



John Larsen <theclaw56@gmail.com>

A letter from Dad: 10 Feb 2011

John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

Thu, Feb 10, 2011 at 7:59 AM

Reply-To: john@larsen-family.us

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

Cc: joyce@larsen-family.us

Hi Dear Phillip,

5 Feb 2011 - Sat (Uncle Mark's birthday)

I enjoyed your email from last week. I read through it again as I "cleaned" it up to send to the email list and post on the blog. Something weird happens to some of the pictures you attach. They don't have file extensions on them (i.e. .jpg). This causes a problem when people receive the email because the computer doesn't know what kind of file it is. This happened in a previous email a few weeks ago. The pictures that have the filename format of "DSCN2268". The filenames become something like "DSCN2268[1]" without any extension. Of the 8 pictures you sent last week three were this way. The other files had names like "Pictures 001.jpg" and they all worked fine. :: shrug :: I don't know if there is anything you can do when you attach the pictures to make sure they have ".jpg" extension on the filenames.

The picture of your "Hobbs House" is interesting. It reminds me very much of the first apartment Joyce and I lived in after we got married. I've attached a picture of that. I'm sure you'll see the similar look. If your apartment is anything like that one in construction, you hardly have any insulation at all. I remember our first winter in that apartment that the thermocouple in the furnace got weak and would go "ping" and turn off the pilot light. When that happened the furnace stopped working and the place got VERY COLD. After a few times of "ping" during the night we called the gas company and they sent a repair man who fixed the furnace.

We're getting another storm today. It already started sleeting and freezing raining. The driveway is getting glazed over with ice and very treacherous. This storm is supposed to dump another 6 inches before it's done Sunday morning. It's possible that church could be cancelled.

I got a haircut today. My hair is almost as short as yours is now. I've attached 2 pictures. You can also see my "new" glasses. The lenses are new. I used my "computer glasses" frames. Several years back, about 4, I got a pair of glasses for use at the computer. However, I quickly got tired of switching back and forth between

pairs of glasses and finally figured out that I could slide my regular distance vision glasses down my nose and was able to read close up just fine. The "computer" glasses went into my black bag and never came out again. So, I had those \$225 titanium frames just sitting there. The glasses that I recently replaced had gotten really really bad. The coating on the lenses had flaked off so much that it was kind of like looking through frosted glass. So, a few weeks back I ordered new lenses and had them put in the hardly used frames. The lenses were \$390! Ouch! However, I have always considered it a very great blessing to live in this day and age when glasses can correct vision problems. These new lenses are great. The right eye correction was improved. My night vision is better now.

6 Feb 2011 - Sun

Well, the 6 inches of snow didn't pan out. Also the threat of lots of ice from freezing rain also didn't pan out. There is hardly any accumulation, at least right here in Nashua. This kind of storm can vary widely over the region.

Larry Hawkins gave me the "white slip" today before sacrament meeting. I'm talking on the 20th.

During our meeting block today I checked on the satellite system at church. The annual Worldwide Leadership Training broadcast is this coming Saturday, Feb 12th. Over the past months I've noticed trouble with our satellite system and wanted to be sure it was going to work for the broadcast. It wasn't working yet again. I cycled power on the receiver and it came up, but the picture started to degrade with thin horizontal rectangles of video getting put in the wrong places, black outs, and distortion on the sound. I called satellite support in SLC about it and went through some troubleshooting steps with them. Our receiver is very old and the support guy said it's time to replace it and the amplifier at the satellite dish. I'm glad I checked that out. It should be possible to get it replaced before Saturday.

I went home teaching to the Carls this evening and had a good visit. The topic I used was "Things as they really are" from the June 2010 Ensign. That article is adapted from a talk that Elder Bednar gave in 2009 at BYU-Idaho. If you have Ensigns around your apartment you might look at that. I thought it was very timely for our day.

7 Feb 2011 - Mon

This evening we had an adventure at home. A little before dinner the lights started flickering. This has happened many times over the past year or so. I don't know if it was happening when you were home or not. The power into the house goes weird where the voltage on one phase goes high and the voltage on the other phase goes low. The basement lights start to pulse on and off because the voltage is so low. I called PSNH about 8:20 PM reporting the trouble. No one else in the neighborhood

had reported a problem so I told them not to send a truck out until I checked with neighbors and called back. Joyce called Anna and they weren't having any trouble. The problem kept getting worse to the point where I decided to turn off the main breaker. There is a picture below showing the panel off the breaker box and my two AC voltmeters connected to monitor the voltage. At about 8:50 I called PSNH back and gave a second trouble report. I didn't write down the name of the second person I talked with. She entered the data into the computer and said they would send out a truck. In the meantime, power is off in our house. We all read books by flashlight waiting for the truck.

