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# NEWSLETTER

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AWD News and Other Things of Interest

November & December 1999

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## COLORADO SPRINGS

By David Bly - Calgary Herald,

The day Bill Clinton came to the United States Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, I stood, cameras in hand, near a wall upon which was engraved the academy's code of honor: "We will not lie, steal or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does."

If only the U.S. president would wander past that wall, I thought. A photo like that could ensure me a comfortable retirement.

Clinton and I were at the academy this month for the graduation of the Class of 1999, he as commander-in-chief of the U.S. armed forces, and I as the father of one of the 944 graduates.

As my wife, Janet, is a U.S. citizen, my children have their choice of citizenship. Our son Brandon, wanting a career in aviation, applied to the air force academy because there is no comparable opportunity anywhere in the world. He graduated

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## Letter to a Grandson

*A friend sent this to me via e-mail. I think it expresses how a lot of folks feel about their first grandchildren.*

We tried so hard to make things better for our kids that we made them worse. For my grandchildren, I'd like better. I'd really like for them to know about hand-me down clothes and homemade ice cream and leftover meatloaf sandwiches. I really would.

My cherished grandson,

I hope you learn humility by being humiliated, and that you learn honesty by being cheated. I hope you learn to make your bed and mow the lawn and wash the car. And I really hope nobody gives you a brand new car when you are sixteen. I hope you have a job by then.

It will be good if at least one time you can see a baby calf born and your old dog put to sleep. I hope you get a black eye fighting for something you believe in. I hope you share a bedroom with your younger brother. And it's all right if you have to

*Continued on page 3 column 1. See*

## October 16, 1934

The long, hot East Texas summer had finally given up its humid heat for a dry, cool, shorter day. If Jack Frost had not already made an appearance in the area he was just around the corner. There was the excitement of the season's change, and a fresh briskness in the air. Autumn had finally arrived with all the color and glory that the Almighty intended.

Today was their Wedding Day, and the future was so uncertain. The world was still in The Great Depression, and the rumor of another World War was in the wind. They didn't have much in the material sense, but they were blessed beyond their

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with a degree in aeronautical engineering, was commissioned as an air force officer and will begin training as a jet pilot next spring.

Graduation from any university is an achievement worth celebrating. At the USAFA, it's the culmination of four grueling years of study, training and discipline. Some don't make it for physical, academic or emotional reasons. A few decide, after two years, they would rather choose another path. Some are expelled for violating the honor code.

The USAFA rates high academically, but its aim is more than academics - it strives to develop moral and ethical leadership. As cadets pursue their degrees of choice, they are being trained to become air force officers. Integrity and a high standard of conduct are expected.

We were not excited about the presidential visit. For us, it was an annoyance. Brandon's commissioning ceremony had to be moved to 5:45 p.m., because Clinton wanted to use the building where the commissioning was scheduled. Later, we had to be in our stadium seats two hours before the graduation, because of security.

For others, it was an insult. I heard of retired air force officers who boycotted the graduation, because they felt Clinton's participation, given Monica Lewinsky and other scandals, detracted from the dignity of the event.

The air force academy is a military base, but it is also a popular tourist spot. Each day at noon, busloads of tourists arrive to watch 4,000 cadets line up and march to lunch in an elaborate parade that leaves the cadets only 15 minutes to eat.

On the day Clinton came to town, some areas were closed as security was beefed up. Access was limited to those invited to the graduation. It would not have been a safe day to go skulking through the academy's forests with bird-watching binoculars. As the stadium filled, helicopters pounded the air overhead. Entrance was through metal detectors. Handbags were searched. Snipers in battle dress patrolled the top tiers of the stadium. Sprinkled throughout the crowd were secret-service agents, easy to spot because they wore dark suits, sunglasses and earpieces. They spoke into their sleeves a lot and scanned the crowds constantly. There was nothing secret about them.

Clinton's imminent entrance was announced.

We stood. And we stood. Eight minutes later, the president of the United States of America walked on to the football field and toward the podium. No explanation was given for why he kept 30,000 people waiting on their feet in the sun. As he walked under the crossed sabers of the honor guard, the applause was restrained and polite, but not enthusiastic. Around me, I heard comments about respecting the office, if not the man.

