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A letter from Dad: 24 Oct 2011

John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

Sun, Oct 23, 2011 at 6:31 PM

Reply-To: john@larsen-family.us

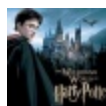
To: Phillip Larsen <phillip.larsen@myldsmail.net>

Cc: Joyce Larsen <joyce@larsen-family.us>

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Hello Dear Phillip,

Somehow, another week has flown by, a day at a time, and somewhat in a blur. Sorry, but no pictures were taken this past week. I'll summarize my week, if I can remember it, in reverse order.

It is Sunday afternoon right now. Joyce just got up from her nap. Julia has a Bishop's Youth Discussion at 6:00 PM at the church, in about one hour. Today was the annual Primary Sacrament Meeting Program. I think I mentioned to you how I was asked about 3 weeks ago if I could be the pianist for this event. The Rackliffes left this afternoon for Utah. Everything has been packed up, including their cars, and they're gone now. It's a sad day for us, but a wonderful opportunity for them. The primary program went well. I made a few bloopers on the piano, but probably hardly anyone knew it.

Saturday afternoon was the annual Stake Primary Daddy Daughter date. They have been announcing this for the past several weeks and everytime I heard the announcement I just kind of zoned out because I knew it had no impact on me. Then this past Wednesday or Thursday I received a telephone call from the stake primary president asking how to show youtube videos in the gym. So, I told her that I would be happy to be there and set everything up and make sure it worked properly, which I did. It was fun to see 50 or 60 primary age girls with their dads dancing and doing

other activities. I even got two slices of pizza and some cake!

Saturday Joyce left the house early for the Stake RS Temple Day. Julia and I slept in until about 9:40. After we got moving I suggested that we watch the DVD "Crossed Swords" that had come from Netflix. That's a movie from 1977 based on Mark Twain's "The Prince and the Pauper". My brothers and I went to that after I got home from my mission. We had the sound track and love listening to it. Every time we've been at King Richard's Faire the music from this movie goes through my head. The audio quality of the DVD was poor, but the movie was lots of fun. Julia even enjoyed it!

Friday evening Joyce and I went on a mall and Barnes and Noble date. As you know, I'll be going to Egypt on a business trip. I expect I'll be leaving either Dec 1st or 2nd. Mike Malone and John Maher did this same trip a week ago. Mike said the hardest part of the trip is the 24 hours it takes to get there, and the 24 hours it takes to get back. That and having your body clock all messed up because of only being in country for a few days. Anyway, that got me to thinking about the long flights and also what to do if things get really slow while I'm there. So I decided it would make sense to have a Nook. Friday evening as part of our date, I bought the second generation Nook along with a case. It is about the size of a paper back book and has a six inch screen. I loaded up all the Vorkosigan novels that I had on CD. I also put a bunch of church publications on it. The past 2 days I have been playing around with it and have really enjoyed reading "Cordelia's Honor", which is the back story of Miles Vorkosigan's parents. I really like being able to make the font bigger so it is easier on my older eyes.

Thursday evening Heather came over and the four of us watched another episode of "Chuck" after dinner. We really enjoy that show. We're almost done with the second season.

Wednesday evening was mutual for Julia and knitting for Joyce. I practiced the sax some. I keep working on "Take Five", a jazz sax number. The song sounds simple, but it really is challenging. I'm getting better at it, but it takes lots of practice.

Tuesday morning we went to Hanson's and picked up the van. As I explained a week ago, the brakes had failed again. It was a different problem this time. Dennis said he inspected all the other brake lines and fittings. He said they all look okay to him. The place where the lines broke this most recent time is in an area where there is a lot of body rust. Heavenly Father has provided us with safety and protection twice now. I certainly hope Dennis is correct and that he inspected everything thoroughly.

Tuesday evening was Merrimack Concert Band rehearsal. We sight read several songs and I didn't make too many mistakes. I enjoy playing.

Monday was FHE. I was in charge of the lesson. We watched the video of Elder Boyd K Packard's October Conference talk. He spoke to the youth of the church wanting to impart some of the wisdom he has learned over the years. He recited some "classic poetry". I don't know if you remember the talk or not. It was the Saturday Morning session. Here is the poem is used:

*The old crow is getting slow.
The young crow is not.
Of what the young crow does not know
The old crow knows a lot.
At knowing things the old crow
Is still the young crow's master.
What does the slow old crow not know?
—How to go faster.
The young crow flies above, below,
And rings around the slow old crow.
What does the fast young crow not know?
—Where to go.*

He also said twice in his talk that our youth are being raised in enemy territory. Here is the second time:

"I say again that youth today are being raised in enemy territory with a declining standard of morality. But as a servant of the Lord, I promise that you will be protected and shielded from the attacks of the adversary *if* you will heed the promptings that come from the Holy Spirit."

I really liked his talk. We discussed some of his points during FHE. What a blessing to have living prophets!

Monday morning driving into work (or maybe it was Tuesday) Heavenly Father blessed our family once again with safety and protection. I was driving into work and was on 495 about a mile away from the interchange with Route 2 East. I was in the right hand lane, having just moved over from the center lane getting ready to get on Route 2. A large fuel truck in the center lane had just passed me when all of a sudden the storage locker on the right rear of the trailer burst open. Large pipes and fittings came flying out of the locker and started bouncing and flying all over the road in front of me. I was able to quickly slow down and avoid all but one large elbow shaped pipe that kept bouncing around right in front of the car. It probably only took a couple of seconds, but it seemed like it went on and on. Finally the pipe bounced off the side of the road. I looked in my rear view mirror and saw cars swerving and weaving back and forth to avoid the pipes. The driver of the fuel truck was oblivious to the whole thing. Just before the exit to Route 2 the truck hit another bump in the road and more

stuff came flying out, but I had slowed down to let him get away, so those pipes weren't a danger to me. I thanked Heavenly Father for watching over me once again.

I'm positive that there are so many things and situations of which we are totally unaware. Sometimes we become aware because we see the evidence of what has happened, but mostly I think we just blissfully go on with each day and have no clue that we are watched over and protected.

I'm going to forward an email that Aunt Gwen forwarded from your cousin Ammon about his wife Melanie. It turns out she has ovarian cancer. My heart is very heavy over this. Three out of four women last a year. Half of women survive 5 years. I pray to Heavenly Father, but I pray without faith because cancer is an enemy with no feelings and usually takes those he claims, as we well know. This is a very sad situation. Pray for them.

Well dear son... I'm thankful you have this opportunity to serve a full time mission. I hope that you are settling into your new area. I remember the unsettling feelings of being in a new area; figuring out where everything is; getting to know the members; getting used to a new companion. It's all part of the adventure! Heavenly Father is aware of everything we need. He loves us and desires for us to be happy. Keep your focus on your mission the best you can. I know life and concerns slip in, but work to keep in your mind that you have consecrated this time to the Lord. By doing that you have claim on the blessings that have been promised.

Love you!

Dad

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