

June 3, 1997

Dear Friends--

Our heartfelt gratitude to all of you who made the pool dedication such a joyous occasion and paid us such an unexpected honor. As Joanne says, we have become "family" over the long haul. The fellowship and comradeship that come with a shared goal and faith in the vision are gifts that cannot be bought.

We wish everyone could know the work you put in through all the trials and tribulations--especially this past week. Bern pushing the magic cleaning machine through the lobby and mechanical room, Joan Nelson and Suzanne Budd cleaning the ladies locker, Dave Smith and Dave Wassenaar moving furniture into the office, Bill Price helping them hang plaques late Friday night, Patty and Sheena cleaning around the pool and--I-don't-know what else. I think everyone had a turn at the broom!

There were some problems the week prior to dedication:

Three pumps failed to remove water so Acme could apply marseite.

Frank Mowrey couldn't finish as scheduled--he just about sliced off three fingers while sawing the reception area counter.

The threat of rain again on Saturday was a worry and so was the muddy parking lot.

Michelle Biddick called Thursday to say Middle School band couldn't perform after all.

Sara Smith called Thursday to say Phil Schairbaum had to conduct a funeral Saturday so couldn't give the benediction.

Todd Welscott kept making changes in the program.

Ken Mousseau said weather too wet to spread gravel on driveway.

Friday night Joan called to ask where was the wheelchair for Ralph Hamilton. Find it quick!

John Hess couldn't find the screws to attach the railing for the ramp.

There was still so much cleaning up to do Friday that Bruce kept saying "there's no way we're going to be ready for the dedication."

At 5:40 a.m. Saturday the "balloon" lady called to say her headlights weren't working so she'd be late getting there. Early morning fog was so dense it hid the pool building. Down along the highway, where the races began, one could hardly see the tents put up by the Coast Guard.

So on Saturday morning Bruce and I felt very uneasy--he hadn't had time to jot down notes for remarks at the ceremony. I couldn't think straight. The film in our camera was all used up. The programs were still at the printers.

Say, how does an Army run a war?

So, what happened? Somehow, it all came together.

LexaLite loaned pump, Acme did marsite, water poured in via temporary hoses.

Frank returned to pretty much finish reception counter.

Kate Belfy finished the mural just ahead of the carpet layers.

Ken Mousseau graveled the driveway. As a bonus, he offered to install the flagpole. Dave Smith got a big flag.

Gary Stutzman showed up with musicians from Northwest Academy just as the boom box was being set up for taped music.

Rev. Nelson said he would be happy to give benediction.

Linda DeGrow found wheelchair for Ralph.

John Hess outraced the rising pool water to get the posts in, at least, for the railing.

Dale Troppman tracked down Carol Deakins and her crew to finish cleaning the building early Saturday morning. They then watched dozens of muddy runners cross the field to use the Unisex bathroom. Theresa Cook braved the fog and made a beautiful balloon arch with wide gold ribbon for cutting ceremony.

I picked up film while Paul at Kwikie's finished printing programs. Bruce holed up in the office and worked on his speech. Suzanne sewed button on his jacket.

Beth Strawbridge remembered to bring the stool and Michelle found the box with the booties to cover muddy shoes.

Then--the Sun came out!

The beautiful A capella rendition of "Star Spangled Banner" sung by Dave Smith as the flag was raised caused a bunch of us to choke up. Another very special touch was Steve and Anne Hansen's idea of christening the pool with ladles of water tossed into the pool by each visitor.

Patt DeYoung signed in about 150 guests. Mona Bergeon and Susan Van Wieren had the (non-alcoholic) champagne all ready for us. (Joanne Curtis may have missed out because she was busy selling bricks). Dave Strawbridge came up with the perfect statement on the spot when interviewed by Channel 9 & 10. Smiling Dan Spagnuolo dealt with the unexpected arrival of the musicians.

We wish Mary Adams, Mary Frame, Earl Kilander, Sandy Allard, Dan Buday and Jinx Pancoast had been able to share the happy occasion with us. Perhaps this account will provide a sense of this memorable event.

For Bruce and me, it was one of the most joyous occasions of our lives.

HOW CAN WE EVER THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR PULLING THIS OFF AND FINDING TIME TO THINK OF A PLAQUE HONORING ALL THE VOLUNTEERS AND US?! THE VISION COULD NOT HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED WITHOUT ALL OF YOU. YOU ARE ALL VERY SPECIAL AND WE WILL ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL TO YOU.