No one jeered, but no one cheered. As I watched the newly minted second lieutenants stand to salute their commander in chief, I wondered how many of them were thinking what I was thinking: "If Bill Clinton had been a cadet here, he would have been kicked out for lying and cheating."

Actually, he probably wouldn't have qualified for admission. To enter the academy, an applicant must first be nominated by a member of Congress. This year, 8,800 applied for nomination and 2,148 qualified. Of those, 1,275 received appointments to the academy. They were chosen on the basis of such criteria as academics, athletics, citizenship and leadership. And, moral character. If Clinton was aware of the lukewarm reception, he didn't show it. He cracked his jokes, defended his actions in the Balkans and took personal credit for saving democracy as we know it.

As he announced he was sending 7,000 more troops to the Balkans, I heard more muttered comments about sending troops to a foreign country to distract attention from personal problems at home.

His manner was smooth, but my American wife was not impressed. "I had hoped he would honor the graduates for their achievements," she said, "and acknowledge what they have been through to get this far. But it was just a political speech. He didn't uplift me or inspire me as I hoped someone in his position would."

Perhaps Clinton's advisers suggested he not talk too much about what the academy stood for. Perhaps they felt it would not be astute to talk about personal integrity and a high standard of conduct. As a Canadian, I felt a little awkward amid the unabashed patriotism of the event, but as a father, could not help being choked up at seeing 2nd Lieut. Bly step forward, salute smartly and shake hands with the president. Never mind that this president had besmirched the office - my son and his comrades had every reason to

*Continued*

stand tall.

The applause became thunderous as the graduates came to attention at the order of the academy's commanding officer. Clinton was forgotten as cadets and their families realized this was the end of a long, hard journey.

It was an intoxicating moment when the superintendent barked:

"Class of 1999 - dismissed!

As nearly a thousand white hats were flung into the air, the Thunderbirds, the U.S. air force's aerobatic team, roared over the stadium in salute. Youngsters spilled onto the field to collect the hats as souvenirs, and families and friends milled about. There was much hugging and laughter and celebrating.

I looked beyond the turmoil. The presidential cavalcade, which had arrived with much fanfare, was quietly leaving the stadium. Few noticed.

No one applauded. After all, it wasn't about a president who had lied and cheated. It was about 944 young men and women who hadn't.



*Letter continued from page 1.*

draw a line down the middle of the room. But when he wants to crawl under the covers with you because he's scared, I hope you let him. When you want to see a Disney movie and your little brother wants to tag along, I hope you'll let him.

I hope you have to walk uphill to school with your friends and that you live in a town where you can do it safely. On rainy days when you have to catch a ride I hope your driver doesn't have to drop you two blocks away so you won't be seen riding with someone as un-cool as your mom.

If you want a slingshot, I hope your dad teaches you how to make one instead of buying one. I hope you learn to dig in the dirt and read books. When you learn to use those newfangled computers, I hope you also learn to add and subtract in your head.

I hope you get razzed by your friends when you have your first crush on a girl, and when you talk back to your mother that you learn what Ivory soap tastes like.

May you skin your knee climbing a mountain, burn your hand on a stove and stick your tongue on a

own understanding. God had only just begun to shower them with blessings of grace, love, and tender mercies as only He can do.

They had each made their personal choice. They had individually chosen to make the wedding vows to each other before God and the world, and both were determined to stand the course no matter what, and to hope for the best.

Now, 65 years later, they are still standing side by side facing whatever may come, and facing it well. If you know them, as I know them, you will understand me when I say that they are just a couple of youngsters. They are a riot to be around, and they are so filled with an abundance of joy. The example they have set for us to follow goes far beyond just staying married for 65 years.

Everyone has heard of the famous couples of the world, like Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, like Clark Gable & Carol Lombart or even Frankie and Johnny. Not many people know that my sisters played Aunt Texie and Uncle Larkin during their childhood games, but my mother, her sisters and childhood friends did too. I am sure that Uncle Larkin and Aunt Texie were aware they were being watched, but I doubt that they had any idea how much long term influence they were having on our family.

