



Sunday,  
March 2, 2008

www.mankatofreepress.com

# Currents



TRAVEL, PAGE E4  
Atlantic City  
taking a  
gourmet gamble

## THE SIDEBAR

### Family tip

Always be honest with your child. Tell the information in a manner that's appropriate to your child's age,



but always tell the truth.  
— parentingtipoftheday.com

### Teen a monk no more

Michael Sa-Ngoun is no longer a monk.

The 19-year-old from Tukwila, Wash., who spent two years in a Cambodian monastery because his mother was desperate to stop his self-destructive behavior, is not prone to deep philosophical meditation these days.



He doesn't work very hard to resist the desires of most young men his age, nor does he seek humility at every turn.

It took surprisingly little time, family members say, for him to turn back into a regular American young man after his return from Cambodia a little more than a year ago.

### Did you know?

Ever wonder what your dog sees as he or she gazes upon their world?

Dogs can see better than people in the dark and can detect subtle movements better.

Dogs see moving objects much better than stationary items, too. The trade-off, because of the ratio of rods

to cones in a dog's eye makeup, is that dogs can't distinguish the full spectrum of colors and probably see colors similar to a red-green color-blind human.

The canine spectrum may be divided into two hues — blue and yellow — with shades of white and gray where we can detect other colors.

And whereas a human's vision ratio is 20/20, the visual acuity of a dog is about 20/75. This means from 20 feet away, normal dogs can distinguish the details of an object that a person with normal vision can differentiate from 75 feet away.



### Verbatim

"You can observe a lot just by watching."  
— Yogi Berra



— Free Press Staff and news services

# From the Tropics to Down Under

## Mankato's Nolan family has seen parts of the world most never will

By Cathy Jones  
Special to The Free Press

**MANKATO** — So many daydreams are made up of traveling around the world, but not many such trips turn into reality.

For Mankato's Nolan family they did. Mike and Jules Nolan had quite an adventure, covering 16 countries over five months with their three kids, Anna, Charlie and Jack, ranging in age from 12 to 17.

"I can't think of a better way to have spent that money," Jules said.

It all started with Mike investigating MBA degrees with an international component after selling his business, MinnesotaCars.com, in 2006.

"A lot of the international MBAs really don't have much international flavor to them," he said.

Mike has a friend who runs the executive program at the Kellogg School of Management in Chicago, which partners with the Melbourne (Australia) Business School and the WHU — Otto Beisheim School of Management in Vallendar, Germany, for the course work.

It also has study components in Chicago, China and Slovakia, among others. The program, which takes place during four months (one month on, three off, over a 14- to 16-month period) is ranked highly in the world.

So why not take the kids along during their summer break while Mike was finishing a component of his schooling? they thought.

