

Dear Dave,

8/30/80

While I rest and recover from the first of the day's pained physical labors, this reassurance: I am improving. I'll know more before you can receive this. Lil and I have talked it over and she agrees that if the hospital recommends surgery I'll ask them to go ahead with it while I'm there. I'm also on the second of five days off the blood-thinner and I feel better without these lapses, so it would not have to be repeated.

My walking ability had become impaired. Much. From earlier injunctions dating to Group Health days I was reluctant to force myself after pain persisted from fear that the pressure generated might break a clot loose. Dr. Mufnagle told me Monday that he wants me to build up to a non-stop hour. (Flatland city man, he probably assumed I'd be walking on the level.) Well, on the first walk of the fifth day thereafter I exceeded an hour, half uphill. In the lane, by 10:15, I'd walked, non-stop, the equivalent of from here to the Holiday Inn. Not bad!

Yesterday I got an earlier start and kept at it for about 50 minutes. However, after the first rest I spent an hour on the riding mower and then, after additional resting, two hours pushing the hell out of the push-mowers, broken in half. Made me feel better than in a long time, too. Half of the mowing was in the woods, big stuff, thick and dense. A new neighbor, whose kids enjoyed ice-skating on the pond, wants to see if he can repair the broken dam, so I'm liberating it for his inspection. Means I have to show him where his tractor will go so its tires may survive.

This in the hottest month and weather on are record, staying above 95 (highs) and with unhealthy air warnings. ('Course, that for old folks.)

Now my only fear is of falling. In addition to the danger from the anti-coagulant and hemorrhaging the local doctor recently added the caution that I'm getting to the age where hips break from falls. That's why I stopped when I wanted to push my walking performance more. I was getting unsteady.

I've walked out whatever was causing the pain in the thigh. It persists in the left leg, so I presume there may be some new venous obstruction. I doubt these new tests will pick any up, but I'm prepared to walk out the obstruction(s) or develop new by-passes. Winter will take care of itself. I did check with the local doctor, to let him know I'll be at Georgetown and to ask if he wants any other checking done. Negative, which I take to be good.

Although the cold presents problems, I'm looking forward to winter because of the different physical exercises it holds. I'm really looking forward to wood cutting and splitting. A friend has a new type splitting ~~axe~~ maul called "Monster Maul." He says it splits what otherwise can't be. I'm going to learn if I can handle its 25lbs. In addition to what should be a full winter's supply already stacked, as I think you saw, I have about a cord of knotty stuff. I'm staying away from felling any except small trees, but if my neighbor Paul remains able to do them for me I'll have half of next year's wood stacked and drying by Xmas. I've already cleared the underbrush away from almost all the trees for immediate culling. All are downhill from the house, which requires work and hard use of the legs getting them to the house and most will have to be sectioned where they are and carried up to where I can use a cart. So I'll be rebuilding during the winter, too, and I do look forward to it.

I feel that if I could reach the doctor's target by the fifth day it is reassuring. While it is boxing, I'll improve on that on my own.

I was alte getting to the walking because I wanted to complete a longer than usual appeal to Shea centered on the fee-waiver revocation but also including all cases. I'm leaning on him hard, to force a decision. I've heard nothing on this from Jim, so I'm restricting myself to what is not in litigation. As usual, I believe he is letting this slide and I don't want to. I'd rather have an adverse decision and go on to other things. Otherwise I'm stalled indefinitely and have to keep fighting pointless fights. I plan to tell Jim this all over again.

Well, I've about finished sweating so I can take Lil shopping. We'll keep keep you posted. By the way, Lil has sent Jim the draft of her will. Best to you all,