

Dear Family:

March 31, 2002

It's been a good enough Easter. Barely home from her 9-day Thailand trip, Coco first attended our "special" sacrament meeting program, and then joined Grant, Jen and Abby at our house for dinner. She might have enjoyed Grant and Jen's ward's two-hour sacrament meeting extravaganza more, but I guess we'll never know. The main advantage of a five-weekend March—aside from the rarity of not having to choose between the Priesthood Session of General Conference and the Final Four—is that it gives me an extra weekend to get this letter out the door. Naturally I have procrastinated to the point where I am now pajama-ed, in bed (are you turned on yet?) trying to find the most comfortable position for my laptop, and hoping I can fill a page with something coherent before I drift off. For the record, I have always opted for Conference over the Final Four. Also for the record, if Maryland can hold off Indiana tomorrow night I will win the office pool and an undisclosed sum of tax-free cash.

Dad, with whom I just hung up the phone, has informed me, without gloating, that his letter is done and sent. I have not read it yet, but assume it at least addresses our trip to the Oglebay resort in Wheeling, West Virginia. For the uninitiated, Wheeling is in that often-overlooked 12-mile-wide panhandle that drives a small wedge between Pennsylvania and Ohio. The town has seen better days (one can only hope) but the resort has a lot going for it, including, perhaps most importantly in light of Dad's never-ending quest to find "the right place" for 19 people to get together, a limited number of very comfortable 6-bedroom cottages. It seems the only hang-up now is coordinating our availability with the place's. It was particularly appealing compared to the Pennsylvania ski resort we checked out on the way there, which, even though it boasted of being voted "the 5th Best Ski Resort on the East Coast" (which is not at all unlike boasting of being voted "the 5th Best University in Nevada,") was a dump. Oglebay's many selling points include very good pools, a decent enough zoo and a first-rate breakfast buffet. We had been counseled to keep Hannah away from the all-you-can-eat bacon and sausage spread in an effort to combat her 188 cholesterol (a level higher than mine). At the same time, we have recently been informed that Lucy is anemic, so we obviously have no idea how or what to feed our children. Hannah enjoyed the zoo though, and Lucy might've had she been a little less tired.

The girls apparently recovered sufficiently to enjoy our little jaunt to the National Aquarium in Baltimore a couple of weeks later. They were particularly taken by the seahorses and the dolphin show. (They're really going to dig San Diego and Sea World this summer.) Our family recently became "members" of the aquarium, meaning that we do not have to stand in line to buy tickets (though, living in this area, we have become accustomed to not having to purchase admission to any museum with "National" in its name) nor do we have to wait in line to enter the exhibits. It's like being a senior couple at the MTC—except that I enjoy the aquarium.

I spent last week in Chicago assessing the operations of a client that has become the undisputed 800-pound gorilla in its industry by acquiring just about every competitor in sight, and is now facing some challenges in digesting them. This engagement was supposed to take me to Southern California tomorrow, but my employer, cognizant of Crystal's impending delivery, demonstrated uncharacteristic compassion and moved me onto a local project at the last minute. This is relieving for so many reasons; not least of which was that I was able to cancel my reservation on the 8:25 am American Airlines flight from Dulles to LAX (which used to be known as Flight 77 before it flew into the Pentagon on Sept. 11—not that I'm superstitious or anything). With the cherry blossoms now in bloom, there's really no better time to be working downtown anyway.

Crystal is very eager not to be pregnant anymore and I'm not sure I'm eager to be outnumbered by children. Otherwise things are good with us. Hope they are with you too.

Love,
Tim