"I was game to go anywhere," Jules

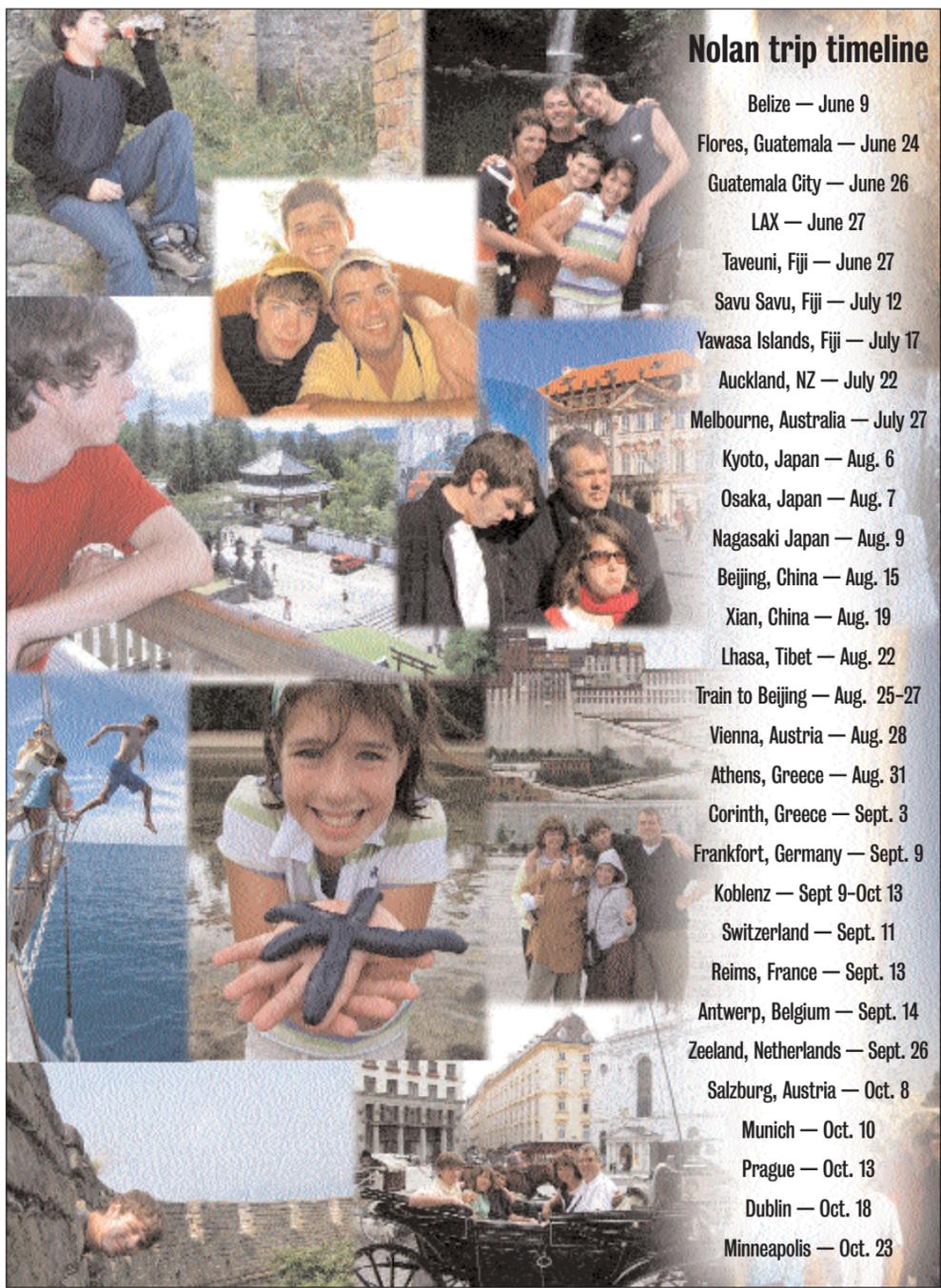
said. "We wanted to go to Fiji, we wanted to go to Japan, Mike wanted to take us to China, I wanted to visit France, and we had to go to Germany for his school. Other than that, it was whatever else fits in."

It took between six to eight weeks to plan the actual route and make all the reservations, and Mike highly recommends online trip calculators, even if you are just

daydreaming.

"The trick is to get in as many stops as you can for the least amount of money. It's almost like a puzzle," he said. "It was actually less than the cost of a high-end SUV (to take the whole family). \$3,300 per ticket, that got us 19 flights, totally changeable."

Please see FAMILY, Page E7



### Nolan trip timeline

- Belize — June 9
- Flores, Guatemala — June 24
- Guatemala City — June 26
- LAX — June 27
- Taveuni, Fiji — June 27
- Savu Savu, Fiji — July 12
- Yawasa Islands, Fiji — July 17
- Auckland, NZ — July 22
- Melbourne, Australia — July 27
- Kyoto, Japan — Aug. 6
- Osaka, Japan — Aug. 7
- Nagasaki Japan — Aug. 9
- Beijing, China — Aug. 15
- Xian, China — Aug. 19
- Lhasa, Tibet — Aug. 22
- Train to Beijing — Aug. 25-27
- Vienna, Austria — Aug. 28
- Athens, Greece — Aug. 31
- Corinth, Greece — Sept. 3
- Frankfort, Germany — Sept. 9
- Koblenz — Sept 9-Oct 13
- Switzerland — Sept. 11
- Reims, France — Sept. 13
- Antwerp, Belgium — Sept. 14
- Zeeland, Netherlands — Sept. 26
- Salzburg, Austria — Oct. 8
- Munich — Oct. 10
- Prague — Oct. 13
- Dublin — Oct. 18
- Minneapolis — Oct. 23

## Travel tips from the experienced Nolan family

### Packing

Mike: "Make your pile of laundry, and then only bring half of it."

