

Just the Life of Me!
By Rebekah Gebauer

Copyright 2006 Rebekah Gebauer

Title by RG Copyright 2006 RG; All rights reserved. Reproduction of this work in any form or in any language by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any retrieval system without the express written permission of the author; publishing company address

Dedication Page

This book could not have been written without the help of my family. Thanks for all the research materials, interviews, and great memories to share with others. I learned a lot and am pretty excited to learn more. It was a great way to talk to my family and learn about relatives I had never met before.

Acknowledgment Page

I'd like to thank the many people that made this book possible. My uncle Bert who sent me papers and certificates of relatives I have never had the privilege to meet. Most importantly I'd like to thank my parents. Mom helped with my family interviews and I found out a lot about her childhood. I thank God most for giving me this amazing family.

Story Table of Contents

1. How it all started
2. My Mom
3. My Dad
4. It Bit Me
5. Parties
6. Disney World
7. Back East
8. All Six Years
9. Sweet 16
10. My License
11. Log Canoes and Glacier Waters
12. Arizona

How it all started!

In 1964 Mike and Carol were finally married. After dating off and on and breaking up every summer on June 21, 1964 they finally tied the knot. Soon after a little girl was born and within a two year time span two boys were welcomed into their family. As the family grew they did everything together. Road trips, and family vacations were a big part of this families life. In 1982 Mike packed up the family to move to Washington. The kids Joanna, Steven, and David were 17, 16 and 14 years of age and leaving the town they'd lived in and made friends in was rough. Finally they arrived and never would've imagined what was happening. Mt. Saint Helens had just erupted and they remember ash everywhere and big clouds of gray hovering over the sky. Years go by and everyone has grown up. The family is soon to get an even bigger surprise; the family is soon to get bigger. The youngest son is now 20 years old and hears that there's another Gebauer entering the family. Shocked, yet happy everyone gives their congrats to mom and dad since it had been 20 years since their last child was born. On July 8th 1988 the newest edition was born. Everyone shocked that 45 and 46 year old parents just welcomed the baby into their family.

My Mom

My mom is amazing! After growing up in the 1940's she went through a lot. She remembers walking 4 miles to church because her family couldn't afford a car.

Growing up in a Catholic church she learned about Catechism in Sunday school. Afterwards she remembers going to a typical dinner at home. She told me " it was always a feast, lots of bread, pasta, and salad since we are Italian". When I asked her if she enjoyed Christmas growing up as a kid she said "no, it was always a sad time for her due to our family not having a lot of money", she recalls. Some Christmas traditions and memories involved lots of food and her grandmother would cook for days in preparation.

My Dad

On February 15th 1943 Howard Michael Gebauer was born. Growing up Mike went to a Catholic School and graduated in 1961. In 7th grade he met Carol. They were in the same group of friends and eventually started dating after they graduated and dad went to find " what he wanted to do in life", like every other teenage does. Mike and Carol were in an off and on relationship and little did they know they would eventually get married. In 1962 after dad went away and came back they started dating again and after two years they were married on June 20th, 1964. They picked June 20th because they said "they always seemed to break up every summer". They started living their lives and had three children with the first four years. The family moved from state to state when in 1982 the family moved to Washington for dads job. Little did they know they'd be living there for over 20 years. As they were arriving Mt Saint Helens had just erupted and the sky was thick with dark clouds and ash was everywhere. Dad ended up managing the building project for the Tacoma Dome and managing it after it was complete. 1988 arrived and the family found out that after 20 years from having their last child that Mike and Carol were soon having another baby. On July 8th Rebekah was born and Mikes life changed. 41 years of marriage and four kids later Mike owns his own business and has many stories that he tells to his ever-growing family.

It Bit About Me

It was a bright sunny day and I was five years old. I have two older brothers and seeing them was rare so when my mom and dad told me we were going to see my brother Dave I was thrilled. We arrived at Bubbas, and everything is going well until I decide I'm bored and want to look at a magazine. To get one I had to climb over the treadmill. Once I start my journey I find something sharp and end up cutting my forehead. Blood starts coming and I start to scream. My parents start freaking out while trying to stay calm for my sake and rush me to the hospital. Of course that was a 45 minutes away and they didn't go to the nearest one wherever that was. I ended up going through two hand towels and finally we get there. Of course my head injury wasn't major enough for me to get right in so we waited about an hour. Finally, I got to see the doctor and I received stitches. Hating the stitches I ended up getting chicken pox three days later, so now my forehead didn't look so bad, since I had a ton of red bumps all over my skin. I have never forgotten the day the treadmill bit me.

