

Arlington, Va., March 11, 1994

Dear Family,

I'm at Barry's office waiting for him to clear up a few things so we can go out to Merrifield and close on a bank loan for the Radio Station. We've been trying to keep the station going month to month on a shoestring and a prayer while the bank got around to finalizing this loan, so we are glad that this day is here at last. At least the TV station in Philadelphia is in the black so we're not having to feed it any more. The bank loan should (we hope, we hope) get us through until we can start to make a profit on the station. Every month it gets better and better, so at least the trend is in the right direction.

I've really enjoyed the Hallmanack letters of late, and apologize for my lack of entries. We don't have a printer at home and lately the computer has been down, so unless I get something written by hand, you don't hear from me. Thanks to Charlotte, who patiently calls and takes down our news by phone, you at least have the notion that we are alive out this way.

I went to see the surgeon last week (I arrived at 10:10; he saw me at 12:05, and I left his office at 12:11) and he was very pleased with how my wounds are healing on my face. He still may want to do a very small incision on my cheek to make one of the scars less obvious, but he said to give it three months and keep massaging it and see how it continues to heal. I think doctors should have to deduct from their bills the time you sit in their waiting rooms. Tell your kids to become dermatologists specializing in Mohs surgery. When Barry went there a year ago he was one of his first patients and the waiting room was nearly empty. Now you can't even get in to see this guy. His office has been like this every time I've been there.

The kids are all doing great (except for the occasional math test score here or there.) A couple of Sundays ago, Warren talked in Sacrament meeting as the youth speaker, Nathan blessed the sacrament, Jonathan passed it, and Sarah played for the congregation on the piano. They all did terrific jobs. It's wonderful to get to the stage where the kids can prepare their own talks and take some responsibility for their own practicing. I don't think I ever quite made it to that stage until I was an adult. Nathan is doing well in his part time job at the bird feed store. We've taken up bird watching at our house, thanks to the generous contribution of a free-standing feeder by Nathan's boss. We've seen quite a variety of birds at the feeder, though the Morning Doves tend to dominate it. We had one suet feeder dragged off in the night by some critter or the other (probably a raccoon). After we reattached a new one more firmly to the tree, we found that the varmints had managed to get that one free as well. This time it wasn't dragged off out of the yard. Animals can be very smart. It's very intimidating when you feel you've been outsmarted by an animal.

Jonathan is working three days a week babysitting two children of a neighbor who works out of her home. They are quite fond of Jonathan, and he does a good job for them. Rose-Ellen continues to improve on the piano. She has retained her tall, skinny frame and gets prettier by the day. Christian is everybody's favorite pal, sweet, generous, compliant, and such a good friend to his bossy younger brother, Roland. Roland keeps us hopping (still). Last Sunday he crawled under the bench and went all the way to the back

under the benches. This was quite embarrassing as we sit on the second row from the front, right behind the deacons. My friend Jill said it was a hoot to watch him come to the back as people's heads went down row by row to see what was underfoot. We call it the Wood Wave and it only happens in Church.

We've got to go. I'll let Barry finish up and fax this. Addendum March 14 --

Spring is finally springing here, although we still have a lot of ice in front of the house, where the sun never shines. In sunnier spots, crocuses are coming out (fully a month behind their progress last year until the Blizzard of '93 froze them in place on March 13). I will not enjoy much of the next two weeks of spring as I am on my way to Arizona (on the 17th) and then to Las Vegas (night of the 20th through Thursday morning) for the broadcasters convention.

I have not gone to the spring convention for several years, and I think Virginia would have a good time, but she feels she can't get away on account of the kids. There are lots of interesting things to see there other than slot machines. I'm curious to see some of the new extravagances that have been built since I was there the last time -- probably in 1989 or so.

We are doing an Easter promotion at the radio station in conjunction with Del-champs -- the biggest grocery chain in Mobile. The entry forms are a coloring book sort of picture of an Easter basket; the lucky winners get Easter baskets that we traded with a local florist, and the grand prize winner gets a trip to Disney World. The employees put the displays up last Friday and Saturday, in 27 grocery stores, and by Saturday night all the entry forms (we had printed ten thousand) were gone. So today they printed up another fifty thousand, and hope that will suffice for a while. Also for the Grand Opening of a new Jazz Club in Mobile we packed the place each night by promoting the place on the station. (There was no other promotion for it. Because of these kinds of things, we have no doubt but that we have listeners, but they're slow showing up in the rating books.

The manager sent a box of Mardi Gras beads, cups and serpentine (curled confetti) to us the other day. These have been a big hit with the younger kids. Nathan wants me to send him to Mobile to work at the station this summer, but I'm worried about the trouble he could get into in a strange place basically alone, not to mention that it's even hotter there than here in the summer.

Over the weekend the kids rented the videotape of Wayne's World. I sat in with them to watch it mainly because I was curious about this oeuvre that for some reason captivated the younger generation, but also because one of the missionaries in our ward recommended it. I am going to have a talk with that missionary. In my humble opinion, Wayne's World is a prime example of the Decline of Western Civilization. Vulgarity, lewdness and worldliness are exalted, respect for any adult and for any semblance of authority is ridiculed, and mindlessness is glorified. No doubt there are worse things, but the way this movie masqueraded as something innocuous is what ticks me off. OK. I'm off my soapbox.

We hope everyone else is doing great and making progress notwithstanding the diligent efforts of Hollywood to corrupt the minds of the youth of 7th or