

FROM THE DESK OF

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September 10, 1996

Greetings Thomas family members!

I hope this letter finds you both happy and healthy!

Enclosed you will find a copy of our first "family" newsletter. The idea has been rattling around in my mind for quite some time but I simply didn't take the time to do anything about it. Then I remembered the Nike commercial, "JUST DO IT! So, enclosed is my stab at getting us started.

The purpose for this newsletter is simply to keep our family "connected" and, hopefully, a bit more informed about events going on in our community churches, schools, libraries, parks, etc. that might affect our lives or be of interest to us. We live in such a fast-paced and mobile society that it seems we rarely have time to make a quick phone call to or visit a family member to catch up on what's happening or to simply say, "How are you? Hope you're doing well." I would like this newsletter (which I hope we can distribute every other month) to contain information that will interest everyone and symbolize the "unity" and "pride" which should be characteristic of the Thomas family. By no means is this newsletter a replacement for the telephone calls and visits that we should make as often as we can. But, hopefully, it will remind us that we have a family of people who are concerned about our well-being and enjoy hearing about us and what we're interested in.

First of all, let me explain that although the first edition was put together completely by me, that was only to get the project off the ground and to give you some idea of what might be included in it. I certainly hope that all future editions will contain contributions from other family members. After reviewing the enclosed, I hope you will agree that the idea has some merit and would like to contribute to its continuation and growth. As I stated previously, the first copy is somewhat indicative of its writer's interests, but I can hardly wait to receive articles, recipes, prayers, jokes, etc. from other family members to be included in future editions. (You will note that there is no information concerning sports in this edition because I don't know a football from a basketball, but I would love for someone to volunteer to keep us up-to-date on what's going on in that area since I know there are many family members who are interested but may not have time to watch the games.)

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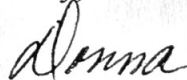
Secondly, I needed to have a starting point. As we all know, the Thomas family is a **big** family. I could not possibly include all the branches in the distribution at this point in time. So for purposes of a beginning and due to the fact that my paternal and maternal grandparents are deceased, I have started this "family tree" with my parents at the top. The next branch down includes their children; the next branch, their grandchildren, and so on and so on. (I hope to have this "tree" included in the next edition of the newsletter.) But I feel it is certainly possible for this newsletter to expand and include other branches of our family tree. (If anyone has any ideas about how to do this, I'm open to all suggestions.)

Included in this edition of the newsletter is a listing of addresses and phone numbers for family members. I hope that this will be useful to everyone, especially during the holidays when cards are being mailed. (Please let me know if this information changes.)

In closing, I hope that you will enjoy the enclosed and get excited about making a contribution to the next issue. I welcome all constructive criticism and look forward to an improved product each edition. Just remember, you can't complain if you're not willing to contribute something--be it suggestions, labor, postage, etc., anything will be welcomed. (Please feel free to leave a message on my answering machine or at my e-mail address.)

In the meantime, take care and may God bless each and every one of you!!!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donna".

Note: The next edition should be mailed in November. By the way is anyone interested in organizing a bowling party???? I think it might be fun!!!!