

PYKES: Sequel to well-received documentary on tap

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met with exceptional reviews and garnered far-reaching potential with accessibility on Amazon Prime.

This success proved fertile ground for what was to follow.

Many people have unrealized dreams of going on a cross-country road trip. For the Pyke family, which now includes two children, Dakota and Isabelle, the first adventure turned out to be preparation and inspiration for another journey of purpose. Eli and Kelly, while dealing with the grief of losing Eli's father, decided to plan another season of living on the road.

"I wanted to carve out space in my schedule and my life to intentionally grieve, whatever that might look like," Eli said. "I noticed within myself a desire to 'push through' and get on with life as normal, after my father died. Yet I knew deep down that I needed to press into it and find ways to remember my dad. Revisiting places from my youth where I had vivid memories of just seemed like what I needed. And as an artist, I feel that I process life best through my art of film and storytelling."

So, the Pykes decided it was time to take on another risk, go back on the road and create another film. They initially purchased another used

motorhome but quickly realized there might be potential to partner with a manufacturer and have more stability, potential and peace-of-mind for the next trip.

After contacting several different potential options, Winnebago was excited to collaborate. The Pykes became official "Brand Ambassadors" and partnered to create another documentary — "The Far Green Country 2: At Road's End" — focused on visiting the National Parks and the restorative power of getting back to nature. This second trip would once again provide restoration and healing, while allowing an even greater reach in promoting family bonding, cross-country exploration, hope and possibility.

During this current journey, the Pykes are traveling through 30 states and covering over 15,000 miles.

Each state has contained its own unique educational and recreational opportunities, culture and history. Real people that we often take for granted become more appreciated when we find a way to step into their world, even for a day — which the film allows. Organic farmers in Idaho who spend long days mindfully working the lands; multi-generational families dedicated to collecting and producing pure maple syrup in Vermont; the Amish of Indiana who value and protect a way of life nearly forgotten by mainstream America, are but a few of the people depicted in the film.

Visiting different regions, cultural museums and historical sites brings the tapestry of America into vivid color.

There have been never-ending learning opportunities for the Pykes along the way — and also a lot of fun. Imagine a chapter of life that includes snorkeling in aquamarine waters of the Dry Tortugas National Park; soaking in hot springs on the banks of the Rio Grande in Big Bend National Park; roasting sausages over a campfire in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; all the while witnessing the glory and magnificence of nature. Imagine what it is like to experience first hand a vast array of wildlife that most only see in zoos or documentaries: alligators, manatees, iguanas, turtles, grizzly bear and bison. And then go even farther and imagine what it is like to literally step into different worlds; to experience relationships within a variety of differing belief systems, ethnic backgrounds and heritage.

The Pykes have come to believe deeply that "we should all live with a humility and gratitude to be American citizens and experience the peace, beauty, ruggedness, and civility of our nation."

At the end of this adventure, Kelly has a new summer position awaiting her in Lake City, Colorado as "Wilderness Ministries Manager" at Sky Ranch Ute Trail. Responsibilities will be focused on hiring, training and leading a team of guides who will be taking hundreds



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Pyke family toured America's National Parks for new film.

of people into the wilderness of the Colorado high country for weeks of transformative adventures.

Eli will continue building a platform for "The Far Green Country," expanding their reach and ability to speak into people's lives in a hopeful and encouraging way. He will also continue to produce videos for clients through Zion Pictures (which serves well in a mobile/nomadic lifestyle) and is open to new projects.

The first teaser to their new film, "At Road's End," is now available for viewing online. Addressing mortality is a foundational component and evidenced as one of the interview subjects speaks to his belief that, "How we view death ultimately defines the

way we live here on earth... the absolute commonality of everyone here on earth is that we are not going to make it out alive, and yet we spend most of our lives completely ignoring it and not even thinking about it."

"At Road's End" will be a foray into grief, a conversation about the most important things in life, and a chance for us all to reflect on our mortality as humans and how to finish this life well.

When asked what advice he has about pursuing a dream and/or purpose, Eli shares that, "Not everyone gets to do what they love for work, but I firmly believe that everyone can learn to love what they do for work."

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