

August Hallmanack.

Dear Family:

Happy Day, Liz is here and she is running the letters you have sent through the copier while I write my own Hallmanack.

Laura did very well at the Y in her classes this summer. Mary was awesome in "Fiddler on the Roof", which we saw from the third row where we could see them bat their eyelashes.

Liz is going to pick up some leadership week classes this week, and next Monday, Marty will bring Greg up to get him started at the Y.

I guess the thing uppermost in all our minds is the middle-east situation, which I don't like at all as our grandsons are nearing military age. I hope it's all over before Greg is missionary age, and I'm glad that Tracy and Daniel are on missions. Why is it we seem to get involved with adversaries who are so ruthless. Japanese--Vietnamese and now the Arabs. Man's inhumanity to man--and man's insatiable drive for power, power and more power seems to be universally around us.

We enjoyed seeing Charlotte and her family. We had a family picnic when she came and it was great seeing the cousins enjoy each other's company. We really should get together more often. We hated to see them go home.

School starts tomorrow in Provo. And it won't be long before the fall semester starts at the Y.

I have been having more of those numbing spells--and have decided I'd better stay close to home until they clear up. So I guess I won't be any use to Virginia this time. Good news, though. The baby has turned into the correct position so that now, at least she should be able to give birth normally. Sherlene will go down and help out while for awhile.

I have decided to try to sell the Tulip Cottage and lessen the stress a little there. If I can. Also I will go on a low fat--low cholesterol diet which hopefully will help, too.

I need to get my life in order. If these (little strokes?) spells continue they may effect my mind. (what, even worse?) I hope if a stroke hits it hits hard enough to kill me--it would be so much better than being a drag on my loved ones half paralyzed or wholly paralyzed. But then none of us get to choose the method of our dying--do we?

Maybe this too will pass and I will live to be a hundred. Who knows.

Love ya all, Mom and Grandmom Hall

July 1, 1990

Dear Family,

Today was my first day as Primary President. We had quite an interesting day. My only councilor (the other is yet to be called, along with the secretary, chorister, pianist, Merrie Miss A, Merrie Miss B, Sunbeam, and Nursery assistant) directed the music and I played the piano, did sharing time, and conducted. I guess the first lesson a Primary Pres. has to learn is that staffing is always the greatest challenge.

For sharing time I taught the children about the dispersion and gathering of Israel. I had cards hidden around the room with the names of Israel's sons. We talked about the divided kingdom after Solomon's death and how each kingdom was taken into captivity, minus Lehi's family. I sent different groups of children to different corners of the room--each corner representing a place such as Assyria etc. They seemed to have a good time and enjoyed getting up and moving around the room.

Bryan arranges the talks for Sacrament meeting. The bishopric tell him who they want to speak and then he calls them. Two weeks ago he was unable to find anyone to speak so he said we would have to do it. And I said, "No--you have to do it." I'm not about to fill in every time he can't find someone to talk! He gave a very nice talk about grace and works and didn't have any trouble taking up all the time. One woman commented that he gave the best talk she'd ever heard in the Lakeridge Ward. She liked the frequent references to scriptures and a talk that concentrated on basic gospel doctrine.

The children are in swimming lessons. Hannah and Sarah are doing very well. The boys will do well when they decide to put their faces in the water! They are just taking after their mother. I have always been rather fond of the dog paddle!

Sarah has had a good experience with money this past year. She has done a lot of baby sitting and has been saving her money for a bike. She and her friend just started a baby sitting club. They are making flyers to advertize their services. She tried out for a play and the person in charge of casting said she has a beautiful voice. Both she and Hannah made the final cuts but when they found out the rehearsals were during swimming lessons they backed out. Unfortunately I was in a Primary meeting and couldn't be there to tell them to forget their \$15 swim lessons and be in the play. We'll let them try again next year.

