

Dear Phil,

3/1/85

Reur 1 and 5, better to write Jerry McKnight at Hood College (History Dept) than at home because he has those files there and the copier also is there. He copied my FBIH, and Memphis Invaders (how crazy those kids were to take THAT name!) and Sanitation workers files and is using them in teaching. One girl, planning a law career after her brother, did a great honors paper on them. (Another, by the way, has done a paper on the official treatment of Marina Oswald and is expanding it now into an independent study. Several turned loose to work independently in my files have called it the most educational experience of their college careers.)

Instead of more correspondence, the copy of Frame-Up heretofore, Total cost \$11.40.

You ask if my outdoor exercise is exclusively woodchopping, say it is difficult for you and makes you sore and that you have much of it to do. What is more difficult is the kind of moving of uncut chunks I'm into now, green, heavy, more than 100 feet to take and stack them, and with the danger entailed for me from even a single piece falling on a foot or striking a leg or thigh. I therefore am stacking these heavy pieces 6 feet high. And with this load into an older man's advice.

Sunday a younger friend was here and used my chain saw to fell some damaged hard pines. Those about 6" in diameter he cut into 8-10 foot lengths and I carried them up the steep hill behind the house. Thicker logs he cut to stove size and I'll haul them up when I can. First I must move these larger and heavier cuts from the side of the lane near the house. Last winter when he cut some others up, early in the winter, I could not walk up that hill without sitting and resting. But I eased into it and by the time that job was done, many trips, I was able to pull a full load in a large cart stopping only once to rest while standing briefly. When he pulled a cart of it as we returned after we had to stop he had to rest 3 or 4 times and could not see how I was able to do it. He is 30 or younger and in a month I'll be 72, aside from my limitations and infirmities.

It is important, physically and psychologically, to be your own master and to get to be able to do what others do, within normal limitations. You are a college prof, not a lumber jack, so you operate at your level, and do not try to equal a professional man in wood working.

I can use my gas powered chain saw but I do not because I do sometimes get dizzy and it does not stop automatically, the electric chain saws do. I use the electric some of the time but most of the time, on smaller wood, I use a pruning saw, about 15". It gives me exercise. Sure it takes time, but the exercise is worth the time.

I have enough space to avoid stacking wood high as the top of my head and higher, but that gives me exercise I get no other way and besides, I can be and am careful, and I'm resisting giving in to weaknesses. This is important, including to the mind and its attitudes and fixes.

When you say you get sore, you've gotta be real soft because I do not and my skin is extraordinarily tender from the anticoagulant, of which I take a high level daily. If a small piece of soft pine rubs against a forearm, as happened a couple of weeks ago, through a denim jacket and a heavy flannel shirt I got a large bruise and a piece of skin the about size of a nickel was brushed back and off. I put a bandaid on and went out and moved more of that wood immediately. I was not going to be intimidated or inhibited by a slight mishap. I'm so careful in stacking this heavy stuff, most of which weighs 50 lbs and some are over 75, that when there is any question I walk off and examine the stack to be sure it does not lean in either direction. In short, I live with my many problems but they do not dominate me and thus do not depress me.

Your muscles, your hands or both can get sore. This suggests more than lack of use of the muscles and hands, lack of experience. Perhaps also inadequate tools or lack of familiarity with them. All the tools you can need cost little. If you have a good axe, be sure it is sharp and has a sound, unsplit handle. I've never used one but I intend to get the gizmo they now make to fit on the handle where it enters the axe because in splitting that point sometimes strikes the firewood and is damaged. If you do not have a splitting maul, they are inexpensive. With both, get good quality