I'm sure they have had more than their share of troubles and struggles. Just hanging on day by day took a little more than an ordinary amount of effort. They lost their daughter Karen Kay, a few years ago, and I can only imagine how devastating that was. I can't understand how God can allow parents to outlive their children, but He does, and Uncle Larkin and Aunt Texie did out live their only child.

They have made what is very difficult, appear easy and second nature. They have been gliding though life one day at a time with smiles and laughter, caring for the animals that migrate in and out of their yard. Feeding deer, squirrels, birds, and my little goat herd, and they feed me when I'm around. These two have what it takes to live to be over a hundred, and I am counting on them doing just that. All they have to do is keep propping each other up, stay side by side, and keep the smile in their hearts that you can see in their eyes.

Congratulations to Larkin & Texie Gooch for 65 years of marriage. May they have 65 more!

*By the Editor*

*Letter; Continued from page 3.*

frozen flagpole. I hope you get sick when someone blows cigar smoke in your face. I don't care if you try beer once, but I hope you don't like it. And if a friend offers you dope or a joint, I hope you realize he is not your friend.

I sure hope you make time to sit on a porch with your grandpa and go fishing with your uncle.

May you feel sorrow at a funeral and the joy of holidays. I hope your mother punishes you when you throw a baseball through a neighbor's window and that she hugs you and kisses you at Christmas time when you give her a plaster of Paris mold of your hand.

These things I wish for you - tough times and disappointment, hard work and happiness.

Written with a pen. Sealed with a kiss.



## Not Her Again!

*By Patsy Clairmont*

DOES THE PROVERBS 31 WOMAN HAVE A NAME?

I vote for "Mrs. Get On Your Nerves," or "Mrs. I have No Friends Because I'm So Perfect," otherwise known as Mrs. P-31.

I know, I know; I shouldn't be like that, but she is so squeaky clean it makes me want to oil her. Surely her joints must be stiff by now from holding everything together over the centuries. This gal needs a trip to a spa, a masseuse or at least a visit to the local Jiffy Lube.

Have you ever met Mrs. P-31? If she does exist, I know I don't want to live by her. I beat myself up enough already, thank you. You see, there are days when I leave lipstick in my jacket pocket and then launder it, glazing my wash tub and dryer in Mambo Mauve. I have been known to mail our taxes without the check in the envelope; the government, known for its sense of humor, frowns on this. I have scorched supper beyond recognition. (Actually, we weren't sure what it was before I burned it!)

Occasionally I meet women who appear to have it all together, but on closer inspection, I find that seldom to be true. Actually, I can say across the board that the people I've met are just that ----*people*. People who sometimes waste time, break the bank, burn the bacon, spew anger and lose their way. And

that's what is so wearing about Mrs. P-31. There aren't any weaknesses noted.

### A Process, not a goal

In Proverbs 31:10-31 is a list of worthy goals and a set of excellent standards for women. And I know I need examples in my life. In fact some years ago (21, to be exact), I pleaded with the Lord to bring a woman into my life who would be a mentor, an example to me. His answer at that time was, "I'm not going to give you an example; I want you to become one."

Don't think that didn't cause my heart to palpitate wildly. I was more than willing to observe another woman living out truth, but to rise to the call of doing it myself--well, that was a mop of a different color. And believe me, a mop was the least of what it would take to help clean up my act. I'm grateful that along the way He did eventually send women who were excellent examples for me to learn from, but He has also required me to continue to grow up.

Actually I had always had some examples to follow, but I hadn't seen them for what they were. Perhaps you do, too. For me, it took time, healing, maturing and personal experience before I realized what an example my mom had been, not to mention enough of my own failures to tenderize my heart and be more merciful toward the failures of others.

My mom didn't do everything right, but once I forgave her for not being perfect, I realized she did far more right than wrong., I encourage women today, if they have issues with their moms, to resolve them as quickly as possible so they can enjoy and appreciate her while she is still with them.