The city of Lake Oswego had their annual arts festival this past week. Local artists displayed their work and they also brought in a special art show. This year they displayed aboriginal art and I found it very fascinating. The majority of the paintings are done on cotton duck cloth and eucalyptus bark. The

paintings are called "dreamings" and depict their sacred places and religious beliefs. Most of the "dreamings" are made up of hundreds of dots. It wasn't the type of art typically found in living rooms but it was very interesting.

I was just interrupted by a call from the Bishopric councilor over Primary. He drafted a chorister and a Merrie Miss B/Blazer B teachers but they can't start until September. I blew it! When he called me I should have told him sure I'd do it but I wouldn't be able to start until September! He did talk to my secretary and she said she wanted to think about it over night--so I called her up and said see you at the Presidency meeting at 9 am tomorrow!

July 28, 1990

We're really looking forward to vacation! My yet to be called Primary councilor is arriving home tonight from a six week vacation in Park City. (What a life!) I told the 2nd councilor in the bishopric to park on her doorstep and not let her through the door until she said yes!

We've had beautiful weather the past few weeks. We Oregonians bask in the sun when it comes out!

I tore up our bathroom floor and pulled the toilet. There was apparently a bad seal on the toilet and I could see the wood was water damaged. I took a screw driver and started poking around to see how soft it was and as I scraped away I uncovered some white colored bugs. I immediately yelled for Bryan (Mr. Pest Control Operator himself) and he said they were damp-wood termites. He spent the following Saturday tearing up the floor and replacing it. I was very curious about the shower so I hired a man to come tear it apart back to the studs and he found some water damage there also--but no sign of bugs. I wonder what is lurking in the other two bathrooms? Tune in next time for further Primary and remodeling news. That's probably all you'll hear about from me for the next few years! I'll make Bryan write the next letter.

Bryan here. Since Charlotte has been called as Primary President, I have substitute taught primary three out of the last five weeks. I think Charlotte should be assigned to speak in sacrament meeting. Don't you?

I had to go to small claims court a couple of weeks ago. A former client found some problems in a home I inspected after moving in. They claimed \$2500.00 in damages for misrepresentations. This was the first time I have ever been sued. There were no attorneys present for either side. I was vindicated of all claims. Going to court is an interesting process. I hope it will be a long time before I have to experience it again.

Love, Charlotte, Bryan and Family

For Hallmanack

This letter was sent July 12, 1990, Postmarked L.A., July 17, 1990--arrived July 19, 1990 in Basking Ridge, NJ, with King's Express (Outside of a recent envelope said "Jardines de Asuncion, Guatemala"

Dear Mom, DAd, & Laura, ["Mom" cutting some to keep this to 2 pages!]

!Hello from Guatemala! (first exclamation upside down)

Things are going fairly well here with the work, but we still need to work more constructively. The nice thing is that we're receiving plenty of referrals. This next Sunday we're looking to have two baptisms. It all depends on those two younger brothers of our recent convert, Hugo Rolando. They're good kids (listening to the platinas and going to Church) in the midst of a very hard family. The family is pretty friendly, but I feel the Spirit has trouble touching them in some way.

Hugo is on an opposite track. He is so flecha (straight arrow)! We're getting him and his wife married this Saturday. If they can continue on as they are, they'll be married in the temple in a year. I bought him a nice triple combination for the wedding. Hopefully, he'll use it to teach those three young sons with, and they'll all become missionaries (o.k., I'll stop counting chickens before they's hatched).

The 4th of July came and went. It was on a Wednesday and all the (more honestly, many) of the elders who are gringos showed up to the canino Real (a hotel restaurant) to attack a buffet. It was pretty good.

My biggest problem while doing that was thinking of Hugo with his three kids. I spent about half (perhaps 1/3) of their monthly income on lunch that day. It was a pig-out on some of the finest food to be found in Guatemala (although some of the elders said the food there was not as good as usual).

