

FRIDAY FOLLIES

February 25, 2005

Hey!

My trip to Mississippi did not turn out exactly as I had pictured it in my mind.

I was dreading going back and sorting through my Mom's things . . . in the worst way. I knew it would be very sad, and it was, but honestly, the fact that we waited six months to do it made it so much more tolerable. It was truly bittersweet as my sister, brother, and I slowly went through every drawer, cabinet, closet, letter box, file, and photo album. There were so many smiles and wonderful memories and stories told.

I got up at 5:30 each morning and started. My sister joined me at 7:30, and then when my brother got in from work - around 12:30 or 1:00 - we took a break, went to lunch, and then jumped right back in. By 5:30 or 6:00 at night, we were mentally and physically exhausted. We went out for dinner, and then by 9:30 or 10:00 each evening, we were ready for bed - only to start all over again the next morning at 5:30. Three days of this, though, and we completely sorted out all of Mom's things.

Long before she passed on, she went through the entire house and made index cards for each of us telling us what she was leaving us (furniture, silver, china, crystal, antiques, etc.) It was such a wonderful idea because there was absolutely NO quarreling. If Mom left something to one of us and we wanted to swap - so be it - but for the most part, she knew *exactly* what she was doing, and had given it a great deal of thought.





As for the little sentimental items, if there was something we all wanted (and there were many items that we all would like to have had...) then we simply drew numbers. It actually got to be fun at the end of the day to set up the numbers and start our little "lottery." Who could be upset about handling it that way? It really worked out well, and we all ended up with special keepsakes to remind us of our spectacular upbringing and heritage.



We were not rich by any stretch of the imagination, but we were the wealthiest family I have ever known . . .

So, my notion of maybe seeing many old friends and "catching up" did not transpire this trip. That will have to wait until the next trip.



However, I did see two very, very, dear friends while in Starkville. I went to see Buddy, a college sweetheart who is now the President of a bank in Mississippi. We had some business to discuss, and then got to visit for awhile. Buddy played football for Auburn and then transferred to Mississippi State his Junior year. I was crazy about my "Buddy!" What great fun hearing about all that has happened in his life and what his plans for the future are.



As I was leaving that meeting at the bank, it had warmed up considerably outside and was in the high 50's with bright, Mississippi sunshine everywhere. I put the top down on the car, and as I was pulling out of the parking space, I noticed this big, red pick-up truck flashing its lights and tooting its horn. I just thought it was someone flirting or something. I ignored . . .

Well, by the time I got to the parking lot next door, this big, red pick-up truck pulled right up beside me, and the guy rolled down his window and just grinned at me from ear to ear. He didn't say a word.



It registered immediately with me. I recognized him instantly! **ROBERT!**

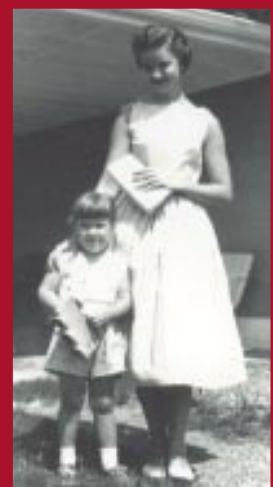
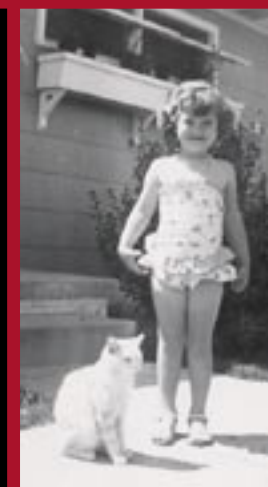
Robert was the other male in our little “college foursome” of friends. It blew me away because Robert does not even LIVE in Starkville anymore! He married my best friend and they live in Clinton, Mississippi, about three hours away. He just happened to be in Starkville on business and was going to stop in to see Buddy when he saw me pulling out of the parking space.



He said, “I saw that red hair and that Virginia tag, and I just **KNEW** it had to be you!”

Now what are the odds of that happening!

In college Robert and Buddy were best friends (They grew up together in Starkville), and Patty and I were best friends (we had spent our high school years together in Columbus - a mere 20 minutes away . . .) Robert and Patty got married, and we kept in touch for years and years. Then, about ten years ago - for whatever reason - we just kinda lost touch! That should **NEVER** happen! Anyway, the only one of the foursome not present was Patty.



After reuniting in the Payless Shoe Source parking lot in Starkville, Mississippi, Robert and I went back to the bank and surprised Buddy! We grabbed one of Buddy’s employees and had him take a couple of pictures for us.



