

Karen V. Hall
738 E. 2680 N.
Provo, Utah 84601
July 30, 1979

Dear Family,

Since many of you haven't heard from us since the first of the year, I should have lots of news to give you. Let me start with our new baby, Emily. Emily was born February 2nd at Utah Valley Hospital. When I went into labor at 3 am that morning dear Mom Hall get up and came over to be with our children and then stayed at our home each day for the first week I was home to help out. She was a big help to me and the whole family. Emily is about six months now and almost angelic in her disposition. The whole family adores her, including Michael who sometimes gets a little fough with his affection. I think I am going to have to buy a playpen to put Emily in to keep Michael a safe distance from her. Most people say that she looks just like one of the boys, but I don't agree. She looks just like my baby pictures except she isn't quite as fat, thank goodness. I was a little tub as a baby and until I was 13 years old. Unfortunately, Emily has very little hair, and because I never bought her a bonnet this summer she sports quite a suntan on her scalp.

Now I move on to the subject of our new house. David & I always said we would never buy a new house with no landscaping, and here we are eating our own words. Now speaking from the voice of experience I would say, "Don't buy a new house with no landscaping." When you have children and move into a new house surrounded with nothing but dirt Mother's nerves are going to be put to the test. All the freshly painted walls, shining windowns, and new carpets are bound to get dirty quickly with children running in and out of the house all day. Not until after we moved in did I find out that when landscaping a yard the grass is the last thing that should go in (and yet grass is the first thing a Mother needs put in to keep her sanity). First we had to do some grading, then came the cement work for an extra driveway and retaining walls, then came the fill dirt which had to be graded, then the top soil and mor grading, then the fence, then the trees and bushes and last of all comes the sod. Somewhere in there I forgot to mention the automatic sprinkling system and we are also having a few brick walls erected in the front yard. Oops, I just put everything in the past tense and we certainly do not have all that behind us. Right now we are working on the top soil and fence. All the boys on our block love congregating at our house to play in the dirt. They make all kinds of roads and mountaines for they jeeps and trucks, and if I don't happen to catch them they like to turn the water on and make ditches and little waterfalls in the dirt which turns to mud.

Mark has had a different kind of experience in kindergarten at Rock Canyon Elementary this year. All Kindergarten, first, and second grade children are put in classes known as primary family groups. One teacher has approximately 10 kindergarteners, 10 first graders, and 10 second graders. Once a child enters the class as a kindergartener, he stays with

with that teacher up through second grade. This system has been used at Rock Canyon for several years now with favorable response from most of the parents. I think it was a good experience for Mark to be in a class of mixed age groups because of his particular needs. Stephen will enter the program this year as a kindergartener. Mark and Stephen began swimming lessons today. They are both "beginner beginners" and are taking lessons from Brent Christensen who lives in Mom and Dad Hall's ward. Stephen just learned how to ride a two-wheel bike and is now the proud owner of his very own.

David and I have been involved with the Cub Scouts of our new ward. After we first moved in they called David to be Chairman of the Pack committee and they called me to be a Den Mother. David also teaches the twelve year olds in Sunday School. Just last Sunday they called me as first counselor in the primary, and I will be released as Den Mother as soon as they find a replacement for me. Within the last few months I've learned that being a Den mother brings more condolences from friends than congratulations. However, I don't think the job was too bad. There is a lot of autonomy with the job and the boys can be somewhat enjoyable if the den is small as mine was. Of course Mark, Stephen, and Michael think that Cub Scouting is really the "Big Time", and my being a Den Mother was very impressive to them. I really believe that the achievement part of the program is instrumental in helping these boys develop new skills and broaden their horizons. It's surprising what a little boy will do in order to be able to wear a badge or ribbon on his uniform. The bribe system is alive and working well in the Scout program.

We really enjoy living close to Mega. David can ride his bike to work if he wants to and it only takes about 15 minutes. David puts in his usual 10 hour days five days a week. Just when things get running so smoothly at Mega that it becomes almost boring, something will happen to liven things up a bit such as a press breaking down or some personnel problems. From my observations, I would say that David would much rather diagnose and fix a broken machine than listen to and appease an employee. I have been hearing all about these Mega employees for over a year now but haven't met many of them. But this Thursday they are having their annual company picnic and so I will finally get my chance.

Until I write again

Karen V. Hall