

1 February 1999

Dear Family:

It's 8:13 pm (at least it was when I started this) and I'm currently sitting on the platform at Farragut West Metro station in the District awaiting the subway that will take me home now that my Monday evening class is over. Okay, that was fast, I'm now on the train marveling at how easy it is to get things (like this letter) done with my new notebook computer. For the record (and so I won't need to date this letter) it has a Pentium II, 266MHz processor, a 4 GB hard drive and 96 MB of RAM. I realize that just about every desktop computer currently being sold is more powerful. But, these specs are pretty good (okay, maybe average) for a portable. It has a 14.1 inch screen. (I think that may be Dad's favorite feature—I think his new desktop has a 17-incher) Oh and did I mention, I love the portability feature. I'm really digging my new computer.

I'm basically sitting here trying to think of what happened to us during this past month. I'm mostly coming up empty and trusting the theory that nothing beats writers block like moving one's fingers over a keyboard (especially the oh-so fluid keyboard of a brand new Gateway Pentium II 266 Megaher.....okay I'll stop now.) Saturday was my birthday. I spent a lot of it (5+ hours) at school working on a group case for my Finance class. We finished giving the presentation about a half-hour ago. We timed it perfectly to make the end of the presentation coincide with the end of class, so no one had time to ask any hard questions or take shots at our recommendations. I'm sure people will have that opportunity next week—but all this is occurring in February which is a short enough month as it is and I want to have something to write about next month. So anyway, the most enjoyable part of my birthday was unfortunately also the shortest. I had a very nice birthday lunch with Mom, Dad, Peter, Grandma, Grandpa, Coco, Crystal and Hannah at Copeland's of New Orleans (that call it that even though it's in Rockville.) I was reminded of how much I enjoy living close to so many members of my family. I reflected on how my two years in France was the only period of time in my life when I didn't live close to family, and how much less fun things might otherwise be. Crystal took care of Peter (we're not sure how many diet Barqs he drank—we'll still find cans around the yard) while I was at school and Mom & Dad were at the temple. When I got home, Crystal and I went to La Madeleine for dinner. I don't know if La Madeleine has made it to Utah yet. In case it hasn't, it's a Dallas-based (I think) French pseudo-fast food chain. It's hard to explain really. You should go. We often do and really like both the food and the price.

I think I probably mentioned this last month, but Hannah is a little babbler now. She repeats everything, and I mean everything, we say. She really likes the Teletubbies as well as anything animated on TV including, are you ready, The Simpsons. Whenever she hears the music start, she cries out gleefully, "Mommy, Sihsuns!" She and Noah both enjoy riding down our sloped driveway in her wagon. We're in the earliest stages of toilet training (and are just a little jealous of the Hales.) Hannah has reached the point where she finds soiled diapers yucky, and has spent a fair amount of time on her little potty, but hasn't really put it all together yet. She has successfully peed once in the little thing—an event she celebrated by splashing around in it afterward for a while. She has gotten pretty good with names. She frequently refers to "Coco," "Grandma," "Pa-Pa" (Grandpa & Great-Grandpa) and "G-G" (Great-Grandma.) She now fully enjoys visiting her great-grandparents, and is no longer frightened of Grandpa on his scooter. Grandma always has candy for Hannah, and she never wants to leave. We all feel lucky to live so close.

It could be an interesting time at work. My boss has applied for a promotion (I'm not supposed to know about it.) I really like my boss and my altruistic self—a relatively minor component of my personality—wants him to get it. The rest of me really doesn't want to work for anybody else. I may apply for his position should he vacate it. But a couple of people would probably have to either die or quit in order for me to get it. He's no shoo-in for his desired position, but he's definitely among the strongest candidates. If things shake out the way I'd like, I won't be with the organization much beyond this summer, so all worrying may have no foundation. But, as everybody knows, things don't always work out perfectly, so this whole episode is one of those frustrating things about which I can't do anything, but worry anyway.

We received Andra's (and Matt's) letter. We're happy to learn that they're enjoying their new digs. Found the deer story a little amusing. Although this may come as something of a surprise to our western readers, Montgomery County (in which we live) is experiencing a deer over-population problem. Just about everyone understands there's a problem, but no one in this politically left-of-center county can bear the thought of anyone shooting Bambi. Occasionally we miss Utah. But we're happy. Hope you are.