You know in our mind’s eye, we were all smiling and hugging and thinking we looked just like we did thirty years ago! Then, when his manager turned the digital camera around so we could view the photos -- we all just burst out laughing!

Almost 30 years - well - that’s a LONG time!



The image was NOT what we were expecting! Very funny.

Here are Robert, me, and Buddy all smiling BEFORE we saw the picture! The other two insets are pictures of me at the age when we were all best friends . . .



My! My! What a difference a "FEW" years makes!

It was *GREAT* fun reuniting, though. And we ALL still feel that young inside, right?



Ro, you were the topic of conversation at least once during that meeting! We must meet someday! Actually, Buddy and I started talking about these Follies and what a huge networking tool they are. I explained that it never started out that way, but yes, it has turned into a bit of a monster -- well, "*Gentle Giant*" might be a better term.

It caused me to start thinking on the 13 plus hour drive home about all of the folks on this Friday Follies list. It truly is amazing! Many, many, I have never even met . . .

We have numerous bank Presidents and employees, retailers from all over the country, politicians (including two Governors) and countless state and US representatives and Congressmen and women, NASA executives, Fortune 500 executives, a whole slew of attorneys world-wide (with a small concentration in Jackson, Mississippi), a huge group of doctors here and in California, travel agents, countless real estate agents, Presidents of Universities, educators and administrators around the world, accountants, entertainers that you would ALL know, an international entertainment attorney, NFL stars, all types of sports stars, recording artists, numerous authors - (one extremely prominent), magazine editors and writers, at least six professional photographers, graphic designers, computer



gurus, financial experts, truck drivers, countless soldiers here and abroad, college students everywhere, construction workers, contractors (who build NFL stadiums!), song writers, poets, undertakers, missionaries in Indonesia, farmers, pilots, astronauts, Blue Angels, newspaper editors and journalists all over the world, democrats, republicans, and even three pastors that I am aware of.

I will never forget the Mothers' Day that Jessica went to church with me and while listening to the sermon, the reverend started quoting some of the Mothers' Day jokes from the Follies. Jessica (at the age of 20) twitched, looked over at me with this twisted, horrified face and said, "Mom! He gets the Follies?" I calmly assured her that there are *two lists*, and that he is on the "clean" list. It was truly memorable!

The list simply goes on and on. I do not know *HOW* it happened. It just *happened*. And I love it, and love hearing from all of you. Thank you!

Obviously, the photos this week, for the most part, are photos discovered in albums of my Mom's. I hope they remind some of you of your past, as well.

Sweet, sweet times!

OK, Jeremy is in Washington state for a wedding and soon will be moving back to Oregon after a winter of working at Squaw Valley (poor little thing . . .) Jessica is taking a



full load and is working full-time - whew! One of my nephews, Andy, has been re-located to Ft. Brigs and graduated at the top of his class from Army Boot Camp in Georgia. (He is due to be married in May.)

Thank you to everyone who wrote last week. I thought the Follies would be “booed” because they were so very *different* from in the past, but I was astounded at the response! Thanks!



“They” are calling for snow tonight and tomorrow. Time will tell. When they call for it, it doesn’t happen, and when they least expect it, it does.

All I know is that spring is right around the corner and it is time to start planning the garden. I think I will build raised beds this year. (Might need some help!)



I have tons of Spring plans and tons of relatives and friends coming to visit, and I am so looking forward to spring and summer in this wonderful house. It is going to be *AWESOME!*



For those of you who asked, “Papa Bird” still has a secret escape route, and I have simply given up. I have another cage I could put him in, but he so enjoys glaring at me from the top of the Canaries’s cage and then darting back to his nest. (The Finches have five new eggs, by the way... Spring cannot be far away.) I think I will just let it go until the weekend when I have time to catch him. Plus, he makes me laugh!



At 5:30 tonight when I was driving home, I realized that it was still daylight! That is so encouraging! Soon I will be able to take long walks on the beach with Gandalf after I get in from work. I look forward to that.



I will leave you with a few photos of my Mom's backyard from a few years ago. If I lived to be a hundred, I could never hold a candle to her green thumb. She was an amazing, *amazing* Southern Lady. . .

Have a great week, ya'll!



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, Colorado, Philadelphia, Key West, New Jersey, North Carolina, Indonesia, Washington D.C., Iraq, Costa Rica, Maryland, West (By-God) Virginia, Nashville, Florida, Chattanooga, New York, Oregon, Maine, Australia, Europe, or Yuma, have a wonderful, wonderful week!

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 emails. (To my knowledge, none of the 20 were on our joke 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 the jokes that accompany 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 Follies Joke 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!