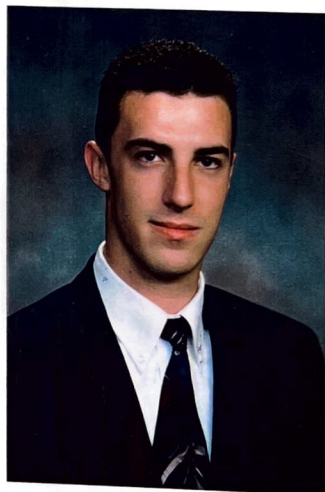


Letters to our Grandchildren



Daniel M. Armendariz



David P. Bailey



Alisa H. Reninger



Jeanelle Taveau

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November 7, 1995

Dear Grandkids,

I am writing this letter to tell you about my life as a college student in South Texas at the end of the 20th century. Your "Bampaw" went through a great deal of changes as a freshman in college.

First, I became an Internet junkie, sending E-Mail to Heather Elizalde, Esequiel Elizalde III, and Zeke William Elizalde. Also, the reason why your "Bampaw" always reads *Wired* is because Dr. Libby Allison, my English 101BG professor asked me to write an essay on Audience and Purpose on *Wired* which I enjoyed reading so much and subscribed to the magazine. *Wired* is a magazine for people who are interested in the Internet and future explorations in computer technology such as Virtual Reality, artificial intelligence, and higher quality models of computers.

Besides becoming an Internet junkie, your "Bampaw" collected many boxes of baseball, football, and basketball cards with Michael Elizalde. My favorite baseball cards were Cal Ripkin, Jr. of the Baltimore Orioles, Ken Griffey, Jr. of the Seattle Mariners, and Greg Maddux, the pitcher for the Atlanta Braves, which won the Pennant in the National League in 1995. My favorite football cards are Troy Aikman of the Dallas Cowboys, Dan Marino of the Miami Dolphins, and John Elway of the Denver Broncos. My favorite basketball cards are Michael Jordan of the Chicago Bulls and Shaquille O'Neal of the Orlando Magic.

Also, while your "Bampaw" was in college I watched the O. J. Simpson trial everyday. The trial concerned the guilt or innocence of O. J. Simpson for the murders of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend Ronald Goldman, on June 12, 1994. I watched the trial from late June 1994, till the end of the trial in October 1995, waiting to see him get convicted, but as you know O. J. Simpson was not guilty in the eyes of the jury. He may get convicted in the wrongful-death civil suits for Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman filed by their parents. Also, O. J. Simpson has to go to court for custody of his two children, mothered by Nicole Brown Simpson.

Besides watching the O. J. trial your "Bampaw", spent most of his days at Esequiel Elizalde Jr. and Janie Elizalde's house. What was great about them was that while your great-grandmother, Velma Cantu Armendariz, was not being a mother to me, Esequiel Elizalde Jr. and Janie Elizalde were like my perfect parents. If I had not already told you, they are the ones that won \$16.7 million dollars in the Texas State Lottery. They lived in a two-story house in Kings Crossing which included: a workout room, a swimming pool, a big screen TV, a laser disc player, 6 bedrooms, 2 living rooms, 2 BMWs, a Mercedes, a Suburban, and a fully-loaded computer. Besides all the possessions that they had, they treated me like part of the family. Also, Zeke William Elizalde was only 1 1/2 when I met him, and I treated him if he was my own son.

Besides having a great family, your "Bampaw" is a Republican. Now, Bill Clinton is President of the United States which I hate. I am a conservative Republican and a straight-ticket one at that. This meant that no matter who the running

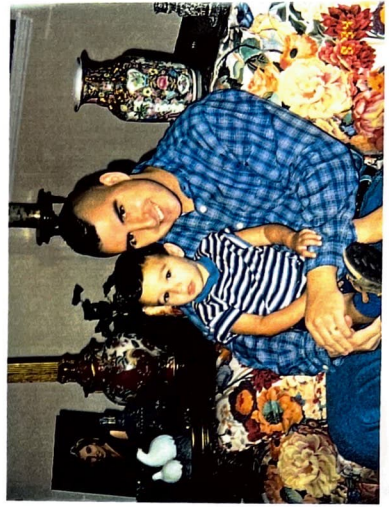
for election I always voted for the Republican candidate. Also, I am of a fan of Rush Limbaugh, and I read all of his books which include: *The Way Things Outta Be* and *See, I Told You So*. If this is not ironic, I am also a fan of Howard Stern. Howard Stern's book *Private Parts* was a big success and is being made into a movie. Besides being conservative on most issues, I was liberal on issues concerning the environment. Whenever Corpus Christi had an Ozone Action Day, I would rollerblade to college on the rollerblades I had received for my 19th birthday which was on October 24, 1995.

