



John Larsen <theclaw56@gmail.com>

---

## Happy Birthday to Me! Email from Mom, 1-9-2012

---

Joyce Larsen <linenlady9@gmail.com>

Mon, Jan 9, 2012 at 9:36 AM

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

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

Dear Elder Phillip Edward Larsen,

I look forward to Mondays, when I can "chat" with you sometimes, and at least hear from you! Dad wrote his email yesterday, and said it was short, though it didn't seem short to me, just the regular length. As he said, it was a week of appointments, so I felt like I was constantly busy. But it wasn't too frazzled, so that's good. On Friday I got together with Anne Senter (who sends her greetings to you), and we knitted for a bit. I forgot to bring to her one of the pass-along cards. Shelly Scott handed them out last week at church, for us to give away to people. I took some, with a few people in mind. Now I just need to hand them out.

On Friday I also went to Julia's Latin classroom to help out her teacher, Ms. Blood-Thom. Julia said the teacher is getting better, but she does not like her way of doing things, and has been frustrated the whole semester. Apparently Ms. Blood-Thom is not well-liked by any of the students. I told Julia I would be helping, but not during her class, but she said anything I could do to help the teacher get organized would help the class. So far I've collated handouts, and made copies of other handouts. I hope it helps a bit.

Saturday I spent hours in the attic, moving things around and rearranging things, also sorting through all of the blankets and pillows. Heather has been working on going through her books, and has made great progress. I found seven more boxes of her books for her to go through, and put them closer to the attic door so she could get to them. She also has tons of other stuff in bins to sort through, most of which, I suspect, can be gotten rid of. She has about 1/4 of the attic for her stuff in it. I told her she needs to make more room for your things, also for Stanford's things that are currently still in the bedroom. I had wanted to get to the room on Saturday, but the attic took longer than I thought (and I got into more organizing than I planned originally, but it's good to have it done). Then I put away Christmas decorations, except for the tree, which will be put away tomorrow, I think. My knees still hurt, whenever I kneel down for prayers or for cleaning the tub or for my exercise routine. I should have worn some knee pads, I think.

One of the things I came across in the attic is that paper mache mask thing that

Stanford and Andross made. Do you remember Andross? I talked about him in my testimony yesterday, how he died of a brain tumor or aneurysm or something after he went back to his country, and how now both boys who worked on that mask are now gone. But how I imagined Stanford teaching him the gospel in the Spirit World. I don't know if that's true, because there are so many missionaries on the other side of the veil, but I do know Stanford is doing good work there, and teaching lots of people.

After last week's emails, I had intended to start another email right away, because I had things on my mind still. But it didn't happen, and now I can't remember what I was going to say!

Beverly is on a cruise right now with her family. That's a good thing for her to do, I think. She had recovered enough from her broken hip to be able to go, and I hope she's having a wonderful time. This morning I was thinking how next year my birthday will be on a Tuesday, then thought how I just need to enjoy the day today and not worry about next year. Which I wasn't, really, just thinking. And I got to thinking of what might happen in a year's time. I don't know if Beverly will still be around or not. You'll be back from your mission, and have left for BYU-I. And that's as far as I got in my thinking! I think it works best to just enjoy the present moment. Plan, of course, and set goals, and decide what kind of person you want to be (spiritual, who reads scriptures and is in tune with the Lord, someone who is kind and who has integrity, etc.), but not think too hard about the details. So much is not in our hands, that the best thing we can do is to be close to the Lord to know what He wants. And enjoy our blessings that we have now. And have dreams, of course, things to work on, like to save money for travel, or develop habits of daily writing or whatever. But always be open for what the Lord has in mind.

You mentioned in your last email how COLD it was, 69 degrees! Is that because of the air conditioning in the LAN house? I guess you could bring a sweater, but then you would be lugging it around all day long, and that would not be fun. It has been quite unseasonably warm here, and we have no snow at all. I joke that we got all of our snow in October for that storm that knocked out power for four days. People would like the snow, if they can be inside and have hot chocolate and soup, have a fire in the fireplace, watch the flakes drift lazily down, and read a book or knit. But nobody minds not having to shovel or scrape the window! It's amazing, sometimes, how much weather can affect our daily lives, making them more pleasant, or more difficult. I guess that's one of the challenges and joys of mortality.

Oma and Papa got the letter you mailed to them. They said it took about two weeks to get there, and they were thrilled to hear from you. Oma said it was a very sweet letter. She asked if you had gotten the Christmas card they sent, and I said that as of last Monday, you had not gotten any of the Christmas things. But that you would in January. Be sure to let us know when you receive things in the mail. I've felt,

recently, an urge and a desire to talk to Grandma more often. She left on Saturday for Mesa, so she is busy with Casey and Don, but I'm sure I could email her. I like having a bit slower schedule, which leaves more time for pondering, and focusing on what the Spirit may be telling me. Though I suppose when one is really in tune with the Spirit, one can hear it no matter how busy life becomes.

Stake Conference is this coming Sunday. I will finally be getting a new Second Counselor, sustained at Stake Conference, I'm sure. I think this because I know she has been called, and has accepted. But she has been the RS President in Heritage Park, and they needed to find a replacement for her first. Heather said a new RS Presidency got called in her ward yesterday. So, we now have more Presidencies to train (Billerica and Peterborough also have new Presidencies). Always something to do! I don't know if I told you or not, but in December I went to the Temple with my Presidency. I went with Reta Brown and Judy Peterson, but we were missing the Second Counselor, because at that point she had just barely been called. But there in the Temple, on our session, was this sister, who was an ordinance worker and being the follower for the session! So it was wonderful, almost like our whole Presidency was there together. I had thought about it, why it took so long to get a new Second Counselor. I never wanted to have Nancy Carl released, but her Bishop had wanted her to serve in the ward, and when I prayed about it, I felt like that is what the Lord wanted. Then I considered a half dozen or so sisters for a new counselor, and fasted, prayed, visited them in their wards, and went to the Temple with them in mind. They were all good sisters, but I kept having a hard time picking one. Then one day, after I had already visited Heritage Park and talked to Emily Maughan, I visited again, and talked to her again. At that time, I thought it should be Emily, so I submitted her name, and eventually she was called and accepted. The only reason I can think of for it to take so long is that she was the right person, but needed to be in her calling in Heritage Park for just a bit longer. And we were at a point that we could limp along for a time with one counselor short.

Well, I will enjoy "chatting" with you again. I love the Monday emails! The church is true. We are so blessed to have the gospel. I'm so glad you are teaching the people of Brazil!

I love you.

Love,  
Mom