

JULY 18, 1989

Dear all;

YES, another darn FORM LETTER. Well, due to a lot of things, most markedly my recent vacation, I am again waaay behind in my correspondence. I have also just come off a really neat vacation (though, as we shall see, somewhat abbreviated) and I want to tell you about it. So, due to mail back-up and a great tale to tell... I resort to a FORM LETTER.

As is usual every end of summer... feel free to read on or THROW IT AWAY... I understand!

Before I get to that, I want you to know that the school year ended, with the usual hectic mess, a very nice graduation (marred by the fact that on the nite of the graduation, some sickos hung and killed my 175 pound St. Bernard.. Odin... No, I have no idea for sure who did it, but he is sorely missed) the rest of the students all got off well and so some quiet reigned here at the school. These are a truly wonderful 22 acres of quiet without the young men around.

I spent the time between the end of school visiting with some friends, getting some discipline letters out, visiting a local water park and preparing for the vacation. It was a good ending. But now to the trip.....



## PROLOGUE

The trip was conceived, more or less, last year in Alaska with Trey Martinez, one of the two young men who were with me in the North-land. Owing to our experiences in Alaska, i.e. the mosquitoes breeding season of June, we decided to do the month long trek in July, assuming that the breeding season would be the same. And, basically I think that was a fair assumption, but the heat was a different matter ... oh well, it was either June or July and one seemed as good as the other.

When dropping Trey off from the Alaskan trip and my visit with his father, we managed to interest him in the hike as well. And so the plans were laid... we would back-pack for about three weeks, along the Appalachian Trail in Maine, the three of us Jef, Trey and his dad Tony. The plans would be firmed up and refined over the next twelve months ... and some revisions would be made. There were logistics to be worked out, gear to be purchased, timetables to be made ... it looked good, it looked fun, it looked like an adventure.

By the time February rolled around the location had been changed ... from Maine to Pennsylvania - this to give us more time on the trail and less time in the getting to the trail. The amount of time Tony would be with us had been shaved from two weeks to about 5 or 6 days, the boots that were to have been purchased in December and broken in over the next 7 months (along with the feet that were to be inside the boots) would not be gotten until May. Other, less important or crucial details were also revised but it remained a trip that looked good, fun, and an adventure.

June came, my office had become a camping gear warehouse, phone calls were made from S.A. to Brownsville on a weekly basis, excitement was building, last minute purchases were being made. Trey and I would drive to Washington D.C., Tony would be picked up at the airport, we would drive to the trail-head, we would have a good fun adventure.

June 24 finally arrived, and so did Trey. We spent the weekend making more last minute purchases, buying food, sorting out equipment, adding this piece of equipment and deciding we could do without that piece, this was necessary, that was not, this was too heavy but needed, that is very light and simply nice to have. After getting down to what we thought was the minimum, we packed the three packs, packed the car, rented some movies, relaxed and took in a good nites sleep... it was Sunday nite and we were finally going to be on our way the next morning.... we were excited.

## MONDAY, MAY 26... DAY 1

We left from the school at 8:30 that morning. It wasn't going to be as long a trip as it was to Alaska, but for me, given my excitement about it all, just as long a trip emotionally. With that first day came the first set-back, a rather minor one considering, but a set-back none the less. Do you know what it costs to go 16 miles over the speed limit in Dallas? Trying to by-pass an accident slowing traffic on the highway I took a

different route than outlined by Triple-A, in so doing my foot grew heavier than it should, I was stopped... 71 in a 55 mile zone. Last year we were also stopped for a similar offense on our first day... but Trey was simply warned... I wasn't so lucky. The officer, as he handed me my ticket also informed me that I was going in the wrong direction. I thanked him, turned around (by this time I was no longer as concerned about bypassing traffic jams) and we were again on our way. By the way, such an offense carries a 75.00 charge... oh well! My passenger, I think, rather enjoyed the incident, and really the thing was sort of funny... I set my cruise control at 55 and continued on. We spent that nite in Little Rock, Arkansas... at camp MOTEL 6 (we were not going to rough it yet... though some of you might think M-6 is roughing it, Tom Bodette is quite correct, once your eyes are closed it does look like one of those fancy hotels).