Everything is rising in price. My triple combination that I bought for Hugo cost me about 20 quetz. When I came here it was about 12. The scary thing is that it wasn't even a gradual thing. That jump in price happened all at once some time during the past week. Tomatoes went from 2 for 30 centavos to 2 for 60. Eggs (a staple here) also rose in price substantially.

Arrived a couple of days later--about July 21, 1990

Dear Mom and Dad,

I'd like to start off this letter (Mom!) with: 10 reasons why I refuse to be interested in (never mind marry) a Guatemalan young woman. [I told him it made me nervous that he didn't talk more about the young women they baptized.]

1. When I return, I'll be a freshman in college.
2. I don't want to have to speak Spanish to my wife because she can't speak my native tongue.
3. I want a wife who can cook something besides eggs, tortillas, and beans.
4. There are better-looking Ephraimite women at BYU (hoping I'll get back in).
5. I'm only interested in fourth and fifth generation Mormons.
6. I don't want to be going to family reunions at Tikal.
7. I'm disgusted with missionaries who allow themselves to get interested or infatuated or whatever, and I'm thoroughly nauseated when a missionary comes home with more than his luggage and good memories.
8. Every good looking girl here has a fat mother (I believe these things are genetically passed down).
9. I don't believe crossing people from different cultures is a good way to build a foundation strong enough for a good relationship (as if we don't have enough trouble getting along already).
10. I AM A MISSIONARY!!!

If these don't convince you I'm not interested in, infatuated, or thinking of marrying someone from here, nothing will.

We had a marriage yesterday of our 2 recent converts. All the members got together and made it a really special occasion. Two of the sisters made a beautiful, two-layer wedding cake that was structured like this [I'm not going to try to draw it--looked very elegant].

Hugo Rolando (spouse) and Dora Consoela (esposa) are quite poor, so the cake and the sandwiches and the two dozen roses there must have looked amazing.

Lately, Hugo's boss (who drinks) hasn't been paying him much. He didn't have anything nice to wear, so I took him to a Sastreria (tailor shop), had him measured up and had them make one of my slacks look his size (they didn't cut anything--I'm taking them back to have them returned to normal). With that and my suit coat, and a white shirt and a tie, he looked totally different. He looked like a new man. He even walked different. His wife looked beautiful in a white dress (lent from one of the sisters in the Relief Society), as well. Quite a change from the 23-yr. old with the terrible hangover who came to my companion and me on the street a month ago. I also gave him a triple combination. Hopefully in a year they'll go to the temple. That would really be beautiful.

Maren Mouritsen is awesome. I'm glad Laura is in her class. Tell Laura there's a cure for the peppy California girls. It's called Book of Mormon tapes and intelligent conversation. Blonde bubbleheads can't abide spiritual things. They're too busy being "floor leaders" and girlfriends to jocks or preppys. Tell her not to get interested in just one guy. Window shopping is a lot more fun.

Thanks for the prayers. They always make a difference! I love you guys. I miss you, but I ain't (take that for good English) never been happier. Hasta la Vista! Love, Elder Daniel H. Bartholomew

Received August 7, 1990

Dear Mom and Dad,

New area! I've been sent to ESQUIPULAS. It's quite the Catholic town. I've been here one day. Oh yeah, another surprise. But first let me go through a little history. (He makes 3 columns, titled "Time Period," "The Way Things Were," and "Symbol," (drew smiley faces with captions describing

his emotions). To save space, I'm going straight through: 1st Month: New, I'm new, language is new, the work is new, the money is new, almost everything new! Enough to make you go liberal. (Draws smile in green pencil, "Call smiles very green." 2nd and 3rd Month: More or less accustomed to the change, learning better work habits, overcoming the new temptations (jade, etc.), still following a companero mayor (smiley face with hair sticking straight up "Still Smilin'- 7-Up Cut." 4th month: de repente (suddenly) I'm a companero mayor and a district leader, now I'm really learning 'cause I make all the decisions. By end of month was working the way I wanted (5-6 families being taught--7 people with baptismal dates). (Draws smiling face with one furrow in brow: "Still smilin'--one worry line (responsibility). Beginning of 5th month: NEW REPOSIBILITY--I've been made a branch pres.! (Big "new symbol" in middle of page--"Smile with 10 worry lines.")

