

Mrs. Betsy Neichter
2711 Colonel Dr.,
Louisville, KY 40242

11/20/92

Dear Betsy and Bill,

Under any circumstances the gift of a big box of that beautiful, delicious and exceptionally large Indian "iver fruit is a prize and a delight but even the conditions under which we received yours yesterday were a great pleasure, for all of which we thank you very much.

It has not been safe for me to drive out of Frederick since 1977 and I haven't. But I have regular appointments at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, in Baltimore. Until recently my wife's sister used to drive us there but she developed a heart condition and now also is allowed to drive only short distances. When a woman whose mother my wife had befriended heard of our predicament she told my wife to call her, that she'd always want to drive us there. Two weeks ago she did, for an appointment my wife had and yesterday I had my regular vascular checkup on my legs. That the family doctor told me in January 1990 he had expected me to lose ten years before then.

You've probably heard of John Hopkins because of its reputation. But few are aware of its size. The main hospital is a series of connected buildings that take up 14 acres not far from the center of Baltimore. Some of these buildings are 14 stories high. That installation has grown to where the new outpatient building is not connected with the others, except by an underground passageway. The distance is about the limit of my walking capability, to the west of the other buildings.

The building in which the chief of cardiovascular and transplant surgery has his clinic is about the limit of my walking capability to the east and south of the main entrance, where those who go to the hospital are deposited by drivers who use the parking garage. We got to where he has always held his clinic and found it empty. Inquiry told us that his clinic had been moved into the new outpatient building! So, with some uneasiness, some pain and unsteadiness, having used my legs about as much as is ordinarily safe, I had that to do twice over again. When I saw a chair or anything else I could sit on briefly I did. By the time I got to this new building I had felt like I was about to collapse several times and came close to passing out on the elevator that took me to the floor I needed.

Only to learn that this doctor had had his morning interrupted by a surgical emergency. Some of his morning patients were still waiting for him! When his staff saw the condition I was in they took me in as the first of his afternoon patients - almost two hours late!

As usual, one of his staff did a Doppler on both feet. A pleasant young woman, she said, "Not bad." They usually say nothing. I said, "Not good, either." She smiled and said, "But also not bad."

As you probably know, these tests are audible when the machines that record them are used, so I could hear the circulation. She also took my blood pressure which was surprisigly

good for the kind of day I'd had and when from the sleep apnea I'd been up since not much after 1 a.m., 145/65. So, then the doctor came in and looked at the results and at my legs he smiled and said what I do not remember hearing before after these test of the circulation in my feet, "better." I could not believe it. He said that in one foot it is 10 points better and the other 8 points! A very good sign on keeping both of them!

So, although exhausted and with another walk again the limit of my usual walking capability, we met the friend, she got her car and we drove home.

Refusing again to let me repay her costs.

When we got to the end of our lane, she being closer and more mobile, checked our mailbox to get the mail for us. But for the first time I can recall there was none. She knew that was unusual, too, and she wondered aloud if something could have happened to the rural carrier. She is a bit sensitive to rural carriers because her husband, who I've not seen in about 30 years, was one for years and today is the representative of that union for all of Maryland and a bit more. We drove to the house, I got out ahead of my wife to open the door for her, and when I got to the door I found that the carrier had carried the mail to it and immediately saw the Indian River box. So, immediately I signalled to her to come and she did. I'd carried the other mail in when I opened the door and she took the box before I could go back for it, knowing I'm not supposed to lift more than 15 pounds. And she did accept a couple of those magnificent ~~orange~~ oranges and only one grapefruit, all she would take.

Being able to give her a little something did mean much to us. It was just a gesture but it made us feel good, and we thank you for your perceptive timing!

Two weeks ago we got back to Frederick in time for lunch and she agreed to go to out favorite restaurant whose owners have become friends, and oriental restaurant. The man is Korean, his wife Japanese, and she regards my wife as a surrogate mother. This woman, Ann, let me order for her and as I knew she had enough to take home for another meal for the two of them. Her husband did enjoy it, and did arrange his schedule for this coming Wednesday, when we should be back ^{from} for my urological consultation (I'm now on the new medication, Proscar and we hope it works!) ^{for him} for him to join us there for lunch.

Her husband is quite a story of overcoming a serious handicap. When they were quite young (she either just out of college or not yet having gone to college) and they farmed he went to help a friend harvest a crop and through the friend's carelessness had an arm torn off. He had to give up farming and when I knew him was a rural carrier.

And his name, as was his father's and is his son's, is actually "Ai." ^{pronounce A.I.}

Bill at least comes from a rural area in which such acts of friendship are not uncommon but they are always appreciated especially by octogenarians who are in need. So, we really did get an extra pleasure from the timing of your fine gift and I can't wait to finish consuming the ~~orange~~ store-bought oranges. I'm prescribed one to begin each day. We do thank you very much for your thoughtfulness. This reference above to how things

are or at least were in rural Kentucky, where Bill comes from and before either of you was born, reminds me of a story I think you'll enjoy about some of my experiences in London during the famous case of that era, 1938, U.S. v Mary Helen et al, the "Bloody ~~Harlan~~ Harlan" case. "Mary Helen" was the name of a mine, first in the indictment of more than 60 corporations and deputized gun thugs. When you are here, as Bill ^{INDICTED} indicted you may be, remind me of those days.

Again our sincere ~~thanks~~ ^{thanks} and appreciation,

Harold Weisberg

I wrote this when I awakened and put it aside to be more sensitive to typos on reading it later. Today's mail came with a letter I'd written Bill and forgot to affix a stamp! So it is enclosed.