

Dear Family,

The following are the Rules of Lucy's Room according to the handwritten sign affixed to her bedroom door (pictured [here](#)) beneath the "I Love Lucy Lane" street sign featuring a pouting Lucille Ball:

- 1) Knock before entering
- 2) Don't make a mess
- 3) Bow to Lucy and kiss her feet
- 4) Have fun!

The handwritten sign goes on to explain that the rules are applicable to adults as well as children. Enforcement (particularly among adults) has been an issue, particularly in light of how the room's ostensible "owner" is the biggest violator of Rule 2. It's hard to say how often Rule 3 gets observed, though I find the juxtaposition of Rules 3 and 4 rather amusing. (For what could be more fun than bowing to Lucy and kissing her feet?)

But if anyone can enforce a rule, it's Lucy. She is a proud member of the Forest Knolls Elementary School Enviro-Nazi Club (I can't remember what it's really called), whose activities include encouraging students to recycle and reporting teachers who leave their classroom lights on. She is a free-spirited independent thinker who, perhaps ironically, can do a very good physical impression of a puppet.

For our date this month, Lucy and I went to the Air & Space Museum to watch *The Spiderwick Chronicles* in IMAX. She held my hand during some of the scary parts. It made me happy. The movie includes the story of a crazy old lady named Lucy (actually Lucinda, but her dad calls her Lucy) whose eccentricity we eventually learn is attributable to her oddball father. I walked out thinking there was probably a lesson in that for me somewhere. (Incidentally, this was at the "new" Air & Space Museum annex out by Dulles airport. Details of the whole family's trip there last winter are chronicled in [this letter](#). For the record, Lucy still gets vertigo on the catwalks.)

For my 36th birthday, Sophie gave me several homemade cards and a handsome sculpture constructed principally from toothpicks and Styrofoam peanuts. I thought it looked like fairly impressive work for a kindergartener; that is, until I looked under the base and noticed that she had crossed out the names in "Happy Birthday Sophie, from Hannah" and replaced them with ours. So I guess I'm still not sure at what age people start feeling self-conscious about re-gifting; but it would seem that Sophie hasn't reached it yet.

She has, however, reached the age at which she knows exactly what she wants to do for a living. Her stated preferences are: 1) Dentist, 2) Doctor, 3) Artist, and 4) Dog-sled racer. To these she sometimes adds 5) Basket-

ball player and 6) Teacher. It isn't yet clear to me whether this represents some sort of hierarchy (1st choice = dentist, 2nd choice = doctor, etc), or if she wants to do them all simultaneously. Fortunately, dentists only work about two days a week, so if she gets her first choice, she should have plenty of spare time to race dogs. (Incidentally, she doesn't like our house and has begun insisting that we all move to Alaska. So that should help.)

Late last month, we all made the eight-mile trek to Mom & Dad's house to see Dad ordained as a patriarch ([pictures here](#)). While this has doubtless all been very humbling for him, I take great pleasure at the prospect of my daughters receiving patriarchal blessings from their grandfather. He now juggles patriarch duties with his other lifetime job as a [sealer](#) in the Washington, DC Temple, and I think I've overheard him observe, "This is great; all I do now is bless people." It certainly sounds like the good life. And he's earned it.

On a related note, from the "small world" department, I got a call from the temple baptistery last weekend to confirm my ward's upcoming appointment there. The caller was Cathy Wendell (doubtless misspelled), wife of Norm, brother (I think) of Judy Rich. I think she spent most of the conversation under the impression that she was speaking to my father. But we eventually got it straightened out. I don't know whether Judy will read this, but there you go. She was very nice.

A week later, we took a 17-mile jaunt to the Maryland side of the [Great Falls of the Potomac](#) (though technically both sides are Maryland since the Maryland/Virginia border runs along the Virginia bank of the Potomac—as opposed to down the middle of the river. Take THAT, Virginia!). We also visited the neighboring [C&O Canal National Historical Park](#). We took a leisurely family stroll along the canal towpath, and the kids had great fun scaling the rocks around the falls. Happily, no one fell in.

A week after that, Crystal and I went to the polls and cancelled out one another's votes. Crystal voted for the best candidate, while I voted for the best candidate who actually has a chance of becoming president. Naturally, neither would have any chance of carrying Maryland in the fall, so I'm not sure why I even care.

A week after that, Crystal and the girls made the torturous 210-mile drive down to Suffolk, Va. to visit Roland and Marci's family. I didn't make it, but everyone seemed to have had a good weekend without me.

Hannah and Grace didn't get a lot of ink this month, but they're doing fine. Grace's latest catchphrase is, "Mommy, we need to talk," which usually means she's ready to get out of bed. She also sings a variety of *Annie* tunes, which, trust me, is much cuter than anything *your* kids do.

Have a nice month.



**Lucy** — Jumping on Uncle Roland’s and Aunt Marci’s trampoline.

1. Yes, that’s their backyard
2. Yes, that’s a navigable river running behind it.
3. Yes, the property fronts the river
4. Yes, they have a dock, a ski boat, and a wave runner.
5. No, we don’t get down there often enough.



At Roland and Marci’s house (from Left): Emma Kent, Sophie, Noah Kent, Grace, Hannah, Lucy

The girls display the “Family Love Box” — A Valentine’s Day tradition since circa 2003. (We all write little love notes to each other and put them in the box. It’s a cute little tradition, but it’s probably time to update the dilapidated box)



Grace—Scaling a large rock at Great Falls.  
(Click [here](#) for more from Great Falls.)



Sophie: At our Valentine’s Day  
cookie-making party.