

Father: Local teen discusses experience of becoming a parent

Continued from E6

Right now, I have a part-time job at the Westmount Country Club. Also my parents, my brother, her brother and her grandparents are helping out. We have a lot of help from outside people; it's not just us, and that's helping out a lot.

Q: Do you have any other thoughts? What would you like to say about your experience?

For me, personally, I was scared of the whole pregnancy thing. But now that I was there with my girlfriend in the room, and now that my son's here, all my emotions have changed. Before he was here, I would just wonder to myself, "How would it be if he wasn't coming?" and "Would I still be with my girlfriend if she had chosen an abortion?" But now that he's here, nothing could explain what I felt when I first held my son in my arms. Nothing can explain

all the joy, the sorrow, all the emotions when you hold your first child.

Now that my childhood's almost over, it's going to be really hard for my girlfriend and myself. I'm only 17, and I know that it's going to be really hard between school and working, extracurricular things and just having time for myself. But I know that there are sacrifices I've had to make and that I will have to make later on in life.

"My advice for expecting fathers is: Don't get scared."

FRANGY SIERRA,

Passaic High School senior and new father

But there really are just no words that can describe how I feel right now. When he cries, I get scared; when he's sleeping I just

like looking at him. A lot of people that had high expectations for me don't really believe that I'll accomplish what I set out to do before he got here, but I'm going to prove them wrong. I will accomplish what I set out to do originally.

My advice for expecting fathers is: Don't get scared. The whole experience is overwhelming, but just make sure you're there for your partner emotionally, because she's probably going through something she's never been through in her

entire life. She's going through maybe three, four times as much as what you're going through. Just make sure you're there to listen to her, even if you're not there physically, and make sure you'll be there for your child. It all fine and dandy to have a mother, but it's extremely important to have two parents to make a good life for your child.

Hannah Janoozwalla is a senior at Passaic High School.

Dear Self, How's 2036 treating you?

By **ELAINE WANG**

Knight Ridder News Service

I just sent my future self an e-mail. The message goes like this: "Physics class does nothing for the complexion."

"You are an idiot."

I did this through www.futureme.org, a Web site designed to let people send messages to themselves in the future — up to 30 years from now.

I made my e-mail "public" (but anonymous) and decided to have it sent to me one year from today. I then clicked the cheery "Send this to the future!" button. And there it went — into the future. Until it gets sent to me. And because it's public, you'll be able to read it on the Web site when that happens.

Futureme.org is a Web site designed to let people send messages to themselves in the future — up to 30 years from now.

According to the Web site, FutureMe was started by two guys who just thought it would be nifty for people to be able to send themselves letters at later dates.

"We've all had to do them in high school and college," the site says. "It's sorta cool to receive a letter from yourself about where you thought you'd be a year (two years? more?) later. FutureMe.org is based on the principle that memories are less accurate than e-mails. We strive for accuracy."

It is not, they say, a front for a corporation trying to collect e-mail addresses.

I did some research on what actually happens (through www.howstuffworks.com and a knowledgeable friend) and found that I'm probably not really sending anything to the future. Most likely the site has a database, and every day it collects and sends all the e-mail scheduled to be sent on that day. Therefore, any delusion of a lone intrepid letter floating off into the future, defying the fabric of space-time, is incorrect.

If you happen to get a new e-mail address between now and the date of the future e-mail, the site says, its account-manager feature will let you change it.

I wonder if this service could be put to malicious use. I can very easily imagine sending an e-mail to my best enemy like this:

"I Can See You. This is your conscience speaking. A year ago today you were wearing a disgusting purple shirt and jeans that definitely did not fit. If I could pack up and move out of your body I would. I have seen the future, and, whoo boy, you will become a huge waste of carbon. Not that you aren't already."

But then, that was only hypothetical. I'm not that malicious.

Elaine Wang is a senior at Lamar High School in Arlington, Texas.

entertainment
travel
sales
spirituality
relationships
justice
elder care
neighborhoods

