—Mckell C. and Nathan W.

Before leaving the great pelican state the International Folk Dance Ensemble performed one last show at the Magnolia School. The public relations representative for the New Orleans stake, Martha McKay, helped set up this performance. In addition to the show, Sister McKay coordinated a drive for Mardi Gras beads for the school's participation in the annual Mardi Gras parade. The clients love to hand out the necklaces during the parade and fortunately many boxes were donated!

Most of our school shows are for elementary aged children but the **Magnolia school** provides support to adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. They emphasize health and wellness, recreation, and encourage their clients to live life fully and achieve as much independence as possible. The school is also the home of Special Creations, a store that sells homemade items from the clients. Marilyn Barrett visited the shop after our performance and took home several works of art. One artist, Bobby Walk, is famous for his "teeth" paintings.

As with every school performance the show needed some adapting to the surroundings. The stage was smaller and slipperier than what we're used to. Nell Cunningham was the first to find out how slippery the stage was when she took a fall during the first number. Luckily she wasn't hurt but she did get some laughs from our enthusiastic audience. Mark Geslison joined the band and during the "Orange Blossom Special" puffed on the train whistle for the entire song... normally, the whistle is only there in the beginning. Overall the audience really enjoyed our performance. Many people were clapping along and during "I's a muggin'" some people stood up and danced as per Alex's invitation. It was a really fun performance. One employee said, "This morning I was having a bad day but your performance has made my day so much better!"

After the show we quickly packed the truck and headed off to Houston. We were behind in our schedule because of traffic so Julie called ahead and ordered sandwiches. She was really concerned about being late so she and a couple of others ran into the store, grabbed the sandwiches, and ran back to the bus. We ate lunch while driving and had our much needed "bio-break" a few hours later. On another note, we made it to "way 77" on our **100 ways to love a cat video**. The highlight during this viewing was the wonderful **KEY CHANGE** in the song after "way 60." There will be mixed emotions when we finish watching that video... though mostly relief...

When we arrived at the stake center in Houston we had **FHE with the YSAs set up by David Lewis's brother**, Michael, a former folk dancer. They had pizza and watermelon waiting for us. Nevertheless and notwithstanding our desire to sit down and eat, we were informed immediately that we would begin performing for the YSAs in 10 minutes. We hurriedly ingested our food and changed into our costumes. The dancers performed Steppin' (on a wood floor!) and Nagada Nagada, and the band performed several numbers, including "The Fox" and "I Don't Love Nobody." Following the performance, we invited the YSAs to join us in a few dances such as Suicide Squares and La Bastringue. After that a few of the YSAs had a chance to win free tickets to our show the next day. Winning categories included upcoming birthdays, people named Stephanie, and engaged folks. We then closed with "Simple Gifts," Brightly Beams," and "Irish Blessing" and a testimony by Jarelle.

At the end of the program, we had a few minutes to mingle with the YSAs, then we had to take off fairly quickly to meet up with our host families at another building 40 minutes away. A spontaneous dance party erupted in the middle of the bus during that brief trip to meet with the host families.

Sweets & **SOURS**

*Sw- Mark blew the train whistle the whole time
during Orange Blossom Special*

S- AARON'S BELT FLYING OFF IN
THE UKRANIAN BAND NUMBER

Tuesday May 15th – Battleships and Folker-Filled Performances by Nell Cunningham and Eddie Tyler

Our day started bright and early with a trip to North Shore Elementary School for a performance. As we waited outside for the dressing rooms to be ready, it started to sprinkle and we entertained ourselves with playing four square, long jumping, throwing the Frisbee, and just generally remembering how fun recess used to be. The school itself was a little intimidating—there were barbed wire fences all around, locked gates, and signs instructing students to NOT OPEN THE DOOR FOR ANYONE, EVEN IF THEY ARE KNOCKING. Yikes. We changed in two classrooms and had fond memories of previous SPAC years.

The show was totally awesome. The kids had clearly never seen a show like this one before because they **cheered for just about everything we did**. It was so much fun to see their excited faces and to watch them get so into the dancing and the music. The best part of the entire experience was getting to eat lunch with some of the students after the show. They were so excited to talk to us and tell us all of their favorite dances, colors, movies, foods, etc. We were sad when it was time to leave.