### TUESDAY, MAY 27 DAY 2

Well, since we were passing through anyway, and we did have some time before we met the third member of the party, and because he is a (living?) legend ... a great portion of this day was spent at GRACELAND in Memphis, Tenn. the home-site of ELVIS PRESLEY. What the heck.. right? This was my second tour of the place, but this time we took the Combo tour and so we saw not only the mansion, but also got to tour the airplanes, the Car Museum and to see the movie "If I Can Dream". After 2.5 hours of the stuff (and a possible sighting of the possibly dead king himself) we were Elvis'd out. But not so much that Trey was able to do his rendition of an Elvis imitation in the parking lot ... thank God I was several paces from him and was able to pretend not to know him... though he was not the worst I've ever heard (remember, I am tone deaf). From Memphis we pushed forward and spent the nite in Bristol, Va.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 28 DAY 3

Left bright and early arriving in WASHINGTON, D.C. at about 2:00 in the afternoon. It's a shame, but after 10 weeks of living there and many visits since, I got completely turned around and even after arriving in D.C. we ended up circling the city and going way out of our way to end up in the area where I used to stay. We went by St. Elizabeth Mental Hospital to see my friend Fr. Ira Lott who is chaplain there. I had not seen him in about a year and it was really good to see him looking so well. Unfortunately, I think Trey got a bit bored in the visit because Ira and I spent the visit talking about our mutual friend George Stallings who is currently making national news and trouble in the church with a possible schism he is involved with. I kept waiting for Ira to offer us lodging for the evening, but he seemed to have already made plans and so after an hour or so Trey and I were on the prowl for another hotel. Of course, this meant another hour or two of being lost. We also had to establish our route to the airport and so find a place to stay that was cheap and close... as I said, after circling and re-circling we finally settled down at the Brookside Motel in ALEXANDRIA, VA.-

an authentic dive.

After settling in to the hotel, we then located a sporting goods store in Springfield, Va. where I purchased a new camp stove. I had decided enroute that one of the two we had with us was too big and bulky, therefore I wanted to get another small one.... which I did.....and getting back to the hotel meant several more circles (Trey was getting frustrated with me.. or maybe just dizzy) but we finally found our base and then walked up the street to the Howard Johnson's to literally pig out at the food bar. We ended the day doing some more re-packing of our equipment and then to bed.... tomorrow would be good, we would begin our back-packing fun and adventure.

THURSDAY, MAY 29 DAY 4

We were real casual this morning. Took our time, watched some nonsense on the tube and eventually left our dingy room, deciding to go visit some of the museums in the city. We never really made it to any of them. We did circle them several times as we searched in vain for a parking spot - we never found one, but we did somehow find ourselves heading in the direction of both the airport and ARLINGTON CEMETERY. We decided that since the exit was directly in front of us, it would be nice to visit the cemetery. We witnessed the changing of the guard, visited the Kennedy tomb, the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Arlington House, the memorial to the dead astronauts and generally had a pleasant visit.

From Arlington we were off to the airport where again parking proved problematic...; but we finally located a spot only a mile away, with a shuttle right there. Tony made his arrival... and we were off - to good times, great fun and adventure! I for one was really charged up, my heart beat twice as fast as normal as we got in the car to actually begin.

That beginning was delayed only minimally by my taking the wrong exit on the freeway, and the new route was a far more pleasant ride.... I'm sure of it. We headed to the town of CHAMBERSBURG, PA. where we pigged out at the local Wendy's. Trey informed his father that such stuffing of the gut would be necessary because I was so tight with the meals on the trail; I don't think this is necessarily so, but so be it...

Having filled out guts, we were off to CALEDONIA STATE PARK some 15 miles away, where we registered the car for long term parking, changed our clothes, completed the arrangement of our packs and WE WERE OFF.....

We walked to the trail head, took our first picture of the trek and headed out. We left at 6:05p.m. intending simply to do a couple of hours of walking simply to sort of break ourselves in. And broken in we were to become as approximately half of the time was spent going uphill... in less than 30 minutes on the trail we were already sweating like pigs, and I for one was cursing myself for our recently completed bout of gluttony. At 8:00, after our first 3.6 miles of trail taking us about 2,000 feet up, we stopped for the night. We did a lot of fine-tuning of our straps along the way, we did a lot of huffing and puffing, and, judging from the faces of my companions, a lot of wondering

"what we had gotten ourselves into". We pitched tents, snacked a bit and hit the sleeping bags..... the fun had begun, we looked good, it would really be an adventure.

FRIDAY JUNE 30 DAY 5 2ND DAY OF HIKING

There is something about sleeping out of doors that really makes a person sleep hard and well and gets him up plenty early. After rising, getting Tony his cup of coffee made, rolling up our bags and tearing down our tents, we were back on the trail by 7:45 a.m.

