

Dear Family:

29 July 2001

This has been pool month. Late last month, we broke down and joined our local swim club. I cashed in all my stock options...oh, wait, I forgot, my stock options are further underwater than the Andrea Dorian. Our stock stinks. We've been in free-fall ever since negotiating an endorsement deal with golf "great" Phil Mickelson. The second-ranked golfer in the world, he is best known for building big leads during the first three days of tournaments, only to choke on Sundays. He is, in other words, just the guy you want hyping your consulting firm. Our first TV spots featuring Phil aired last weekend during the British Open. I didn't see any of them, though they presumably didn't feature him saying stuff like "KPMG Consulting: They can really come through in the clutch. Take it from me. Well, okay, don't take it from me. But they really can!" Anyway, like most Nasdaq issues, KCIN's a real bargain now, so we had to go ahead and buy that pool membership with hard-earned cash.

It's been worth every dime. Crystal, Hannah, and Lucy have averaged over five days per week there this month. The proximity to our house (the club's literally a block away) makes it an easy trek. Hannah runs ahead while Crystal pulls Lucy in the wagon. Hannah and Lucy both have great kid-tans and are total fish. Hannah can now swim about half the length of the pool, and is a big fan of the diving board. Lucy cannot swim yet but has no reservations about fleeing her mother's custody and jumping in the deep end with no one to catch her. Basically, Lucy's Shangri-la is a big empty pool with nobody touching her. She, unfortunately, would not survive long in her Shangri-la. But she'll be swimming soon enough.

We celebrated Independence Day with Grant, Jen, Abby, and Coco at (where else?) the pool, which held a potluck lunch and other festivities. Grant won the 12-and-over big splash contest. I finished a disappointing third after experiencing trouble timing my lemon drop off the high dive. (Second place was taken by a 600-pound Polynesian kid who didn't have to worry about timing anything.) The thunderstorms didn't arrive until early evening. Anyone who watched "A Capital Fourth" on PBS was probably wondering how they were able to shoot off fireworks amidst such a deluge. We're not sure either and, what with the Republicans being back (at least nominally) in power, are inclined to chalk it up to some kind of conspiracy.

Mom and Pete came down to join Coco and the rest of us in celebrating Grant's birthday last Friday. The next day saw all of us go to (guess?) the pool. Pete, as is custom, became a conversation piece among little kids with his cannonballs. (Too bad he wasn't here on the Fourth.) Grant and I nearly wet our pants laughing when he tried a flip off the high dive. This was the same weekend as our ward pioneer day picnic that Crystal, in her new capacity as ward activities chair, did a fantastic job putting together. I, in my new capacity as husband of the ward activities chair, did a commendable job designing the flyers, setting up tables, staying for the whole thing, etc.

If you've read this far, it means you probably read last month's letter too; the letter in which I mention the possibility of doing some work at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Well it happened. More specifically, I'm working out of the Federal Housing Administration's Office of Lender Activities and Program Compliance. Just down the hall from HUD's prestigious Office of Lead-Based Paint (presumably describing the agency's regulatory scope as opposed to the office itself) my new digs provide a breathtaking view of Interstate 395, with National Airport providing a stunning backdrop in the distance. Though four blocks south of the Smithsonian "Castle" and the National Museum of African "Art," I'm also walking distance from some *good* museums, and particularly enjoyed the "Piano 300" exhibit "Celebrating Three Centuries of People and Pianos." All this provides for some pleasant lunchtime escapes, the likes of which I haven't experienced since leaving the World Bank downtown for the mind-numbing sterility of Tysons Corner nearly two years ago.

Looking forward to next month's reunion.

Tim