

November 17, 1984

Dear Children;

Busy month: Two deaths, Walt Tueller and David Beesley in the ward. Anna mae Curtis is in the University Hospital taking treatment for cancer. Doesn't look too good.

We are going to go to Liz's for Thanksgiving. I wanted to fly, Dad wanted to Drive, so we compromised on Amtrack. Sounds fun. Let you know if it is later.

Dad is recovering from his operation. He still aches at the end of the day if he is on his feet too much. He was so bruised and beat up, I couldn't believe it. Others who have had the same operation say it is always like that. Dad says they nailed him to the table by his scrotum. It looked like it, too. (Just joking.)

When Doug went back for the check up on his operation, the Dr. said that he couldn't believe how fast Doug has recovered. The doc said that he had expected him to be down for at least two months. Its all that clean living. Doug thinks the Lord blessed him, and I think that is surely the answer.

We have been enriched with a Stake and a general conference this fall. In our Stake conference meeting the night before the conference, one of the speakers was talking about getting prepared. Like the speakers in general conference, they talked about a year supply of spirituality, etc. I don't think Spirituality can be stored, but it's one item we can work on even when we are suffering from physical want and hunger. The scriptures and Prayer are always there and don't depend on how much the pay check is.

Louise Erickson and her husband got back from Manchester, England, and they gave their report last Sunday. She told us about one inactive member of the church they reactivated, but they couldn't get her to pay her tithing. She was quite poor, and said she didn't have enough to get along on, let alone pay 10% to the Lord. Sis Erickson said she didn't feel like she could tell her she would find the money if she really was converted to paying tithing, because she knew the woman really WAS poor. All she could tell her was that the Lord said he would bless us if we paid our tithing, and the Lord never said anything that he didn't mean. Since coming home she has received a letter from this sister. She started paying her tithing, and the Lord HAS blessed her. She is a firm convert to the principle of tithing. She told Sis Erickson that paying her Tithing has been the greatest blessing in her life.

Liz has been having some of the same symptoms Doug had, and is going in for a test for gall stones next Tuesday. I hope the added trauma of having company over Thanksgiving doesn't cause an attack. I guess we will find out when we get there what the test showed. I'm sure your prayers have helped Dad and Doug, now let's unite our faith in Liz's behalf.

I guess you've all heard that G.E. said we were infringing on a patent--one week before we settled. It will be delayed until that is settled.

Love, Mom

We will have our Christmas Party, the Afternoon of 24th of Dec at 2:P.M. At the Farm if there is snow. at our house if there isn't. Remember the White Elephants. How about extending that white elephant to the adults, too. Each adult bring one, too. Should be hilarious.



I also got an electrician to put up the track-lighting in the study and a spotlight in the livingroom, had the vertical blinds in the liv.rm. and study rehung and straightened they look gorgeous now--, and put up all the downstairs switchplates and rubbed the old paint off the old switches, doorknobs, etc., replaced knobs and doorstops and spot-repaired walls (caulking and wood-filler for doors) and repainted here and there. I also made curtains for the two side windows beside the front door and washed all the downstairs walls and windows. My goal next month is to wallpaper the study bath and lay the tile in the typing end of the study. Susan Buckles is coming end of November to visit and stay in the guest-room (study), so that gives me a goal. I also finally tackled the filing and in two days filed another three boxes. I still have that many more! A lot of this is old public relations junk, so maybe there has been method in my not getting around to it until now--a real refresher of what is now available!

We had fun decorating for Halloween this year. The family of artists who used to live in this home left a stack of 12 colored drawings of children in various Halloween costumes. So I mounted them on orange poster-board and used them in the nursery and, later, at home. We put a big Welcome Pumpkin on the door. Laura made a witch out of black garbage-bags--darling, sitting beside a stack of corn-stalks (our garden produced no corn to speak of, but great stalks!). We got one very nice pumpkin from our garden this year, which Laura carved and put in the lap of her witch. We put those nasty rubber bats, snakes, and spiders all over the entranceway and a skeleton-in-our-closet to scare any visitors who tried to hang their coats. We also stacked those old chests in our entranceway and opened the top one to reveal a scary skull (poster) and those foil-covered chocolate-coins--it was a great treasure chest. Then we served hot, spiced punch to all our Halloween guests and had real fun. Laura went trick-or-treating as "Miss America" (we made that costume from Thrift-shop fare for a celebrity party she attended at a school-friend's just after Sharlene Wells was crowned) and Daniel went to the Church party dressed up in his father's paint clothes and paint-hat--what a screech!--but D. opted not to trick-or-treat this year--besides, he cajoled Laura into sharing half of hers. Consider the picture of Laura in her costume as part of your Christmas.

Daniel got his "First Class" at the Court of Honor this month. He was the last one his age to get it, but we were proud of him for waiting to do it right. In the meantime, he has his work done on the next level, so it's just a matter of waiting out the required time (dumb!). He seems to enjoy being back in the public schools and has learned the most in his cooking class. He'll probably use it the most, too. He baked an apple pie yesterday that got such raves, he baked two more today. It's nice to have someone in the family who can bake. He just finished his cross-country term at school and really brought up his speed and endurance in track.