I try to prepare for these trips with some caution, especially with people who have not done this sort of thing before. Part of the preparation is food... the proper energy source for the strenuous activities that we were to encounter. For this particular adventure I had brought Trail Mix - one of the best energy sources, providing all the needed stuff to keep us on trail. Well, several hours into the days journey, I discover to my dismay that one of my travelling companions prefers Pop-Tarts (bad energy source) to Trail Mix.... something we are to nibble on all through the day ... I tend to get very worried about such things ... I don't mind someone falling to the ground from some really exciting mishap... but the idea of someone doing so from lack of nutrition is in my book unthinkable...I could have killed! Oh well, I suppose a random worry here or there is necessary to add to the adventure.

Now, I must add, that from my reckoning, since Tony would only be with us for a limited amount of time and had to be back to work six days after he began that it would be advisable to be in a reasonable sized town in time to get him bus connections to an airport. Such a town looked to be a minimum of 50 miles away, which would mean that we would have to do some 10 miles a day .... which I rather optimistically had supposed we could all do rather easily .... I would soon learn the error of my thought process.

Today's walk was not terribly uphill, more like gentle rises and slopes. At one of the several shelters along the way we met up with a "through hiker" (one of the people making the entire Appalachian Trail journey of 2300 miles from Georgia to Maine) who Trey and I would later learn was called "California Ray" (all through-hikers take on a trail name) a man in his late 50's-early 60's. Quite a pleasant guy really who informed us that just up the trail in PINE GROVE FURNACE STATE PARK there was a camp store that had great ice cream and a contest about who could eat a half-gallon of the cold concoction the fastest.... it gave us a goal for the day... ice cream and cold drinks.

California Ray soon left the shelter we met at (these shelters are located along the trail at varying distances and are usually open three or four sided accommodations with a spring or other water source located nearby. They are available on a "first come first served" basis.) We sat around a while longer talking of blisters, sore spots, hot spots, weary legs, etc. ( I think my travelling companions were forgetting, in the light of the pain, that this was fun). We finally left the shelter and continued on to the store and park, arriving about 4:00p.m..

After drinking numerous cold drinks, and refilling our canteens, the next concern was shelter and food to end the day. We travelled through the park, found out many other hikers were also stopped there, found ourselves a picnic table and proceeded to prepare supper. We originally assumed that we could camp there, and my hike-mates in their pain filled faces and insistent voices declared WE WOULD CAMP HERE. Well, not wanting to torture them any further I went to look for the park ranger to RENT a tent spot. I was told it would be about 15.00 for such a spot and we would still have to walk to the other end of the park to get to the spot. The ranger thought it would be a waste of money, and that if we simply kept to the trail for a bit longer we would come to a camp spot on the trail itself. Well, I returned to the others.... tried to break the news gently, and after a bit more rest we slowly put our boots back on and proceeded down the trail, luckily we found our camp spot only 1/3 of a mile from where we stopped. We pitched our tents, went down to the river to bathe (I think Trey really enjoyed trying to teach his dad how to properly and fully bathe in such a situation) and rinse our clothes, and settled down to do "regular guys stuff" around the campfire. I had a bottle of Blackberry Brandy with me, decided to pass it around, Trey and Tony each had a sip and then passed off to the land of Orpheus very quickly. Tony had good sized blisters, Trey has a sore waist from the belt of his pack, for some reason they don't look to be having a good, fun adventure... I started to feel like a Nazi torture master..... but we needed to do the ten miles a day and there was no guarantee that a camp spot would be exactly at that ten mile mark.... oh well, they would toughen into it, it was only the first day and we had maybe pushed it just a little bit in doing 15.5 miles today..... tomorrow would be different I thought.... I'll let them lead the pace.... with that thought in mind I finished off the Brandy (trying to cut down on the weight of my pack) and joined my companions in sleep.

WALKED 15.5 MILES THIS DAY.....TOTAL MILES = 19.1

SATURDAY, JULY 1 DAY 6 3RD DAY OF HIKING

A good nights sleep was had by all, and we were up, fed, packed and on the trail by 8:30a.m. Much of the mornings preparation was spent cushioning the blisters and hotspots on our feet with moleskin, bandaids, absorbine jr., and other medicines.