That's right. I'm branch president. I direct meetings, give temple interviews, accept and take to the bank tithing and fast offerings, etc. & etc. for about 40 members. AAGH!

Don't worry. I'm all smiles. It's just a lot of responsibility for a person with very little experience (the truth = none).

Back to the subject of Equipulus. Like I said, it's a big time Catholic town. It's famous throughout Central & South America for the "Cristo Negro" (Black Christ) here. I love Esquipulus. It's very very clean. The houses are all painted in bright colors. There's a very nice feeling here. I really love it. The temperature is very nice, as well.

In the mornings I have a new schedule. I get up at 5:30 and pray. Afterwards, I exercise. Today (It's taking me a couple of days to write this letter), I started exercising for the first time in months. I could hardly get the first situp. Anyway, I forced myself to do 20 and then did 10 push ups. If I do this every morning, I should be in a little bit better shape by the end of the month. Afterwards I shower and I got to tell you something here: there's no hot or warm or room temperature water. The water is COLD. (Draws a face which definitely makes the point!)AAAAGH!!!

Needless to say, it is VERY COLD. It's enough to make your bones into ice cubes. Needless to say, I'm awake by the time I get out of the shower. Afterwards, I get dressed. At 6:30 we have zone prayer (that's when most missionaries get up). Zone prayer is a companionship prayer in which we pray for the missionaries in our zone. With all 300 missionaries in the Guatemala North Mission praying for their zone at 6:30 each morning, it's no wonder we all get blessed with baptisms.

Afterwards my comp showers. I have from 6:30 to 8:00 for personal study. My bed is right beneath our window. The second day I was here (yesterday) I opened the window. It was the first time it had been opened in months, perhaps yrs., and it looked like something out of a horror movie. I cleaned it. It took up my study time for the day, but now I can open my window each morning and enjoy the fresh morning air and sunlight and all that good hippie stuff while I study, finish letters, etc. I love it. I laughed when I thought of this while I was cleaning my window. You know how we have spring once a yr and the custom is to have a big Spring Cleaning? They call Guatemala the land of Eternal Spring. Looks like we're going to be having an eternal Spring cleaning.

My first day here I went to my first rodeo (I think it was my last as well). We watched men on horses do dumb tricks (like walking sideways, etc.). Afterwards, we watched dumb men get on top of big bulls (very mad bulls--they make them mad by taking a rope around their lower body and then pulling each end, thus rubbing a very sensitive part of the bull) and try to ride them. One time I was sure the guy was going to get killed. The bull knocked him off and turned around, ran over him and then turned around and was inches from goring the poor fellow. Somehow the guy got up and ran away. Is this a sport? Maybe we should teach them football (smiley face).

Oh, yeah. While I was in Tardines de la Asuncion, I met a couple (friends of a member) who are going to New York. They told me they'd be happy to bring something from me to you and then return with stuff from you guys to me.

I sent home a basket. Inside, you should find: Books (Kekchi Bible, Kekchi B. of Mormon, Guatemala Coffee-Table Book, etc.), clothes I was not using or using very little, but will use when I get home, 4 rolls of film that need to be developed (wrapped up in a pair of white athletic sox in the middle of the basket), 2 bags for books--send 'em to Laura for college, a Father's Day card (very late) in Spanish, 2 wooden flower containers (Mom's Mother's Day gift, made by a member here), probably some other stuff I forgot.

