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A letter from Dad: 21 May 2012

John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>
Reply-To: john@larsen-family.us
To: Phillip Larsen <phillip.larsen@myldsmail.net>
Cc: Joyce Larsen <joyce@larsen-family.us>

Mon, May 21, 2012 at 7:54 AM

Hello Dear Phillip,

Wow... I guess I've been too hyper focused the last few days. Here it is 10:22 PM Sunday evening and I haven't even started my weekly email. I also didn't do any budget this weekend. I even had Friday off as a vacation day (use or lose it). My intention last Friday was to finally finish the last little part of the bathroom project, the sealing of the doors. That good intention got side tracked by Heather's car buying experience of Thursday.

Yup. Heather finally replaced her 1992 Honda Accord with a 2001 Honda Civic. For the past several weeks she has been looking into cars at various websites. She is planning a trip to Ithaca, New York in the September time frame to visit Mandy and Jason. Visiting them is now a much longer trip because they recently moved from CT to NY. The longer distance and the age of Heather's Accord made her realize that she needed a more reliable car.

The AutoFair website had the 2001 Civic listed, but it was for almost \$9000, which was more than she really wanted to pay. The car only had about 58,000 miles on it, which is very low for a car that age. It had only one previous owner who lived on Martha's Vineyard, which is why the miles were so low. Another impediment was the fact that the car was in Plymouth, MA, about 90 miles from Nashua. Well, everything changed Thursday morning when Heather looked again at the car on the website and noticed that the price had dropped almost \$3000. During our noon walk we talked about it and Heather decided to call and find out what the deal was. She scheduled a test drive at 7:30 PM and then with pleading eyes asked if I would go with her. Thursday evening was open, so I agreed and off we went at about 5:30 PM. We arrived just a few minutes before the scheduled time. Heather took it for a test drive with me and the saleswoman as passengers. We did highway driving and then did tight turns in a parking lot to listen for clunks in the suspension. We checked everything out, looked at the engine, looked underneath for rust, verified the spare tire and tools were there, tested all the lights, AC, radio, windows, etc. The car has a few "warts", but overall it seems like a solid good car. Heather decided to buy the car and then more paper work fun ensued. I didn't get home until almost 1:00 AM Thursday night. That kind of put a change in my Friday plans because I wasn't sure until almost noon whether or not I'd need to go back to Plymouth with Heather. All worked out fine and Heather was able to go get the car herself. She took pictures. Hopefully she will send one to you.

My hyper focus has been on this Beta tape to mp4 conversion project. It's a big involved project. To make the output of this whole process usable for your Mom it needs to be easy for her. That means it really needs to be in DVD form. Just like figuring out how to do the video recording and editing, figuring out how to author DVDs has turned into another learning experience. Everything I tried on zippy ran into stumbling blocks. The operating system on zippy is two years old and the programs that are readily available for zippy are all two years old. Things have moved on since then. So, I decided that I needed to install the latest ubuntu 12.04 onto a machine. One of my other machines, screamer, is a triple boot machine. It has Solaris, Windows, and Linux on it. I no longer needed Solaris so I decided to install the latest Ubuntu Linux on that drive. That whole process took longer than expected and I ran into troubles there too. I finally got it all working and got it to the point where I could actually "author" a DVD. Of course I had to learn that software as well. Finally Sunday evening a burned a

test DVD that has working menus. That worked in the DVD player. So, I now know how to go about it. I'll have to figure out the most efficient way to do it.

Sunday was pretty much a regular church day. There weren't any extra meetings for me or Julia. Joyce attended Nashua 2 Relief Society. Heather came over and Rachel attended church and then came over for dinner and hanging out time.

Saturday evening was a ward activity, an "International Night". We have quite a diversity of nationalities in our ward. Each of these families made native foods. We had Hawaiian, Korean, Japanese, Italian, Mexican, Indian... it feels like I'm forgetting something. Each family talked about the food. Then we got in line and filled up our plates. Bradford joined us for that activity. He looked to be enjoying himself catching up with Russ Noel, John Carl, Stuart Bentall, and others. I'm glad he came and could enjoy being with people that helped him grow up. He left before the end because he and Amy were going to a movie. There was entertainment after the meal. Brother Rigg does native American hoop dancing. I never knew. He was on a dance team at BYU. It was really cool to see him work with all those hoops. I think he had 21 all in play by the end. Sister Rigg had the YW doing a Hawaiian dance, and the YM did a Hawaiian war dance. It was fun to see. I love our ward.

Monday morning now and I'm back from the gym. I missed last Friday due to the car shopping experience of Thursday with Heather. I also missed last Tuesday because I drove the seminary students to high school so that Joyce could get to the temple for her temple service shift. So, after two "perfect" gym weeks I had a non perfect week. Maybe I'll be able to have a perfect week this week?

I decided to get the AC fixed in the Toyota. I took the car to Hanson's a couple weeks ago and they were unable to figure it out and said it is a dealer job. So, off to the dealer I went last Tuesday evening. Their standard approach is to drain the system of refrigerant, flush the system, then fill it back up with a refrigerant that has a dye in it that shows up with a black light. They then look for leaks. They were unable to find any obvious leaks. The next step is to have the owner drive the car for two weeks with the AC on all the time. Then they look for leaks again with the black light. Once they know where the leak is they can recommend what needs to be replaced. Fixing car AC systems is expensive, hundreds of dollars. If they determine that the leak is very slow, I'm thinking that I'll not have them fix anything, but I'll just have the system recharged as needed. If it lasts two or more years then it will be cheaper to do that than have some expensive repair for a really small leak. In any case, it is nice having the AC working again.

I finished the BofM mp3s again last week. I started it in December some time. I'm now listening to April General Conference. During my commute the first thing I listen to is whatever lesson of Egyptian Arabic that I'm on. Currently it is unit 24 of 30. I'll finish up in about 14 days at the rate I've been going through the lessons. Then I'll need to review them all several times. After the Arabic lesson I listen to the next conference talk. I slowly make my way through all of them.

I don't have any pictures this week. Sorry about that.

I'd better get ready for work now. I look forward to your weekly email. Keep the faith!

Love,

Dad

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