

Hallmanack: March, 1984

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Dear Family:

Beginning this issue, Mom takes over again. Thanks, Liz. We appreciate all your good work. Especially typing our illegible missionary letters (unless Dad wrote them.) It's interesting, I got the idea at the same time as Liz just decided she couldn't do it any more. She can't, either, she is really busy.

I am amazed constantly at the accomplishments of our children and their spouses. Liz is directing another children's choir at the local school again this year. I think she said there were 175 kids. She says she enjoyed it more when there were less. But she saw a need, and filled it. I hope they appreciate it. Even if they don't, there will be a lot of children who will later on. She is also helping with a community production-- if I remember correctly, it is a children's musical. She will teach the music to the children. The week we were there she was attending auctions for a couple of hours each day while they were having tryouts for the production. How's it coming, Liz?

You get all this information because we were with Liz and Marty from Jan 28th to Feb 5 and it was lovely basking in the sun and smelling the fresh air of spring and the blossoming trees. We brought back four primrose plants which I couldn't resist, and which will be through blooming before they can go in our cold and frozen ground.

We had very good traveling weather both coming and going. Dad hadn't been feeling well, and the week did him good. It should have been longer, we have had another month of cold and smog.

Frankly I am sick of winter. I really shouldn't complain because all of you suffered through last winter while we were cooking our bones in Zimbabwe. I can't say I missed the cold and snow. I keep trying to maneuver some of you to move to San Diego. I will help buy the house if you will build a grandparents apt in it so we can spend the winter months there. Any takers? I was hoping Barry and Virginia would go there, or that Marty would be transferred there. Maybe we will just have to move there ourselves for the winter.

While we were at Liz's we went down to Santa Clara on one road, walked along the beach (shades of South Africa) and looked at the ocean. There were not any shells on the sands there, but I found a lot of lovely drift wood, which I loaded in the car and brought home. This is the first time I have ever noticed the drift wood on a beach. If any of you are conjuring up large pieces of drift wood tied to our car roof, forget it.. they all fit nicely in a sack in our trunk. The sea and sand does some lovely things to wood, and it is fun to wonder where that particular piece of wood came from and how long it was in the ocean before it was tossed on this particular beach.

On the way back home, we took a different route, stopping at a nice McDonald's for lunch. It was a new one, and had nice furnishings, which gave me ideas for redecorating the farmhouse.

(Dad says 'forget it!')

This route took us back to Liz's through some little towns and a redwood forest. The moss was so thick, I couldn't resist taking some to Brother Duke, who collects it from my greenhouse and uses it under his Bonsai plants. This forest has some lovely old trees. Not like the sequoias which are much bigger around and taller, but really some nice specimens. I still think the Lord is the best gardener of all. We came home on route #50, and stopped in Delta to see Charlotte.

Our gas bill has been so horrendous this year, I am seriously thinking of storm windows for the house and a inside shell of some kind for my greenhouse to try to conserve some of the heat. Of course when you have 90 days without seeing the sun you can, I suppose, expect high heating bills. Ordinarily, the sun comes in the south windows and turns off our thermostats, even on the coldest winter days.

Nancy has made some beautiful stained glass windows for my little Payson house. She has made windows for the top (mullions?) of the living room and bedroom front facing windows, and for the door window. They are lovely. She is taking a class at the Y in Stained glass (Yes, they even gave her her dependants allowance) (You can get it until you have a bachelor's degree). She needed to do three projects for the class, and I have been amazed at how fast and how adept she became almost immediately. Members of the class accused her of knowing how to do it before she took the class. Even the teacher, who has been especially tough on her, had to admit that the last project was practically perfect. She took it for credit--and I am willing to bet she will get an A for the course. She thinks she can earn some money with the skill, and still do it in her home.

Charlotte is also venturing into "community" projects. She has volunteered for the "culture" committee for Delta. She was nominated, and later found out that they needed five "at large" members for the committee, and when they had nominated five they stopped, and had one of those mock elections to fill the requirements of the by-laws. She is in charge of publicity, which will give her some new experience. All the money we spent for music lessons, and college tuition was the best investment we ever made--or any other parent makes--it is an investment in people, and that is the best investment of all, for the church, the community, and the family all benefit from that investment--not to mention what it does for the individual. Keep that in mind, youse guys.

And you are. David has a good thing going in his family. He is giving Stephen Art lessons. Mark is taking mechanical drawing. They subsidize the interests of their children.

I guess you all realize that your children must learn about computers. Or they will really be out of it. They must also know how to type to learn computers. All of you should be sure all of your children learn to type before they get to college. Even if you have to have them learn it in summer courses. If you don't have a computer in your home, you might investigate summer community classes in computers. These classes are inexpensive,

*3rd pg on back of Virginia's letter*