The other day, my friend, Elder Sill (his parents sent you a letter--he was in the MTC with me--remember?) got a package from his parents the same way. He shared some Doritos Cool Ranch chips with me. AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH. (Smiley face)

Please. Please. Please. Empty that basket into plastic bags and the car and fill it up again. Here's some things that are very expensive, impossible to get, or difficult to find that I would love to see. (Listed one per line: Snickers Bars, Three Musketeers, Milky Ways, Twix, Cool Ranch Doritos, Raspberry Jam (2 BIG Containers), Skippy Super Chunky Peanut Butter (2 Big Containers), 3 large bags of Chocolate Chips (I've already talked with one of the sisters--one of those for whom I was responsible as district leader--she says that if she has the chips, we'll have the cookies at Christmas time), a pound bag of chocolate M&Ms, and a pound bag of peanut M&Ms.

We live here on a steady diet of beans, coffee (natural--no caffeine), bread, and sometimes corn flakes, chicken, sometimes beef. Having some things like this could really put a big smile on my face. Let this be my Christmas gift. The basket is big--there's plenty of room. Use your imagination, but let the things above be the major part. We need good food to munch on.

The couple that is coming with the basket have your telephone # and address. What they'll do is call you and meet you some place. Their names are Maria del Carmen and Ernesto Ordenez. Very nice people. Mom---I know you're going to want the basket, but I'll send you home another to keep. It's easier for them to handle this way. The baskets are really cheap, and if you want some, I'll send them to you through mails. Please send me this stuff. Us misionaries need some treats. [Anything mailed to him gets stolen.]

I love you guys and I really miss you. I pray for you guys and Laura all the time. Stay cool. Love, Elder Daniel H. Bartholomew (Big Smiley face with "Elder 7-Up" caption). [His investigators called him "Elder 7-Up" because his hair reminded them of a 7-Up commercial where somebody's hair stood on end!--just call him "Daniel Dignified."]

Daniel R. & Sherlene H. Bartholomew (201) 766-9771

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August 7, 1990

Hi, all of you! *(Hallmark)*

We are quite the drowned ducks around here--it has been raining day and night for several days--which is good, our garden needed it--but we're feeling a little boggy (buggy?)

I have used the rain as my excuse to quit weeding and zero in on finishing up this Hungerford (Ungerfield) compilation. I have been collecting records on them for at least ten years and finally got around to sifting through all the material and putting the names into family groups. This has been a major effort over the last two months. I was starting to wonder if I was wasting my time, inasmuch as almost every name I checked was already in the IGI (as is true for much of New England research, now). Still, it felt wonderful to get it organized and be able to place these strange souls I had picked up a few at a time in this record or that. My hard copy of family group sheets now fills most of a 3" binder.

Today I had the big thrill of deciding it was as complete as it was going to be for a while; so I turned to the temple submission program and started inputting. Unbelievable! First of all, in order to get a report on the status of what you submit, you have to establish your relationship to one of the parents in the family group. There is this incredible feature I had not noticed before (on this new 2.2 PAF Church genealogy program) where all you do is feed in your identifying number (the computer gives each entry a number) with the one of your relative, and the computer tells you if you are a second cousin six generations removed or whatever. Truly amazing! So I went through and established the relationships first and then put in all the ones I'm related to. That still leaves 1/3 of my binder--I know they're connected, too, I just haven't been able to prove it yet at one key, original immigrant source. But it's coming! If it doesn't come soon, I'll just submit them without a relationship.

This incredible program sorts through your family group, tells you which names are acceptable for temple work and which need more data, tells you exactly what's wrong or right, puts it on a disk in the right submission format, and even prints "submitted" on your original entries for you, if you select that option! And, to my amazement, I still got a whopper of a lot of out of my records. It's possible Salt Lake won't accept all these submissions because I only checked the IGI between helping patrons at the library. I did complete those with our family names, but not always their spouses' or mates' (though I got most of them).

