

Dear Family:

29 September 2002

This month started with a prolonged farewell to summer. We spent Labor Day afternoon with Grant, Jen, Abby and Alex, getting one final dose of the pool (complete with the usual injury-defying diving board antics) and homemade ice cream. We followed this up the next weekend by meeting Roland, Marci, Noah and Emma on the banks of Virginia's Lake Anna. We camped there Friday night and spent Saturday taking turns water-skiing and wake-boarding behind Roland's boat. While the day was mostly fun, my first attempt at wake-boarding resulted in a busted-up knee that now, three weeks later, is still a little sore. I've shaken the last remnants of gimpy-ness out of my ordinary walking, but running and jumping are another matter. My basketball buddies have given me a hard time over my extended absence, but I'm probably still a couple of weeks away.

One week after the Lake Anna adventure, Grant and I celebrated Yom Kippur by attending a Monday night drubbing of the Washington Redskins at the hands of "our" Philadelphia Eagles. Regular readers of Grant's family letters may recall that one of Grant's birthday presents from his wife consisted of two tickets to the game (an especially generous gift given that she wouldn't be going). She purchased the otherwise unobtainable tickets from Chad Lewis via Vai Sikahema. Not surprisingly, the tickets allotted to the visiting team aren't exactly club level, so my sore knee was severely tested as we climbed to seats perched four rows from the top of the NFL's most capacious stadium. Though we wore neutral colors in an effort to hide our affiliation with the visiting team, we were quickly delighted to find ourselves surrounded by a throng of boisterous, drunk, foul-mouthed Eagles fans who became increasingly obnoxious as the rout progressed. The preceding categorization was, of course, fraught with redundancy, but did not accurately describe the half-dozen or so other folks in our row who clearly also got their tickets from Chad Lewis.

I predicted in last month's letter that Sophie would be crawling by now. That hasn't exactly happened. While she has proven capable of using her arms and feet to propel herself forward, she hasn't yet engaged in any sustained activity that meets the technical definition of a "crawl" (whatever that is). She is teething, though, and as a result, doesn't spend a lot of time not being held by Mommy. Neither Mommy nor Sophie is getting much sleep these days—I'm doing fine, thanks—and Sophie is no longer getting the kind of tummy time required for ambulatory development. But she's fine otherwise.

It's becoming a theme, and I'm running out of charitable euphemisms, but Lucy really is "her own girl." So much so that "Lucy, run away!" is generally the most effective command for making her come back. I'm serious. You think I'm kidding, but I tried it today at church and it worked! She turns 3 this week and really wants nothing to do with potty training, as evidenced by the following conversation, which I swear (in Dave Barry-like fashion) that I am not making up:

Lucy: Mommy, I'm pooping.

Mommy (excitedly): Okay, let's hurry up and run to the potty!

Lucy (nonchalantly, after a moment's reflection): Hmm. No. I'm pooping in my Pull-Up.

If you know Lucy, you know that once she's said "No," unless you've got a lot of extra energy stored somewhere, that's pretty much the end of it. One other factor contributing to Sophie's limited tummy time is Lucy's belief that she can pick up her sister, and her insistence on trying whenever Mommy looks away. We are aware of only one confirmed dropping incident. She also has this odd affinity for breadless sandwiches that we won't go into here.

Hannah continues to enjoy first grade and started piano lessons this week. We like her teacher—she goes to church with us—and Hannah hasn't missed a day of practicing yet. We'll see how long that keeps up. Hannah is also currently sporting a number of bicycle- and roller-blading-related battle scars. She's becoming quite competent on the bike, but somewhat less so on the inline skates.

In employment news, I have submitted my resignation to KPMG Consulting (formerly KPMG LLP, formerly KPMG Peat Marwick, formerly Peat Marwick International, soon to be something entirely different and much stupider—our CEO is ringing the bell at the New York Stock Exchange on Wednesday (in honor of our migration there from the pitiful Nasdaq) and unveiling our new name. I'll probably get my new business cards just in time to leave for my new job at Fannie Mae (tag line: "Our Business is the American Dream") hopefully in a couple of weeks. The exact timing will depend a little on how adept I am at extricating myself from my current project.

That's all for now. We send our love.

Tim, Crystal, and girls