Parties

Ever since I've been little my family has always had parties. When I was younger we lived on a lake and on the 4th there were always fireworks and since my birthday was on the 8th it just seemed like the right time to have the family over. Since my two oldest nephews were only 1 and 2 years younger than me we normally just threw all the birthdays together. I remember my brothers chasing us around and teaching us silly songs like " the candy man can"! Now we're all grown up and have even more fun now that the families grown. Watching movies, vegging out and playing pool is a must at Gebauer gatherings. Having a family full of goofballs helps liven things up. We are always laughing and teasing and of course eating, which we never seem to run out of since we're Italians. Now everyone is so hectic that we don't see each other as much. So when there is a birthday or holiday its always nice to get to see your loved ones.

Disney World

Disney World is one of those places that every kid wants to go to and they have their own little idea of what its like. Well Becca who was 7 at the time had never been before and she had a ton of ideas in her head. It was this huge park filled with rides, people in costumes and the huge castle. So seeing as she had all these big ideas about what it was like she was thrilled when her parents told her that they were going to Disney World, along with her older sister and her two kids.

So the big day arrives and they're all over at her sister's house and awake at 5am so that they wont miss their flight. Dragging the younger kids out of bed was not fun but once we all woke up everyone was pumped! We mostly slept on the plane with occasional games and finally we arrive. The airport was huge and the kids were shocked at all the people that were there. The cab ride was fun and the scenery was beautiful but it was still mid afternoon so it was a weird adjustment for the kids. We finally get settled into the hotel and start swimming in the huge pool.

The next day was hitting Disney world and that was a shock. It was a lot bigger then Becca had imagined and it was the greatest day. The weather was awesome and they hit all the rides. Becca remembers one certain part where she was in the "Honey I Shrunk the Kids" and "attraction" and that was great until she got lost. Of course everything it was giant and it's so easy to lose someone. There was this slide and it was a blast to go down and she thought she could go down it again so she went around the corner went down it and realized that her dad was gone. He thought she was with him and walked off. After freaking out because everything is big and there are a lot of people around she calms herself down and sat down and eventually her dad found her and she never left his side.

The last day was eventful. The night before they had all gone to The Hard Rock Café and saw this beautiful thunderstorm and the next day it hit our hotel. The wind was crazy and the rain was not letting up and we were wondering if we'd be able to leave. We all arrive at the airport and our plane arrives in Seattle and we're finally home. Happy to be home Becca knew that it wasn't going to be a trip she'd forget. Now all she wants to do is to go to Disney Land now that she is older.

Back East

Family is very important, but when you have family in the Northwest and East Coast and you've lived in the northwest all your life you tend to make special trips every now and then. My moms family all life in Massachutes and I hadn't seen them since I was five so mom and I decided to go back. I was twelve and nervous since it was almost like meeting them for the first time. My moms' brother picked us up from the airport and we drove to my moms aunts house, which was where we were staying for the next week. It was a different experience for me since I had never met her before and her house smelled and was different. After we got settled in we went to my aunts who had her huge pool and it helped me get more comfortable and eventually it was like I had been with them a bunch of times. I found out that drivers there are crazy and we almost got in so many accidents that I appreciate Washington drivers more. I got to catch up with my uncle and aunt and my favorite uncle Tony. My mom and I got to drive a Mercedes Benz and that was like the coolest ride ever and my mom enjoyed showing me where she would hang out after school and where her and my dad met. Even though I enjoyed myself I could not wait not wait to get home. I would like to see all of them again sometime soon and hopefully there will be an opportunity.