Even so, today I am mailing a disk to Salt Lake that has submissions for 95 temple baptisms, 95 endowments, 92 sealings to parents, and 46 sealings to spouses. Out of 2500 individual entries and half that many marriages that's not very much, but it still felt good. I had them all sent to the Washington Temple and stuck my neck out and asked them if they could process them by Sep. 20. So, if Mom/Dad come out when Virginia has her baby, we can take a couple of days before or after and do some of the more direct and exciting ones.

I can't tell you how much I have learned to love the Hungerfords. They really went through it with settling this country, winning wars (in one family the father died in the French and Indian War and his namesake son, in the Revolution), and dying from childbirth. One dear woman had her husband killed by a maniac after she had lost two of her four children at ages one and two,

and then one of the two remaining was an imbecile. Makes you count your blessings, if nothing else! There was also enough intermarrying of cousins to keep us all well-allergied.

I've got a horrible case of cabin fever. If I had not had this genealogy to do, I probably would have gone bonkers by now. Dan scratched an itch on his eye and broke open his healing surgery, so I am still doing all the yardwork, lifting, etc. Worst of all, we can't travel away from August in the East. But, we must count our blessings that Dan's sight is returning. Day by day we see the miracles of modern medicine taking hold.

We got a wonderful letter from Daniel yesterday. Obviously his huge new responsibilities have numbed his brain. He seems to actually believe I'm going to send his friends back loaded up with M&M's, Snickers bars and such! However, as a true Mother, and out of consideration for his health and the shoulders of his friends, I am sending along freeze-dried peas and carrots, dried milk, parsley flakes, and maybe some hair spray to tame that 7-Up haircut. Maybe some kleenexes, too. Branch presidents always need lots of kleenexes.

Laura is working very hard at school and doing very well. We would not be at all surprised if she makes the Honor Roll there.

I hope you're feeling better, Mom--when you get dizzy, we worry. Dad, are you better now? I tried to call at least eight times last weekend--you are either gone or on the phone, it seems. Anyway, I had planned to drop in and help you with Virginia's children, anyway, when you came--it's really too much for just one Grandma. I told Virginia I will be there for sure, whether you come or not. Please come. It's the only way I'll get to see my Muzzer this year. Dad, you come, too. The plan is that the baby will come late so we can all attend the baby blessing and Sarah's baptism, the second Sunday in October. Then I will take whichever of you are in the mood and we will go to MA and see Jonathan Fairbank's home. We have to see this. The oldest standing colonial home in America, and it was built by our Hall ancestor! People who aren't even related come from all over the country!

I also think I've found the Richard Richardson who is our ancestor. So I want to maybe come up a couple of days before the baby arrives (or after) and chase him down. Mom, want to help me? I think we should go on another genealogy tour. This is so much fun. Fall is the time to do it in the East.

We are having a very pleasant experience with Eric Adams, the young RM Alan (Hall) sent to rent one of our rooms. He has worked out so pleasantly, we have ordered another one for Laura's room. If anything is left after we pay our taxes, we hope to thus get rich enough to take Laura and go get Daniel at the end of his mission and have a great time getting the amoeba and such. Inbetween, we're still planning to attend Mom and Dad's 50th!

'Can't tell you how much I've enjoyed the Hallmanack. You write so naturally--it sounds just like sitting down for a chat! We do love each of you and pray for you and appreciate all the sharing and caring you show.

Oh, wait until you hear this! A miracle has happened. All of a sudden while I was inputting genealogy, I realized that I was retaining the numbers in my head through several procedures! The old gray mare is getting back her memory! It's EXCITING!!! I still keep checking up on myself because I just can't believe it--but it's the real thing! I do, somehow, manage to forget my age!

Love,
Sherlene

Neil Hallmanac

August 5, 1990

Dear Family:

Oy, it's hot! Our house does not cool down at night when the air outside cools down, and I am uncomfortable! Marty keeps saying (year after year) that we need to install a ceiling fan to draw air outside through the attic, but year after year we (he) do nothing about it. Our summers seem to be hotter and hotter each year, too!