We spend the day huffing and puffing up and down the hills, some feeling a little steep some simply rolling. Despite the apparent heat of the day we are walking in the forest and so we are kept cooler, though the sweat that rolls off our bodies would belie and sense of comfort. Trey is in pain from his pack straps, much of the talk is about blisters. Toward the end of the days trek we come close to another commercial campground, so we simply stop in the middle of the trail, I take off to walk the 3/4 mile distance to the local camp store, I look for another water canteen for Trey (who ended up with a 1 qt. canteen rather than 2 qt.) which they didn't have, more mole skin (we looked as though we were going to use an awful lot of the stuff) which they didn't have, some cold sodas - which they did have and some

cigarettes (which I had intended to give up.... the road to hell is paved with good intentions ... so I'm told). I returned to my companions and Tony made a similar trek to the store, Trey decided to just sit still for a while longer. It was later that I found out that Tony had been doing quite a bit of cussing and swearing and decision making and cussing and swearing while I was gone. Trey told me that his father may very well not go as far as he had intended. I racked my brain, how do we keep him on the trail and still make it to the town in time..... nothing came to mind.... I handed it over to fate. Maybe tomorrow would be better. Tony returned and we determined to stop at the very first campsite we came to, luckily only 1/2 mile further from where we stopped. it was a rather idyllic spot really, set along a stream with a small wooden bridge crossing the stream, among the trees, the only disturbance coming from the fireworks being set off by the campers at the commercial site. We spent a great deal of the evening talking about our feet and hiking strategies, soaking our feet in the icy water of the stream, washing off and eating. We fell asleep quite quickly.

WALKED 11.1 MILES THIS DAY ..... TOTAL THUS FAR = 30.2

SUNDAY JULY 2      DAY 7      4TH DAY HIKING

Today we started out a bit slowly, spent more time bandaging and lazing through the morning chores, we were off by 8:45a.m.. We had a 700 foot climb up switchbacks and rocky terrain very early in this days trek, but 2 miles later we came to some very good water in a spring along the road known as WHISKEY SPRINGS. The water was so good that as we sat and drank our fill we were visited by bicyclists, people filling water jugs, ice chests and milk bottles....good water. After lolling at the spring for a while we began another ascent, but ten minutes later Tony stopped, plopped himself on the rocks and declared he was going home. "Oh shoot" was all I could think. We yelled for Trey who had taken the lead to return. The look in Tonys' face, the timbre of his voice, the pain of his every movement told me that there would be no talking him out of this, Tony would be going home.

We emptied his pack of the food that we thought we could use, took his canteen and medical kit (more moleskin and the absorbine jr.) and I walked with him back to the road where we intended to flag down a car to take him into Carlisle where we figured he could catch a bus to Harrisburg and the airport. It didn't take too long before a woman in a station wagon and two small children stopped and took him aboard. Tony really looked pitiful, I'm sure she must have been feeling sorry for us both. He was on the way, and I promised to call when we got near a phone to make sure that he was all right.

Apparently Tony had his own adventure and a lot of good luck getting home. The woman took him to her home, she tried to help him as much as possible even eventually driving him all the way to Harrisburg where he caught all his connections just right... still dressed and smelling like he was right off the trail.

I returned to Trey and we realized that our packs felt almost 15 pounds heavier each with all the new stuff that we added and it did not take us long to decide that at the very next shelter we were going to dump as much of the canned food as possible (eating what we could, leaving the rest behind for the use of others).

Why did we have such heavy food products? Well, I had thought that given the high cost of freeze dried and dehydrated food that we could live out of cans for the first week, the time that Tony would be with us to help us eat it. After that time we would live off the other lighter foods..... this was not to be.

It was really a bad time to have heavier packs too, and probably a good thing Tony had left for the next several miles were spent crawling over, around and between boulders big enough that people were rappelling off of them. It was difficult, and as we went on the resolve to dump the weight grew and grew. It was really hard to see Tony gone, but I believe Trey and I were both a bit relieved as it was obvious he was not really having a very good, fun, but probably adventurous time. We pushed on. (It was at this time, according to my log that I thought Trey would make possibly 5 more days and also call it quits... which would have meant the end of the journey for me as well.... I had wanted to do at least 200 miles of trekking, but I was not really wanting to do it without a companion..... Trey would eventually prove me wrong in my estimation of his determination). We suffered, we climbed, we huffed and puffed, we found blackberries along the trail to eat.

We eventually arrived at CAMPBELL SPRING SHELTER... but the spring was dry. Luckily, this was one of the major shelters on this part of the trail and there was a caretaker there (a young school teacher who looked like a sixties throw-back who had not bathed in weeks..... he had done the trail twice and was spending his summer just sort of lazing around the shelter, reading his bible and filling jugs with water from down the road for the hikers passing through. It was a rather big shelter.... more of a cabin really, and Trey and I thought we would spend the nite there.... we laid out our sleeping bags, took off our boots, got all ready to spend the night.... though the shelter was very warm, the air was very muggy, but it was a stopping place. We ate several cans of food, left quite a bit behind and thought tomorrow would be fairly nice. And then, we were joined by 4 other campers .. talk began about the fun we would have, two travelling companions started yelling insults at one another, there was a Pole from New York who seemed none too friendly and another young man who looked dazed, spaced out or psycho.