Love,  
Tim, Crystal & Hannah



Dear Andrew:

You've doubtless heard by now that Denver kicked the crap out of Atlanta in the Super Bowl. It was a very frustrating game to watch. The score was a blowout, but Atlanta penetrated deep into Denver territory many, many times only to throw an interception, miss a field goal, go for it on 4<sup>th</sup> Down and not make it or whatever. It all sucked. The commercials weren't even all that good. So basically we all broke the Sabbath for nothing. Even though it's only two in a row, it's becoming apparent that the AFC is the better conference. Dallas is done. Scary as it sounds, the Cardinals ought to run away with the NFC East next year. The Niners are done (they may very well win 12 games next year, but that's not all that impressive when you factor in the 4 free wins against the Saints and Rams every year. The Falcons are no longer a pushover and could win the division next year. The Vikings (and maybe the Packers still even though Mike Holmgren will be coaching in Seattle next year) are more or less the NFC's only hope. Much of the Vikings promise is dependent on Randall Cunningham's resurgence. Randall wasn't even their starter at the beginning of the year. No one really knows how he'll perform as the "real" starter. Many think he'll revert to his game at the end of his Eagles era. Time will tell.

The NBA lockout is over. Every team has now played one or two games. I don't know how the Sixers have done—but I can guess. The season will be 50 close-together games (rather than 82.) No one knows anyone's roster. Jordan has officially retired (again.) Pippen's with the Rockets. Maybe I'll enclose something if I remember. I have a hard time really caring about the NBA though. The Flyers, last I checked, were leading the division. Dallas is the only team in the league with a better record. I'm pretty sure Lindros is leading the league in scoring.

I have a hard time believing this, but that might be all of the sports news worth reporting. We received a letter from you this month. You sound happy, and I hope you keep writing even though you can't spell English words anymore—or maybe you never could, what do I know? When Mom came down on my birthday, she brought some pictures you'd sent her. I must say you're about the coolest looking missionary I've ever seen. She tells me you've been transferred again. I hope you're enjoying your new area. Maybe it's just that the time has gone fast, but it doesn't seem like you've spent very much time in either of your areas. I guess there are some upsides to that, but I enjoyed staying in areas for a while. I only spent two months in my first city, but then 6 in my second, 7 in my third, 6 in my fourth, and then I was transferred to the city I died in with 7 weeks left on my mission. It was a totally dead city with a branch president who wore is garment top as a tee shirt and wouldn't give a temple recommend to anyone who drank coke. It was a tough place to finish my mission. I got through it though. But I guess it's fair to say that my favorite places were the ones in which I spent a fair amount of time. That might be just a coincidence though. And since you don't really have any control on how long you serve, there's no point in preaching it. It does fill the page though.

Clinton's impeachment trial is slowly dragging on. Everyone now realizes there's no chance of getting the 2/3 vote necessary to convict and remove the President from office. Public opinion is strongly behind the President. His approval ratings have topped 70% (an astronomical figure under any circumstances) and many Republicans now living in fear of losing their seats in 2000 are beginning to push for the end of the whole thing. The proceedings are winding down, and by the time you receive this, they probably will have already voted to acquit him. At no point in my life have the scriptural warnings of "calling good evil and evil good" more apparent than in this whole mess. A majority of Americans are rallying around this sin-filled, self-absorbed piece of human garbage who is the President of the United States and holding him up as a hero and martyr while constantly bashing and criticizing the independent prosecutor, republican members of Congress and all others who cling to the belief that perjury and obstruction of justice are impeachable offenses—even if engaging in oral sex in the Oval Office with an intern your daughter's age isn't. There is of course other current event news. But you wouldn't know it around here. Brazil agreed to a new IMF bailout package, but you probably already know that. That's one wacky economy down there.

We haven't told many people—but probably will have by the time you receive this. It looks as though Hannah will have a younger sibling around the end of September. So there you go. It's pretty early so we don't really know anything other than the projected due date yet.

I gave a talk last Sunday in which I was supposed to encourage (without being a jackass) members of the ward to share the gospel with their friends. I guess this is part of my job. I basically filled my ten minutes with "If you really believe the gospel, you believe that everyone needs it. Consequently, if you really like your friends, you'll tell them about the gospel." I hopefully said it more eloquently than that, but I believe it's true however you say it. I'm glad you're doing what you're doing. Love you.