



FRIDAY FOLLIES

March 21, 2008

Hey!

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**He's Baaaack!!
My Andy is baaaack!!!!**

After 15 months on the streets of Baghdad, being one of the very first to be sent over during the surge, Christmas before last (that being December 2006), the Army surprised him and sent him home a month early! We all had info ahead of time, and some of my family was able to drive up from Mississippi, and I was able to drive down to his base in a nearby state.

I absolutely cannot tell you how wonderful it was to see him safe and successful! We had some wonderful conversations, that is for sure. I love ALL of my nephews, but Andy and I seem to have a special bond that I cannot explain, nor can he. Small example - he had to sell his car in a hurry right before he left for Baghdad and his father - my brother, Larry - just happened to be here visiting me in Virginia when we got the call that he was being sent. Larry drove down to see him off and brought a box of odds and ends from Andy's car and left them with me. In it was a cross on a yarn necklace that Andy had made when he was about ten years old at summer camp.

Well, I took it out of the box and placed it on my rearview mirror and that is where it stayed until I saw him this past week. Every time it would dangle and bob against the dashboard, it made me think and say a little prayer for Andy - probably thirty times a day. When I arrived, the whole family had gone to a restaurant. Andy came back to the hotel to pick me up in his brand new car

he had bought an hour before! I was able to take the cross from my car and hand it to him. I thought he was going to cry! He immediately placed it on his rearview mirror and off we went. Little things like that just mean so much.

He talked and talked and said he was still in culture shock and expected a bomb to go off at any moment. I asked him if he had been able to learn and appreciate the culture at all - knowing that would have been hard in his situation. He said it was amazing. They had to go door to door and knock and go in on people to find out



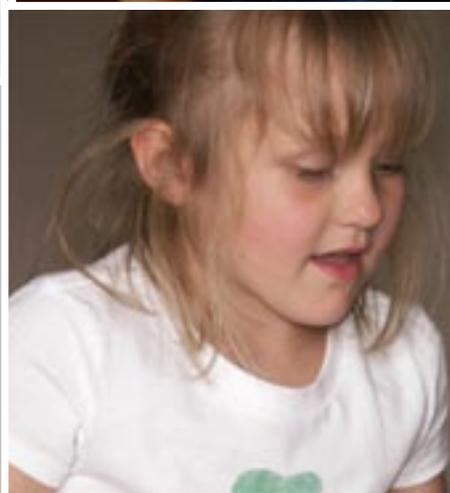
how they were and what was going on. He said, "Aunt Judi, even if they were so poor they lived in houses with dirt floors, they would not let us leave until they had given us something they owned. They were very grateful and gracious." He said they were loving and beautiful people - MOST of them, that is.

My brother, Larry, was there, his oldest son, Allen, and his wife, Meredith, and two children, Reagan, five, and Cale, whom I had not even met, yet! Awesome. My sweet Vicki was there, too! David - my brother's middle son was not to arrive until Sunday and I had to leave on Saturday, so I missed him completely! Was very sorry about that, but it was still just a fantastic, family time.

I took little "happys" for everyone and Reagan loved her Easter chick. I took a box of nice cigars and a cigar cutter for Andy thinking he would share them with his father and brother.

Nope! He was so funny! At one point at the restaurant I missed him, and I looked up and he was outside on the sidewalk smoking his cigar! Too sweet.

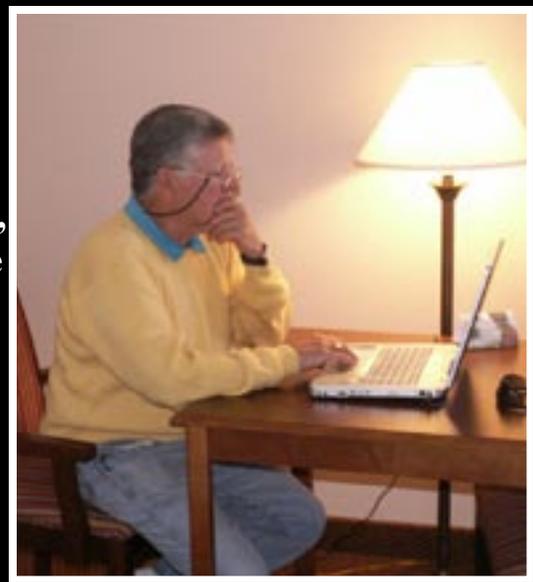
One other really sweet thing, and then I will



move on to something else, at dinner Friday night, we were all taking photos of one another with our cell phones. It was really funny! But Vicki took the one on the cover of Andy and me on Andy's phone and then took one on my cell for me. I was looking at the photo and Andy poked me in the side and said, "Look, Aunt Judi! I made it my wall paper!" With that, so did I. Little things... very touching.