Much of the conversation centered around the next stretch of trail... they referred to it as THE ROAD - some 14 miles of walking on the road, hot, flat, repetitive, and no rest spots. Some even talked of doing it at nite in order to avoid the heat. Trey and I just listened.

After a small conference, Trey and I decided we would look for another camp spot. We gathered up our belongings and declared to the others comments of surprise that we "had found new energy from our meal" and that we would "knock off some of



the road by moonlight". We simply didn't want to spend the night with them. We walked about 1/2 mile found a river, a campspot, played in the water and went to sleep. We tried to establish ourselves out of sight of any hikers that might come by the next morning in order that our lie might not be discovered. We were really in very good spirits.

WALKED 7.3 MILES THIS DAY.....TOTAL WALKED = 37.5 MILES

MONDAY JULY 3 DAY 8 5TH DAY HIKING

After a rough nite on very uneven ground in a tent where I could not stretch out in (I slept with Trey in the two man- there was no place to put up my own) we were back on the trail by 7:30 a.m. with a more relaxed day planned. We had decided to shoot for only 7 miles a day, walking three hours, resting a couple of hours and then doing a couple more in the evening.

Our packs were still heavier than we liked. We walked all day along the road with small forays through farmers fields... crawling over fences on ladders provided for the purpose. On one break we were met by the Pole from the shelter who was surprised at how little progress we made..... Trey and I both gave differing reasons for our lack of progress, totally confused the old guy and watched him proceed. We were not yet done resting.

We passed through a town, Trey called home and we found out that his dad had arrived very safely. We slept well that night, lightened our packs even more.... I think we finally got them where we want them. My tendon in my left leg is starting to hurt, I can't recall doing anything to it, Trey agrees that it looks swollen, and it is tender to the touch.... oh well, I'll walk it off I figure.

WALKED 8.6 MILES TODAY ..... TOTAL = 46.1

TUESDAY JULY 4 DAY 9 6TH DAY HIKING

On the road by 8:45 ... boy we got rid of a lot of stuff.... the packs really felt good. About an hour or two of walking I discovered to my pain that my poncho/ground cloth was missing. It must have fallen out of my sleeping roll without my notice. I left Trey with the packs on a bridge and walked back a mile or so to see if it was on the road, I couldn't find it, I got back to Trey to find him occupied with a young boy and father. They were talking and I sat down on what the little brat announced was "his spot" on the bridge rail. We left. We hadn't had any rain yet, but I felt sure that now that my poncho was gone... it wouldn't be long.

We plowed on, though we had to slog through some mud in crossing a stream where the trail was washed out. I prayed there would be no rain, and there wasn't.... not until we set butt to shelter floor after a rather strenuous 1300 foot climb to DARLINGTON SHELTER... and then, on cue the heavens opened up and the water fell hard and heavy. We arrived about 12:30 in the afternoon. During a break in the rain we hiked down to the

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spring.... to find it dried up. There was a spring at the bottom of the mountain, we had passed it up anticipating the spring at the shelter. What the heck, I had nothing better to do so I declared that since the rain had stopped I would walk down and get it. Trey would read some of the magazines that were left at the shelter. About half way down, the waters again came down... I was getting soaked, I passed three people going up the trail as I was going down "hell, I thought, I hope they aren't planning to stay at the shelter.... Trey and I would rather hike down in the rain than spend a cramped nite with strangers." After about 1.5 hours of getting the water, passing up the shelter because my head was down in the rain, getting back on track and to the shelter I was soaked to the skin... but I had water! And, to my surprise, the three hikers had apparently decided not to stop. Trey and I settled down to make supper..... A ROYAL FIASCO!!!!

We decided on eating dried beef mixed in a sauce base.... which came out so salty that it was like drinking in a shaker full of the stuff. Trey was going to tuff it out and not let me know how bad it was.... I had no compunctions... I bit into it and spit it out..... luckily Trey decided to do likewise.... it was terrible. So, Trey was going to make soup, which he did, and then spilt on the floor. Finally, we pulled out a Freeze-dried mexican beef and rice dinner..... great! But all too many dishes were dirtied... we got them semi-cleaned and settled down to a good nights sleep. With all my backtracking and going up and down the mountain that day I'm sure I almost doubled the distance we walked that day, but officially ....

