

**John Larsen <theclaw56@gmail.com>**

My Dear Elder Phillip Larsen!

Joyce Larsen <linenlady9@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 3, 2011 at 11:34 AM

To: Phillip Larsen <phillip.larsen@myldsmail.net>

Cc: John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

Hello, my dear Elder Larsen,

Wednesday, 2 February, 2011

We are having yet another snow day today, Groundhog Day. It was called last night so we didn't even need to get up to check the website. And the kids were sent home early yesterday because of snow. And now I hear there will be more on Saturday, and again on Tuesday/Wednesday of next week! This winter is crazy. I like it so far, but of course, I haven't been the one to do most of the shoveling, and we have not lost power. I like the cozy part: baking cookies, drinking hot chocolate, having a fire in the fireplace, all those things. Today Julia and I will go out to shovel later this afternoon. It's supposed to change to sleet and freezing rain later, though we might get mostly snow here. I think the total from yesterday and today will be about 20". I'll let you know! Oh, and YM/YW was cancelled last night because of snow, and guess what the activity was going to be? Sledding! I know it's because of travel to get to the activity, but I find that funny.

It's interesting about last week's talk of goals and posting them so you can remember to do them. On Sunday Bro. Henkel came to Home Teach us and we talked about goals. He brought papers, one for each of us (except that he didn't know Heather would be here so he didn't bring one for her) to fill out with about five goals listed so we could post them and work on them. I'm trying to make some habits every day: scripture study, journal writing, exercise, practice the piano. I would also like to work on family history, and on learning some Portuguese so I can read and understand some of the things you write! Also, on Sunday I saw a sister in the ladies' room at church. I remember seeing her before, and I talked to her a little. She is from the Nashua 2nd Ward. As near as I could understand, she has been gone the past month or so to visit her son in Brazil, in Sao Paulo. Later I saw her in the hallway talking in Portuguese to Bro. Orr, and I wished I could do that. Then on the news they had a man giving a sort of editorial comment and he said that other countries routinely teach their kids a second or even a third language, and we are the only ones that assume people of the world need to learn our language to communicate with us. He said it used to be because we (the USA) was a leader and the rest of the world depended on us for their economic stability and trade. But now, he said, using that same logic, we should all be learning Chinese. (Since China owns us, financially.) Though I'm not

planning to learn Chinese in the near future, learning more German, when I already have a background in German, would be a good start. And learning some Portuguese, or dabbling in it, as Bro. Henkel said, would be another good thing to do, because of your mission. I talked to Michael Ogden, who, by the way, has just finished up High School, and has moved to an apartment in Boston and will be going to a woodworking school. He speaks fluent Spanish, and was telling of how he went to a party on Saturday night and he was the only white person there, the others being Hispanic. I thought it was neat that he is so comfortable with the language that a party with his Hispanic friends is fun for him and not a lot of work to communicate with them.

Saturday Heather and I went to Ewe'll Love It and knitted on chemo hats for several hours. Beverly is having a chemo hat drive to make some really nice hats to donate to three oncology places in Nashua. The basket is already full of lovely hats that are pretty in design and not itchy. This hat day we went to was the third one she had, but the first one Heather or I could attend. Heather already finished one hat, and I've been working on mine. I have yarn for another one or two. My friend, Carol (one of the three Carols who are knitting friends!), has made about eight hats already. She knits a ton.

When I talked to Oma and Papa a few days ago, they read to me an article about visas to Brasil, which was written for the Salt Lake Tribune. I found it online and printed it out for you. I'll be putting together a package for you, to hopefully mail tomorrow so you can get it before you head to Brasil. If you do get your visa and a package is in transit, I was thinking you could just have your companions return it to sender (take it to the post office and send it back) and we'll send it to you in Brasil. But hopefully we can time things so you will get it before you leave. Anyway, this article talked about all of the troubles with visas. It said the MTC in Sao Paulo can house 700 people, but there are now only 60, and none are US citizens. And the Church has changed the age for young men from Brasil to serve missions, from 19 to 18, so they can get more of them out there. And it quoted a man who is Utah's honorary consul to Brasil, Gary Neeleman. I was interested in what he said, but was even more interested in who he is, the husband of a woman I took classes from years ago when we lived in UT! So I looked him up online, and found he and his wife have written a book called *A Taste of Brazil*, which is a cookbook making traditional Brazilian foods, using ingredients you can easily find in the US. They said it is mostly return missionaries who buy the cookbook, but I'm planning to buy one and do some Brazilian cooking, and maybe catch up a bit with them, too.

