

October 18,1999

Dear Family,

Deb, here's Jason's new e-mail address:

JHarry1060@hotmail.com

I have some more dune pictures. Go to <http://photomail.filmworks.com> and supply the following information:

Customer Number: 40901679 Roll Number: 11366685

The guy in the pictures is an old friend. We shared a house for a while between marriages #1 and #2.

I had a letter to the editor published in the Lansing State Journal last week:

"I don't agree with Jesse Ventura when he says religion is for weak-minded people. That may be true for Creationists and others who take the Bible literally, but I know a lot of religious people who are very intelligent. It probably has more to do with parental and community influences early in life, although that didn't do it for me. I was brought up in a church-going family, but by about age 11 this whole business of the all-powerful God and going to heaven started to smell kind of fishy. It wasn't a complete loss, though. Learning about Jesus and his teachings is probably why I grew up to be a Democrat."

Otherwise, nothing much going on here. Carol has been working as a temp for the State for the last 2 weeks, but today she accepted a real State job working for the Family Independence Agency (formerly Social Services). She will be doing phone work, answering calls regarding various types of FIA payments. It is a "limited term" job - one year - but there is always the chance it will be extended. They told her she would be in training for 3 months. New state employees have to take a drug test within 24 hours of accepting a job, so she had to take off time from her current job this afternoon and go pee in a bottle. It took her 45 minutes to squeeze out the Engler-specified amount.

Yesterday (Sunday) was busy. We went out to breakfast at a new diner in town that attempts to replicate the old-time diners. The building has a silvery outside and formica, vinyl and chrome inside. The food was good, but not cheap. Then we took a canoe trip from our back yard to Delta Mills, about an hour and a half ride. It was a little cool, but otherwise pleasant. Then we drove to Baker Sanctuary, about 45 minutes southwest of Lansing, a big marshland where the sandhill cranes congregate in late October. There are

thousands of them. You can hear them and see them with binoculars, but they are so far away that it takes a telescope to see the red spot on their heads. They feed in the surrounding fields and gather there in the evening. Later this month, they will head south to Florida and Georgia.

I think I told you about the grub invasion that started last year. They devour lawns - turn them to mud. Our next door neighbor just re-seeded her whole front lawn. I haven't lost much grass to the grubs, but I've got another problem. Some grub-hungry critter has been rolling back the sod to get at them. I have to go out every day and put back all the sod pieces, like doing a jig-saw puzzle. I've done it about 5 times already, and I'm getting tired of it. The yard looks like a crazed golfer has been out there, and he's not replacing his divots.

Steve