Laura has mixed feelings now about Ursuline. The older girls there seem very wild, and she has not been very challenged so far--except in Science where she has had some bad grades. I can't understand why Dad didn't pass on at least a few genes. The phys. ed. program at Ursuline is awful. She takes tap-dancing. I guess it's good for rhythm (more of hips than feet). She has been my right-hand getting ready for the nursery each week.

I will be in Utah this March (end). I got a call from Sydney Reynolds of the BYU Women's Research Institute, and an old friend from college. She asked me to speak at the BYU Women's Conference for 50 minutes on the subject: "The Full-Time Homemaker as an Endangered Species." I told her my homemaking was not only endangered at times, but often extinct and that I went to work full-time last year and was not sure I qualified, but did not talk her out of it. I am really excited about the opportunity, though, and thrilled that I get a free trip to the Women's Conference and, more importantly, General Conference and some genealogy at the S.L. library, not to mention the joys of visiting with family without the usual family responsibilities. I hereby solicit letters from all you homemakers. Now's the chance to air your insights, suggestions, peeves, personal experiences, and send any newsclippings you see on the subject. I'm in real trouble. Sydney gave a talk on this same subject several years ago, and I sent her all my ideas for that talk. Now I need fresh material. I'd rather quote real-life sister-homemakers than the New York Times for this one, if you get a chance to write amid all the homemaking. I love you all.

Sherlene

Tuesday, November 6, 1984
White Plains, NY ELECTION DAY: DID YOU
ALL VOTE?

Hi, All!

I'm out of paper, but it is not entirely inappropriate to write this on some genealogy family-history paper. I've got a lousy case of bronchitis and have had such a stressful week, I am barely together. But I do want to let you know we are here and at least breathing.

We've been very concerned about Doug, Dad Hall, and Dad Bartholomew (cancer) this month. We went to visit Barry and Virginia and the Temple last weekend (also saw Dan's sister Joan and her family in Virginia) and put all our family on the temple roll. Our fasts and prayers have been with you. Also, this has not been an easy time for Tracy David and all of us on the stock issue. I just want you to know that I have fasted and prayed about it and done some repenting about my own feelings, and I have nothing but love for each brother and sister and a peaceful feeling that everything will be all right. Everything we get is really from the Lord; and we have dedicated everything to Him and His work, anyway. Those who receive more stewardship have more responsibility and accountability and this is not easy, either. I hope all of us can pull together and use these blessings in a way that will bring joy and peace to Mom and Dad and strengthen each other. While doing my filing, I found an old cartoon which I can't resist enclosing with this letter. It seems rather timely in light of this stock distributing issue.

Sunday afternoon, Don Staheli, new 2nd Counsellor in our Stake Presidency (he also held that position in our former stake in Illinois) called and asked if he could come over. For some reason, I knew as soon as I heard his voice what was coming. A "new" call to be Stake Public Communications Director again. All I can say is the Lord must really be desperate. He said Bishop Garff said I was the best nursery leader the ward has ever had and he was not happy about this. I'm not happy, either. I can't tell you how rewarding this job has been. It's a wonderful thing to see such tangible, almost immediate rewards for your efforts. These little children are so responsive. Last month we had so much fun. Each week we have a theme and scripture and then we make 26 craft-kits which are somehow tied to the theme--which is attached to the craft, so parents can reinforce it at home. One week the theme was "I can see because Heavenly Father made my eyes." We had Brother Groom come in with his seeing-eye dog. What a success! It was good for Brother Groom and good for the kids. Not so good for the dog. They kept feeding him colored macaroni from the craft, and he left with a blue muzzle, practically fractured tail, after being "loved" by 24 kids. We have now recruited 5 inactive families through the nursery. The parents love it and have been so gracious about coming in and sharing some of their ideas and skills. I have the best, most loving nursery help I could ever ask for. Parents peek in from time to time and can't believe no one is crying. How come I never get to keep a warm, fulfilling job. They always stick me with slow-poke adults or some organizational job. Gripe, gripe.

Anyway, I was very frank with Pres. Staheli about the stresses in our home right now and remembering how hard it was on Dan when I held this position last, I said I would not take it unless Dan could feel right about it. Dan said "yes," but Pres. Staheli gave us 24 hours to think it over. He said to call him last night with the answer, but when I called last night, I was relieved he wasn't home. Bishop Garff was supposed to call Cincinnati to give some input, but he hasn't yet. When I pray and read in the scriptures I keep coming up with thoughts about the nursery and the importance of children. The Lord isn't helping me accept this new job. Maybe I'm just too tired to get an answer. I do know if I accept, we will be blessed for it. And I got a very happy feeling when I started outlining for the bishop a way to keep the nursery thriving and delegate a continuance.

Nothing has changed on the job-front. Dan's boss has kept him very busy on this project (late hours again and some trips to New Jersey), and I am starting to relax about having to move. It has been nice to get some projects done around the house. Having the Genealogy Society research group over here gave me a goal to work towards. I repaired the kitchen and got rid of those dizzy big flowers. The small gold and white diamond print picks up the dining-room theme and looks "country" and is neutral enough for decorating versatility. I sanded and painted all the kitchen woodwork and repotted and brought in all the plants (got plant lights for our new spotlights--maybe they'll survive the winter, now).