

FRIDAY FOLLIES

July 9, 2004



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Hey!

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Well, many of you have written to ask me what the heck is going on. I appreciate the concern, truly. My little family has just been through an extraordinarily tough time of late. Since June first, it has been unbelievable . . .

My nephew was in a horrible car accident and is now in rehabilitation. He graduated from high school in a small town outside of Jackson, Mississippi, and since he could not take his senior trip with the rest of his buddies, he drove a few hours to New Orleans to stand on the dock and wave good bye to them all as they left on a cruise. On his way home that night, he fell asleep at the wheel and had a terrible accident. The motorist behind him said he never even tapped his brakes - he just drove right off the road. He also was not wearing a seat belt . . .

At first the word was that he would not make it, that there was absolutely no hope - then miraculously, on the third or fourth day, his uncle, aunt, and mom were standing over him, all trying to coax him to communicate with them. When they asked him how he was, without even opening his eyes, he gave them a thumbs-up. It was one of the happiest moments of my life - sincerely - even though it was relayed to me through email.

It has been slow but steady progress since. His friends have jumped at the chance to help and even come over and shave and dress him every day. Their church has jumped in and deliver food every day. Friends have stepped in and taken care of the insurance to make sure his mom can stay by his side a bit longer instead of having to rush back to work. Wonderful, yes? But they are still very much in our prayers as there is a very long road ahead.

Then, the last week in June, my sister's sister-in-law (who was like an aunt to me while I was growing up) died rather suddenly. She had become very ill while JP and I were visiting in Mississippi back on April the first. She was an amazingly graceful, Southern lady who has appeared in Southern Living Magazine so many times that the photographer became a very dear friend of hers. In fact, several years ago he took this picture of Margaret and her husband, Bill (a very prominent doctor), as a gift for her. Bill died shortly after.

Her passing was very sudden, very unexpected, and very sad. Now her beautiful Colonnade will be up for sale - complete with the antiques inside and the 3,000 square-foot trophy room built behind the house in her incredible gardens.



There are also several long-time marriages in the family ending in divorce right now, which is extremely sad . . .

And, most of you know that my mom has been very ill for some time now with several different afflictions. Well, I got a call last week to come home if I wanted to be able to “talk” and spend time with her. She cannot talk anymore - at least not above a whisper - and I cannot hear her at all on the phone, so the trip home was well worth the 14 hour drive to get there. I was there for three days and on the third day, she was more herself and was able to talk and just chat about things in general. She was her old self, truly - witty - sharp - and funny. It was a day I will cherish forever. It hurt like hell to get in the car and drive home on the Fourth of July.



Sometimes some of my friends and family almost get irritated with me because the Follies come out every week and they sound like life is just PERFECT! Trust me! Life is far from PERFECT! Things happen everyday that make me want to cry or that simply break my heart. But why write about them in the Follies? These are a time to connect and share the positive. Right? So please do not ever assume that because there are photos and smiles and everything sounds so wonderful all of the time that there is no pain. If I wrote about the “other side of life” it would fill a book and could get rather depressing (smile).



OK, a few photos from the trip. I was driving south on Interstate 85 and there was a huge wreck. It was so bad that the highway patrol showed up and started directing traffic OFF the interstate. I pulled out my little map and found two highways that paralleled the interstate. One took me through a little town called Hillsboro, North Carolina, a place I never would have had a reason to go through before. Anyway, it was BEAUTIFUL! It reminded

me of Oxford, Mississippi with the town square and all of the little shops and cafes. Just amazing.

After following that highway for about 40 miles, I intersected the interstate again and all was fine. But when I pulled back onto I85, this truck was in front of me. Can you read what it says? It does not say “Wash Me!”

It says, “I love my wife. I MISS her!”

I wanted to pull the truck driver over and give him a big ole kiss. How sweet is that!



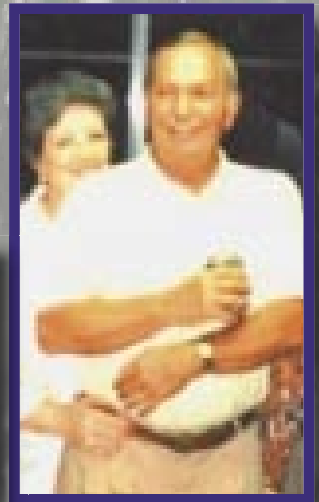


I will also send you this oil painting that my mom painted back in the '70s. She wanted to learn to paint so she took a college course (for credit). It was very expensive for the times. She said this was the only thing she painted all semester long. They studied colors, highlights, shadows, mixing paints, etc. and at the end of the semester this is all she had to show for it. She just calls it the most expensive painting ever. HA! I just LOVE it.

Anyway, even with all of the very tragic things happening right now, I had a wonderful time visiting with my mom, sister, brother, sister-in-law, brother-in-law and friends. No matter what - it is always good to go home.

Here is a photo of my sister and her husband. Their home, their yard, their gardens are just beautiful!

And here is their new dog, Fritz, who is only six months old and already weighs 55 pounds! Adorable!



Well, until next week . . .

Please keep us all in your thoughts and prayers, and I promise to do the same for you.





1960



1956



1956



1962

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!