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Chapter Nine
Eight Months Old,
Feeding, Growing, Physical Therapy

♥ June 16, 2005 at 02:27 PM CDT

Hello to you all,

Sorry no update in a few days, but the writer of the family is out of state. Chad went to Santa Fe, New Mexico for work. The sound of excitement in his voice this morning was great to hear. He said the scenery is just beautiful.

Blake is having a great week!! Saturday, Blake had his 1st lick of a lollipop. (pictures to come, when Chad has a chance to post) Gail with occupational therapy let him have his 1st taste of applesauce. Blake is enjoying the different taste.

He is still on 45% of oxygen with the nasal CPAP. We hope he will be weaned a little more soon. Blake is holding strong and for that we thank GOD!

I wish all the father's and father's-to-be a HAPPY FATHER'S DAY this weekend. I look forward to Chad coming home and celebrating his 1st Father's day with his son!

Love you all!!

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ June 17, 2005 at 12:14 PM CDT

Quick Friday Message...

Please check out the latest photo, Blake's taste test. I can't wait to see Blake's reaction to the applesauce. I hope to see it this weekend. I talked to Kimberly a few minutes ago, and Blake was trying to turn his physical therapy session into a something more like a massage. He was enjoying letting the therapist do all the work, as if he was getting a rub down or something. Blake's doing well today, and slowly sneaking up on 12 lbs. I'll put together a longer message Monday w/ some new photos. For now I'm sure the Lollipop photo will melt your hearts.

Here's to a wonderful Father's Day to all you Dad's out there, especially Blake's Grandpas Ron and Eddie Joe. I'm proud to include myself in the club...

Take care of those Dad's this weekend.
Cheers!

Daddy Chad

Addition from Mommy!!

I forgot to tell Chad this morning---Blake hit 12lbs last night on his 8 month Birthday!!! The nurses are calling him chunky. I call him chunky monkey! He has lots of baby fat now!!!!!!! I have been enjoying rocking Blake to sleep. I feel more like a mommy everyday. Blake has me wrapped around his finger. I love motherhood!

I want to wish my MOM a Happy Retirement!! If you don't know, yesterday was her last day of work. Now mom & dad are finally retired together. I am very happy for the both of them. They can now enjoy coffee together in the morning and waking up slowly. Congrats Mom & Dad!!!!

Have a wonderful Father's day weekend!

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ **June 21, 2005 at 09:08 AM CDT**

A Wonderful Father's Day,

The weekend started out with a great surprise from the 'Bunco Buddies' in Austin, several of Kim's girl friends. They surprised us with putting together a care package of Salt Lick BBQ. Delivered in an ice chest to me just before heading to Houston, the BBQ was fresh off the pit. I had a hard time not stopping for a quick sample along the way. You should have seen Kim's eyes as she saw me carry in the ice chest. Salt Lick is our favorite local scene and B.B.Q.. For a moment we were back in Austin...kicking back. Thank you 'Bunco Buddies', that was special.

Saturday we celebrated with Kim's mom, Mary. Mary is officially retired from the school district now, joining Eddie Joe who has been retired for a few months now. The family was nice enough to meet at a restaurant close to the hospital so Kimberly and I could join them. Margaritas were flowing and a good time was had by all. Congratulations MIL, and Grandma!!! We know that you will thoroughly enjoy spending more time traveling as well as getting settled into your ranch at Wheelock. More time

with the grand-kids is a good thing, too. I'm sure this Monday morning was one of the best ever.

Father's Day followed Sunday, and an emotional day it was for me. My Mom and Dad came for a visit, and as always brought surprises. My Mom Judy brought with her my baby book including: letters, pictures, and dates/facts of my first days. With these was one item in particular that was very special.

When I was born, my Dad Ron was off the coast of Cuba as he was in the Navy at the time. So Dad saw me for the first time weeks afterwards when his ship returned to Galveston. Mom dressed me in a little sailor suit. I remember seeing the photo in our family album, of my Dad holding me for the first time. Mom surprised us all as she brought that same sailor suit which she has kept all this time.

It was a very emotional scene to see my son Blake in that very outfit, at eight months old. I'm sure for my Mom, she felt in a way as if she was looking back into time. Blake looked very cute, and posed for a picture of grandpa, son, and grandson. Check out the photo gallery... Shortly after, Blake christened the outfit as I'm sure I did by spitting up all over it. We all laughed once we cleaned up Blake and the outfit. This certainly was a meaningful day for me and our family. Thanks Mom and Dad.