All Six Years

I first started 4H with this attitude. I could make new friends and enjoy showing something that I'd liked for a long time! Me, a short, tiny little 11 or 12 year old who had just moved and was very shy went to her first night of 4H, which was a very interesting night. Me saying when asked why I was there that "my mom made me come tonight" and some other stupid things and that first night I met a couple new people who turned into being friends. So I had accomplished something my first night. I started my 4H years with my Licorice. A old pony who you could just hop on and ride. He worked out for a little bit until his arthritis became too much and he wasn't able to perform the way I needed him to. Of course I went into this whole thing totally blindsided but as I went to many more shows I learned that Licorice just wasn't going to cut it. We ended up selling him and purchasing Skipper. We found out that Skipper was abused and had "problems" but with a lot of work he became my "show horse". He wasn't exactly thrilled with this plan though. Skipper would make my days as hard as possible, which would make me not enjoy myself but I never gave up on him and eventually after 5 years Skipper and I went through all our classes without being disqualified or him having a temper. By then though my goal was not just to make friends and enjoy my hobby but I had wanted to make it to State. My best friend Julie had joined my club and she had made it to State and it looked like so much fun so I made it my goal. Skipper though wasn't going to cut it and he got an injury and I couldn't show him. Not showing anymore wasn't an option and since I worked at a barn my boss told me I could show one of her horses. I was totally for the idea and my state goals seemed to be heading in the right direction. So Sterling was my next horse. He was a overweight 10 year old gelding. He was a lesson horse and since no one had ridden him the "right way" he was very rusty on his show skills. After many frustrating hours of working with him, Sterling finally started looking like a show horse. Our first show went amazing followed by many more shows. We got blue ribbons and once again I saw state fair getting closer and closer. I also realized how much stress I had been under at shows with my other horses, mainly Skipper. Sterling would just do everything and not throw fits and we lived through all our classes. It was a nice adjustment. I found myself enjoying shows. I then made the decision to quite 4H if I did make it to State. At the end of the year when you find out if you're going or not, State Fair Delegates start being named. I hear my best friends name and a couple others that I had known but not mine xcept for when the alternates were named. I was first alternate and my

chances of going were high. I waited three weeks for a phone call asking me if I would like to go to state and finally one night I received the call. Words could not describe how I felt. Finally the day comes when we "haul in" and it's an awesome feeling. Fair was fun and I had many great experiences and made new friends. With my last year I felt accomplished and was happy to move on and begin new things. Now I'm ready to see what new things I can begin and have many more memories!

Sweet 16

Birthdays are great! My 16th was going to be the best party I had ever had. My birthday is July 8th, a summer birthday right in the middle. I could not wait. I made my plans and now all I had to was wait. Finally the day arrives and the day included having my friends and their families joining us at Alder Lake and doing whatever like canoeing, swimming and the best part eating food. That lake had, been a family "spot" for a long time and we hadn't been there forever. We pick up two of my friends and head to the lake. We had the perfect day. The sun was out without a cloud in the sky. The ride to the lake was fun; we laughed, took pictures and goofed off. We arrive at the lake only to be disappointed by it being full. We thought about that being a problem, but never thought it'd happen to us. Having no "plan B" and not sure what to do my dad remembered this little lake about 45 minutes away. We get there and it was perfect. There was a dock that we got all to ourselves and we bbq'd on it and started diving off of it and swimming. We were there till sunset and it was definitely a birthday I wont forget, but now I cant wait till my 18th.

My License

Getting your license is an exciting part of growing up. It's a privilege and you feel really free. One day I just decided to go take the written test. My parents agreed that it'd be good since I had gotten really busy and it would be much easier on them. Granted I would have to wait six months before I could drive by myself. I read the pamphlet and go, not the best way to do it but it worked. I took the test and passed.

Being 16 and wanting to drive before the age of 18 I had to take drivers Ed. I en-rolled in the coolest driving school. All my friends' older siblings had taken it from him and LOVED him so they suggested I go to Ninnis Driving School. At first glance Mr. Ninnis is really intimidating, with his souped up old school Cadillac and big body type. Once he started teaching he was so fun and the best part is he actually remembered everyone's names and we weren't just students he was getting paid to teach.

So six months was up. I made my appointment to take the final step before getting my license. I was so nervous and ready to get it over with. I'd been driving for six months everyday and knew I could do well. I go over a few things, wait in my car and the instructor comes. We go over everything without the car running and then start up. Hearing the woman's calming voice saying, " Just breathe and we'll begin when you're ready", helped me a lot.

"Everything is going well", I said to myself. I remembered everything and luckily we went on all the roads I knew like the back of my hand. Not that I am bad with directions it was just easier to feel relaxed. So we're finally done and I get my slip and I frantically try to find my score and much to my surprise I received and 100%. In shock and totally happy I take my picture, which isn't the greatest. I go out calling everyone, but not trying to brag. First thing I did was dropping my mom off and go to a friend's house. Freedom is awesome!