My mom could do anything, especially with her hands. Organize, customize or economize, she could do it all. She could take a shack and transform it into a cottage. She could take a chicken and concoct a feast, and she could take a nickel and create a bankroll. I don't know how she did what she did with what she had, but perhaps having grown up in a large family on a farm, living through the Great Depression and marrying a milkman gave her opportunity to be creative, versatile, resourceful and industrious. Just like you know who: Mrs. Got It All Together, Mrs. P-31.

### It's all in the hands

Proverbs 31 highlights wonderful ways a woman can effectively and even eternally reach out to

*Continued on page 5*

*Not Her Again; Continued from page 4.*

others. Six times hands are mentioned, and many more times they are implied, suggesting the incredible influence of a woman's touch. And for me, I find I must first reach up before I can effectively reach out.

Hands down (and up), women have made a difference through the ages. Consider Hanna, who relinquished young Samuel to the priesthood for the good of God's people. And the woman with the issue of blood who risked persecution and prosecution---there were laws against public involvement for those considered unclean---when she touched the hem of the Savior. What about Jochebed, who with her hands wove a tiny ark to protect Israel's future leader, Moses? Or Miriam, who played the tambourine before her people to celebrate God's faithfulness to the nation?

And Ruth, who physically supported her mother-in-law through the valley of the shadow of death and then birthed a son who was included in the lineage of Christ. Then there was Abigail, who reached out to the future King David and prevented a catastrophe. And of course Mary, who lifted her hands to heaven in surrender and presented the world with a Savior.

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I am not yet a P-31---or even a B-52, for that matter, because I can hardly get off the ground at times to get my day going. But I have made progress, dear sisters, and if I understand this journey correctly, measurable, loving progress is what it's all about.

→→

*Enjoy more of Patsy Clairmont's wry perspective with three of her best-sellers: **God Uses Cracked Pots**, **Sportin' a 'Tude** and **Normal is Just a Setting on Your Dryer**. Her latest book is **I Love Being a Woman**.*

*I Took this piece from Focus on the Family monthly magazine, and I thought it is a treat not only for women but men as well.*

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## A Simple Case of Arrogance

*By the Editor.*

I had arrived in Phoenix, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> of September, at 0730 MST, which gave me almost 6 hours to kill before my check-in for a non-stop flight to Atlanta. I am trying to stay in good physical shape for more reasons than one. (One was a mountain trail hiking expedition planned for later in September.) I was on a ten speed touring bike that I had dragged all over the world from Amarillo to Hawaii, Oklahoma

City, Washington DC, twice to Las Vegas and twice to Phoenix. The bicycle had been purchased new while I was still single and lived in Amarillo. That was a long time ago, but it was a very nice bike. I have a definite affection for it. (It is destroyed now.)

I had started the ride shortly after 0800 MST and had probably ridden fifteen or maybe twenty miles. I remember how good it felt as I had been working out daily for the past several weeks and was gaining more endurance everyday. I had turned toward my crash pad and was probably five or six miles out when going down a short, but steep grade, I lost my grip on the handle bar. I was probably moving along at somewhere between 18 & 25 MPH. My arms and elbows were hanging over the handle bar, and I was sitting on the bar my feet still on the pedals. I can remember trying to get my arms up and back on the handle bar, but was unable before crashing into the crossties used as landscaping timbers. The timbers were about 5 feet above the trail and were parallel to my direction of movement. It was not a head on collision to a wall of crossties, because if it was, and at that speed I would have probably been killed. I am okay so far. I have over a hundred tiny stitches on the right side of my head, some under the outer layer, and some on the outside, starting at the middle of my right eyebrow up with turn back behind my right ear. My right eye has swollen shut and my whole face is quite puffy. There are numerous places on my body that look like raspberries and others that are dark black and blue bruises. My body will heal to be just as good as before unless some unforeseen complications should arise. This is unlikely, so I should be as good as new in a couple of months.

