

## Plight of a Parent – A Damaged Computer (Item #5)

*“Does he take me for a fool?”*

- Matt Rainer, a question on the affidavit, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2008

In October, following my release from jail, I received the contents of the evidence pertaining to my case; a summary of the evidence was provided in the last writing, “Plight of a Parent – Aggravated Stalking”. This next in a series is specifically about “Item #5” of the evidence described as follows:

5. A computer and printer sent to my son for his graduation from high-school...

The summary (from “Plight...Aggravated Staking”) began as follows:

Continuing with the evidence, item #5 is a gift – not an assault and not malicious – but only a graduation gift. Yes, I did “willfully and knowing” purchase the gift – but it was not nor could seriously be construed as malicious or any form of assault...

Yes, I purchased a Dell notebook in April for my oldest – who graduated from high-school in June of this year. Other gifts included a Dell printer, a book (“Don’t Waste Your Life”, by John Piper), a surge protector, a wireless mouse, and a card of congratulations.

Within the contents of the evidence was an affidavit from Matt pertaining to the gifts; apparently, the computer was broken: described as being cracked and with a broken or damaged disk drive. His last statement (or question) in the brief testimonial was: “Does he take me for a fool?”

To answer Matt’s question (for the benefit of the reader only), I do not think that you (Matt) are a fool. Coincident to Matt’s question, I recently read a paraphrased proverb: “It is wise man that looks ahead, sees a problem, and tries to avoid it. A fool proceeds without caution and will pay a penalty.” But to go further, let me offer (again, to the reader only) another quote from a recent read:

Your (parent to child) generation will surely witness interesting days. My advice: don’t quit...just live ready. Conduct your studies with diligence, your work with perseverance, and your relationships with grace. Seek authenticity at the highest level, for one of the great gifts of authenticity is that it leaves us continuously ready for “what comes next.” \*\*

\*\* Written “To our sons, Adam and Matt”, written by Richard A. Swenson, MD; 1999.

Besides trying to reassure my son that I do not believe him to be a fool, I would also encourage him with words like that used above by Richard Swenson – to his own children; that by doing so, would benefit him for the present as well as future. Intermixed with this encouragement however, would be some effort to try to resolve the problem that evidently prompted the question. The expressed problem (in the testimony) was that the computer or gift arrived to him damaged as described: “However, the laptop (computer) I received had a jammed disk-drive and part of the laptop was cracked.”

To address this problem is to back-up and reason as to what happened – what caused the crack and damaged disk-drive? On purchased of the computer, I loaded it with Microsoft Office®; and at that time, it was working properly to include the disk-drive; and without any marks or cracks. The computer was carefully packed; and was shipped by the U.S. Postal Service as “fragile”, Priority Mail, and insured over the purchased value of the contents.

After learning of the damaged computer, I spoke with a local postal clerk on the matter (offering all of the details while elaborating on the likely condition of the box given the described damage to the computer). We agreed that for the computer to have incurred such damage during shipment, the box would have to have torn, crushed or otherwise visibly compromised. Arriving in this state, the box would have been sited by the attending clerk for examination with the filing of a claim to follow. We agreed that the loss could have been recovered as generally described above; but given that such did not occur at pick-up, the box must have appeared uncompromised or undamaged.

If the box was undamaged – and the computer undamaged – at the time of pick-up, what could have happened? I will tell you (the reader) in lieu my son that I would not make such a purchase with the intent or action to damage it; indeed, such an act would be childish, malicious and wasteful. I did not damage the computer, the USPS did not damage the computer...but Matt received the computer, damaged as described.

In my previous writing, “Plight of a Parent – Aggravated Stalking”, I addressed “malicious” in application to the evidence (or my actions) that was generally gift-giving and letter-writing. You (the reader), I and everyone (except the Prosecution) understand that “malicious” means to deliberately and intentionally cause hurt or damage to something or someone. What is absolutely true is that the hands (and minds) that prepared and shipped my son’s computer were not malicious...