The beginning of the week started out great! Lots of fun things to do with the kids and grandkids. It was birthday week. Brody turned 30 on Monday. He and Ray fished in the morning and we had a little party that evening. Simple and perfect.



Wednesday was Sophie's birthday. We had a full day of activities that went so late into the night that it was the next day! We started with going to a farmer's market down on lower Sugarloaf Key, then on to Key West for lunch at Grandpa's favorite raw oyster bar. Sophie was only interested in the birthday ice cream at Haagen-Dazs.

On the way home we stopped on Big Pine Key which is home to a species of deer called Key deer. They are an endangered deer that only live in the Florida keys on Big Pine Key. It is the smallest North American deer species. Anyway, if you turn off the main road the key deer are all over the side streets and neighborhoods. There are signs that says "don't feed the deer" but many residents do so the deer come right up to you. In 1957 there were only 27 Key Deer but today there are about 800. The deer are curious and if you are quiet they will walk up to you. Rayden and Kartor spent some time with this little guy.



We got home a little latter then planned. We had dinner and a little party. Amazing this precious little thing is 6!



After the party we went lobster hunting. Sophie and Rayden were trying to see who could spot the lobsters first. When we finally were ready to come in the house, Sophie said "well tomorrow my birthday will be over." I looked at the clock and told her that her birthday had been over for quite a while ...



We actually had ice cream several times this week... we don't limit ourselves to birthdays...lol.



Then I hurt my neck. It has been really painful. The chiropractor tells me that I need to do a stretch each day to strengthen my muscles. I do the exercises for a while and when things improve, I stop doing the stretches... Pain is a big motivator to get back on track. I spent two days and nights sitting very still. One of them was Ray's birthday... I couldn't move. I couldn't go out fishing or bully netting and probably lost the last calm night while we are here to go fishing.

I have been thinking about how easy my little exercise is to do each day, it strengthens me and yet I don't do it. I wait until I am in so much pain.

I was thinking about the Israelites. During their long and difficult journey out of Egypt, the children of Israel began to murmur against the Lord. As a result of their murmuring, fiery serpents were sent among the people. Many of them were bitten and died. Moses went to the Lord on their behalf, and the Lord instructed him to make a brazen serpent and attach it on a pole. All they needed to do to live was look at it.

Old Testament

Numbers 21: 9

9 And Moses made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

There is a reference to this story in the Book of Mormon. Nephi is recounting the story to his murmuring brothers and he said:

Book of Mormon

1 Nephi 17:41

41 And he did straiten them in the wilderness with his rod; for they hardened their hearts, even as ye have; and the Lord straitened them because of their iniquity. He sent fiery serpents among them; and after they were bitten he prepared a way that they might be healed; and the labor which they had to preform was to look; and because of the simpleness of the way, or easiness of it, there were many who perished.

It's a good lesson to me to apply physically and a good lesson to all of us spiritually to do the simple and easy things that make our lives better. Reading our scriptures and saying our prayers and following the teachings of our Savior. It keeps life simple and we can avoid so much suffering.

Love, Leslie