Jules: "Two pairs of shoes, no more, no exceptions."

### Flying

Jules: "If there's trouble with your airline tickets, go to the airport. Don't try

and do it on the phone. Physically go there, because when you're standing in line and they've got a family of five tired people, they'll do something to help you."

### Fiji

Jules: "Don't kill your house spider."

Mike: "We had cockroaches the rest of the time."

### China

Jules: "Shopping is a full-contact sport."

Anna: "The biggest mistake is to take a second glance at something. They're on you like hounds on a scent. ... They'll

Please see TIPS, Page E7

# Maybe we could try a little honesty once in a while

A suburban Twin Cities city council member recently got busted for engaging in prostitution during a police sting in St. Paul.

So far he's laying low, but at some point he will have to make a statement. It'll be something like this:

"I'm terribly sorry for the embarrassment this has brought on the city and my family. This was totally out of character for me. I've been going through some trying times in my life recently, and I did something I've never done before and will never do again."

The truth, of course, might be more like this:

"I like hookers. I've done it before and I got away with it and it was a lot of fun. I wish I wouldn't have got caught because it's a serious bummer around my house

right now and I'm probably going to lose my job. If I had to do it all over again, I'd have been a lot more careful not to get caught."

We're used to hearing things we know aren't true or accurate. It happens so routinely, so often, we expect it. And it feeds off itself. One TV interview of a public official dancing around the truth is mimicked by the next one who is caught.

It would be refreshing — albeit at times awkward — to see people respond with the truth.

After someone commits a horrendous crime — like locking people in their basement dungeon and dismembering them — the neighbors are always interviewed on TV and they always say the same thing:

"He was very quiet; he kept to

himself. But I'm shocked he did something like that. This is a nice neighborhood."

Translation: "I knew he was a freak. He creeped me out. His shades were always all pulled, and he just looked guilty. I was pretty sure he was up to something. I should have told someone and this might not have happened, but I didn't want to get involved."

Whenever a high-ranking executive suddenly leaves his or her job, the public gets one of these: "He resigned to pursue other interests. She found a new opportunity. He felt this was a good time to take a new direction."

Translation: "He was always kind of an abusive jerk, but we put up with him because he got the job done. But we found out he was skimming some money, so we fired his butt. We told him he could just resign instead and we'd stick with that story if he agrees not to try to sue us for anything."

Cops probably get lied to more than just about anyone else. When they pull people over for speeding, they know what they're going to hear:

"I didn't realize I was going that fast. I just wasn't paying attention. Was I really? I can't believe I was speeding."

I've had a few speeding tickets. I've used those excuses, but always felt kind of lame about it.

A couple of summers ago I got pulled over on the four-lane near Brainerd on the way to the cabin. I figured I'd play it straight on.

"Do you know why I pulled you over?" the officer asked.

"Yeah, I was speeding."

"Is there a reason you were going over the speed limit?"

"No. I just wanted to get there faster."

He let me go with a warning. Maybe he would have anyway, but I'm guessing he was a little more generous for not being lied to.

Employees often do a little misrepresenting when they call in sick:

"My head and chest are all stuffed up. I'm achy all over. I can barely get out of bed. I don't think I'll be in today, and I doubt I'll make it tomorrow."

Translation: "I got two unused sick days. It's December. I'm going to use them up before I lose them."

There are times, however, when diplomacy is the best policy:

"Do you think I'm getting fat?"

"Do you ever think about your old girlfriend?"

"Do you think I'm less desirable than I used to be?"

The answer to all is: "No. Absolutely not."

Tim Krohn is a Free Press staff writer. He can be contacted at 344-6383 or tkrohn@mankatofreepress.com.



TIM  
KROHN  
Free Press