

February 14, 2002

Dear Tom,

Happy Valentine's Day. Haven't heard from you in ages. Are you OK? Is your e-mail working? How do you like your new car?

Nothing much new here. Carol and I have been trying to figure out which pension options to choose. We both plan to retire by the end of the year. With the kind of pension plans we have, we must each chose from several "survivor options" that determine how much of our pensions the spouse will get if the other dies. The survivor benefit can be 100%, 75%, 50% or none. With a survivor benefit, the pension is reduced. The higher the survivor benefit, the more the pension is reduced. But if the spouse dies before the pension recipient, it goes back up to what it would be without a survivor benefit. What we are thinking is that we should set things up so that if one of us dies, the survivor would get the same amount we got together when both were alive.

Carol is planning to go to White Plains, New York for a week in April to get trained to do biofeedback. She received biofeedback treatment from her therapist in the last year or so of her therapy, and she thinks it works. She has also been talking to a guy who administered it to Carol's sister's child. He says he has been getting good results and people are clamoring for his services. The training and equipment is expensive, but she thinks she will be able to make it back in a short time.

I bought a \$500 film scanner as a first step in starting my own business scanning people's slide collections. I just got it, and haven't yet had much success scanning slides. I'll figure it out eventually. I found a website for a guy in Massachusetts who has a slide scanning service. I called him. He charges \$1.40 per slide and says he can make \$20-30 an hour. Eventually, I'll have to get a more powerful computer. The one I have is 3-4 years old.

Dawn and Bob are getting married in April.

On the job, I have been working 3-4 hours a day doing routine stuff, then killing time the rest of the day. I am supposed to be writing procedures, but there is no management interest in the project and I got tired of pulling information out of people. I wrote up a proposal for a new approach to the project, where the managers identify what procedures need to be written, then assign each to a staff member who is responsible for getting the procedure written and keeping it

updated. I would do the writing, but they would have to make sure I got the information. I gave the proposal to my supervisor 3 weeks ago. He liked it and said he would talk to the executive director about it. That hasn't happened yet. I had written a lot of procedures before I gave up on it, but nobody paid any attention to them. They didn't get used or reviewed and nobody informed me when the procedure changed.

So I've been killing time by writing about my bad experiences here at work, how badly things are run. I'll give it to someone when I leave - like maybe the board of directors. I'm also working on my political essays. I just finished a piece on direct democracy.

We've seen Beautiful Mind, Monsters Inc., Gosford Park, and Fellowship of the Ring. Missed Mulholland Drive and Ali. Haven't seen Black Hawk Down and In the Bedroom. I'd pick Fellowship of the Ring as the most over-rated. Big production, but not very entertaining. Looking forward to seeing Monster's Ball. We enjoyed Billy Bob Thornton in Bandits.

Love, Dad