Log Canoes and Glacier Waters

I have the most amazing friends in the world. So when we decided to go on a camping trip it was a blast. A summer or two ago we all decide that it'd be fun to have end of the summer campout and made plans. The ride up there was fun. The RV that I was in had some fun times too. I know RV's aren't ruffing it, but that was for our moms who didn't exactly want to ruff it. We pack up and are on the road. Four of my friends were in the RV with me, just playing games and talking when we start to climb this huge hill. Apparently all the weight was too much and we pull the RV over. So Julie, Nick, and I decide to be adventurous and go on a little hike, while Nicks dad takes some water out of the tank. We go down this trail to this beautiful open field of flowers and tall grass until we look to our right. To our right was a pile of tires stacked and tarps. Nick and Julie decide to get CSI on me and freak me out by saying that there might be died bodies under it, and while they're trying to scare me they end up scaring themselves and we run back up to the RV. When we get back we hear that we can't get back in the RV due to us being too heavy for it to get up the hill. We climb in the van that was following us and sit on top of the coolers and all the other camping equipment. Glad we're finally at the campground we get out stretch look around a little and then get right to putting the tents up. The tents took us forever but had tons of laughs, and great photos. The next day was filled with Swimming, canoeing, hiking and eating. One of the funniest moments was when we talked our three moms into taking the canoe out for a little paddle around the lake. They get in and start off. Peter, Julie and I were walking back to the campground when we hear screaming. Doing something I never thought he'd do,

Peter turns around, chuckles and says, " O man I can't miss this". Realizing that our moms were in the canoe also Julie and I run down with him and much to our dismay our moms were still dry BUT the water is almost to the rim. Another fun part was there was this big pipe going under a bridge and Nick, Julie, Joel and I went canoeing under it and the boys freaking us out. There was a cove where the water looked so shallow but it was extremely deep. It was so amazing because there were full trees underneath us. We all pictured a body floating up and got out of there. Also as childish as it seems we got huge logs and floated on them. We ended up going all over the lake just paddling and floating on these logs we called Chunky and Woody. I remember the long walks to the bathroom and cougar sittings and loud drunks breaking every rule of the camp, and especially Julie stealing my pillow along with blaming me for stealing her pillow aka mine, and me laying on a rock every night. It was nice having all of our families together and Lake Cushman was the best. It's sad that that is probably the last time we all do something together like that since we're all growing up and starting our lives. On the ride home we went to one of the national parks and hiked some more when we came to this huge rock next to the river. We decide to jump in knowing that the water below us is glacier water. Not caring and wanting the rush we jump in two at a time. It was such a shock hitting the water but it was a blast. Only one bad thing, we didn't have any dry clothes. The car ride home was miserable due to being soaked, but we all eventually fell asleep.

Arizona

After one of the best summers of my life I finished it off with one of the best vacations! My sister owns a condo in Arizona and when I had been asked if I wanted to go with her family I of course said, "yes".

The day finally arrived and after a rough couple of weeks I was more than ready to leave and get away. Having only heard about it all I was very excited and the plane ride was rather fun. I remember thinking stupid things like " what is the house like", "I wonder if the weather will be unbearable" and lastly " I hope there aren't any scorpions in my room or under my covers".

Finally we are about to land and as stupid as it sounds I knew I'd love everything about Arizona. We're finally off the plane and walk outside and it's like a heat wave. I loved it. We finally get our car and head home. We settle in and go to the store and that was our exciting first night, not! Next morning was filled with swimming and shopping.

We were there for four days and one of the days was a absolute blast. We went tubing or "tubbing" as I called it. I was nervous at first but once we started floating down the river and hitting the first rapids I loved it. Two and a half hours of rapids, beautiful scenery, lots of laughs and just relaxing. Then we enjoyed a late night swim and tons of ice cream.

Finally the last days arrives and after a very long bike ride in the 112 degree weather 3:30 roles around and it starts pouring along with gusting winds and this massive sandstorm. That was breath taking, but kind of disturbing since we wanted to get home. Luckily there were no plane delays and we got home safely. I wont forget that vacation ad would love to go back.

About the Author

Rebekah Gebauer was born on July 8th, 1988. Born and raised in Washington State. Rebekah has been home schooled off and on through out her life. She is a senior in high school and graduates in June. She enjoys hanging out with her friends, watching movies, listening to music, surfing the Internet and just having a good time. She is excited to see what the year has to offer.