

Virginia's letter -- Originally written about 7 Dec 1993; edited and printed 12 December

Dear Family,

I'm here at Barry's office typing on his computer as ours is down at the moment. Roland was "playing computer" the other day and since then we can't get the C drive to boot. Someone at Church said that the battery needed to be replaced. So I did that, and set the time, but now the screen tells me that the memory is not right for the different drives. I don't know how to fix it. One problem in running the diagnostic is that I don't know how much memory we have for the different drives. Ah well, I'm sure sooner or later we'll get it fixed.

We've learned that if we wait long enough, it will either fix itself, or we cease to have need for that particular item. The washing machine stopped rotating for about a week. Barry would put a batch into soak in the a.m., come home at night and manually swish around the load for a few times or until his arms got tired, turn it to spin (spin worked just fine) and drain the load. The clothes came out surprisingly clean but this was not a long term solution. The one day it spontaneously began working on its own. I figure Barry's dad came and fixed it in the night.

We paid a ton of money (\$450) to have the refrigerator fixed. The motor that drives the fan had ceased to work and some seals on the freezer needed replacing. The coils on the bottom had become clogged and had to be blown free of gunk and a few other little problems were fixed. Well, about ninety-six days after it was fixed (six days after the guarantee expired) the freezer started to frost up again--the fan wasn't working again, so water wasn't evaporating and it was starting to build up. I went on a wild hunt for the paperwork from the previous fix-it job. About the time I finally found them it had spontaneously started working again. (I figure another night-time repair job!)

As a test for my little theory, I've managed to break my sewing machine just eighteen days before Christmas. I've taken it apart trying to discover what the problem might be. I've oiled all the parts that need to be oiled. I've checked the belts (I was sure one was broken). I've finally decided that it's an electrical problem, but I can't determine if it's in the cord or in the box that's on the back of the machine. I can't just take the machine down to a repair shop as I built it into the shelf it rests on. I didn't want the cord always interfering with my leg, so when I had the butcher block shelf put in, we drilled a hole in the back for the cord. What we didn't do (genius that I am) was make the hole big enough for the plug on either end to go through the hole. So, to get the machine out, I either have to dismantle the shelf and pull it away from the wall, or cut the cord. Then I really will have an electrical problem, won't I?

I could really use a night-time repair on this one. Due to the demands of the station on our budget at this moment, I really had planned a homemade Christmas as far as it is possible. I was in the middle of doll quilts for Sarah and Rose-Ellen when it expired. I still have doll dresses and doll quilts to finish, and I promised Nathan that I actually could make him a Western shirt just like the one at Boot Hill that cost \$89. Ah

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well, I have found an idle sewing machine at Karen Hanneman's home which she is happy to loan me having only used it three times in the ten years that it has been hers. Can you imagine? [Karen may not sew a lot but she is a good genealogist. -- Ed.]

The school clinic today called telling me that Sarah had hurt herself in P.E. Actually, her friend made the call from the clinic and told me she had fallen and hit her head and that I had to come immediately. You can imagine what I was imagining. When I got there, I learned that it was her foot, not her head that was hurting. I was vastly relieved. Still, I spent three hours at the office of the doctor who set her fingers just last summer. She had indeed broken two of her toes, but that all in all, he didn't think it worth setting. On the scale of one to ten in breaks he said it was a one and that she should come to see him in three weeks and to try to stay off it as much as possible.

I should tell you much more about what is going on in our family, instead of what is broken and not working. We're all quite well at this moment (aside from broken toes) and feel the joy of the Christmas season and the blessings of the Gospel in rich abundance in our lives. We give thanks for our heritage and the good lives of those who have gone before us. We love each of you and pray for your happiness and well-being daily.

I have to go now as we're picking up the kids from the skating rink down on Constitution Avenue where they went for a Mutual activity. So--as I have no working computer at home, from the office I will wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year!

Love,

Virginia
Virginia

Editor's note: We just talked with Mom, who sounds in pretty good spirits notwithstanding the California pheblitis problem. We hope she mends faster than our appliances! We are into a weather cycle here for the last 3 weeks where the weekdays, when I have to sit in an office, are lovely and the weekends are ghastly. Either drenching cold rain or (this weekend) fierce cold winds -- or both, as in last weekend. NOT FAIR. I think it's the ancestors, who know that if the weather is nice on a Saturday I'll go outside and work, but if it's rotten, I'll pull out the family history and dig or organize a bit. This afternoon at the Library of Congress I made a big find by turning up a book on my Conkle (German Kunkel or Gungel) family from Western Pennsylvania. I got the author's phone number from directory assistance in suburban Philadelphia, and called him up. Just got off the phone after an hour plus. This guy is a walking gold mine of information. This is the line where, when I was out in Utah briefly last month, I stumbled onto some deeds that gave me my 3rd great grandmother Elizabeth (Conkle) Myers' parents while looking in records of Wheeling, W. Va. for a completely different line. Seek and ye shall find.

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