

Nov. 1993

5

From a telephone conversation with Doug:

We're just working and playing here. We're trying to play more than work, but that's not working out.

I'm working up at Sundance again this year. They made me a director of the Mountain Hosts. Robert Redford will call me on the phone and tell me to meet so and so and take them out on the mountain and ski. When Redford calls down it's usually someone important he wants us to take out. He calls us by first name but when he sees us on the mountain he calls boys!

They have 75 cottages and they put in another 25 the year before. It's become quite a little resort. I don't know if he's trying to make it into a Deer Valley. Celebrities want to come to Sundance because it is small and quiet.

Some of the celebrities we have taken out are Juice Newton, she's a singer, Jeff Bridges and William Devane. Often times the people we host are producers and directors.

There's no snow yet. We're hoping to have some for Thanksgiving. A couple of the resorts opened yesterday with man made snow. Only one or two runs open but it's like skiing on ice. It is very slippery.

Chelsea skied on Sundance's racing team. She did it last year but she wasn't sure she liked it or not. But now this year some of her friends are joining and now she's more excited than ever. She saw it snowing just a little bit yesterday and she ran in the house and yelled "It's snowing outside." It melted as it hit the ground.

When the leaves changed here they were on for a very short time. The leaves changed really quickly but they were really pretty. Carli and I went on a hike up to Stewart Falls with the young women and the color were just at their peak. I kept wanting to take Nancy up to see it but never did.

We have been sticking up all our Christmas lights. Our little culdesac has a Lights On Party. We all meet at one person's house and have hot chocolate and donuts and then we go door to door and turn on lights on each of the neighbor's houses. It is a riot. I've been hanging Christmas lights for about two weeks. This year I'm putting up the bigger light bulbs because if one light goes out the whole string doesn't go out. I'm using all different colored lights. After turning on the lights we go back to the house where we had hot chocolate and vote on the nicest house. The winner gets a roving trophy of a cheap plastic candle.

The kids are doing well in school. We're totally thrilled. DJ class is working out really well. We talked to one of the teachers and she just loves D.J.

6

Neil Family Letter
November 12, 1993

Dear Family:

What a month, what a month. *The days are just packed.* (Actually that's the name of the new Calvin and Hobbes comic collection that I picked up at the bookstore. It's good for some real side-busting laughter--especially right before bed when you're feeling kind of punchy anyway. Things are heating up around here with only a month left before my Los Altones concerts. I finally got the choir practice tapes finished. Now each tenor, alto, bass or soprano in the choir (65 in all) have their very own tape, with their own part to every song. I spent about 40 hours on those tapes--they better be listening to them! It seems like there have been a hundred and one details to work out for the concerts, but things are gradually coming together. I'm pleased that Mom and Dad are going to come visit us during the concerts. I'm also singing in an LDS group called the "Valparaiso Singers" (after the street where the Menlo Park Stake Center is located.) We're also doing three or four concerts in November and December. We're pretty good, if I don't say so myself, and have a professional organist (Jim Welsh) for our accompanist. Jim has lots of connections and gets us concerts at interesting places. Last year we sang at St. Mary's cathedral in San Francisco, and this year we're doing an Advent concert with the choir at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Palo Alto.

Both groups are singing at the Oakland Temple December 15th. There is a cultural arts festival going on along with the lighting of the grounds during the month. The nice thing about it is that it is inter-faith. The black mayor of Oakland is the "dignitary" who will throw the switch to light the temple grounds at the end of November.

Marty travelled to Europe and Hong Kong last month. Kept calling and saying how much fun he was having in Venice. Spent a long weekend there and picked up some nice gifts for the girls. (Can't say what they are, because they might read this.)

We threw a fun supposedly surprise 16th birthday party for Erin. She's a great actress. We took the kids to a laser tag joint where they chased each other around with computerized laser guns and generally had a wild time. The equipment "zaps" you with a vibration and noise when you've been hit, and records your hits and kills. Kind of like playing with paint ball guns, only a lot cleaner. Everyone wanted to be on John's team, because he had done it before, and was shorter so he didn't get hit as often. Erin has been practicing her driving and will be getting her license this next week.

John is into basketball season now. Checks his height weekly. He is finally off the refrigerator, and onto the door jamb. Grew one inch in the month of September, then slowed down a bit. He's 5'6" now. (Last night we heard that Shawn Bradley was 6'1" in the sixth grade.) He's doing much better in Algebra now that Marty is teaching him at home. The new teacher at school is not so great, yet, and John was falling way behind. Since Marty began tutoring him, all John's test scores have been A's. Guess what Marty secretly wants to be when he grows up.

Well, gotta go. Used up my page. Have a good turkey month.

Liz