We were left with a few free hours before we had to load in at the venue, so we decided to take a group trip to the **USS Texas battleship**. Some of us went onto the boat while others played at the nearby park. The ship was incredible—it saw service in several of the wars of the past 100 years; in fact, it began service on May 18, 1912, meaning that we missed its 100 year birthday by three days! They had four different levels of the ship opened for touring, from the boiler rooms at the bottom of the ship up to the third or fourth level above the main deck. Some of us girlier, prissier tourists had some anxiety about climbing that high up, but we made up for it by providing great entertainment as we attempted to climb down steep, narrow stairs while wrangling skirts with a tendency to fly up in the wind. Brittney was by far the funniest—I think Mike got it on video. The boys enjoyed working the still-moving guns and taking action shots with the gigantic ones.

After play time, we traveled to the Cullen Center on the University of Houston campus for load-in. The stage was a little bit smaller than we were used to and it had almost no wing space at all, which means we were spread all over the place for changes. Load-in went relatively painlessly, and at dinner time we headed downstairs to the green room where our gracious hosts had provided us with delicious burritos, salads, and chocolate chip cookies. Mckell found a cockroach in the bathroom, eh!

Everyone was very excited about this performance. We had an almost **sold-out show filled with folk dance alumni and youth groups** who were all very excited to be there. There was an awesome vibe amongst all the performers, along with some mild nerves, which was kind of fun since it's been a while since we've felt nervous with this show. The performance was awesome—it was probably one of our best yet, with an audience that was just fantastic. The energy in the room was contagious and the dancers and musicians caught fire. What an amazing experience.

After the show, we managed to strike and load the truck in almost record time. Great job to all for being so efficient and helpful. We all headed home with our host families with the joyful news that our meeting time for the next day would be... 9:00 am!! and the meeting place was on the lake!! And there was much rejoicing.

* After the show, a lady came up to me and said, “you guys just convinced my 16-year-old to go to BYU!”

* After the shows the band always goes and plays in the lobby. Last night, so many people stopped to listen that we got asked to go outside because people might start to panic. While outside, tons of people filmed and listened to us, and then an older man asked if he could sing with us. We sang Amazing Grace. It was awesome.

* When I was sitting with some kids at lunch one made a comment about how old his dad was. “My dad is 41 years old” he said. Another responded “your dad would be dead if he was 41 years old!”

*** An usher at the show (who had worked “far too long” at the theater and had seen “every kind of show”) said we were one of the very best shows and people she’d ever seen.**

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

Sweets & **SOURS**

S- NATHAN S FOR SAYING THERE WAS 30 SECONDS LEFT BEFORE THE SHOW WHEN THERE WAS 4 MINUTES

Sw- Alina giving an intense smoulder, then making the whole bus yell "smoulder! smoulder! smoulder!"

Sw - Kana got in her leo and tights before the show for the first time!



Battleship!

Wednesday May 16th – Glistening waterfront sunrises and Dallas Evenings, by Doug Olsen & Mikayla Ellison

The sun rose upon lake Houston. And thanks to the generosity of the Thrift Family (who definitely had plenty to be generous with!) the team was able to enjoy a much needed and super **fun time on the lake**, complete with boats, jet skis, tubing, and wake surfing! The festivities were supposed to begin promptly at 8:45 – however, only a select few were on time. Those individuals (who happened to be all men – just sayin – you’ll see why this is important shortly) were able to go out on the second boat with Brother and Sister Oaks, another wonderful host family. Drew enjoyed some wake boarding, and then the wake surfing began. For those of you reading wondering what wake surfing is, it is basically like wake boarding but with just a board (no bindings) and a lot closer to the boat; so one just surfs on the wake. The boys all enjoyed this activity, even Alex. His experience is especially noteworthy, because he had worn jeans and a shirt due to a loss of his swimwear. Drew, filled with charity as always, offered him the opportunity to borrow his swimsuit. After much coercing, Alex decided he wanted this opportunity. We need not graphically describe what happened next, other than to say it involved Brother and Sister Oaks lying on the back of the boat with covered eyes, exclaiming “Tell me when it’s over.” **By the end of the process, Alex had gone from his full wardrobe to Drew’s swimming suit (Yes – ONLY Drew’s swimming suit!)**

The morning was filled with a lot of activities. Many enjoyed being pulled behind Brother Thrift’s boat on a three seater tube. He may have been gentle on the first run, but he quickly warmed up his driving skills to challenge anyone who dared to stay on the tube (which as far as we know proved an impossible feat). Others enjoyed the wave runners.