Blake's continuing to progress. He is now on a normal 3-hr. feeding schedule of 60 cc's over 45 minutes w/ time in between to digest. This is a big step for him. Blake is also continuing to enjoy his physical therapy sessions. Sunday Blake was kicking with his feet and pushing down with them. He looked so happy and content to be discovering new movements. After these exercises...Blake falls fast asleep. He continues to love playing with his hands and touching his mouth. All great things to see...

I hope everyone's Father's Day was pleasant, and I'm glad to be apart of the club. More updates to come this week...

Love you all, and God bless.

Chad



♥ June 22, 2005 at 09:35 PM CDT

Good evening everyone. It's been a while since you've heard from us.

This time we have GREAT NEWS about several exciting events that are planned. Blake's Buddies (BB) are hosting several fundraising events in the coming months and we wanted to let you know when and where.

The first event will be a BBQ Dinner and Silent Auction on Saturday, August 6 from 11-2 at the Santa Fe Fire Station in Santa Fe, Texas. Feel free to come and go as you please, but remember to place your bids for the silent auction items and check back often. Tickets are being sold in advance for the meal (\$7). You may also buy raffle tickets (\$5) on site for the Austin event (see below). We are accepting donations for the silent auction. You can contact Michelle to make donations or for more information.

The next event will take place in Austin on September 24th. (Please note the date change from the previous information posted on this website.) BB will be holding a Golf Tournament at The Yaupon course in Lakeway. The play will be a four-man scramble with a shot gun start at 1:00pm. More details will be available soon (price, registration forms, games). Please feel free to contact Michael and Becky and we'll get your name on the list. Later on that same evening, BB are also hosting a dinner and silent auction event to be held at the Trinity Episcopal School Gym in Austin. Dinner tickets will be sold in advance and will be available later in July. After the silent auction, we will hold the drawing for the raffle winners. There have been some GREAT handmade items donated for the raffle (swings, cedar chest) but we are in need of donations for this silent auction as well. If you're interested in donating or helping at the events, please contact Becky.

Needless to say, we're all working hard to put together some exciting events for you to enjoy. Please try to join us at one or all the events as we gather to celebrate Blake and help to raise funds for his benefit.

Have a great remainder of the week!

Uncle Michael & Aunt Becky (for Blake's Buddies)

♥ **June 24, 2005 at 08:37 AM CDT**

Good Friday...

Kimberly called yesterday excited to share some new findings. There appears to be some tiny white objects emerging from Blake's gums. Yes, our boy has teeth coming in! For all you parents, you know how these moments with your first child were for some reason bigger than the world. Kimberly was so excited, and relieved as Blake had been a little more fussy the past couple of days...turns out he is teething.

Feedings every three hours are going well. Mommy is getting Blake into a daily routine of playing time (physical therapy), nap, Mommy time, nap, bath time, and bedtime. She is really enjoying these Mommy times w/ her son. We'd like to be doing these things at home...but that will come, when exactly...patience is a virtue.

Thank you so much Blake's Buddies Organizers. Your caring, determination, and time are overwhelming... We love you all. Kimberly,

Blake, and I are making it through all this with hope in great part to all your support. We are forever grateful for your efforts.

Cheers, to a great weekend!

We are excited to have some friends from Austin (Blake Buddies themselves) visiting Saturday. Ric, Erica, and Benicio are heading to Houston for the weekend. Thanks guys...Kimberly eyes are not going to believe how Benicio has grown. Be safe!





♥ July 06, 2005 at 01:50 PM CDT

It's been too long...since our last update.

We hope everyone had a great Fourth of July weekend. Kimberly and I missed not being in Austin, as we always love taking in the festivities from Townlake...but we were very glad to spend Independence Day with our son in Houston. I'll post some new pictures of Blake later, new outfits and special visitors...

Sunday was a good day filled with friends and family visiting Blake. Brooks and Kristen, two of Blake's cousins, got to visit Blake in- person for the first time. They each read Blake a story and sat with him on the mat.

They were both so very excited and surprised as they did not know the plan until they arrived. Before, Brooks and Kristen had only seen Blake through the window, but not up close and personal.