Altogether, your "Bampaw" had an interesting life as a first year college student at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and at Esequiel Elizalde Jr. and Janie Elizalde's house at Kings Crossing.

Love,

Daniel M. Armendariz

Daniel M. Armendariz ("Bampaw")



October 11, 1995

Dear Grandchildren,

Right now, I'm a hard working, youthful eighteen year old. However, by the time you read this I'll be a distinguished older man or I will have "passed on." Regardless, my purpose in writing this letter is to tell of how life is for me as an eighteen-year-old. Life will have probably changed drastically since I was younger.

As of September 1995, I am enrolled as a student at Texas A & M University - Corpus Christi, pursuing a degree in computer science. College life is really different from high school. I have really had to study in college. In high school, I rarely had to study to ace tests. Now, I feel I bust my butt on tests and assignments just to find out my efforts are worth a "B", or "C." Furthermore, college assignments take much more time to complete than high school assignments. In high school, assignments usually took one night. However, in college, I spend about one week. All of these professors are trying to load me down with work, such as my English professor, Dr. Libby Allison, making me write letters. In this English class, we have been peer editing our papers through the network, which is a way to communicate from one computer to another. Our class is an intra-class network, meaning that we can read our fellow classmates' papers. In my history classes, about two hundred people fill the lecture hall and the professors keep notes on the computer. They display these notes through the computer on a huge projection screen. In addition, the school issues I.D. cards with magnetic strips on the back, which can be used for checking out equipment for sports, entering the campus late at night, and a variety of other things.

Lately, I have been learning how to use the Internet. This network goes outside the classrooms, campus, state, and sometimes the country. I have talked to people from all over the United States and read mail from people all over the world. This technology may seem archaic, but it is relatively new to me and many of my classmates. I've been told by some professors, such as Dr. Libby Allison, that this is one of the first colleges to actually use the Internet and computers at this level.

Last weekend, I went to watch a band called the Toadies at a concert. They play a type of music called alternative or grunge. Alternative is supposed to be music that just doesn't fit in any category, but it's become much like rock. This music is probably "the oldies" to you. I bet recording companies during your time will be selling sets of the "grungy ninety's," because companies today are really trying to push music sets, such as "The Rockin' 80's, The Groovin' 70's, etc." Lately, music has been trying to mesh together, such as rap singers in rock bands and country band playing rock. To me, this "meshing" make classifying music difficult.

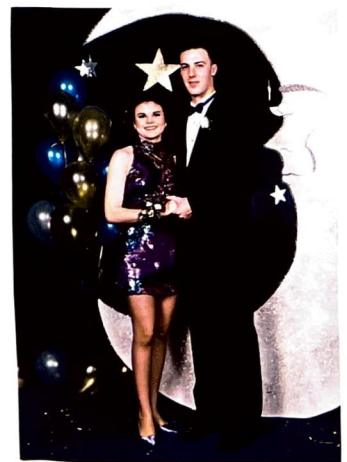
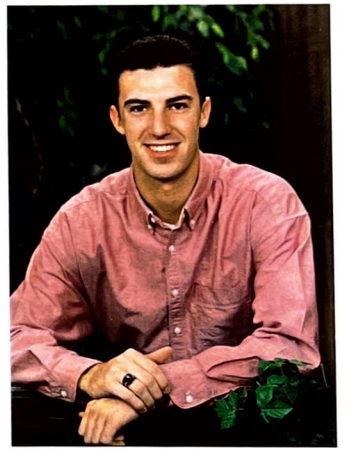
For the past two years, I have been restoring a classic car, a 1968 Chevelle SS 396. These cars are mostly mechanical. Unlike the new cars of the 1990's. New cars have all these computer chips and boards to regulate everything from fuel intake to exhaust. The old cars were simple and easy to work on. A comparison would be like building a log cabin to building a skyscraper. The log cabin is like the old car. Nowadays, people can hook their car up to a computer to fix it.

