

February 27, 1978

Dear Family:

I'm in good spirits this evening, as we just went down and bought me a new sewing machine. I never would have believed I'd buy a Kenmore, but Consumer Reports rated this machine higher than all others, and it happened to be on sale this week, too. (One wonders about the coincidence of the sale and the appearance of the magazine article at the same time...I'm a cynic) I wanted an Elna, but the comparable machine of theirs was \$320, and the Kenmore \$159. It's a basic zig-zag, blind stitch machine, and has four decorative stitches and buttonhole built in. I decided I didn't need all those decorative stitches the higher priced models have. Marty feels he got off pretty easy, as I was talking about buying the top line Elna for \$550. Anyway, I can hardly wait to start sewing to see how well it works.

I probably won't get much sewing done this week, as I've got appointments up to my ears! I'm visiting different schools to determine where we want to put Greg next year. Our lovely neighborhood school is closing due to declining enrollment, so he would have to be bussed to the next closest school. However, an alternative school is going to be housed in our neighborhood school (hereafter referred to as Faria). It's called A+, or Academics Plus, and is a "back to basics" type school, placing more emphasis on reading, writing and arithmetic and discipline in the classroom. Funny they should call a school that provides a good, basic education an "alternative" school. Anyway, I'm attempting to find out all I can about this program so I can register Greg this Saturday if I so desire. It would certainly be more convenient for him to run down the street to Faria, than to be bussed over to Jollyman.

Erin is growing up so fast, and is a real joy to her mother! I've never enjoyed a baby more. I guess I'm getting older and more settled, or something, but I don't seem to mind the extra work as much and get more joy out of nurturing the baby. She's such a happy, delightful baby; wiggley and bright-eyed. She's sleeping from seven p.m. until six a.m. which definitely helps endear her to me. I've heard before that third babies are easier, which must be from the mother's attitude.

Marty wants me to tell you what a hero he was in the basketball game Saturday. Our ward Seniors have gone to region playoffs, and they won their first game Saturday because Marty shot the last crucial basket just 10 seconds before the final buzzer. He also made several baskets during the game. Basketball is good mental therapy for Marty and he never misses an opportunity to practice or play. It's kept him in good physical shape, too. He's been on vacation from Seminary this last week due to school vacation, but he had to drag himself out of bed this morning again.

Marty and I spoke at a Young Adult fireside last week. Well, Marty did the spoking and I did the singing. He talked about the pioneers (what the seminary class has been studying recently) and he'd break for me to sing a Mormon folk song with my guitar. The seminary put out a supplement of really nice songs for the pioneer study. Marty quoted from Nancy Naomi Alexander Tracy's diary and I sang a heart wrenching song about "Lonesome Wolves." I think the fireside was very nice, and we enjoyed doing it. We ended it by singing "Come Come Ye Saints" together.

We've been busy fixing up our home. During Christmas vacation Marty ripped up all our carpets and pads, down the hall and three of the bedrooms, and spent hours tediously pulling nail boards and staples out of the floor. Then we hired a pro to come in and sand and refinish our hardwood floors, and they're just beautiful, and so much easier to care for than those filthy carpets! The finish is urethane and I was told not to wax it so that several years from now when I want it refinished again, all they have to do is a "screen" job (very light sanding, with a screen) and put a new coat of urethane on. In the meantime, all I do is dustmop!

We've also been painting all the rooms and halls your basic white. We have one more bedroom and the master bedroom to paint before I start on the kitchen. All the furniture we ordered has arrived in good shape and we feel a little more settled to have something to sit on in the living room. We also got the kids a bunk bed and gave Betsy and Tracy the trundle bed we used to use. Mom and Dad slept on our sofa bed when they were here for Charlotte's open house, and declared it comfortable, so all yours, come visit us!

We've had lots of lovely, lovely rain this winter and the hills around our valley are green, green, green. We really live in a beautiful place, but haven't been able to appreciate it for three years. The spring has come early (probably a false spring) and the blossoms are out all over the valley, skies are blue and clear, making me want to breathe deeply and for some unexplained reason (probably comes from my genes) urging me to get out the mops and sponges and go to work cleaning the house. Fortunately, there's no time to fulfill that urge!!

Marty must feel it too, cause he's been out back digging our garden, preparing it with gypsum, manure and redwood compost. We've planted four rose bushes, three raspberry plants and three boysenberry plants. The kids now have a swing set and sandbox, too, so they've been spending more time outside.

One of my piano students brought Emily a tutu she had outgrown, and now Emily dances around the house with that "choo choo" on telling everyone how she is going to take ballet next fall. She's really getting tall now, too. You'll be amazed at the change in our children, as I'm sure we'll be with yours when we meet at camp this year.

Well, hope all is well with your families when you read this. We've had pretty good health this winter with only some minor bouts of asian or russian or whatever kind of flu.

I'm sending the pictures of Erin you asked to see. Please send them along with the letter.

Love,

Liz + Marty