

the Famlet monthly

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Dear Family,

About an hour ago I was walking out of the College Park chapel when the mission president flagged me down. I jogged over to him and he told me what he had to tell me, but all I could think about while he was talking was Hannah.

Hannah really loves her mission president and honestly seems to believe that she has the very best one in the world. While statistically unlikely, I suppose this is possibly true. But true or not, I am deeply grateful that she feels this way. I have long held that, broadly speaking, there are two kinds of church members: those who feel that their *current* ward is, in a manner of speaking, the best ward in the whole Church, and those who feel that their *last* ward is the best ward in the Church. Both are probably wrong, but that's irrelevant, because the first kind is much happier, much more pleasant to work with, and tends to be about a million times more useful than the second kind. Hannah's sentiment about her mission president suggests to me that she's tending toward the first kind.

Her letters continue to be the source of much happiness for us. She survived her first transfer (nothing changed for her) and had her first baptism. Details of these and other events are known to those who receive her weekly emails. If you are not receiving these and would like to, then send her an email and ask her to add you. She will. Or just [email me](#) and I'll get you hooked up.

Or I suppose you could also send me a Facebook message since I'm on that now. You can thank Sister Hannah Willis, my first official Facebook friend, for that. I haven't posted very much and I don't have very many friends (I've never had very many friends) and so if you want to get in on the ground floor, now is your chance! I read my father's monthly letter a few moments ago and learned that his new hearing aids are causing him to be awakened by his own snoring. Strangely, my first thought upon reading it was that it would make for an amusing Facebook post, which I guess means my head is in the game.

The weather is turning toward triathlon season, and so I took my bike off its hook for the first time since October. I've only been on a couple of rides this month, and I'm still getting my legs back under me. I'm surprised how much bike fitness I've lost despite all the running and swimming I did throughout the winter. Hills I had become accustomed to sprinting up in relatively high gears are a burden again and yesterday's 43-mile ride around the downtown monuments left me utterly spent.

This summer will mark 20 years since we moved to the Washington area, but cycling downtown around the monuments has not yet gotten old. (Dad, [here's the route](#).) One of the things I've forgotten how to do over the winter is eat

while riding, and so I stopped and ate a peanut butter sandwich on the steps of the Supreme Court. I knew it was the Supreme Court because, you know, we've lived here since President Clinton's first term and I know where the Supreme Court is. Other things that gave it away were the two large flags at half-staff (RIP, Justice Scalia) and the words "Equal Justice Under Law" etched above the large columns. It's a fairly unmistakable building, which is why I was perplexed when a couple walked by and the woman pointed toward my bike, my sandwich, and me and asked the man, "What's *that* building?" The man replied confidently and without hesitation, "That is the Library of Congress."

Clueless tourists haven't gotten old yet, either.

Memory Lane Tangent: I was a graduate student at GW during President Clinton's re-election campaign of 1996. The Republican ticket that year was headed by two geezers, Bob Dole and Jack Kemp (approximate combined age: 180). The presidential election was not close. (For a reminder of how lame websites were in 1996, [check this out](#).) One of my cherished memories is of some GW students who were handing out bumper stickers on campus. Instead of "Dole/Kemp 96," they read "Roll Hemp 96." I remember thinking both that that was really funny and that I definitely was not at BYU anymore.

In other exercise news, Sophie has started running with Crystal before school. They get up at 5:40 to do this, which sounds earlier than it actually is. This is partially in anticipation of Sophie's potentially joining the Northwood High School cross-country team in the fall. Sophie learned this month that she was not admitted to the Communication Arts Program at Blair High School that Hannah claims to have enjoyed but that also consumed virtually her entire life. Hannah felt her first year of college was a cakewalk by comparison. While slightly disappointed for Sophie (rejection is never fun) I can't help but be happy for the extra-curricular opportunities that she would not have had in CAP.

These include chorus and orchestra, which Sophie loves. In a couple of weeks she will accompany the 6th grade chorus on the piano at a competition in Clarksburg and then sing with her advanced chorus, which I will accompany. Between the two of us, it appears we'll have all the piano duties covered.

Relatedly, Grace has entered what I term the "The Entertainer" phase of her piano development. I'm beginning to suspect that every piano student goes through this phase in which all other musical work is subordinated by an endless loop of "The Entertainer," a playful little Joplin tune that is known and beloved to all the world—or at least to anyone who has never been subjected to a simplified version of it played on perpetual repeat. I can't remember how long the phase lasts, but nothing is forever.

Except family, of course, and for you we are grateful.

Love,

Tim, et al.





Hannah and her companion, Sister Williams, eating in what could only be a Mormon cultural hall.



A very bad picture (it was the best I could do) of Grace and her flute at the Forest Knolls Elementary School Black History Month celebration.

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Sophie and Ceres in the woods behind our house on Presidents' Day. Behind them is the snow-covered frozen Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River.



Crystal caught up with us a short time later. (Nothing is snow-covered or frozen anymore.)