

American Inspiration

Thoughts for today and every day . . .

“We are different, one from the other. But we are all bound together by a single premise—that every individual counts. We each have a right to be judged, not by where we come from or by who our parents are, but by our own actions and character.” Madeleine Albright

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“Basing our happiness on our ability to control everything is futile.” Stephen Covey

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“An honorable defeat is better than a dishonorable victory.” Millard Fillmore

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**“You’re not rewarded for having brains. You are rewarded for using them.”
Mordecai Johnson**

American Update

Tuesday was an eventful day here in Central Texas as we had over 5” of snowfall that blanketed the ground and the trees in white. It was quite peaceful working in the office, and peering over my computer, to watch the quiet beauty of the snow. It is an event that we see maybe every other year, so it was special to all the children that got to build a snowman or make a snow angel.

We had three great contests this past weekend and one raised thousands of dollars for Rangerette scholarships at Kilgore College with the Gussie Nell Davis Dance Classic. It was a great opportunity for so many young dancers to see the Rangerettes perform and visit the campus, including the Gussie Nell Davis Rangerette Residence.

We have three more great events this weekend and will have a live video stream from the Texas Dance Classic in Rowlett as well as the Heart of Texas Dance Classic in Temple. Make sure to visit our web site and the Live Stream pages on Saturday to see some of the great events!

Make plans now to be a part of our 2010 National/International Competition on March 26-27th at the University of North Texas in Denton. We will have over 20 college teams competing with over 100 high school and other teams. The college teams will have recruiting tables set up so you can learn more about their programs. There will also be teams from Japan again this year. Go to our web site for more information at www.DanceADTS.com

Inspiration of the Week

DREAMS

The first day of school our professor introduced himself and challenged us to get to know someone we didn't already know. I stood up to look around when a gentle hand touched my shoulder. I turned around to find a wrinkled, little old lady beaming up at me with a smile that lit up her entire being. She said, "Hi handsome. My name is Rose. I'm eighty-seven years old. Can I give you a hug?" I laughed and enthusiastically responded, "Of course you may!" and she gave me a giant squeeze. "Why are you in college at such a young, innocent age?" I asked.

She jokingly replied, "I'm here to meet a rich husband, get married, have a couple of kids..." "No seriously," I asked. I was curious what may have motivated her to be taking on this challenge at her age. "I always dreamed of having a college education and now I'm getting one!" she told me.

After class we walked to the student union building and shared a chocolate milkshake. We became instant friends. Every day for the next three months we would leave class together and talk nonstop. I was always mesmerized listening to this "time machine" as she shared her wisdom and experience with me.

Over the course of the year, Rose became a campus icon and she easily made friends wherever she went. She loved to dress up and she reveled in the attention bestowed upon her from the other students. She was living it up. At the end of the semester we invited Rose to speak at our football banquet. I'll never forget what she taught us. She was introduced and stepped up to the podium. As she began to deliver her prepared speech, she dropped her three by five cards on the floor.

Frustrated and a little embarrassed she leaned into the microphone and simply said, "I'm sorry I'm so jittery. I'll never get my speech back in order so let me just tell you what I know." As we laughed she cleared her throat and began, "We do not stop playing because we are old; we grow old because we stop playing. There are only four secrets to staying young, being happy, and achieving success.

- 1) You have to laugh and find humor every day.
- 2) You've got to have a dream. When you lose your dreams, you die. We have so many people walking around who are dead and don't even know it!
- 3) There is a huge difference between growing older and growing up. If you are nineteen years old and lie in bed for one full year and don't do one productive thing, you will turn twenty years old. If I am eighty-seven years old and stay in bed for a year and never do anything I will turn eighty-eight. Anybody can grow older. That doesn't take any talent ability. The idea is to grow up by always finding the opportunity in change.
- 4) Have no regrets. The elderly usually don't have regrets for what we did, but rather for things we did not do. The only people who fear death are those with regrets."

She concluded her speech by courageously singing "The Rose." She challenged each of us to study the lyrics and live them out in our daily lives. At the year's end Rose finished the college degree she began all those years ago.

One week after graduation Rose died peacefully in her sleep. Over two thousand college students attended her funeral in tribute to the wonderful woman who taught by example that it's never too late to be all you can possibly be.

These words have been passed along in loving memory of ROSE. REMEMBER, GROWING OLDER IS MANDATORY. GROWING UP IS OPTIONAL. We make a Living by what we get, We make a Life by what we give. God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.

This weekly message is generated from:

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