I've been busy this month choosing music for our stake choir that is performing in December. We call ourselves the "Los Altones" (I know it's corny, but I had nothing to do with the name, as the choir was formed years ago.) The woman who has directed the choir in the past has moved and I've been nominated to direct. It was my idea to do a Christmas concert--the choir has always been a "pops" chorus, but I wanted to sing some of the beautiful choral music that is arranged for Christmas. I picked out about 60 pieces and gradually narrowed it down to 15. We're doing some secular and some sacred. If any of you need some really terrific music for a quartet or something, give me a ring! Now if I could only find a few more tenors to sing. (Hey, I'm a poet!) Our rehearsals begin September 8th, on Saturday mornings.

John and Erin are going to all-day camps this week. John to a soccer camp and Erin to an orchestra camp. Neither is very excited. Erin will be playing chamber music and studying theory all week and John is in for some pretty intense training with real soccer pros from Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain. John can't understand the British accents the coaches have and thinks that they are "tight." I keep telling both kids, "Hey, who said life was always supposed to be fun!" Deep, huh?

Emily has discovered boys^{*}, or should I say they have discovered her, and she's had lots of fun this summer. She has a nice group of friends and they're always "hanging out" (that's what teens do, right?) together. Poor girl has an 11:30 p.m. curfew, while all her friends get to come in much later.

We now have a "rose" room--you know, like the White House "green" room. I just got my new living room carpet and furniture. It's beautiful, and very pink! Actually, the sofas are floral, and there are two blue side chairs, but the overall effect is pink. I like it. It has a very calming effect, and this family needs calm.

I hope Mother's finger is healing up like it should. From Dad's description of how she smashed it under that rock, it must have hurt like heck!

Emily says this should read "men"

John has his braces on now, and already his teeth have begun to move. Now he can only get a bicycle through his front teeth-- instead of a motorcycle. This will be an expensive year with two kids in braces. And music lessons! Whew! Gone are the good old days when we paid \$5.00 a lesson. Now music teachers think they have to earn a living too!

How about this Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Very scary business. Especially as we all have children approaching or at draft age. I sure hope we don't have to get involved militarily.

Here's Marty to say a few words.

"Life is hard, and then you die". I'm depressed so this is not a good time to write. I'm ready for a new job--the Christmas tree business in Payson looks better all the time. I seem to be flying somewhere nearly every week--at least it's good for the frequent flyer mileage. I'll probably get fired from my High Council job-- I've only been to one meeting in the last 2 months. My travel schedule seems to be directly in conflict with High Council.

Liz and I had a great weekend in San Francisco about 2 weeks ago-- we were able to use some frequent flyer "hotel" discounts at the St. Francis and we played tourist for two days. Emily and Greg did a wonderful job of watching out for the family--we had talked about paying them if Erin and John were alive when we returned. But they had such a good time that they refused payment (not really, we just decided that we shouldn't have to pay and so we didn't.)

John, Greg, and I play basketball with men from our old Cupertino ward* on Saturday mornings. Even though John's only 5ft, he plays better than most of us--and scores more buckets. His only problem is defense--it's hard guarding guys that outweigh you by 100 pounds. John's decided that he's going to play in the NBA and so he practices about 2 hours a day--shooting, dribbling, and playing just about anyone who'll take him on.

Greg's working at the sports card store (still) and spends a lot of his wages on cards--hot tip: hockey cards are going to be the next big run up in sports card prices. If I'd listened to Greg two years ago and bought basketball cards like he told me, I'd could have retired by now. (A rookie Michael Jordan that I could have purchased for about 5 dollars several years ago is now selling for \$300). Mostly, Greg is chapped that Emily is making nearly twice as much per hour as he is--she's playing piano for the music class during Pinewood's summer school.

Liz, back here. Hope you are having a fine summer. So long all you cool dudes and dudettes. I tell you, living around teenagers is totally mind numbing!

Love, Liz and Marty

*That should read: "old men from our Cupertino Ward." (Liz)