I enclosed some photos of me when I was eighteen. I'm a stud, and good-looking too. By the time you read this, I probably will have lost my youthful appearance, but I am hopeful I won't have lost my youthful spirit.

Love,

David Bailey

David P. Bailey



October 18, 1995

Dear grandchildren,

I am aware that when you read this letter I will look, talk, and act like a grandmother. But, please understand that at this moment of time I am full of youth and zeal; your grandmother at age 18. I am attending Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi and am experiencing the norms of today's everyday life. I write this letter to share with you a day of my life, October 6, 1995, so you may compare the way you and I have lived. I also write this letter to share with you my hopes for both your future and mine.

As the day began my twin sister, your great aunt Christina, and I hurried out the door while screaming at each other about being late. We got into our white 1993 Ford Escort and drove to Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, a fairly small college. As we drove down Ocean Drive we heard on the radio President Bill Clinton talking about the O.J. Simpson trial. O.J. Simpson was a football star accused a beating his wife and another man to death. The trial had been going on for almost a year and, after the verdict (not guilty) was read, people still were talking about it. I guess the reason the trial received so much attention was that it was a scandal involving a well known star.

When the car was parked Christina walked to her class and I walked to the student center. When I got to the center, I heard a song of Micheal Jackson's being played in the pool room. He is a famous pop star who has been accused of molesting little boys. Some people say the reason why Micheal Jackson married Elvis Presley's daughter was so he could seem like a normal heterosexual, not a man interested in little boys. If you do not know who Elvis Presley is, he is a famous rock star who overdosed on drugs. As you can see, scandals of famous people are well known and well publicized.

Once I got to the student center's lounge I sat down near the big screen television and watched the weather reporter talk about hurricane Roxanne. I hoped it would not come through Corpus Christi, though the surfers waited for it impatiently. I then took out my gender communications paper and read through it. I wrote the paper about the problem with using the word "he" as a generic term for all people. The usage of this word was very controversial in our society just a few years ago. Some people, mainly women, thought that since it was okay to use "he" as a generic word for all people, then it should be okay to use "she". So, in my paper I used the word "she" as a generic term, to prove a basic point that it is not right to exclude one sex in writing regardless which sex it is.

After I finished reading over my paper I decided to go into the the store on campus. On the way there I saw a young women wearing a sports bra and biker shorts with nothing else; it seems to me that are society sheds more clothing every year. When I got to the store I saw a great variety of boxer shorts in stock. I found it odd that wearing men's underwear was in fashion for both men and women. I contemplated what kinds of clothing would students be wearing at this school forty years from now.

Finally, when the time came to 10:00 a.m. I left the students center and went to my history class. Then, after the history lecture about the Civil War, I went to the computer rooms and wrote my boyfriend on the Internet. The Internet is a way

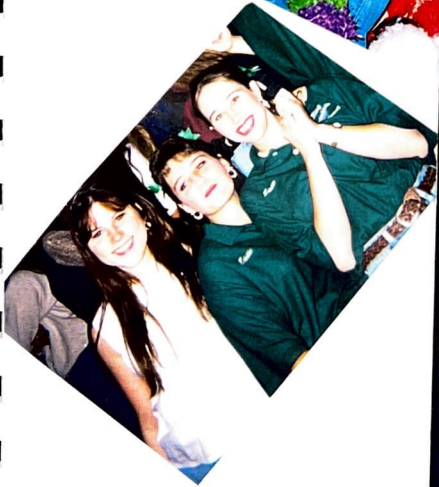
of talking to people through the computer. I asked him if he would meet me in the lounge at 2:00 p.m. and take me home. Once 2:00 p.m. rolled around I met Daniel and was ready to head for home. And that was the end of October 6, 1995's school day, during my freshmen year in college.