Now, the problem is getting over the disgust with myself for being so arrogant. I was too good to buy and wear a helmet. With a good helmet on I would have suffered only a few raspberries and bruises. I was much too good to slow down in a very narrow and dangerous part of the trail. If I had, there would have been no crash at all.

Thanks be to God for sparing my life and harm to others in spite of my arrogance, but also thanks be to God for making me aware of that ugly attitude of arrogance in my own life. How I wish I could eliminate it completely!

One of the many nice things about Heaven is that there is no arrogance in heaven.

◆◆◆

## Details of the Gooch Courtship

By *Vickie Milam George*

By the light of a silvery autumn moon came that first sweet kiss.

Just a kiss a day, 65 years later, would be about 24,000 kisses.

To meet Texie and Larkin and see how healthy, happy and lovely they are - you just might say, "These are two lucky people!" They are!

Let's go back to a slower time, 1932, and see them meet.

Then, Larkin was 19. He and his uncle had been baling hay at Sanger until rain on Friday sent them home to Ft. Worth. On Sunday, these teens began hitching a ride back to the hay meadow. No one picked them up. So, they crossed the road and accepted a ride in the other direction, to Dallas. Changing their plans and led by the spontaneity of youth, they said, "Let's go see Uncle Hershel in Detroit."

After walking through Dallas to Garland, they rode a freight train to Greenville and began walking toward Commerce. Hungry, with no money, they asked at a farmhouse and were fed breakfast. The next ride they caught was headed to New Boston. She let them off at Detroit.

Hershel asked if one of the boys would stay on for the winter, to help out. Larkin stayed.

It was Alma, headed to a teacher's meeting, who took Texie along with her to Hershel Burton's house that day -- the day Texie and Larkin first met. She was sixteen, she was cute and he was smitten.

When Alma held a picnic for her class the next week, Larkin was there, hoping to see Texie again. No, she was sick.

They soon did get together to ride horses on a Sunday afternoon. The group was Hattie, John, Claude, Bert, Texie and Larkin. Now, Larkin was in love!

Then, there was a party at Hamp's house that fall. It was Laberta who helped, by suggesting, "Let's go out to the barn to get some peanuts." The three of them did. Texie and Larkin, by the glow of a harvest moon, saw only each other. They kissed!

Two years later our fun loving and lovely Texie had graduated from high school. Our handsome and shy Larkin had worked at a restaurant in Ft. Worth. They married at the First Baptist

Church in Clarksville on October 16, 1934. Witnesses were her sister Alma, her brother C. B., and his best friend, Raymond.

We are a lucky family to have been blessed in so many ways during our lives by this wonderful couple, Texie and Larkin Gooch.



*Hamp is a nick name applied to Hansford Flippito my granddaddy.*

## A Most Unusual Week Around the Doudney House

By *Jasmine (Jazz) Schnauzer Doudney Dog*

I couldn't believe my eyes, when the boss came in last Sunday afternoon. He appeared to have been beaten with in an inch of his life and he wasn't very perky either. Poor guy, I felt so sorry for him, so did everyone else. Linda treated him so sweet, she went shopping for groceries and waited on him hand and foot, I knew from her acting the way she did that he must be pretty bad off.

The story is that he had some sort of bicycle crash into some wall of railroad cross ties. His head must have come into direct contact with the ties as he had over a hundred stitches in his head. He said they were small stitches because they were sown by a plastic surgeon. He has been to the Doctor a couple times this week, and had the stitches removed yesterday. He still looks like a beaten man. He must be getting better because Linda has started to give him the normal harassment that she constantly hammers him with. I think if she would treat him with a little kindness things would really change between them. But that is not any of my business so I'll keep out of it.

Looks like Ashley Dee is finally moving out. The boss has tried everything to keep her here, but she will have no part of it. She is moving in with her brother. He has made arrangements for an apartment here in Mustang, and from all I can gather it is going to be a very nice place.

The boss is so proud of Ashley going to school, and now she is moving out. He told her that she had better stay in school. I do believe the man meant it.