WALKED 6.4 MILES THIS DAY.....TOTAL HIKED= 52.5 MILES

WEDNESDAY JULY 5 DAY 10 7TH DAY OF HIKING

After a solid nites sleep we were on the road by 7:45 a.m. At the next shelter, we ran into one of the hikers I had seen the nite before, a young man by the name of J.B. He was, with a companion, a through hiker from Iowa. The two of them had a business card made out - I.O.W.A. (Idiots Out Walking Around). He was interesting and entertaining and on his way while Trey and I rested. Although there was no rain that day, it was quite misty and we had to walk through a lot of fields which had been soaked by the rain of the nite before, and so we were pretty wet. We drank some hot cocoa, ate some peanut butter and then started out to what we supposed we be a 3 mile hike to DUNCANNON, PA.

We had heard the name Duncannon (Trey was at times perturbed by my unintentional insistence on always referring to it as Du cannon) all along the trail. It is a small town at the base of the mountains. It is the closest town to the half-way point of the Appalachian Trail and so a natural stopping point for all the through hikers and others. In fact, the trail goes right through the town. Along with the name Duncannon they also always mentioned the DOYLE HOTEL. They kept describing it as a sort of a flea bag, but a cheap place to stay, a place where all the hikers stayed. It was always spoken of with a certain note of reverence and anticipation. B.J. insisted that that is the place



we would HAVE to stay at. It sounded like enough of an adventure that of course we would not pass it up. And at the mention of 50 cent beer we became resolved.

The walk was only 3 miles more.... but all of it seemed uphill, and when it did go down it was over rockslides and around more boulders.... thank God the blackberries were plentiful. Trey set the pace, and a strong one it was.... it was good to see, I was happy, I thought my earlier doubts were vanishing, he was starting (or at least he looked it) to really enjoy the trail.... I really thought we would make the next twenty days no problem..... if only my foot would quit hurting.

We made it to Duncannon, we found the Hotel Doyle..... flea bag really did not quite capture the place.... flop house is the more realistic adjective.

Apparently it was at one time a rather grand hotel, one of the last built by the Anheuser-Busch people prior to WW II. Doyle won part of the Irish sweepstakes after the war and used the money to purchase the hotel, and that was the last thing he did to it (including cleaning it) since. It was a haven for drunks, the down and out, and hikers. The rooms were small (though cheap.....15.00 for the two of us for the nite), dirty, the bed linens weren't changed.... they gave me "clean ones" so I could change it myself (though I used the sleeping bag instead of the urine stained cloths they offered) Trey was smart enough to grab the section of floor... there wasn't enough room for the two of us on the floor. The first beer was on the house, and the next ones were cheap.... half snockered was probably the only way a person with any sense could have gotten to sleep in the place. The common bathrooms were pigstys, one really hated to place ones buns on the seat. Thank God we were packing toilet paper, because the Hotel wasn't. To bathe, we had to spray ourselves down with a hose connected to the faucet, but the hose wasn't very long so we squatted, being very careful not to let flesh touch enamel and whatever it was that grew thereon. I was not a total stranger to such conditions, but I think this was Treys' first encounter with such a place..... he thought Motel 6 was primitive.

Well, after cleaning ourselves, Trey went to do the laundry and I went to find a doctor to look at my foot. The doctor told me to get off my foot, I told Trey I was to wrap my foot..... I certainly didn't want to stop now when everything was looking so good. After doing laundry we pigged out at the local pizza joint. Retired to our room and finally fell to sleep with the sounds of too loud televisions, drunken noises of all sorts and footsteps aplenty. We ended the day in excellent spirits, being clean, mellowed from the beer, some postcards sent off and now with clean dry laundry... tomorrow should be great!!!! fun-adventure.

THURSDAY JULY 6 DAY 11

I woke up about 3a.m..... with the doctors warning in my head. I know we should stop....BUT NOT NOW!!!! I tried to wrap my foot a dozen different ways hoping to find one that would relieve the pain. Thought about it, wrapped it, unwrapped it (it

was very sensitive to the touch) weighed the possible consequences. When Trey finally woke up about 6-6:30 I declared my inability to continue. He took it better than I did. We left about 7:45... heading toward Harrisburg.... about 15 miles away. I am teaching Trey about hitch-hiking (I just know when his mother finds out about all these things she is going to kill me... probably the last trip she was going to let him go on with me..... probably the last trip Trey was ever going to want to go on..... but later it proved not to be the case). Trey was not a very good hitch-hiker. I just kept him walking ahead of me and I did the thumb-sticking. After an hour or so of walking/hobbling we were finally picked up by a friendly old man in his pick up. He had to stop a ways in front of us, and so I began to run, not wanting him to leave us behind... insisting that Trey do the same.... we must have looked a sight. Trey jumped in the bed of the truck and I got to keep the driver company. He lives near the base of the mountain where the trail comes down and so has been in the habit of helping hikers. Instead of dropping us off at the city limits, he went out of his way to take us to the bus station. We bought our tickets to Chambersburg and waited for our departure time watching the "characters" in the station..... and there were quite a few. I felt like such a weenie for pulling off, but I guess its' better than being crippled.

