

FRIDAY FOLLIES

January 3, 2003

Hey!

How were your holidays?

I can honestly say that it was probably one of the most unusual holidays I have ever experienced in my lifetime.

It started off with our usual Christmas party for JP's clients, and I have to say it was one of the best we have ever had. Tons of friends, great food, music, decorations, and smiles all around. Everyone seemed to be in very festive moods this year. Much more so than usual.

Maggie yawning in Santa's lap



Well, that is where the norm stops. The children's grandfather passed away the day before Christmas and my mom, who has been extremely ill, was diagnosed with Parkinson's that same day. Jeremy was stuck in Colorado and could not change his plans to fly to Mississippi for the funeral. (At a ski resort, when you arrange your schedule for the holidays and then something happens, there is nothing you can do because anyone that might take your place has already left.) He was very upset about that.

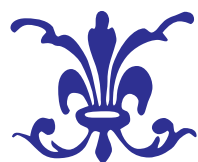
A few shots from the party.



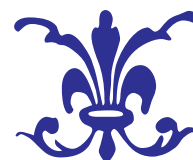
The Copelands



Gil, Bob & Maureen



Morgan, Frank, and Sherry



Santa Table

JP had already decided that he needed to stay at the “Beach” and try to work the last couple of days of the year. Jessica had just flown in from Mississippi, and I had to pick her up at the airport and tell her the news about her grandfather who had died while she was in flight home, and that we had to get in the car and head back that way. We packed the car on Christmas Eve and went to our traditional Christmas Eve events. Then at 4:00 A.M. on Christmas morning, we got in the car and headed south. One thing we did not think about was the fact that nothing, and I mean NOTHING, was open on Christmas Day. You could stop to get gas and that was it. Even gas stations that had restaurants attached to them were serving gas, but no food. Needless to say, we ate a lot of crackers and cheese and chips on that 14 hour Christmas drive.

Once home, it was great to see my mom . She is such an amazing lady. I still marvel at her daily. She is so much fun and loves to laugh.



I got to see two of my sister’s sons and their families, and one of my brother’s sons and his wife and new baby, Regan Presley Greenhaw. What a doll! Here she is with my Jessica.

My former father-in-law’s funeral was the day after Christmas, so I was able to see many relatives and friends at the visitation that I had not seen in decades, literally. I kept thinking

how old everyone looked, and then I remembered that I was ten to twenty years older to them, too!

Chester will be missed. He was truly an impressive man.



I took many photos of the damage that was done by the tornadoes back in November. The devastation was unreal. Everywhere you looked you could see reconstruction, but

in many of the neighborhoods, people were still digging out photos and furniture and sentimental items from the rubble. The photo here at the top is of my father's headstone lying on its side. Can you imagine a wind so strong that it blows over a headstone? Then, in the photo to the right you can see the civil war soldiers' graves untouched just less than a block away from my dad's.



The two photos below are of one of the many neighborhoods devastated by the storms. This neighborhood is actually only two blocks from Friendship cemetery.



These two show the Mississippi University for Women art department and gymnasium beginning to be rebuilt. Slowly but surely, many sites are being restored and school is back in session. Unfortunately, though, there are many homes and businesses in Columbus that will never recover.



Well, to finish the story I began . . . I rushed home the Sunday following Christmas to be in Virginia Beach when my son was to arrive. On the way to the airport got a call that his flight was cancelled due to bad weather. He ended up flying to

NYC to be with friends and finally made it home yesterday. His plans are to fly to Mississippi on Saturday to visit family before heading back to Keystone.

So, as you can see, it was a very unusual holiday season for my family. I hope yours was cheerier and calmer and filled with laughter. I am sure the new year will bring plenty of all of that to our household. Sometimes, though, life has a way of getting in the way. When it does, though, you realize what your priorities are and what is really important in this life.

So, to all of you on my Friday Follies List, whether you are in Manila, Singapore, Kuwait, Bermuda, Virginia Beach, Mississippi, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Minnesota, Indiana, Philadelphia, Key West, New Jersey, Washington D.C., Maryland, West (By-God) Virginia, Nashville, New York, or Europe, have a wonderful New Year and . . .

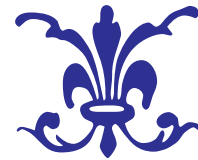
God bless.

Remember, life is short...we need to make it a good one.

Grow in peace and wisdom.

Your Friday Friend,

JUDI GODSEY



PS. NOTE OF CAUTION... 20 employees were fired from The New York Times here in Norfolk for sending lewd and indecent e-mails. (To my knowledge, none of the 20 were on our list - even though some of the attorneys who represent the company were!) I have asked each and every one of you on this list to tell me if these "Follies" place you in jeopardy, or even if they offend you. Please understand that they are intended to be light-hearted and are not mean-spirited in any way. If you are ever offended, do not hesitate to ask to be taken off the Friday list.

PSS. If you send a joke and I don't use it, it is because it has been used before, and I try not to repeat. Remember, I have been sending these since August of 1997. One tends to go through huge numbers of jokes that way.

Disclaimer: When anyone asks if I type all of these jokes, the answer is, "No!" I cut and paste one evening during the week (30 minutes, TOPS). Obviously I don't have time to sit, read, and retype jokes all day!
