

**Dear Family,**

It's probably time we stopped calling her "Baby Grace."

The child, who in most pictures is the little girl with paint smeared across her face, turned 4 this month. She is several months older than her charming cousin Sid, whose parents call him "Big Boy." In reality, Grace is no more a "baby" than Sid is "big," but I imagine the pet names stem from the children's respective positions in their families—Sid has no older siblings, and Grace has none who are younger. (I suppose it might have something to do with gender, too.) Yet even as she persistently protests, "I'm not a baby" in increasingly coherent speech, it's hard for me to let it go.

The ever-present paint on Grace's face is a testament to one of her favorite activities. "I just finished my painting; it's called 'A Masterpiece,'" she's fond of saying. She's also a bit of a gourmand. Among her preferred dishes are simple bowls of sugar, which she smuggles down the basement in an effort to consume them unfettered. She'd probably get away with it more often if she did a better job of concealing the evidence—and by "concealing the evidence" I mean "not leaving half-empty bowls of sugar on the floor next to the couch." (She could stand to take some lessons from Lucy.)

But when she's not painting masterpieces or stealing food from the kitchen (or glued to whatever's on Noggin) you're likely to find her clinging to Crystal asking for something—anything—in an effort to control her mother's every movement. A better father would step in more often to alleviate the burden, but, alas, I'm the only father this family has, and the power struggle is kind of fun to watch. (I seem to recall [a couple of years ago](#) watching Sid pull a similar number on his mother. Maybe it runs in the family.)

I'm told I never behaved like that. Hahahahahaha. (Actually I still do!)

Grace's sisters were also in action this month. Lucy proudly exhibited at the school science fair her experiment on the way in which colored filters affect light refracted through a prism (or something like that). Lucy was advised in this endeavor by a counselor in our ward's Young Women presidency (one of our ward's four physicists—that I know of). The physicist, plus Mom, Dad, Pete and Coco, plus several other people from church that Lucy invited, all came to the science fair, where it was readily apparent that Lucy was far from the only student to receive outside professional "advice." She earned an honorable mention.

One of the other physicists is my new second counselor in the White Oak Ward bishopric. There's an old Mormon saying that (with apologies to Job) goes something like: "The Lord giveth and the Stake taketh away; Blessed be the name of the Stake." This month the stake took away my first counselor. This was not exactly an earth-shattering event, but it did bring down the curtain on a

34-month run, by the end of which, each of us pretty much always knew what the other two were thinking. We had a pretty good thing going (I mean, you know, for *guys*), but life goes on and my old second counselor (an economist in the International Affairs Office of the U.S. Treasury Department) is now my first counselor and the new second counselor is a physicist who blows stuff up for the Pentagon. The replacement of one Ph. D. with another would suggest a gravitation on my part toward selecting as counselors men who are *a lot* smarter than I am. I suppose it's conceivable that the Lord knows just how much help I need, but it was not a conscious decision.

All in all, though, it's been a fairly smooth transition. I think I'd have a much harder time adjusting to a new Relief Society president. I'm still on my first one of those, and she, too, is a lot smarter than me. Come to think of it, so is most of the ward council. (For what it's worth, being the dumbest guy in a roomful of smart subordinates would seem to fulfill an interesting clause in my patriarchal blessing of some 20 years ago. I won't print it here, but if you want to ask me about it in person sometime, I'll tell you.)

Speaking of dumb, for many years now I've sat idly by while Crystal has packed her Blockbuster Online queue with a never-ending lineup the lamest chick-flicks ever made. My incessant mocking notwithstanding, I've been denied access to her account, and therefore unable to do anything about it. Until this month, that is, when I opened my very own competing Netflix account...and promptly surrendered the high ground by stocking my queue with nothing but old Star Blazers episodes. Space constraints don't permit me to fully describe here what a totally awesome show this was (or at least how awesome I thought it was when I was 11.) Aside from the having the [coolest theme song ever](#) (if you're a male in your mid-to-late 30s, you *must* click on the link), its ability to instantly transport me back a quarter-century or more is absolutely remarkable—and so totally worth the incessant mocking I now receive from my wife. My daughters(!) and I have finished Season 1 (Isctandar) and are moving on to Season 2 (The Comet Empire). Woo-hoo!

Sophie's birthday is next month. Stay tuned for details on that. Since two of Sophie's favorite things in the world are Easter Eggs and Barack Obama, I was hoping to take her to the annual White House Easter Egg roll. Unfortunately, the new administration changed the ticket policy from a camp-out-in-line affair to what amounted to a Web-based lottery, thus rewarding the lucky lazy at the expense of those willing to get out of bed early. That's the Democrats for ya! Sophie and I did go ice skating together this month, though. I fell many times—including once on my right shoulder, and my golf swing hasn't been the same since (just ask Reed Farnsworth...then ask him how many balls he put in the water on the island-green 13th yesterday).

Have a nice month. Love, Tim et al.





**Above:** Grace plays the piano and celebrates her fourth birthday (at home).  
**Left:** Grace monkeys around at a downtown sculpture garden.



**White Oak Ward Bishopric (5/28/06—3/15/09)—** Some tall doofus surrounded by two smart and noble guys: Dale Rasmuson (left—outgoing first counselor) and Tom Torgerson (right—former second counselor/new first counselor).

(The tall doofus's new second counselor (who took this picture) has stated (rather adamantly) that he won't be wearing a bow tie.)

(We're standing in the bishop's office; if Dale weren't in the picture, you'd be able to see the awesome refrigerator I put in the corner two summers ago.)



**Right:** Lucy and her science fair display (and the upper-right quadrant of Grace).