Our 'soon to be married' friends Bruce and Dona from Austin also stopped in as they were in Houston for the day. Thanks for taking the time you two...Kimberly especially loved the visit and catching up with the wedding and honeymoon plans. Blake appreciated the visit too, though found Bruce's stories a bit boring I guess as he slept through the entire visit. Thanks guys!!! Mr. 'Charm' (Chung) also stopped by to say hello bearing a Patriotic Teddy Bear with an American flag. Blake also slept through this visit...but eventually woke up later in the evening.

Blake needed some extra sleep time this weekend... and in doing so got off schedule a bit. I believe Blake didn't wake up Saturday until 8 pm. (in the EVENING!) Yes, Blake then was wide awake and playful for several hours. Even his bath did not tire him out. When Mommy and Daddy left for the evening at almost 1 am, Blake was still awake just starting to tire and relax with his pacifier. Just what Babies do, right...

Anyway...good weekend and pictures to come.

Blake had an echocardiogram yesterday to check on his heart, following up on the VSDs and the PA banding. Kimberly and I have been holding our breath, knowing that there is an eventual surgery ahead for Blake. The report found that everything is continuing fine and Blake can continue to 'feed and grow'. (Big Exhale, everyone) The cardiologists do not think his heart is an issue with continuing to wean from the CPAP...that mostly its Blake's lungs that need to be strengthened. We will see in the next few days, if the doctors think they can wean some of the pressure from the CPAP settings. (And if Blake can accept the adjustment).

We'll take that as good news...and continue to patiently wait for Blake's plan to develop. I know we all want to know when Blake will be coming home...but for now, these daily improvements and added strengths will do. By the way...Blake is coming close to 14 lbs. Any day now! Blake's our little bottle rocket...shooting up and up and up.

All these sunny days are starting to add up...keep up the faith, and thanks for all the continued love and support.

Blake's proud Pa Pa,

Chad

♥ July 08, 2005 at 08:57 AM CDT

Friday....Yes!

Four days and out..."everybody's working for the weekend", right? Just a quick update, wanted to direct everyone to some new photos I promised last time. Brooks and Kristen, we are so glad you were able to visit in person. Blake loves his cousins...Kimberly and I are always telling him of all the fun stuff ahead with all six cousins. Blake's ready to go to the beach as you can see...

We hope everyone has a great weekend. Special thanks to all of Blake's Buddies who are working the streets collecting auction and raffle items for the events to come. You all are awesome! Take Care, and Share the Faith...

Daddy Chad

♥ July 15, 2005 at 08:53 AM CDT

Hello everyone from Aunt Becky--

Just a quick update on all the great happenings for Blake. For those of you in and around Santa Fe, remember there will be a Benefit with BBQ plate lunches and silent auction on August 6 from 11-2 at the Santa Fe Fire Department. We've had LOTS of donations from many people and businesses and are looking forward to a fun, successful day. If you would like dinner tickets, contact Michelle as they are going VERY fast. We've also got Raffle tickets on sale for some great prizes.

If you're in the Austin area or want to take a weekend trip, we've got some great things happening there too. On September 24 we'll be hosting a golf tournament for Blake at the Clubs of Lakeway, Yaupon course. Tee off is at 1:00 for our 4 man scramble. We've obtained some really great prizes including cash awards for a putting contest and hole-in-one. Later that evening, we're having a dinner for everyone at Trinity EPIS. School in the Gym. There will be a silent auction, the raffle drawing, a short program and a DJ for some dancing. Be sure to bring the entire family. If you're interested in playing golf or attending the dinner, please contact me for more information.

On a side note, my family went to visit Blake last weekend. My children, Jessica and Gregory had not been able to see or touch Blake since January. They were so excited to be up close and personal to their baby cousin. Gregory was ready to play and Jessica hasn't stopped talking about kissing on Blake's arm.

It's really phenomenal every time we see this little guy. I can't help marvel at how he was barely the size of his daddy's hands when he was born.

Now-- well he's WAY more than TWO hands full! You know what its like when you see a really cute little chubby faced baby. Just magnify that 10X for the feeling you get in seeing those little rolls on Blake's face and arms. We are so proud of the strides he's made and equally as proud of his parents will and determination!!

Hope you all have a GREAT weekend. Our families look forward to seeing you at one of the 'Blake's Buddies' fundraisers.

Take care-

Aunt Becky