I am personally going to miss Ashley. I have been sharing her bed for the past several years, in spite of the boss's insistence of no dogs in bed. It's hard for him to enforce a rule when he's on the road

*Continued on page 8; see Doudney*

# Mothers Little Angel

There came a frantic knock at the doctor's office door,  
A knock more urgent than he had ever heard before.  
"Come in, come in," the impatient doctor said.  
"Come in, come in, before you wake the dead."  
In walked a frightened little girl, a child no more than nine.  
It was plain for all to see she had troubles on her mind.  
"Oh doctor, I beg you. Please come with me.  
My mother is surely dying. She's as sick as she can be."  
"I don't make house calls. Bring your mother here."  
"But she's too sick, so you must come or she will die, I fear."

The doctor, touched by her devotion, decided he would go.  
She said he would be blessed, more than he could know.  
She led him to her house where her mother lay in bed.  
Her mother was so very sick she couldn't raise her head.  
But her eyes cried out for help and help her the doctor did.  
She would have died that very night had it not been for her kid.  
The doctor got her fever down and she lived through the night.  
And morning brought the doctor signs, that she would be all right.  
The doctor said he had to leave but would return again by two.  
And later he came back to check, just like he said he'd do.  
The mother praised the doctor for all the things he'd done.  
He told her she would have died, were it not for her little one.  
"How proud you must be of your wonderful little girl.  
It was her pleading that made me come, She is really quite a pearl!"

"But doctor, my daughter died over three years ago.  
Is the picture on the wall of the little girl you know?"

The doctor's legs went limp for the picture on the wall  
Was the same little girl for whom he'd made this call.  
The doctor stood motionless, for quite a little while.  
And then his solemn face, was broken by his smile.  
He was thinking of that frantic knock heard at his office door.  
And of the beautiful little angel that had walked across his floor.

*Doudney House, Continued from page 6.*

as much as he is. So I got away with it when he was out of town. After a screaming fit was made by us girls (me, Ashley, & Linda), when he was at home for the night, that he finally gave up on his silly no dogs in bed rule, at least as far as me in Ashley's bed was concerned. I am the only one that has achieved this privilege. If he catches me in his bed however, I get tossed to the floor with no sympathy, and a lot of ranting and raving about stinking dogs in bed, yada yada yada. If I manage to get in bed with Linda, I'm taking a real chance of getting the toss, and sometimes that can hurt, depending on where and how you land. It really bothers him to find me in his bed so I best think twice before going there. He is a big softhearted teddy bear the rest of the time, Camry hasn't figured this out yet, but he is.

Times are changing around here pretty fast. There's not much telling what will happen next.

I'll be around taking notes.

JAZZ

*Christmas Prayer by  
Robert Louis Stevenson:*

*Loving Father, help us remember  
the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the  
song of the angels, the gladness of the  
shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.*

*Close the door of hate and open the  
door of love all over the world.*

*Let kindness come with every gift  
and good desires with every greeting.*

*Deliver us from evil by the blessing  
which Christ brings, and teach us to be  
merry with clear hearts.*

*May the Christmas morning make  
us happy to be Thy children, and the  
Christmas evening bring us to our beds with  
grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for  
Jesus' sake. Amen!*

*Keep your cards, letters, and donations coming and I will try to entertain you as best I can. Keep your powder dry, and your speed up, and let me hear from you.*

*AWD News  
1015 West Dorchester Way  
Mustang, OK*

## Communications

Actual radio conversation released by the Chief of Naval Operations, 1995-10-10.

#1: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision.

#2: Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to South to avoid a collision.

#1: This is the Captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course.

#2: No. I say again, you divert YOUR course.

#1. THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER ENTERPRISE, WE ARE A LARGE WARSHIP OF THE US NAVY. DIVERT YOUR COURSE NOW!

#2. This is a lighthouse. Your call.

\*

## THOUGHT PROVOKING

Dear God:

Why didn't you save the children of Littleton School?

Sincerely,  
Student

*And the reply...*

Dear Student:

I am not allowed in schools.  
Sincerely,  
God

**Only in America...do we leave cars worth thousands of dollars in the driveway and leave useless junk in the garage...**