After the waterfront wonders, the Thrifts fed us our **first real Texas BBQ meal**. Many of us were happy about this. They also opened their spacious home and many showers to us so that we could get ready for the rest of the day in our tour clothes. After a fabulous lunch, the team boarded the bus and prepared for our 5 hour journey to our next stop-Dallas, Texas. Before we left, we sang “God be With You ‘til We Meet Again” to the Thrifts and the Lewis family, and then we were on our way.

Five hours later we pulled up to the **McKinney, Texas Stake Center** and were welcomed by the kind members of the McKinney Stake. To our delight, we were fed Texas BBQ once again for dinner! Dessert included Blue Bell Ice Cream and Texas Sheet Cake. We all ate together outside under a park pavilion.

The fireside then began and we performed The Gathering and Nagada. Unlike all of our previous interactive firesides, which were for the YSA’s, this one was for the young men and young women of the group. Because of this, our audience cheered louder for us than any other fireside performance! We then proceeded to teach the youth a couple of rec night dances. After much dancing, we gathered to sing “Simple Gifts” and “Brightly Beams”. Tanner then bore his testimony about staying focused and loving what you do—a lesson he learned from Jeanette. It was a wonderful conclusion to the night. After one more successful fireside, we loaded the bus and traveled to the Coppell Chapel where we would meet our host families for the night. Despite the sore muscles and tired bodies from a long day of boating and traveling, this day was one of the highlights of our trip!

* “Some of the youth that would have never danced, actually got up to dance. It was so wonderful to see the smiles on the youth’s faces. Your dancers made a difference”

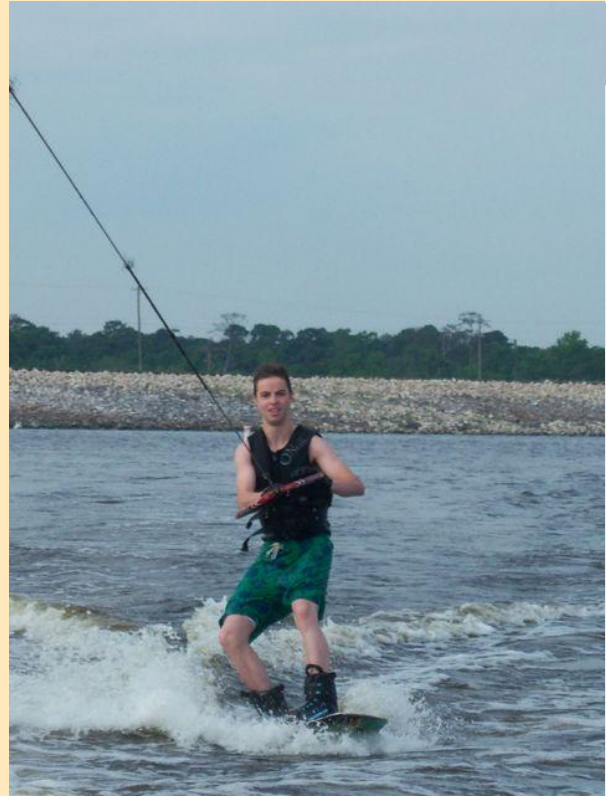
* After the concert, a man who had traveled over an hour, was so pleased with the band he said “If it had been just the band alone it would have been worth the trip.” He came to see the dancers, but was very pleasantly surprised by the band’s awesomeness.

* A woman pulled up in an old car and rolled her window down. “Excuse me, do you know where the ABC driving school is at?” (why is she already driving if she has to go to a driving school1?)

“ No. Sorry, we aren’t from around here. We don’t know the area”

“OHH! No wonder ya’ll look so nice!”

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings



Dallas, Texas

Thursday, May 17
(Written by Superman's Dad)

This morning we met at 7:00 am at the Coppell Chapel. It was early but we were surprisingly all in good spirits. Nathan Shepherd led scripture study about charity. He surprised us with a **list of charitable acts** he had observed since the first day of tour.

