

# the Famlet monthly

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## Dear Family,

As I slid onto the organ bench last Sunday morning, prior to the start of stake conference, a woman in the choir told me she was surprised to see me there because she assumed I would be running the Marine Corps Marathon—our area's premier race. I smiled and told her that I don't run on Sundays, but it reminded me of the time, perhaps 15 years ago, when then-Bishop Johnson announced in sacrament meeting that one of his counselors would not be with us today because he was running the MCM. Remembering that still makes me smile. Were I to come to terms with running a Sunday race myself, I imagine I would not want it announced by the bishop from the pulpit.

I also explained to the sister that I had just completed the Baltimore Marathon three Saturdays prior, which was a complete and utter disaster. I did not tell her why, but I will tell you:

It probably says something about the lack of any real adversity in my life that a small plantar wart, perhaps the size of a corn kernel near the ball of my right foot, managed to ruin pretty much my entire month.

I first noticed it sometime in the middle of the summer. I lived with it (and ran on it, ignoring the discomfort) through July and August and into September. By the onset of autumn it had become so painful that I found myself changing my gait and walking awkwardly on the outside of my foot. Fearing that a minor skin malady might evolve into a more serious orthopedic problem, I made an appointment with a dermatologist. I saw him on Monday, October 7th, and asked him whether there was anything he could do for me that would make my marathon, five days hence, less painful. The doctor took a picture of my foot with his iPad, looked closely at the blemish, scrunched up his face and said, and I quote, "Hmmm, yeah, warts suck." He then explained that anything he did to treat the wart would likely result in my being in more pain on Saturday than if he did nothing. And so he did nothing (other than to shave it down with a #15-blade scalpel, which might have helped a little, I don't know).

It was a miserable race. I still haven't brought myself to look up my official time because I'm so disappointed by what my watch confirmed to be the worst performance of my three marathons. It's been almost three weeks and, if anything, I probably get more depressed thinking about it now than I did immediately after the race.

The following week, my foot hurting worse than ever, I returned to the dermatologist and asked that he please get rid of this thing (the wart, not my foot). He talked me through the various options before ultimately suggesting curettage and cauterization, a barbaric procedure, which, it turns out, is every bit as awful as it sounds. It began with the injection of local anesthetic. Just before sticking the needle

into my foot, the doctor looked up at me and said, "Um, you're not going to like this very much." He was right. But within a minute, my foot was numb, and the doctor proceeded to use a small melon baller to dig a pea-size crater out of the bottom of my foot. He then cauterized the wound using what appeared to be a small arc welder. Though I was unable to feel my flesh cooking, I could *smell* it. I walked out of the doctor's office and went to work feeling great, and then the anesthetic wore off. I've been in varying degrees of pain ever since. I keep thinking that it's getting better, and then the ibuprofen wears off. My running mileage has dropped way off, my pace is a joke, and I feel like a fat slug. This, hopefully, shall pass.

Grandma and Grandpa Kent timed their visit earlier this month to coincide perfectly both with Lucy's 14th birthday and the federal government shutdown. The shutdown made sightseeing problematic, but, as always, we enjoyed having them here with us. The decision to erect barriers around open-air monuments was puzzling to many (including me), but I guess you got to do what you got to do. Personally, I enjoyed the lighter traffic on the Capital Beltway, but this is all over now. Lucy planned her own birthday party. I was not invited, but it appears to have consisted primarily of a group of children hanging out in my backyard burning hot dogs and marshmallows over a fire. Lucy has already been to two church dances, and, if injected with truth serum, I think would tell you that she's had a good time.

Finally, Crystal now has been admonished twice—*twice*—by police officers for riding her bicycle on the roadway in Rock Creek Park. I'm not sure why she seems to be getting singled out. Maybe it's her purple bike and matching jersey. Along with about a zillion other people, I ride on the roadway in the park more often than she does, and no one, other than the occasional ignorant driver, has ever tried to direct me off the road. Crystal's first encounter was on Beach Drive when someone in an SUV flashed a badge and told her that if there is an off-road path (as there is on Beach) then cyclists must stay on the path and off the road. The second was on Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway where a man in a police car told her she was required to move to the sidewalk on account of the road's 35-MPH speed limit. Both cops were mistaken about the law (go ahead, look it up) and probably lacked authority to cite her in any event since Rock Creek Park falls within the jurisdiction of the National Park Service and *its* police. (The second officer was in a D.C. police car, and who knows where the badge-flasher in the unmarked SUV was from.) It all reminds me of when I was a kid and Dad didn't like me watching "The Dukes of Hazzard" because it implied that the police are dumb.

Like I wasn't going to find that out on my own anyway.

I don't know why I get so agitated by these kinds of things.

Happy Halloween.

Love, Tim *et al*





**HAPPY HALLOWEEN**

**Grace (Persephone)  
Sophie (Katniss Everdeen)  
Afton (Princess Leia)  
Lucy (She-Hulk)**