We got to Chambersburg, caught a cab to our car.... our hike was over. Well we had many days to kill and nowhere to be, so we went to the Appalachian Trail Headquarters in Harpers Ferry, Va. There we purchased T-Shirts, caps and paraphernalia from the A-T. Trey completely surprised me by purchasing my things for me... a birthday gift. After that, we caught some dinner and then headed into Harrisonburg, Va. for the nite. That nite we went to the movies.

The next few days were spent on the road, we stopped in Nashville and spent the day at Opryland U.S.A. amusement park and took in a performance of the Grand Ol' Opry where we were entertained by the likes of Roy Acuff, Skeeter Davis, Del Reeves and several others. The amusement park also has many country-western performances. I loved it, but I think Trey was pretty burnt out on the C&W sounds by the time we left. We drove all the way to Benton, Ark. that nite.

The next day we decided to go all the way to my folks home... entertaining ourselves on the road by burping at each other. Along the way I started talking about Greens sausage house and we really got ourselves keyed up, going about an hour out of our way to discover that it, like the entire town, was closed on Sunday..... mom better have something good to eat at home. We got home that late evening, the folks had catfish waiting..... it was their anniversary, we were a surprise to them. But they fed us, put us up for the nite, and we left the next mid-morning.

Well, since the trip had been so quickly ended, and we really were all psyched up for more (and despite my doctors advice) we planned a trip to Bustamante, Mexico and the caves there. We took with us two of the local students here... and had

a great time. We had to bribe pretty heavily to get two of the guys without birth certificates across the border..... we made all the arrangements with the keeper of the key to be at the cave entrance to open it for us at 9:30 the next morning. So, we took in a drink at the local restaurant and then headed to the campsite. That night the guys spelled out rather carefully with stones Happy 31st B'day in the dirt. It was a nice gesture... really sort of funny considering it was a day too early and the fact that I am 27, not 31 (so I insist). But the effort was appreciated.

The next morning we were up and at it bright and early and began the 2,000 foot ascent about 8:00a.m. It is a climb that usually takes about 30-45 minutes..... we managed to do it in about 90 minutes. One of the students with us was not really used to any sort of exercise and has a terrible smoking habit, necessitating rest every five feet. It was all right with me, as I stayed with him and was thus able to not over-tax my tendon. Well, we were at the top by 9:30, but no key-keeper - nor was he there at 10:30 or 11:30, by that time Trey volunteered to go down and find him, half-way there he met the guy and we were, after negotiating a price, were in the cave by noon. It was a great exploration trip, with lots of slipping and sliding, some rope work, and the exploration of a hidden room that I had not seen in about 6-10 yrs. A really great visit, even the being turned around a bit on our departure (I let the guys lead the way out,,,, they didn't pay attention to my earlier directions on how to do this, but it was fun). We were out of the cave 6 hours later, another adventure under our belt.

We camped again that night and feasted on a meal of sausage and beans (though with all the gas going on that day, it was probably not a wise side dish) and I managed to spray my face with hot grease, thus decorating my face with small scars. The next morning we headed home. A little trouble in getting out of Mexico - one of the guys had brought his sisters \$300.00 camera along and when we were searched at the drug check in Mexico we think he may have distracted us with all his throwing our stuff around and then kicked the camera outside the van. We did not discover it being gone until we were on the other side of the border. That sort of hurt.

That night, Trey took me to a wonderful Greek restaurant for my B-day (he really was being exceptionally generous about the whole thing) and then he visited his aunt while I visited with a local friend of mine. We picked up Trey's sister the next morning after a wonderful breakfast prepared by his aunt and uncle and left for Brownsville, where I had a wonderful 2 day stay at his mothers house, visited the pastor of some of my students (so I could write off the gas to the school account) and made it back home by noonish of the 18th.

I had been talking about getting another dog, and when I arrived home I found a birthday card from a friend with money especially for the purpose of a new dog. I went immediately to the SPCA and have now adopted a white mutt (it looks to have a lot of lab in it) girl dog about 2.5 months old. I have named her Psycho (after a name suggested by Trey to his father in some

sort of talk about their future dogs... and I liked the suggestion... no one else here on the staff likes it, but it is my dog).