His list includes:

Day 2 – Taylor picked up Nathan's cream cheese; Alex, Reed, David volunteered to take home instruments; Ion asked me how I was doing during a costume change

Day 3 – Tyler helped Nathan learn the fireside music

Day 5 – Danielle made sure everyone was invited to get ice cream

Day 10 – Ron, Leslie, and Emily stayed with Jarelle at the hospital until 4am

Day 11 – Mike (the bus driver) got grapefruits to satisfy Katrina's craving

Day 14 – Ben gave Nathan an Oreo

Day 16 – Doug put his arms around Nathan, gave him a hug and said I love you

Nathan emphasized that as we live charitable lives we will be happier as we make life better for others. Nathan ended by saying throughout tour he has learned to be more charitable toward some "agitating" host family members. He then proceeded to play our favorite/most hated movie clip "100 Ways to Love a Cat"...Nathan is allergic to cats. We not only had an uplifting morning but also some good humor.

We then arrived at Richardson Magnetic High School where we did a small performance and a teaching workshop. It took a while to get into the school and to find dressing rooms, but we were in good company. Deborah ... and Joanne ... were two members who helped set up this activity and were showing us around. **Deborah gave a small group of students a classic lesson on marriage.** She told the girls that they are spiritually and socially mature and stronger than the men their age, so she told them not to lower their standards in dating in marriage. Deborah then told the men to shape up, go forward, and get married at BYU. It was received fairly well with a smile and nod from each of the students.

May 17 cont.

The show included the Gathering, Syrocovy, Nagada, Hungarian Suite, and Hopak, the band did some stuff too. At first, the **20 students in the full sized gym were a little confused and surprised at what we were doing (we felt fairly awkward also, in full costume and everything)**, but by the end of the show they had warmed up to us. After the show we taught them several snippets of Szatmar and Nagada. Ion and Jarelle taught the students the partner section of Szatmar. The **students were Country Western dancers** so the folk style was a bit of a challenge for them. The students did pretty well at partnering and picking up the sequence despite the difficulty of the movement and styling. Jessica Shepherd and Brian taught the student Nagada and were able to teach quite a bit of material. The high schoolers really seemed to enjoy this style and the opportunity to be sassy girls or manly men.

All around the workshop was a success. The dance teacher loved what we taught them and enjoyed our performance. She said she wished she had known before how great the workshop would be and she would have arranged for all of her dance students to attend. Oh well, maybe next time we're in Dallas!

After the workshop we went to a nearby chapel and were served lunch. We were able to meet two of the dance students who were members and will be coming to BYU next year. We all had a relaxed lunch and left our hosts by singing "Irish Blessing".

We then drove to the Irving Performing Arts Center and started our load in about 1:00pm. The technical crew was very pleased with their nice equipment and didn't have to do all their usual preparation. Set up went pretty well and was done relatively quickly. Many people took a nap all over the theatre, especially the Green room (which actually had green walls).

For dinner we drove back to the Coppell Chapel, which was about a thirty-minute drive with Dallas traffic. Our dinner there was a tasty light salad and cake. We were all happy and thankful to have a healthy and light meal that would sit well for our performance.

Our show tonight was a great success, and the audience was very vocal about their love for our performance. **FREAKIN' GLENN BECK WAS THERE!** They especially loved Orange Blossom Special and Nagada. The **audience was even on their feet for all of Hopak tag** it was a great performance with only one more show remaining. Strike tonight was quick and everyone was happy to go home to their host family to get a little more rest.

Sweets & **SOURS**

s/*Sw*- *Nate Wiley* FOLLOWED *Lynette* *around and*
SANG *BOOTYLICIOUS* *to her because she* HAD ICE ON
HER BUM

S- MARK G FOR CHASING EMILY
DOWN THE HALLWAY, PUTTING
HER IN A HEADLOCK AND GIVING
HER A NOOGIE

Six Flags



Friday May 18

Today was a much-needed day of rest. We met at the Coppell chapel and then drove to Wakefield High School. Several of the girls went in with Jeanette to help teach some dance classes. We taught one advanced level dance class and one beginning level dance class, and we taught a variety of dance styles including Classical Indian, Bhangra, Ukrainian, Slovakian, Romanian, and Israeli. The dancers at the school were all wonderful and they seemed to really enjoy learning new dances.

