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26-Aug-00

Kirk, Jeff, and Ross,

It is 7:30 am. Today Ross is going to college. I have been sitting, looking at the foosball table, remembering when we first bought it, remembering the many hours you guys spent playing on it, and now looking at it as it stands unused.

It is difficult to believe that what we started 25 years ago when Kirk was born is now history. The three of you have been a part of our lives so long; it is difficult to remember anything about our lives before then.

And it has been an extraordinary 25 years ... I cannot imagine having lived our lives without the three of you. It has been so much fun, so interesting, and so fulfilling. Of all the things your Mom and I have ever done ... they all pale in comparison to having spent so much of our lives with you three.

When I think back, the two things that surprised me most were: 1) how much time kids take ... no matter what people told us, it did not really sink in until Kirk was born ... it is all consuming ... it made us wonder what we used to do with all our spare time, and 2) how much fun kids are ... especially after they can talk ... it was so interesting to hear you express your opinions ... your ideas ... your enthusiasm ... and especially your humor.

I remember at the Minnesota Science Museum the time Kirk pointed to a Christmas pine tree with ribbons holding apples on the branches and said, "Hey look, a pineapple tree." ☺

I remember when Jeff was in Kindergarten, learning penmanship. He brought home a paper for me to sign. Without thinking, I read it, signed it in my usual "not-so-neat" handwriting, and gave it back to Jeff. Jeff looked at it and said, "Daddy, why did you scribble on my paper?" I felt awful! What a role model I was! ☺

I remember when Ross and Mom were in our '73 Chevy Nova. Mom saw a much newer Nova and told Ross to look at the new car ... it was a Nova just like our car. Ross said that it does not look like our car. Mom replied that was because our car was much older. Then Ross said, "But when that car is older, it still won't look like our car." ☺

There are so many memories about music, sports, school, games, science discussions, math puzzles, vacations, learning to ride a bike and catch a ball ... memories I will treasure for the rest of my life. I wish I could list all of them for you, but it is not possible to put a lifetime of memories into one letter.

This a sad time and happy time for me. Sad that all of you are now gone ... happy to know that all of you are off to a great start in life, that you have a great set of values, and that you have become exceptional adults.

I hope all of you get married and have lots of kids. While a career may seem important, nothing is as great and as fulfilling as kids. I want you to share in the same joy we have had.

With love,