But wait, my journeying is not yet to an end. Fr. Sal wants me to go to St. Louis to pick up some stuff from our old high school there. I leave in the morning, will arrive in the afternoon, pick up a U-Haul truck, load the stuff up and head back the next morning. I really don't know if I am ever going to get all the other stuff that I HAVE to get done before the school year done in time. Oh well, I guess that is what summers are about..... fun.... good times..... adventure.

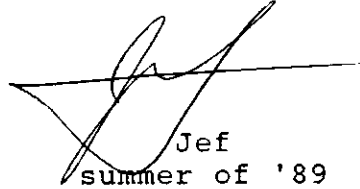
Already I am thinking of next year..... 2 weeks of back-packing and 2 week of rafting.... in the Shenandoah Valley. I have an appointment with a foot doctor for next Tues. hopefully the news will not be too bad... we shall see. Maybe I'll even keep the beard I'm presently sporting (though the VERY FEW gray hairs in it are making me think twice about that).

Anyway, I don't think the excitement is all over yet. It's been a great summer thus far, and actually, for the first time, I am not feeling as bad about the up-coming school year as usual. It might even be O.K.

Trey will leave for Brown University up east sometime in late August. I will miss him a lot, not having him as close by. He should really do well. It's nice to have a young friend with whom to do the kind of crazy things I like, and parents like his who allow it.

Hopefully I will be back to my old ways as far as letter writing goes with this new school year. It looks as though my class load will be a bit lighter, and I am pretty comfortable nw with the job of dean, so maybe I can find more opportunities to relax.

Do take care, be at peace, have a great time and be happy

  
Jef  
summer of '89

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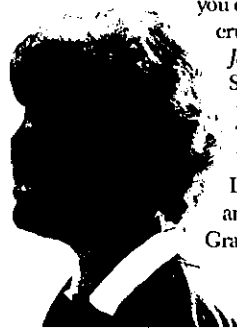


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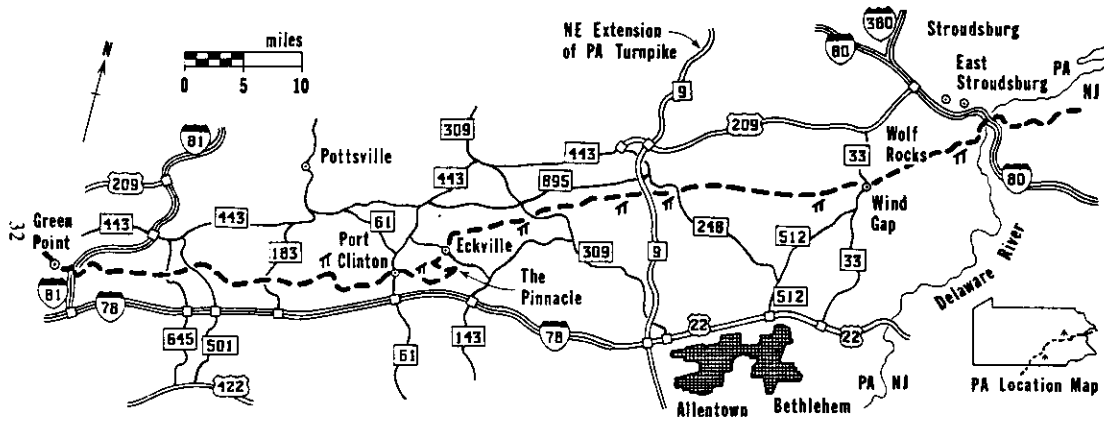
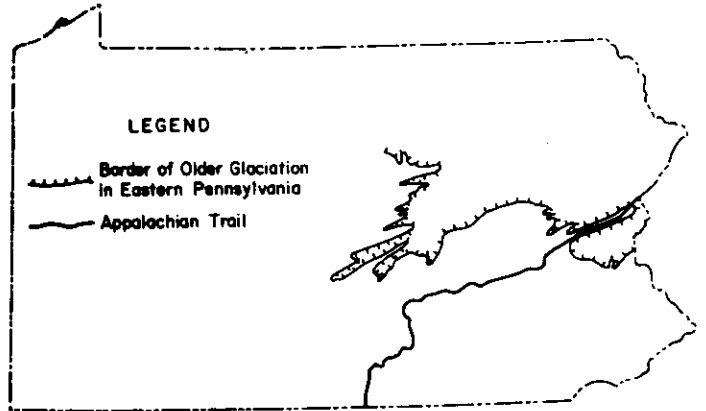
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