For those not involved in the workshop, the morning was spent relaxing at a nearby chapel. We had the whole building to ourselves, and employed it in a variety of ways. Several **groggy dancers slinked in and dozily sought a sleepy refuge** in one of the classrooms. Some set up their laptop and watched Gene Kelly dance away in *Singin' in the Rain*. A few played with the soccer ball in the gym or found a good spot to read. Later in the morning some of the guys played a round of HORSE, the basketball game. Christopher, Reed, Sam, Ion, Tanner, Scott, and Drew tried trick shots to add letters to the others. Drew's left jump shot was a sure shot every time. Reed nailed a couple of one leg, one arm shots near the free throw line. Christopher added letters to Reed in his favorite spot just below the net and Sam went for some lay-ups. Scott tried some one arm shots and Ion went for really radical ones. The funny moments came mostly with Tanner and Reed. Before the game, Reed was trying all sorts of close, but unsuccessful trick shots when he suddenly tossed the ball to Tanner who was sitting with his legs out and his back against the wall. Tanner caught the ball and incredibly, made the basket from where he was – on the floor! Just like that! Then after the game Reed kept trying to make a basket from bouncing the ball from the side wall of the gym and kept just barely missing it. Then Tanner tried it and made it the first time! And then a second time! Swoosh! **Reed was dumbfounded and Tanner bent over laughing** at his lucky streak. Brother Pearson and Tanner's younger brother Conner were there with us and I had to attribute it to *Pearson Power*.

After the fun and games we all met at the high school to enjoy a delicious lunch catered by Jason's Deli. When lunch was finished we all loaded the bus and drove to **Six Flags Over Texas Amusement Park** in Arlington. 19 members of the group got off to enjoy a day of thrills and good bonding time, making sure to grab a coke product to knock off 18 dollars from the admission price.

After dropping off the Six Flaggers, the rest of the group drove to the hotel in Plano, Texas. We enjoyed some pool time and a celebration of **Danielle Murray's 24th birthday**. The afternoon was spent eating ice cream, sitting in the sun, and playing an intense game of pool volleyball. We all loved being able to relax and have fun together.

A highlight of the evening for those who didn't go to Six Flags was the opportunity to go see **The Avengers**. Julie bought movie passes at Costco and we all headed to the local Cinemark for the 6:40 movie. Everyone in the group loved the action-packed super hero movie. The movie was followed by a trip to Denny's where we encountered a "service dog" that we are fairly certain was actually a werewolf. The wolf was very friendly with Ion, however it bit Stephanie when she tried to pet it. After some delicious food we all headed to the hotel for a good night's sleep.

May 18 cont

Meanwhile back at *Six Flags*, the group of 19 headed first for the *New Texas Giant*, the park's famous wooden roller-coaster, and then to the 85-mile per hour Titan coaster, which Michaela and Cody braved because they remembered having blacked out the last time they rode it. It was akin to a near out of body experience, getting off the moon, or feeling a little tipsy. But we managed to stumble our way to the Shock Wave, famous for its two vertical loops. Reed said it felt like an extended back flip. *Very extended*. Having handled the Shock, much of the group decided to go to new heights with the Super Man Ride, which rocketed them up over the expansive Dallas Fort Worth skyline. With that feat accomplished the group went to the much anticipated Mr. Freeze roller coaster that had just opened. It blasted its passengers in reverse at dizzying speeds and then raced back down its track with fast twists and turns. Afterwards, a few got back in line, while others went to explore other parts of the park. Brian and Mike had a fun experience at the bobsled coaster. Brian and Mike being of quite different size and yet sitting next to each other, **Brian extended his belly and extended so that the safety bar would not suffocate them** during the ride. The worker came by, did his safety check, and the bar was left where it was. Deeming his ploy a success, Brian got excited for what was sure to be a terrific ride when suddenly the car gave an initial start-up jerk which bent Brian forward and snapped him back up quickly. The problem? Brian was holding on firmly to the safety bar and so when he snapped back he heard a *click, click, click* and saw that he had just pulled the bar back right up to his gut and he was hurting. And so was Mike! But they had to laugh at the situation and kept on laughing through one of the tightest rides ever! And to top it off, the bar did not want to budge when the ride was over! The ride attendant kept on trying but Brian finally elbowed it down and it bounced right up, affording the two dancers some much needed relief!

Meanwhile, Drew and crew went to the water ride in the park, much to Drew's chagrin who definitely DID NOT want to get wet. So boarding the raft, he chose what looked to be *the driest* spot to sit down on. But within two minutes, a huge wave of **water completely doused Drew!** And it kept on coming. For some reason the water loved Drew's spot! The other riders just looked on, thoroughly enjoying themselves while Drew uncomfortably lifted himself inches from his soaked seat for much of the ride.

Tyler and Jessica had a lot of fun together at the park, but it was **overload for Tyler who was experiencing motion sickness** when everyone gathered a quarter after nine at the entrance for yet another adventure: heading back to the group hotel in Plano on the other side of the Dallas metroplex!