Ann Senter just called, and we talked for quite awhile. She said to tell you "hello", and that she and Johnny think about you a lot. I'm sure they would enjoy a little letter if you have the time.

Thursday, 3 February 2011

I am determined to get the package in the mail for you today. I feel the time is getting shorter and shorter for us to mail things stateside. Oh, last night I messaged Wanda Martins back and forth on FB. She is the roommate Heather had who moved out. She still attends Heritage Park. Anyway, she had posted that she could hardly wait to go to the Fortaleza Temple, and I asked her about it. It turns out her father is from Fortaleza and she has lots of relatives down there. She speaks Portuguese. She doesn't have definite plans to go there, but she is sure it will happen sometime soon. I told her you would be serving near there, and I told Dad Teresina is about 2" from Fortaleza on the map. He thought that was cool.

Julia has a delayed opening today, to allow the sidewalks to be plowed by the schools. Good thing, too, because we still need to dig out the van and clear the driveway. Richard Adams and Ray Deschenes both came over with snow blowers yesterday and did the biggest part of the work. I'll be sure to make cookies or something for both of them as a thank-you. I'm not sure what to do for Richard Adams, though, because he is diabetic.

Today I finally get my crown in, so I will have a tooth on top of the titanium implant! I'm very excited. It will feel strange, I'm sure. And then after that I'll be going to lunch with Sandy Cole. I remember when we used to get together all the time, and now it's not very often, but we're still friends. I'm friends with Jackie Insch on FB, and she posted that in four weeks she will be able to hug her son, Geoff. She and Gary are going to Japan to pick him up from his mission. I would love to be able to go to Brasil to pick you up when the time comes, but we'll see what happens. First you'll have to get there!

In the package I'm sending I made a printout of all of the emails from Ricky since he arrived in Brasil. I could send you the earlier ones, too, if you like, but I thought you'd especially like the ones where he talks about being in Brasil. Next time I will do the same for Mike Scott's letters.

Oh, one bit of news: we went to the wedding reception for Jon Banks and his bride. They were married on the 18th of January in the Provo Temple. The reception was in Alpine Grove, in the very same place as that play Geoff Nelson was in where you ate dinner and the actors interacted with you and you had to guess who did the murder. Do you remember that? Did you go to that? It was funny talking to the mother of the bride--she said when they arrived in Boston she at first didn't think there was all that much snow, then she realized the white Jersey barriers she was looking at all over the place were actually piles of snow! Speaking of snow, it's time to get dressed and help Dad for a bit before I awaken Julia to get ready for school, and get myself ready for the day.

11:30am:

Now I have my new tooth! Yay! I'm supposed to be meeting Sandy now for lunch, and I'll head out, but first I want to share with you my first literary efforts, which I posted on FB yesterday. It is called "The Story of Snow", and several people commented on it. I was just being silly, but it was fun:

Once upon a time there was a country in the northeast where the people were happy and industrious, with a fine Yankee work ethic. One winter day it began to snow. It snowed and snowed. Pretty soon the roads were narrow and the cars could not drive very easily. The people could not walk on the sidewalks, which were covered with snow. The people tried to move the snow, but after awhile the mountains of snow became too high for the people to reach. Every few days it snowed. Then the people and the cars and the houses were buried, covered with snow. Generations later archaeologists learned about these people, and found that even their fine Yankee work ethic could not overcome the snow. And they all ate French Toast and Bread Pudding. At least that's what the archaeologists decided, because every time it snowed, the people would go to the store and buy bread, milk and eggs. The End.

As always, I love you, and I'm so blessed to have you doing missionary work. I miss you, but I know you're where you're supposed to be right now. Keep the faith!

Love,
Mom