



# Jeanne Robertson

## Priorities

**C**onsider this your friendly reminder. Administrative Professionals Day/Week is this month and if it applies to you, my advice is to remember it. Write it down. Put up sticky notes. Email or text yourself a message. Whatever you do, make it a priority. Forget it at your own peril. The exact day for 2016 is Wednesday, April 27. That stated, we don't have to "special" these terrific individuals for only one day of the year. There are plenty of other days that will work.

Toni Meredith has been my Administrative Professional for 37 years. We were both students at Auburn University "down" in Alabama and both wound up near Southeast Guilford in Alamance County with our families. I had grown up in Graham and husband "Left Brain" in Burlington so we came home. Toni and her husband Tom moved to Burlington for business so as Deputy Barney Fife might say, "They were from somewheres else."

To refresh your memory, "Administrative Professionals Day" or "Admin Day" was known for years as "Secretary's Day." In my office, from time to time Toni has been known as "Queen of Everything," "Queen of the Tickets" and "National Coordinator." (I'll never forget the time she booked me for my first speech in California and pronounced herself "International Coordinator.") But the current, politically correct term is certainly Administrative Assistant or Administrative Professional.

Several years ago, I returned home from a speaking trip in January and as usual, soon had a meeting with Toni to catch up on what was happening business wise. I write my material, travel and do the speeches and shows. Toni handles

about everything else including booking all my engagements. This particular meeting, she told me a meeting planner had called about booking me the next summer on Saturday night, August 18th. It was unusual for her to tell me about every call. Usually she just reported on what had booked. This day she told me the gentleman's name and the name of his organization.

"Did he book it?"  
"Well, no. Not yet," Toni explained, avoiding eye contact. "We're holding the date for him, but I needed to talk to you about it first." Again, this was odd. She has full authority to book dates.

"Is there a problem with travel? I can't get there?" "Is he deciding among several other speakers and me?"

"No, you can get there from another speech with time to spare," she said, still glancing at her notes rather than me. "He definitely wants you and he has the fee. It's just, well, August 18th is the exact date of Tom's and my 50th wedding anniversary. We've been planning a big party. One of those events where we send out 'Hold the Date' cards to let old friends from around the country have time to plan if they want to come. And, naturally, there'll be a long list of local friends. It's going to be a big deal, Jeanne, and I wish you could be there."

Priorities. I sized up the situation immediately and without blinking an eye, said what I meant. "I wouldn't miss it for the world. Absolutely turn down his invitation. Left Brain and I will both be there. You're not having that party without us!"

Toni's face lit up and she broke into a big smile. "Good. Because we're thinking about having it at your house."

And they did.

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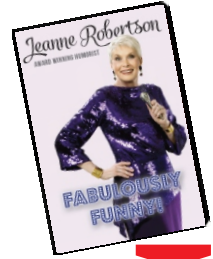
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