We also had a scare while at dinner at a Mexican restaurant. One of Allen's friends called to tell us about the Mississippi State basketball game in Atlanta being called off due to what they thought might have been a tornado. Needless to say, once back at the hotel, we all tuned into ESPN to see what had happened and actually caught the last of the game. Amazing - all of it.

Oh, I also forgot to tell you that right before dinner, the guys took off to go get tattoos. I thought Larry might get one, too, but he didn't. They had wanted me to go with them, and I am glad that I opted out. The mood I was in, I probably would have gotten one, too.



So it is off to March Madness in a GOOD way, this year. Like I have said all along - everything is great in 2008! (smile)

I told you I had great news, didn't I!



And now for a quick Pet Page - I have not done that in a long while. I wanted to show you two of my beautiful babies - Beau BOH and Ollie! Bobo has grown into a very sweet bird. He has so many idiosyncrasies. Ollie is really no longer a puppy and is a great protector and provider of laughs.

I am down to ten adult canaries and three eggs ready to hatch. It has been nice to have the lower numbers again, but several of the males do not get along, so I still have to keep them in separate cages.

And I simply HAVE to include this photo of Ela! She is the new “baby” of a very good friend of mine. I honestly think she may be the cutest dog I have ever seen - including Ollie. She is a LlasaPoo.





The Shamrock Marathon was also this weekend. It literally runs right past my front door. I got up at 7:30, read the paper, made coffee, and the race started at 8:00. By 8:20, the leader of the pack ran past my house. Then it was a slow trickle and then a highway full of humans coming and going. Just amazing. The interesting thing about watching this race and watching the Rock N' Roll Half-Marathon is that the runners are so different. In the Rock N' Roll, there are groups of friend, people walking, crazy, really insane costumes, all shapes and sizes, etc. Those who run in the Shamrock are a totally different breed. They are RUNNERS! Very few costumes and no lolly gagging about. They are very serious and you can see it on their faces. Ollie and I watched for a while, but it was bitterly cold, so we did





not stay by the road for the whole thing. We came home and sat on the stairs with the

front door open. It was an awesome way to watch it! Above is my neighbor, Billy. I did not see him, but heard someone calling, "Judi! Judi!" I did not see him until he was almost past me, and then only got the back of him in the shot. It was fun.



I actually took three days off to go see Andy, to work in my yard to get ready for the party in a couple of weeks, and to visit with a friend who was in town. Also had time to lunch with two dear friends and another good friend was in town, so we celebrated St. Patty's Day together. It was just an extraordinary

week! Hope yours was, too.

Continue to pray for our service men and women - that they return home to us soon, safe, and successful.

Just Judi's Favorites
Volume One • Appetizers
is now available.

You can go to the link at the publishers:

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or can click through from the links page on my website - or you can order directly from me, if you want. Just email me at judigodsey@aol.com and we can work out the shipping.

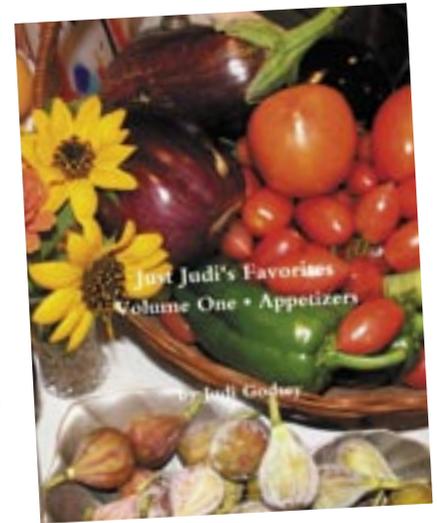
Thanks to those of you who have already ordered your copies!

Just Judi's Favorites • Volumes Two through Ten are on their way!

Volume One • Appetizers

Hardcover with dust jacket \$39.95

Softcover \$24.95



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, Poland, Maryland, West (By-God) Virginia, Nashville, Florida, Saudi Arabia, New Hampshire, Tampa, Chattanooga, France, Phoenix, New York, Oregon, Russia, Maine, Australia, Bangkok, 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!