Everyone else went to bed and I stayed up waiting and reading. About 1:00 AM I started doing some tests. I turned on only the basement light circuit and the upstairs bathroom light circuit. The voltage was only 75 VAC in the basement and 175 VAC in the bathroom. At 1:50 there still was no truck so I called PSNH back. "Karen" answered and looked up the trouble report. Somehow the second report never got entered and the truck was never sent. I was a bit irritated about that. Karen said I had to authorize that I would pay for the truck coming if the problem turned out to be inside the house. My testing clearly showed that the problem was outside. She said I didn't need to stay awake because they could check everything outside. So I went to bed. That was a mistake.

At about 3:30 AM the phone rang and Karen asked me to go outside and talk with the linemen. I dressed and checked the bathroom and basement lights on the way out. They looked normal so I figured they had solved the problem. Not so. The linemen were claiming there was no problem and they had tested their equipment. Unfortunately, instead of testing before touching anything when they got there they had already pulled the power meter and "changed things". I restored power to the whole house and went back outside. The problem started showing up again with flickering lights that the lineman could see. Long story short, because I was asleep I wasn't able to meet the truck and bring the guys inside while the problem was visible. After tightening all their connections and testing more, they still claimed it was inside the house. I'll probably get a bill for \$250 for this call.

10 Feb 2011 - Thu

The power has been fine since Tuesday morning at 4:21 when I turned everything back on. The UPS on zippy has monitoring software on it that tracks every power event. There haven't been any since power was restored. Tuesday evening I stopped by Home Depot and bought six new surge protectors. Every single surge protector in the house had done its duty and sacrificed itself to protect the equipment plugged into it. After Merrimack band practice I replaced all the surge protectors. A picture attached shows the collection of dead ones. They stink. The "magic smoke" got out and they don't work anymore. One of them was turning brown from over heating. Surge

protectors are 9 bucks each, but that is cheap compared to replacing TVs and other electronics.

The last picture shows our old dehumidifier and a new one we bought. On Sunday Joyce noticed that the carpet around the bulk head door was all wet. Even though I've been doing a really good job of keeping snow off the bulk head door, I didn't do quite a good enough job with the ice accumulation from that night. There was just enough ice in the was around the bulk head door that the water was draining into the stairs and down into the house. That got water in on the floor. The carpet was quite wet and was starting to stink. I pulled the old dehumidifier over there and plugged it in and put it on "constant on" mode. It didn't sound right. The compressor didn't start up correctly. (However, that was all a misdiagnosis on my part.) I figured the old dehumidifer had died so we bought a new one that Joyce picked up Tuesday evening from Fletchers Appliances. That one also wouldn't really turn on. It turns out that the humidity in the house is so low that the dehumidifiers can't really get anything out of the air. The carpet started drying out on its own and was pretty much dry by Wednesday. I did run the old dehumidier constant for a couple of days. The coils frost up some, so it is working. :: shrug :: Now we have two of them. That will probably be good, because the basement in the springtime always starts smelling somewhat musty because the old dehumidifier can't keep up and it is over in the storage area. With two of them we can have them at opposite ends of the basement and it should help a lot.

Well, I need to shower and get to work. I finished this email up after going to the gym. Your mom left for the gym a few minutes ago. She is really enjoying the gym. She said it is like "an adult playground", but with no bullies.

Love you lots!

Dad

ps. I used google maps and went into street view to look around the neighborhood where your apartment is. Kind of fun to be able to do that and see what it's like for you.

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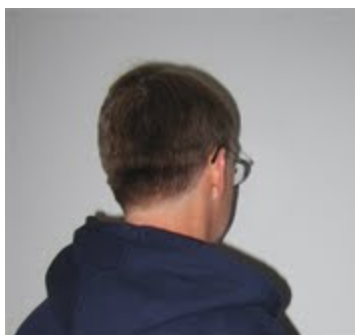
6 attachments



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