

Points East

By: Ike Adams

As many, if not most, of you already know, I am considered both "select" and "literate" in at least one international circle of folks who pride themselves in being members of an undertaking so elite that it itself is a society in and of itself.

I speak, of course, of my friend and adopted big-brother, Frederick J. Beate III (also known as FJ III's Select Literary Friends (SLF) anthology published faithfully and without fail every holiday season over the last ten years out of Wind Gap, Pennsylvania.

First, let me advise you not to run out to Barnes & Noble hoping to find copies of the SLF anthology for sale. On the other hand, if you did, maybe the booksellers would get a clue and realize FJ's enterprise has real market value far beyond the couple hundred of us who participate in and/or devour it annually. Those of us who contribute to it consider it a labor of love and we write, more or less, as a cooperative, that enables us to share our gifts of perception, phraseology, and our life experiences with one another.

We've had volumes dedicated to

everything from favorite books to favorite recipes and culinary experiences, favorite places, memorable moments, gardening, personal passions, childhood memories, movies, possessions and on and on. This year's book was dedicated, in addition to updates of old subjects, to special teachers along with a special category, "What would you do if you knew you were going to die a year from today?"

Not surprisingly many of us didn't touch the latter. We still talked about books we've recently read, places we've been, etc., and wound up with 2 volumes filling 336 8 1/2 x 11 type-written pages. (I personally celebrated and grieved for my 1967 high school English Teacher, Mary Ann Adams whose husband was a distant relative but that had nothing to do with her extraordinary teaching talent.)

Anyway, we sent in our entries and when the books arrived in late December I knew right where to go because the contributors are printed in alphabetical order. I start with Terry Collison who lives in Wilmington, Delaware and begins

his contribution, "I know that lots of kids can name every car they ever owned. I can't. But I can name all of my elementary school teachers, in order." (And goes on to do so.) "Helen Baylis was the first truly 'empowered' woman I can remember in my life," Collison says of his former elementary school principal. It's a seven-page, 10 foot essay too delicious to quote and far too long to run in your paper.

Ditto for Tom Miller who was my boss for ten years at Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation in the 70's & 80's and who is just now home from a stint in Africa and his seven-page tale of being stalked by lions when his truck broke down in Kenya. "It is true that you are not supposed to run when you have the bad luck to encounter a lion in its habitat. It was very difficult advice to follow at the moment."

From Cash Elston, paying homage to his Grandfather, Franklin, "Doc" Shuman. "His tomato garden meant more to him than his stock portfolio. I used to watch him tend to that garden for hours at a time, moving slowly from plant to plant, almost as if in a personal conversation with each individual piece of fruit. When the vines ripened, and the plump tomatoes came in, he placed them in hand-drawn wicker baskets and distributed them to friends and family all over the county. Sharing meant more than holding."

From Ed Gebhart, "I have made my living since I was 16 years old as a writer. The index fingers on either hand should be worn to the bone by now. I even got through a year in

North Korea out of harms way because the Army correctly figured anyone with a newspaper background could handle the duties of a company clerk."

And from old timers to the youth among us—

Meghan Beate (FJ III's daughter) on her favorite professor at American University in DC, "Professor Stock is one of those professors who makes you want to be a better student. And a better person. He loves the Beatles and he fights for human rights with his voice instead of his fists."

Genevieve Awad (my daughter who made a first-time contribution to SLF this year and of whom I am immensely proud) on her 12th grade Humanities teacher, Mrs. Carol Parkey, "She would support the arguments of the crystal-wearing, towel card-reading, New Age spiritualists the same as she supported the vehement Southern Baptists who warned us all of the coming Armageddon."

And on and on and on and on. There's not a writer in the collection this year that I haven't read a dozen times. And every night before I go to sleep I read a single contribution, and as long as there is no can't-lie-down-novel on my night stand, I will continue to peruse, at least weekly this wonderful gift that my wonderful friend Fred has bestowed upon us.

Thank you pal. It's easily my best and favorite gift of all seasons, year in and year out. I just wish I could review it in a way that let the whole world know how meaningful and thoughtful and wonderful it really is.

Our Readers Write

Dear Editor,

I am hoping that one or more of your readers may be able to help me. I am a 34-year-old male who has suffered with spasmodic dysphonia for over five years. It is an illness that has cost me nearly everything that is normally experienced in life.

I would like to receive any information that anyone may be able to find on the internet or otherwise. I

Thank you,
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ramblings.....

by perlina m. anderson
One of the first people I met when we moved to Mt. Vernon in January of 1966, was County Attorney James W. Lambeth.

I was 24 years old and pregnant, a condition I was to remain in with regularity for the next several years, and his office was next door to our Signal office at the time, and

He very politely came over and introduced himself and proceeded to tell me quite a bit of the county's lore, with embellishments as I later discovered. However, I was fascinated with his county, friendly manner which went a long way in making me feel welcome in the community.

He had a quick wit and a sense of humor that, over the years, I enjoyed every time I had occasion to talk with him. One of the things he liked to tease me about, everytime we met, was the number of children we had, six at the time, and, when Allison came along, "in my daughter" as he commented, I had to think quick to return his teasing remarks about the pending event.

One time, when Jim and I were

buying some property, Paige was a newborn and I had to take her to his office to sign some papers. We stood and chatted for several minutes after the transaction and then Jim and I proceeded to get in the car to leave. Jimmy came running out of his office, wildly waving his arms to remind me that my two-week-old baby was still lying on the couch in his office and he wanted to make it clear, in no uncertain terms, that "you're not leaving that particular bundle of joy with me." It was a long time before I lived that one down.

In all my dealing with him, "Jimmy," as he was affectionately called by all who knew him, was always, to my knowledge, fair and honorable.

It had been sometime since I had seen him, when I heard of his stroke and then his death. It saddened me, because as long as I have been here, Jimmy has been an integral part of the fiber of this community and he will be missed.

Our condolences to his family. His passing is a loss that cannot be replaced.

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"What Saith the Scriptures"

With last week's tragic ending of the Space Shuttle Columbia with its seven crew members, let us make this exhortation for all of us to consider.

Once again we are reminded of the uncertainty of life "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." James 4:13-14. Probably most of us will never be on board a space ship, which is true, but a mishap can happen to us in all the various forms of travel we will use, airplanes, cars, buses, trains, tractors, ATVs, bicycles, even walking. Moreover a thousand other things can happen to end our life here on earth, just as suddenly and quickly. Are you prepared, (am I prepared) if you should leave the scenes of this life today? It "is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Heb 9:27. Only through Jesus Christ can I make my life right with the Lord, Jn 8:24, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." If you have not made the choice to believe and obey the gospel of Christ, think soberly and seriously about your souls' condition!

Providence church of Christ

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