



John Larsen <theclaw56@gmail.com>

A letter from Dad: 15 Aug 2011

John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

Sun, Aug 14, 2011 at 11:55 PM

Reply-To: john@larsen-family.us

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

Cc: joyce@larsen-family.us

Hello Dear Phillip,

Well, Aug 15th is exactly 11 months since you left on your mission. Can you believe it? The time seems to have flown by in many ways.

Heather came back this past Saturday from her vacation to Utah. She flew into Logan Airport arriving at 11:10 PM. Jonathan Wilson also flew here Saturday. His flight was supposed to arrive at 7:30 PM but due to delays he didn't come out to the curb until 9:20 PM. By that time it didn't make sense to drive all the way back to Nashua only to turn right around and drive back to Logan arriving late to get Heather, so we just waited in the cell phone lot until her flight came in. I spent many hours on that errand, but finally was able to retrieve both of them and bring them home.

Last Monday I took your bed off of the loft and put it in the basement bedroom. The loft frame is still in your old room because it was impossible to get in to take it down. Your Mom will spend more time working on all the stuff in there and all the stuff in the area where the octagon table is. For now, Jonathan is nicely settled into the "guest" room. There are a few boxes left in there, but Joyce was able to get most of the stuff out. It is driving me somewhat crazy because the stuff is now in the immediate area where I work. It is piled up some behind my chair and I can't roll back without hitting it. It is also blocking access to my saxophones. I can ignore it for the most part when it isn't in my way, but when it invades my space then I lose patience.

Emmy and Julia have very much enjoyed the time together this past week. Emmy will be leaving Tuesday to return to New Mexico. Jonathan will be staying with us until Tuesday morning, Aug 23rd.

On Sunday we had 8 people here for dinner. It felt like old times when the house was very full. We had John, Joyce, Heather, Bradford, Jonathan, Rachel, Emmy, and Julia. We had a birthday cake and a candle race to celebrate Stanford's birthday. He won the candle race again this year just like last year. It was nice to do that celebration in his memory.

Julia and Rachel both gave talks on Sunday in sacrament meeting. I don't know when it happened, but somewhere along the way Julia has figured out how to deliver a talk really well. Her talk was on the topic of service. Rachel's talk was on eternal families. She did a really good job too. Tomorrow, Tuesday, August 16th, will be Rachel's second anniversary of her baptism. I'm pretty sure that there is a picture of that on the calendar. It doesn't seem possible that it has already been 2 years. She is doing really well with her testimony of the restored gospel.

That's neat that you were able to visit the zoo there.

How is Luis doing? Was he able to be baptised? How were Zone Conference and Stake Conference? That's pretty cool that you actually have a stake there. When I was in France there was only one stake in all of France, and that was in the Paris area. There were about 2500 members total in that stake and it covered a large geographical area. The church has grown some there over the years, but progress is very slow. When I was there the branches were all really small with just a handful of active members. In some areas there were no members at all and we did the Sunday meetings all on our own. Unless you get sent to open up a new area you will probably never experience that.

Your description of the electrified tennis racket brought back memories of killing hordes of flies in my last apartment in Rodez, France. They would get into our apartment by the dozens. We would go on killing sprees using rolled up magazines. We would also flip them with a towel and even use rubber bands to shoot them. We'd also sneak up behind them and catch them with our hands and then throw them forcefully into the floor to kill them. Ah the diversions of missionaries. At the end of all the attached pictures is 181.jpg which is a picture of me in my last city of Rodez standing by the panels that we would set up. The goal was to attract people to come look at the panels and then we would walk up and talk to them about the pictures. I never had much luck using the panels, but I never had much luck at all during my whole mission. Fortunately, the number of baptisms isn't the only measure of success for a mission. I also look at the fact that I have a temple marriage, five children, and a lifetime of service in the Church. All those blessings are a direct result of my serving a mission. I'm glad that I did.

Are you using your hammock now? I think I would have a very hard time with a hammock. My sleeping posture would be all wrong.

I mentioned before how I'm listening to podcasts of "The Joseph Smith Papers" downloaded from the Mormon Channel. All together there are about 92 half hour episodes split into two seasons. I've finished the first season of 52 episodes and am about half way through the second season. I've gained a much greater appreciation for the Prophet Joseph Smith and all he accomplished during his years on the earth.

He truly was a great man and an inspired prophet. I look forward to meeting him someday.

Well, the hour grows quite late. It is Sunday at 11:50 PM right now.

Oh, I should explain the attached pictures some. Joyce and the three girls made cupcakes one day. They were yummy. We went to Friendly's for dinner Thursday evening. I remembered finally to take my camera on my morning bike ride to Mine Falls Park. There is one spot where the sun hits just right in the morning. I took several pictures, but only included the two best ones. It is very pretty. On Friday Joyce and the girls "got lost" in Newburyport. They drove down and parked the car and then just wandered around to see what they could see. There are some pictures of Sunday dinner, cake decorating, and the candle race for Stanford. I found some Facebook pictures of Julia at EFY and also at the Hill Cumorah Pageant.

There. That's it for this week. I love you and am very happy that you have this opportunity to be a missionary. I pray everyday in your behalf that the Lord will bless you and guide you to those of his children that he has prepared.

Love,

Dad

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John R Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

<http://larsen-family.us>

32 attachments

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