

Tuesday, July 25. 1995.

My dear family,

Dad and I are just back from our lawyer's office. I am pleased to report to you all that we now have a will signed, sealed, and about to be delivered to the courthouse where it be until it is necessary to use. Phew! I have been fighting to get that done since we moved here. Your Dad has placed copies in his file cabinet (top left drawer, first file). You will all get an equal share after charity gets 20%. We chose Mary to be our 2nd (surviving spouse first) and Tom 3rd personal representative for administering the will. We feel Mary is most knowledgeable and Tom youngest if we go on forever!

Mary will have an unenviable job one I believe ALL expenses (including compensation for time) should come out of the estate before distribution of moneys. Living away from us as she does it will not be easy to take care of matters. Dad and Penny will be ready to help with the funeral arrangements for me. If he dies first, Penny will be my moral support. I speak only for myself when I say that you're being here for the funeral is not necessary. I want you to remember me as I am alive. Besides I am going to be cremated, have the funeral Mass and internment in St. Stans (family plot) in Mable's grave. Mable remarried after my brother died and has since died and is buried in Detroit. I have talked to my siblings and they have no objections. Your Dad will have to state his own wishes to you. Though he will be cremated, he does want a viewing of the body. I pray I go before him. I do not want to go through that ordeal.

You did me no favor by not honoring my desire to share with me what you wanted from the family "treasures"----exclusive of Teri (bless her!). I give you one more chance. In the near future Dad and I will compile a list (excluding what Teri wants and Mark made mention of the phonograph and some tools while he was here) and send on to you a check list. On return of said list (within a MONTH) distribution of article will be made and recorded. Lottery will be held from those selecting same items. (names in a hat and random choice) This will be a hand written list (recommended by our lawyer) kept in the file and another copy in the book compiled with your Xmas letter of 1993. I showed it to Mark while he was here. Unclaimed I recommend be sold and profits shared among you. Dad and I had a mess when Grandam Hamill died trying to sort things out (and there were only 2 of them!). It is my desire to settle things for you in an equatable way WITHOUT hassles! Please cooperate with me on this and NO fighting after we are gone. I swear I'll haunt you if there is any fighting! All shipping charges are to be borne by the individual receiving same. That should not be too hard to do since we hopefully will be leaving you some money in the will.

This is a difficult letter to write and probably to read. Reality must be faced, however, and I prefer to do my thinking and planning while my mind is still agile. I ask of you your cooperation to see this through with me. I love you (and your spouses) very much. I desire to do the right thing. You can and should help me.

You will find Dad records in very good order, up to date, well thought out and planned. He is making things as easy for you (especially Mary) as possible. Grieve not for me when I'm gone. I had a very good life filled with happiness and worth. I can meet my Maker with peace of heart.

It is now Wednesday and time to finish this up. We had a trip to Elgin last week to help Cassandra celebrate her birthday. Driving there Thursday afternoon was hell! The stretch between Gary and Chicago was endless! A bike could have made it faster. Returning early Sunday morning was a breeze! If one needs to travel, that is the time to go. The kids are growing mentally and physically. Dad and I were very impressed with Cassandra's ability to read. Ben is chaffing at the bit to get started at real school but not enough to curb his active zest for life at the moment! The kids (like most, I suspect) have vivid imaginations and activity to match a zealot. Rosie and Margo displayed some of the same enthusiasm in their play time while they were here. It must be in kids! How did I ever stand 8 of you bouncing around?! I enjoyed Mark's letter (very accurate in my estimation) describing their family vacation. Rosie has wonderful reading skills, too. Is there no stopping the next generation from getting too smart? Ben's screeching at the ball game will live in my mind forever! It was a Minor league professional game with enthusiasm not to be believed. Every seat was taken. I see Americans have found a new love in Minor leagues; who needs the Majors! Patti's table will rival mine any day. She outdid me by a long shot in providing tasty meals. Must confess it felt pretty good to be on the receiving end of good food----- and I didn't even do dishes! Thanks, Patti and Jim. I had a wonderful time. You always make us feel so welcome.

Dad and I are fine----exclusive of Dad's allergy problems, that is--- so don't plan on money from the will soon. We will probably make it to our 80's! How many more Elderhostel trips can we get in before our time ends? We left ourselves open for the summer for visitors but come the fall catalog and I will be searching for another interesting trip before Xmas. Like to see the west side of Yellowstone. We have yet to see Old Faithful in action. Time will tell. Enough said. Love and very best wishes to all of you and yours.