

FRIDAY FOLLIES

March 10, 2006



Hey!

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Well, I must say, after planting ten azalea bushes, four rose bushes, a Camellia bush, four mums, and numerous pansies and geraniums, I can hardly walk today! I also pulled up old, worn out Mombo Grass plants that were the size of the tires on my truck! (We called it "Monkey Grass" in the deep South.) I am hoping they can be split and saved, but they are pretty ratty looking at the moment. I also re potted all of my plants that were in the garage for the winter and treated my lawn with weed and feed after mowing it. As bad as I feel today, it sure looks a lot better! Makes me feel a lot better about it, too! (on the inside anyway...) The yard was really getting on my nerves! I still have a long way to go, but it is starting to look like "My Yard" now! Or it will in a couple of years when everything matures! Ha!



Productive weekend.
That was Sunday.
Saturday was monumental as well...

The "Finch Family" is gone!!!
ALL of them! I had just had enough
and packed up all 16 of them and took

them to the pet store. Would you believe before I put them in the car, I had to throw out ten more eggs from their little nest! They were just ridiculous! The pet store was great - took them all, and basically swapped me the 16 finches for a new, beautiful male canary I call, "Sunshine," or "Sunny" for short. He was not in the cage thirty minutes before I caught he and "Brown Baby" kissing... so I guess spring really can't be far away... You cannot imagine how quiet my house is with all of those *%\$#@&% finches gone! Even Liberty (L'il Birdie) seems to be enjoying the quiet. Isn't Sunshine beautiful!



Hey, allow me to get serious for a minute. There is something I want to say to you all, so please bare with me for a moment. The Follies are always jokes and fun stuff, but as you know, life isn't always that way. That is why I often refer to the Follies as the "Lemon Aide" in my life.

A few weeks ago, I sent you a photo of me with an amazing man, Mawi Asgedom. His journey, so far through life, has taken him from Ethiopia through the refugee camps in Sudan, and finally through heart breaking poverty and growing up on welfare in Chicago. From there, bless his heart, with very hard work and focus, he earned a FULL SCHOLARSHIP to Harvard. He was even selected to give the Commencement address at his Harvard graduation.



At the time, when I met him, I was impressed, but had not read his two books. Since then, I have read them both. He is truly amazing! The books were written for adolescents, but let me tell you something, they have a LOT to say to us (half centurions), as well.

One illustration he uses -- which stuck with me -- was playing Nintendo with his younger brother and NEVER being able to beat him. He practiced and practiced until he thought he was pretty good and READY to whip his younger brother! He then challenged his younger brother to play with him again.

His baby brother danced around him and dominated him! He passed faster. He ran faster. He threw the ball up and made a hoop every, single time, and never seemed to tire. Mawi was incredibly frustrated and finally asked his baby brother how he did it. His brother lifted the hand-held controls and showed Mawi a button on the belly that Mawi was not even aware was there. It was the "TURBO BUTTON."

Mawi explains that all of our brains come equipped with "TURBO BUTTONS" installed on the underneath side. Most of us are not even aware that we have a "TURBO BUTTON." But we do! We just need to find it and PUSH IT! Mawi used that analogy to talk about the fact that from that point on, in life's stressful situations, he pushed the "TURBO BUTTON."

After I read that, it stuck! TRUST me! There have been count-

less times since I read that passage that I have been weary, worried, or downtrodden and I have said to myself, "Judi! Find the 'TURBO BUTTON' and PUSH IT!" I swear to you, it has made a dramatic difference in my life, already!

Example... Many of you know (but many of you do not), that 13 years ago I was diagnosed with a degenerative hearing loss. Nothing can be done. No one knows how bad it may get. It is just a fact of life that I have had to face. I will tell you that nothing I have ever encountered has affected my life as dramatically as this affliction has, though.

Truthfully, I am lucky. It does not hurt and it is not life threatening. But it certainly affects every other aspect of my life! You become introverted and withdrawn, and add to that other traumatic events life sometimes throws at you, and well, sometimes, you just want to stay at home and pull the covers over your head! For REAL! For EVER!

I recently went in for a new hearing evaluation because I was having so much trouble on the phone... any phone... even my "special phone" at work. I did NOT want to do it. I knew it would be bad news. I have had so many of these over the years that I knew what to look for. I watched the technician's face as I took the tests and I KNEW that I was failing miserably! I did! 24% correct in one ear and 26% in the other.

With all tests said and done, I have lost yet another 20% of my hearing in both ears. That means I am up to a GRAND TOTAL of "TA DA" -- 80% hearing loss in both ears!

That is serious hearing loss, folks! There is no more faking that! I am deaf as a doorknob! And for the first time ever, they began to talk with me about implants. I freaked! I do NOT want to do that! Ever -- if I can help it! I need a face-lift before I need implants! Right? Isn't that what I should be worried about at this stage of my life?

So -- they adjusted my digital hearing aids to fit with my new results, and I think I will coast for a while. I am not vain, honestly. I am not. But the thought of having "things" planted in my head for the rest of my life - complete with batteries - scares the crap out of me! I have almost come to the conclusion that if I loose my hearing completely, then I will simply be deaf. Period. There are worse things, ya know.

I also know that one thing that makes it so dramatic and confusing for me is that there are still so many people who do not know that I am deaf. It truly is an "invisible affliction!" It is not like wearing thick glasses, or using a walking cane, or a wheelchair like both of my parents had to do for so many years. And truthfully, I have fooled a LOT of people for a LONG time, but that may be coming to a close.

Just keep me in your thoughts and prayers, and I will keep on

pushing that "TURBO BUTTON!" Every time I get discouraged, I think of Mawi pushing that "TURBO BUTTON," and there I am, doing the exact same thing. It has been a tremendous help to me, already! And without trying to sound - oh, "poor me" - I cannot even image the trauma his family endured. I honestly have lived a "charmed" life for most of my years... as most of you have, as well.

OK, I guess I just needed to say that! Now that I am finished... I am finished! Way too serious for the Friday Follies! But sometime, life is much more than just Follies... ya know...

Life is good! SPRING is coming! I have beautiful new plants in my yard and a beautiful new BIRD, and THREE canary eggs in the nest! All is right with the world...

Jeremy is doing great, Jessica is NAILING college, and I am truly very blessed to have so many wonderful and caring friends. Just look at this silly photo made with my very dear friends I saw at the auction last weekend-- a great time!



And look at this beautiful, little Cherub who belongs to a good friend of mine. Is this not the most precious photo you have ever seen!



And this beautiful African Grey, Perky, that I am baby sitting this week while my friend and her family are on vacation.

Truthfully, honestly, life just gets more interesting all of the time... (smile)...

NOT TO MENTION! St. Patty's Day is on the way! Love to you all.

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, Lake Tahoe, Philadelphia, Key West, New Jersey, North Carolina, Indonesia, Washington D.C., Iraq, Costa Rica, Maryland, West (By-God) Virginia, Nashville, Florida, Saudi Arabia, Chattanooga, New York, Oregon, Russia, 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!