The group of 19 packed into **3 taxi vans with Indian/Bangladesh drivers**. Some of us became uneasy with the driving, one taxi-cab nearly crashing into a semi and witnessing a crash with a spinning car just meters away. But we made it safely to the train station 48 dollars later. The problem? **The train station was closed** and our train came every hour this time of night, not every fifteen minutes like earlier in the day. But we were still able to get tickets from the buses parked nearby. The other problem? They could only take small bills. So then we ran to the closest McDonalds where we invaded the obliging cashiers with small bill requests. **Jessica Ranquist and Sam asked patrons who quickly pulled out all their small bills for us**. Then we ran back to the station and ended up waiting awhile for the huge double decker train that would take us to the downtown Union station, where we then boarded the Red Line Train to Plano, making it back to the hotel near midnight, and thanked Julie for staying up so late for us. A

Sat. May 20, 2012

This morning we got to sleep in because we weren't meeting at the bus until 10 o'clock. We had a three-hour bus ride and the **band had a jam session**. It was sweet! We had serious talent busting in the back of our bus. Jeanette even joined in at one point with the bodhran. Once we got to the venue and loaded in to Pleasant Grove High School. Our workshop had been cancelled because only one person had committed to coming. Ha! It was an interesting time loading in because it was just a high school stage. Several people took on the task of **de-smellifying David's costumes**. After dinner we proceeded to dance our last show of tour. Amber, Danielle, And Reed all had family come to the show. It turned out to be a great show despite a few mishaps, including Kelsey's late entry in Slovak and Reed's inability to remember to wear his hat for Hungarian . . . oops ;) **There were lots of tears as it was the last show** (Kelsey, Jarelle, Nell and Brittney who aren't even leaving J. . . . and monkeys). There were treats galore provided for us after the show which included chocolate pudding cups and salsa dips and fruit and so much more! It was a **perfect ending to a perfect last show**.

* Our sponsor said, “I loved the dancers, but I LOVED the band!”

* After the show in Texarkana, a middle-aged woman brought her 12-yr-old (ish) daughter backstage with a T-shirt for all the performers to sign. As I signed the shirt, the mother said “Thank you so much for coming. I can't afford to take my daughter to all those countries, but ya'll brought all those countries to us. I want her to be exposed to other cultures and you made it possible.”

Cool Comments and Funny Happenings

Sunday May 21, 2012

This morning we all went to church together at 9 in **Texarkana**. The brother who conducted sacrament meeting had an amazing southern accent. We had the opportunity to sing Have I Done Any Good in sacrament meeting. The spirit was strong and there were many crying ladies after we sang. We all stayed for Sunday school and Relief Society/ Priesthood. There was an interesting story shared in Relief Society that was a little uncomfortable for everyone about how a woman didn't like her husband but the teacher was amazing and kept the lesson on track! We found out that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the ladies are actually converts. It is awesome that the church is growing in this area! After church the **whole ward had a huge potluck** dinner. There was SO much food and it was all delicious. Probably one of the best meals we have had. This ward does this potluck together once a month! After we drove about an hour and a half to the stake center. When we got there we all learned that there was a problem with the tire, it had a huge bulge, which explains the bumpy bus ride. Luckily Mike our bus driver is amazing and got it fixed! We then hung out at the chapel (which included Tanner rolling around in a wheelchair). We ate a light dinner of... you guessed it meat sandwiches! It was good though because most of us were still stuffed from our huge lunch. We had a fireside and considering how far away the members live from the stake center there was a great turnout. Jeanette introduced the fireside and then we started with Simple Gifts. Danielle spoke and gave a great testimony of our individual gifts. Then the boys sang Brightly Beams our Father's Mercy. Nathan Wiley got to introduce the story and sang the introductory solo part. He did a great job. After Brightly Beams we had Katrina Pearson tell an inspirational story followed by the band number called Emma's Lullaby. After Emma, we sang How can I Keep from Singing. Cody followed with a story, accompanied by Scott and then the band sang Jesus Sailor Pilot Me. Our concluding speaker was Mike Romney and the concluding song was Irish Blessing. We could tell the people in the chapel were very impressed with our fireside. We received great compliments after we concluded the fireside. It was a great way to end our performances for this year.

