

*Tumbleweed Smith*

*Kid's Korner*

## Flat Stanley Rides on a Truck Hungry or Bored

The "Flat Stanley" project started a few years ago as an educational tool designed to make students more aware of their surroundings. They made paper figures that accompanied them on all their endeavors, kept a journal and shared the experiences with other students. The project grew and kids learned about all sorts of things. A man and wife truck driving team, Troy and Regena Wilhite of Ennis, took Flat Stanley with them one whole school year and stayed in contact with a school in El Paso.

"We sent the kids a post card every week," says Troy. "It told where we had been and where we were going. Then the teacher would get a map, figure the miles we had covered and what states we had to go through to get from Point A to Point B. We carried Flat Stanley all over the United States."

About every three months or so, Troy and Regena would go to the school, visit with the kids, have pizza with them and tell about where Flat Stanley had been. The students got involved with Flat Stanley's travels and learned a lot about geography.

"I've got to tell you, that was a fantastic year," says Troy. "We finally sent Flat Stanley to the White House. The first lady took him into the president's office and he went through there. They lost track of him and finally found him at a press conference. They sent us back pictures of Stanley and the first lady, Stanley with the first dog. He took a nap with the dog. We sent all this back to the school and we had a blast that year playing with Stanley and the kids."

Regena says they took pictures of Flat Stanley in the truck. "He got to come out and fuel the truck, wash it and grease it, do some mechanic work. When we did something special, we took Flat Stanley with us. We put him near the windshield so he could see everywhere he went. He crossed all the continental divides on Interstate 10 and Interstate 90. He had a lot of fun that year. I think Stanley only liked ten states from seeing all of them by the time we got him back home."

Troy says they took pictures of Flat Stanley in a snow bank. "This particular Flat Stanley had a red jacket and blue pants. It was about eight inches tall and made out of paper."

Regena made a scrapbook of the year. "We took him through the whole company so that the kids could learn there was more to trucking than just driving a truck. He saw the dispatching and billing departments, security, loading, unloading, everything."

Troy and Regena ran together coast to coast in the US and Canada for fifteen years. "When I wasn't driving, she was," says Troy. "There's a lot of togetherness in a truck cab twenty four hours a day for two weeks at a time, but we thoroughly enjoyed it." Regena says when she got mad, she'd go up in the back and slam the curtains together real hard. At the end of their careers they hauled explosives for the military, which required the highest security clearance. "We had lots of adventures," says Regena.

How many times an hour after eating, has your child wandered into the kitchen and restlessly rifled through the cupboards whining, "What is there to eat?" or "I'm hungry!" If your child ate a good meal, chances are she or he is not physically hungry, but feeling a need for sensation or stimulation. The next time this happens, you could ask your child, "are you hungry, or are you bored?"

Boredom is a common trigger for adults who describe themselves as "compulsive eaters" or "emotional eaters." These adults describe themselves as looking to food for entertainment; Food is a quick fix and a quick fill. As children, these compulsive eaters might have been bored and looking for stimulation. Finding a well-stocked pantry within their reach, they might have filled empty time and space with food. You can help your child avoid eating out of boredom by having a "boredom box" in the pantry filled with a changing, engaging array of stimulating art supplies and other resources.

Art is the natural language of children and creating an image with paint, crayons, or markers usually will be fulfilling.

Small bottles of bubbles can be used inside or out to chase away the doldrums. Take your time blowing and allow your young child to run and chase the ever-changing spheres.

If your child is old enough, teach him to patiently blow the bubbles for himself (or for a pet to chase). You can add a drop or two of food coloring to a one-ounce bottle and allow the colored bubbles to pop on a sheet of paper to create a picture. When the paint dries, use crayons or markers to add details to the images found in the lines.

When choking isn't a hazard, a jar of colorful bouncy balls can stimulate games of indoor or outdoor soccer or basketball using plastic containers for baskets and goals.

A jar of colorful marbles can be used to teach the old-fashioned game that used to entertain grandpa. And don't forget jacks.

Cover a large jar with opaque paper or paint and fill it with several small toys of varying sizes, shapes and materials. Keep a list of the toys or print their names on small cards. Blindfolded children can search for each toy using just the sense of touch. The person who finds the most toys in a specified time wins a prize (maybe one of the toys).

It's good to change the items in the "boredom box" every now and then. This way they do not become so familiar that they are boring too! By providing the materials and short instructions, your children can become active problem solvers.

## Birth Announcements

### Lara

Baby girl, Kamil Zoe Lara was born on February 4, 2013 to proud parents, Teresita Huerta of Jalisco, Mexico and Ignacio Lara of Seminole.

The baby girl was born at Seminole Memorial Hospital. She weighed 7 lbs. 4.3 oz. and was 20" long.

Paternal grandparents are Ignacio and Maria Lara of Cumargo Chihuahua Durango.

Maternal grandparents are Teresa and Roberto Huerta of Jalisco, Mexico.

### Nguyen

Lam Nguyen and Jenney Loan Duog of Seminole are the proud parents of a baby girl, Katie Nguyen.

The baby girl was born February 8, 2013 at Seminole Memorial Hospital. She weighed 7 lbs. 3.0 oz. and was 20" long.

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