

From: Pauline Sutton (paulinesutton@sbcglobal.net)
To: janismillswalker@yahoo.com;
Date: Fri, December 24, 2010 1:39:06 PM
Cc:
Subject: Fw: RE: Christmas 2010

--- On Fri, 12/24/10, Marie Lowe <ransom10@sbcglobal.net> wrote:

From: Marie Lowe <ransom10@sbcglobal.net>
Subject: RE: Christmas 2010
To: "Dan Mills" <millsdan@kc.rr.com>, "Robert Lee Mills" <robmills@srcaccess.net>, "Donald Mills" <dndbnb@etex.net>, "Pauline Sutton" <paulinesutton@sbcglobal.net>, "Stephen A Mills" <sam41241@skynetcountry.com>
Cc: "Brian Mills" <yaybeer9@ku.edu>, "Brett Mills" <brettmills@kc.rr.com>, "Carol A. Mills" <carolmills@kc.rr.com>
Date: Friday, December 24, 2010, 9:12 AM

Dan, I know how you feel. I too am not able to go to my last remaining aunt's memorial service. I do think about the fun times and the sad times we shared with Faye. She was my hero growing up and protected me from evil forces. Going to her service will not let her know how much I cared or loved her, but I hope she knows she inspired me to become more than I was and filled me with ambition to serve others as a nurse. I worshiped her as a child, but probably never told her so. She is upstairs now playing cards with Mother and Daddy, Eunice and Bill, Floyd and Lloyd, and of course Gertrude and Grandma and Grandpa. They are all sharing stories and having a party. They will all be together for Christmas again, the first time in 35 years! Merry Christmas to Mother and Daddy, Grandma and Grandpa, Floyd and Lloyd, Gertrude, Eunice, and Faye – I hope it is your best Christmas ever as you walk the streets of gold, touch our savior's hand, and hear the angels sing!

Marie

From: Pauline Sutton (paulinesutton@sbcglobal.net)
To: janismillswalker@yahoo.com;
Date: Sat, December 25, 2010 12:02:14 AM
Cc:
Subject: Fw: Christmas 2010

0149

--- On Fri, 12/24/10, Dan Mills <millsdan@kc.rr.com> wrote:

From: Dan Mills <millsdan@kc.rr.com>
Subject: Christmas 2010
To: "Robert Lee Mills" <robmills@srcaccess.net>, "Donald Mills" <dndbnb@etex.net>, "Marie Lowe" <ransom10@sbcglobal.net>, "Pauline Sutton" <paulinesutton@sbcglobal.net>, "Stephen A Mills" <sam41241@skynetcountry.com>
Cc: "Brian Mills" <yaybeer9@ku.edu>, "Brett Mills" <brettmills@kc.rr.com>, "Carol A. Mills" <carolmills@kc.rr.com>
Date: Friday, December 24, 2010, 8:50 AM

I have, on occasion written a Christmas letter to my Mother and family "back home" while I was away somewhere that was inconvenient or circumstances made it too expensive to travel home for the traditional family gathering (whatever than was).

My first Christmas letter was written while I was CQ Runner during Christmas 1971 at Fort Jackson, SC after completing AIT. I was a "holdover" (someone who had finished training and for some reason had not gone on to their next assignment) and it just worked out that taking leave during that period did not make sense (plus I was broke).

I remember the letter was about being lonely and away from home, but doing good, dutiful things. It was filled with emotion - and pride. It was about being honorable when emotions moved you to be otherwise. It was written with a very innocent perspective.

I remember the letter I did not write from Germany when my

grandfather McMinn passed away. That was the beginning of the tearing of the heart - as the Eagles say in song, "the end of the innocence." Perhaps I should have taken a Red Cross loan and come home, but logically I could not have gotten home in time for the funeral and, after all, funerals are for the living and since everyone would probably have gone home by the time I got there it would have just been a waste - and add whatever other dribble you want - I did not come home when my grandfather passed away. Shame on me!

I remember the letter I wrote after I retired from the Army - my business was failing, I thought I had to stay open - you know - make some money during the holiday season - maybe we could turn it around if we had a good month - the theme of the letter was "the almighty dollar." Again, my excuses for not being with my family were all centered around protecting my ego and had nothing to do with the spirit of the season.

Now we come to the Christmas where I am so fixated on my petty work problems that I can't even come home for the funeral of my Aunt, or to be with my cousins while the last remaining person from my Mother's generation joins her sisters and brothers in death.

Who the hell do I think I am?

I do have one redeeming quality. I recognize that I FEEL the guilt (thank you Mom and Dad). I read the paper and have been following the stories about the unemployment rate; about children who come to school RIGHT HERE IN KANSAS CITY and RIGHT THERE IN CHILDRESS and all across this country.

We have an organization called Harvesters here in KC that provides

food for the children during the week. They call the program something like "fill the backpack." The one good thing I did this Christmas was give them some money so that one child will take a backpack home each weekend filled with enough food to get through the weekend.

Does that provide me with some "redemption?" Absolutely not. Does it allow me to feel like the sole of the shoe instead of the heel? Yes.

I love you all, even though I do a very poor job of showing it.

Dan



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