Before I close this letter, let me tell you about my hopes for the future after college. I hope that I become a writer, so I may make a difference in this world. I also hope that I will be able to discipline myself so I may reach that goal. My hope for you, my grandchildren, is that you have many school days to write about, as I have had. I also hope that you make a difference in this world with what you do after college.

Thank you for reading your old grandmother's thoughts. I will see you in about forty years, so until then I will be praying for you.

Love your grandmother,

Alisa Hope Reninger



October 17, 1995

My Dearest Grandchildren,

I am writing this letter to inform you of what my life was like in 1995 as an 18-year-old college student. Our society is different from those of the past as I'm sure it will be different from those of the future.

The advancements in Medical Technology fascinate me. With my father, your great grandfather, being a physician, I have had the opportunity to learn about these improvements first hand. Everyday new medications are discovered which aid in simplifying medical procedures. For example, currently a drug is being tested that will help people lose weight. In the surgical area of medicine, the discovery of laser and orthoscopic surgery has simplified the surgical procedures and stress on the patient. In orthoscopic surgery, a surgeon places a tiny camera through a half-inch incision in the area that is being operated on. Then two additional incisions are made to insert the tools needed for the procedure. The doctor performs the surgery by watching what he/she is doing on a video screen.

An aspect of our society that is bothersome to me that I hope has changed long before you read this letter, involves the salaries of teachers and law enforcement officials. Teachers are expected to educate the people who are next in line to run our country. Teachers put in more work than the typical 8:30am to 3:30pm school day. Many teachers arrive early to school and stay many hours after the final bell rings to help students. Also, teachers often spend their personal time planning the next school day and expressing concern for their students through parent/teacher conferences or setting up additional tutoring times. Another severely underpaid profession is law enforcement, especially the officers in the Department of Public Safety. The troopers work long, odd hours 365 days a year. The troopers are all too often isolated, when simple back-up could take anywhere from 15-30 minutes to arrive. The public has invested their trust in law enforcement officials to keep the roads safe, and police officers are expected to protect the general welfare of the people. Every time law enforcement officials go on duty they are risking their lives for us. Unfortunately, it seems we show them our gratitude by paying them salaries which barely cover their living expenses. I hope this will change in the very near future.

Another issue that bothers me and that has been on the rise over the past five years, is the individual's lack of responsibility in society. No one is responsible for his/her own actions anymore. The plaintiff, the one at fault, blames the defendant, the one who is accused for the irresponsible act. The plaintiff sues the defendant and the case ends up in court. The irony is that in today's society the plaintiff, the one really at fault, usually wins and receives a generous amount of money for his irresponsible behavior. This is directly linked to lawsuit abuse. One of the most recent and ridiculous cases involves a woman who bought a cup of coffee at McDonald's a fast food restaurant, and she spilt the coffee on herself. As a result, the coffee burnt her. Well, that's to be expected because coffee is hot. Since she burnt herself with the coffee she spilt, she sued McDonald's and gained 3 million dollars for her irresponsible act. This too must change. Lawsuit abuse is

costing the tax payers thousands of dollars a year for a worthless cases.

Lastly, I'll share with you the prices we pay for items daily. For example, today I stopped at a gas station to fill up my 1994 3/4, ton extended cab Chevy pickup truck (cost estimated \$22,000) with unleaded gasoline which cost 97 cents a gallon. I went in to pay for the gas, and bought a 16-ounce Gatorade at \$1.05 a bottle and a Snickers candy bar at 65 cents. I purchased these items with a Texaco (name of gas company) credit card. The card is plastic with a magnetic strip on the back. The magnetic strip is "read" by the main company computer, and my purchase is recorded. Once a month a bill is sent to my home by the United States Postal service with the collected data. I have a certain number of days until I have to pay the amount that I have charged on the account. On a typical school day one can find me in a pair of windshorts and a t-shirt which cost about \$20 each, along with a pair of Nike basketball shoes which range from \$80 to \$120 a pair. These are just a few prices of common items during this period of time.

I hope with the information I have provided, you have some idea of what life was like when I was an 18 year old college student. I wish you all the best of luck and I encourage you to strive for excellence. All the work is worth it in the end.

Your loving grandmother,
Jeanelle Taveau

