

Gordon Family Road Trip 2013

Sunday morning, everyone went to GPC for the 9:30 service. My dad came back home to pack the car and get ready while my mom taught 11:00 Sunday school. As soon as my mom finished teaching, we left for Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Abby and I had both just arrived from week long youth group trips on Saturday and we were both exhausted. I'm not sure about Abby, but I slept in the car a whole lot. On road trips I always get the whole back seat to myself. ☺ The car ride to Chattanooga was about 9 hours. My mom wanted us to arrive in Houston by Monday night. We stayed at a Days Inn that faces Lookout Mountain. The next morning, we went downstairs to the Continental Breakfast during the sunrise. I took a few pictures of the sun rising on Lookout Mountain. It was very picturesque.

The drive from Chattanooga to Houston was about 12 hours. On our way to Houston, we stopped in New Orleans, Louisiana for a few hours to visit Jackson Square and Café Du Monde. At the famous Café, we had beignets (French donuts) and drinks—refreshments from the hot and humid weather. When we reached our climax of the weather, we got back in the car and finished our drive to Houston.

We arrived at my grandparent's home at around 9:00pm. My mom's sister, Cherry, had arrived the night before from Des Moines, Iowa and were just coming back from the beach with my grandparents. The upstairs of the house had some problems with the AC so the room that my sisters and I were supposed to be sleeping in was too hot and we ended up in the upstairs living room on the couch and floor. That would have been fine for us but every morning our cousins, who were 4, 3 and 2, woke up early and played with the toys in that living room, waking us up at 7:00 every day!

Tuesday morning everyone went to the pool in my grandparent's neighborhood. The pool was refreshing in that hot and humid Texas weather. The pool was also not very crowded, which was also nice. That afternoon everyone went to Galveston's Pleasure Pier. It was a little on the expensive side, but it was worth it. Pleasure Pier is like a fair with rides and games, but on a pier right on the shore of the water. My most memorable ride was the Ferris Wheel. I'm afraid of heights but Abby and I decided to try it. When our cart was at the top of the Ferris wheel, it stopped. For a few minutes Abby and I were

stuck at the top, scared out of our minds. Eventually we came down, but I'm not sure I'll be going again on a ride like that. After Pleasure Pier, everyone went to Golden Corral for dinner. For dessert, my 4 year old cousin, Brody, decided he wanted a cupcake. He goes to the dessert bar, grabs cupcake, licks it, and then puts it back. Oh! The reaction of his parents was priceless!

Wednesday evening, everyone went to the Texas City Dike for a swim in the water. My mom's cousin and her husband came also. I think we would have enjoyed the water more if it weren't for the jellyfish. I had never seen so many jellyfish at the beach! Poor AJ fell scraped her leg from the shells *and* got stung but a jellyfish. After it started to get dark we took a walk and found some hermit crabs. I recall a young Hispanic girl trying to converse with us in Spanish. Only my dad could really understand...

Thursday morning we went to the pool again. The whole day, my grandpa was preparing Lechon—roasted pig, a Filipino specialty. My grandpa was never pleased with store bought Lechon. He was also a mechanic and carpenter. He built his own pig roaster out of old bicycle parts and other things that others might call junk, and made his own Lechon. It was delicious! After dinner, we gave a concert of music and also played some fun versions of Uno and Farkel.

Saturday morning, my parents took the family out to eat breakfast at IHOP. The rest of the day was really just a relaxing day at the pool and at home.

At 6:00 in the morning on Sunday, my aunt's family departed for the 15 hour trip to Iowa. The rest of us and my mom's cousin and husband, went to the famous Lakewood Church with Pastor Joel Osteen in Houston. The church can seat 16, 800 seats and has more than 40, 000 people visit the church throughout the entire week. The music and sermon were very good and I enjoyed it a lot. After church, we went to a Filipino buffet nearby for lunch. We went home and rested, then went to Galveston Beach. The water was very nice, but there was so much seaweed! I had never seen so much in my life!

For lunch on Monday, everyone went to my mom's cousin's house. We enjoyed a delicious meal of Filipino noodles and grilled pork and chicken. We played Uno Attack and Abby and A.J. also played on the Kinect. Every Monday, as a tradition, my family goes to the coffee shop. So that's what we did. Scooter's is a nice coffee shop and frozen yogurt place that was nice to relax in. That evening, my mom's cousin and husband came to my grandparent's house for dinner, karaoke, and some games.

Tuesday morning we left for Dallas. We visited our old family friends, the Bennett's. The oldest daughter, Ruth, and I went to the movie theater, while the others went to the pool. It began to rain so they came back earlier than expected. After the Bennett's, we went to a friend of my dad and his family's house. The Patchen's hosted us for a delicious dinner. Abby and A.J. played with son, Nathan, while the rest of us sat and chatted. We drove about another hour to Terrell, TX so we could save time for the drive the next day. We stayed at a Laquinta Inn.

On Wednesday, we drove to West Monroe, Louisiana, where we used to live. We first went to our friends', the Park's, home to settle in. We had lunch and chatted then we went to Excalibur, which is like a Chuck E. Cheese but they have go-karts, rock climbing, mini golf and more. My dad got the car wash then picked us up to take us to one of my best friend's house. I spent the night with her and another friend. We went four wheeling at 9:30 at night. It was super fun! My dad went to a prayer meeting with some of his old buddies and then everyone, besides me, went to dinner with the Parks.

The next morning I was picked up early so that together as a family we could visit West Monroe and old sights. First we visited our good friend, Mr. Clem, who practically lives on a farm. He showed us his goats, chickens, home grown vegetables, and rooster. I stepped in an ant hill, which was really scary. We visited our old house, one of our favorite parks, the hospital, had lunch at McDonalds, and had ice cream at Eskimoe's. We came back to the Park's to get ready for the Dayspring get together. The get together was a fun time. We enjoyed catching up with our old friends to see how they were doing.

Right before we left on Friday, Mr. Mike Park took each of us girls out for a ride on his motorcycle. It might have been one of the most dangerous and scariest thing I've ever done, but it was fun all the same. It was such a short visit, but we had to go. ☹️ We drove to Atlanta, Georgia and stayed at the Days Inn near Stone Mountain.

On Saturday, we went to the Stone Mountain Park. While visiting the museum, I realized I forgot my retainer at the motel so my mom and I drove back to get it. On our way back, we decided that was too cold and rainy to go the whole day without a jacket, so we stopped at Walmart to buy some rain jackets. Back at Stone Mountain, we went on the Sky Hike—a ropes course at different heights. It was fun, but frightening at times. We also went up the mountain on the Skyride. Stone Mountain is a mountain with huge carving of Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and Jefferson Davis on the face of it. It was

very windy and foggy at the top, so we came down to a warm lunch. The rest of the park included a train, 4D theater, and the Antebellum plantation. After a long day we traveled another 5 hours to Greensboro, North Carolina and stayed at the Drury Inn.

Sunday morning we had a nice hot breakfast at the hotel then drove an hour to Raleigh and visited Ernest Myatt Memorial Presbyterian Church, where a friend of ours preaches. He and his wife took us out to lunch after the service at a restaurant, called Tripp's. After a delicious meal we went to their house to change out of our church clothes. On our way home we stopped at a McDonald's for ice cream. We arrived home at around 9 to a nice clean house, thanks to our house sitter. It was a fun trip, but it was great to finally be home.

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~Nicky

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