For some, this was the last performance with the BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble – a closing of a great chapter in their lives. Joy, sadness, and relief were among the feelings shared by our teammates as we came to the end of our tour. Nevertheless, all things have an end and whether we want it or not, we have to deal with it. It was a great tour full of adventures and great moments. We all played our part in it, like little pieces of a big puzzle, building a big and wonderful picture of BYU and the LDS Church.

BYU International
Folk Dance
Ensemble

MAY 2012

Handwritten signatures and names include:
Karine Pearson, Paul Wille, Taylor Jones, Cody Phillips, Ben Groban, Justin Kelly, Aaron Harris, Ian Cross, Katelyn Phillips, Sean Akin, Julie Cook, Stephen, Ryn Miller, Tami Parnum, Jessica Shepherd, Billie Smith, Emily Nelson, David, Arnie Shepherd, Thomas A. All, Chris Francis, Daniel M. Ramsey, Kona Tyler, Alana!

mmm...Recipes

Awesome Peach Cobbler:

Peaches (Del Monte Canned, or Fresh. It's your preference)

1 cup Self Rising Flour

1 cup Sugar

1 cup Milk

BUTTER

Put a layer of peaches on the bottom of the pan (amount is personal preference). Top with Butter (optional, but delicious!). In a separate bowl, mix Milk, Sugar, and Flour until barely mixed. Top the peaches with the dough mixture, then top the whole thing with crumbles of butter (This one is not optional, but you can determine the amount). Bake at 350 until the dough looks golden brown... or until you just can't wait anymore. Top with Blue Bell Ice Cream (or a lesser but still tasty brand) and enjoy a little piece of heaven!

Jambalya:

2 cups uncle Bens rice

1 Rotisserie Chicken

1 lb smoked sausage

1 can french onion soup

1 can beef con somme

1 stick of butter cut up

Add ingredients in pan. Add spices: Tony's

350 degrees for one hour, usually finished in 40 minutes. Check for doneness early. Add water if necessary.

mmm...Recipes

King Cake:

3 packs yeast
2 cups very warm water
1 cup butter-real butter-almost melted
1/2 cup sugar
1 1/2 tsp salt
4 eggs
7-8 cups flour (divided)

Combine 2 cups of the flour, sugar and salt in LARGE mixing bowl. Soften butter in microwave to ALMOST melted stage and add VERY warm water and butter to the flour/sugar/salt mixture. Stir with wire whisk. Add 3 packs yeast (add it dry) and stir until dissolved. Add 1 egg at a time, mixing well after each one. Add 2 more cups of flour. Exchange wire whisk for spoon here (and rinse of whisk immediately to avoid hard, dried-on flour junk). Add enough more flour to make dough easy to handle (I usually add about 2 1/2 more cups), and then dump out onto floured counter and knead until flexible, but not hard. Rinse out bowl, dry and then oil it lightly with vegetable oil. Put dough in bowl, cover with towel and let rise until it reaches the top of the bowl (sometimes this takes an hour, sometimes it takes 2 or 3 depending on how warm your house is) Punch down dough and let rest for about 10 minutes.

BROWN SUGAR/CINNAMON FILLING:

Mix brown sugar and cinnamon to your taste (should taste more like cinnamon than brown sugar). Store in zip lock bag to keep from getting hard.

CHERRY/APPLE/STRAWBERRY/BLUEBERRY/RASPBERRY/BLACKBERRY FILLING:

1 can cherry pie filling (blended for 2 seconds in food processor) not too long because your still want pieces of the fruit. I have recently tried freezer jam (needs to be frozen when used) instead of canned pie filling, and have enjoyed the fresher taste that brings (especially strawberry). I have a friend who uses lemon pie filling and it's their favorite.

Cont on next page

mmm...Recipes

CONTINUING:

Melt another stick of butter completely and stir well. Divide dough into 2 equal amounts. Roll out dough (this is tricky use your sixth sense! if it's too thin it will tear; if it's too thick it won't cook thoroughly) Using a knife or pizza cutter, cut the rolled out dough into 3 pieces lengthwise. Using a pastry brush, "paint" melted butter on the 3 cut pieces. For the brown sugar-cinnamon variety, generously sprinkle the brown-sugar mixture down the middle of each cut piece and spread just a little, then pat down and sprinkle a little bit of flour over the top. For the cherry or other fruit variety, spoon the briefly blended pie filling down the middle of each of the 3 cut strips. Spread slightly, but not too close to the edge. Be careful not to overfill because it tends to leak out when rising/baking. With the cherry and apple filling, I sprinkle some of the brown sugar-cinnamon mixture on top of the filling and then sprinkle a little flour on the top of that as well. Fold the short ends over just slightly and then fold the long ends in a tri-fold (like folding a letter) from the top down to the middle and then bottom up and over the top. Bring the 3 pieces close together (don't be afraid of the dough). Pick it up and gently swing it back down to the counter, giving it a little bit of a stretching as you do. Begin braiding in the middle; work to one end then go back to the middle and braid to the other end. Carefully place on huge cookie sheet, shape into oval or circle and pinch the ends together where they meet. Cover and let rise again. Bake at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes (I always set the timer for 12 minutes and monitor until it's done) When cool, tuck small plastic baby wherever you want! Cool completely before frosting. I frost a small section at a time so the frosting won't dry out before sprinkling the sugar on top. Alternate the colored sugar (purple, green, yellow). Enjoy!

FROSTING:

Soften 1 stick of butter. Add powdered sugar and milk alternately. Add about a tsp or two of vanilla (to taste) and a pinch of salt. It usually take 1/2-3/4 of a 2 lb bag of powdered sugar. Stir to desired consistency.

VARIATION:

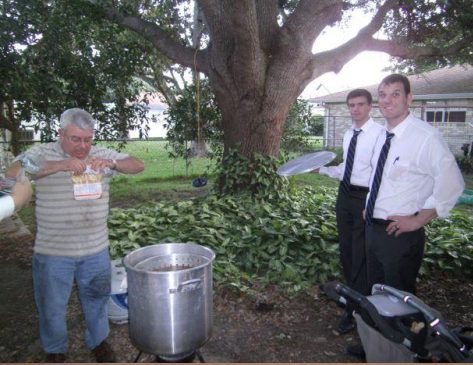
I use a cream cheese frosting for the cherry-filled and blueberry filled (or any kind you choose) king cake. Blend a package of room-temperature cream cheese with a half stick of butter, softened. Add powdered sugar a little bit at a time until the right consistency. I do not use vanilla or milk for this frosting unless it becomes a little too thick.

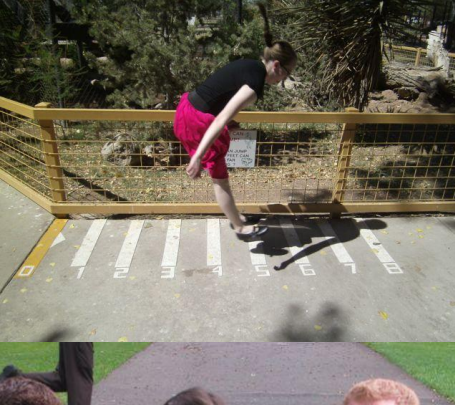
COLORED SUGARS: Pour 1 cup of granulated sugar each into 3 ziplock bags. Add several drops of food coloring to get the desired color of sugar (traditional Mardi Gra colors are purple, yellow, and green) squeeze out air, zip bag and squish sugar until drops are mixed in with the sugar. Add more as needed.

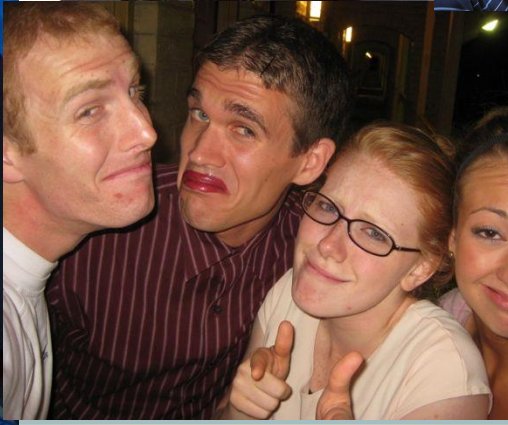
More Pictures!











Folk Dance Babies

(both parents were a part of this tour)



K. O. Biles
PHOTOGRAPHY



Music Videos



Call Me Maybe

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MN1IR1Te0VM&list=UUmVW62eIKOSQfcYv1NqUI6w>



Love you like a love song

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95q8-dlh_lw&feature=youtu.be

Amber and Kana's Photo Slideshow



THE GATHERING (entire show)

Click the video. If that does not work, here is the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VaMObQvlbAs&feature=youtu.be>

