



April 2013

## Here's your reminder. Mark your calendar!

**A**dministrative Professional Week is April 21-27. The specific Day is Wednesday, April 24. You have been reminded.

I don't have to be reminded. My Administrative Professional Toni has been with me 35 years. We were at Auburn University in Alabama together and are both big Auburn fans who wound up in Alamance County. I grew up in Graham but as Barney Fife might say, "Toni's from somewheres else." She runs everything in my office from booking the speeches and travel to reminding me of important holidays. Trust me. Administrative Professional Day (formerly "Secretaries Day") is one of the important ones.

Last Spring, Toni booked me for an early morning speech in Little Rock, Arkansas. When it was over, I was to fly from Little Rock to Atlanta, change planes and fly to Lexington, KY to speak the next day. As always, Toni made sure there were plenty of backup flights. I can't make people laugh if I'm not there. We had four backups to Atlanta and several to Lexington.

The Little Rock airport was crowded when I got there after my speech; too crowded for that time of morning. There were long lines at every counter and way too many people. I fell into place at my airline and struck up a conversation with the man in front of me. "What's going on?" He didn't know but traveled for a living and sensed, as I did, that something was seriously wrong. He

was young, probably early thirties and was headed home to his wife and kids near Huntsville, Alabama after being gone a week.

"Huntsville? We have something in common," I told him. "I live in North Carolina but I went to school at Auburn." No reaction other than a slight nod. That told me something.

"You're an Alabama fan."

"How'd you know?"

"Because you didn't react when I said 'Auburn.' An Auburn fan would have smiled and said 'War Eagle!' We would have high-fived, We might have even hugged."

"Well, ma'am, I'm the biggest Alabama fan you'll ever meet."

We said in unison, "We're not going to hug."

At that precise moment, the electronic boards in the airport switched every flight to or from Atlanta to "cancelled." The announcement was concise. "Due to bad weather, Atlanta has shut down and will probably be closed for hours. If there is any way you can travel tomorrow, you might want to consider doing so." The young man in front of me made a quick decision, "I'm renting a car and driving to Huntsville." My decision was to call Toni.

Within minutes, Toni told me that if I could get to Memphis, there was a two p.m. flight to Cincinnati. She would set up a rental car there and I could drive to Lexington, KY. But first, I had to get to Memphis. Her Mapquest indicated there was time to make it to Memphis if I got a rental car and got on the road fast. I told her I would get the car in Little Rock.

Practically running to the rental car section of the airport, I met the young man who had been in front of me as he came out. "I may have gotten the last car," he said, never breaking stride, "Good luck."

Inside the car rental place, a quick glance revealed signs proclaiming "No Cars" at every counter. People behind those counters were shaking their heads at me.

I didn't bat an eye but I did start moving my legs, running in the direction of the only person I knew at the Little Rock airport. I found him putting luggage

in his car. "Remember me? To get to Huntsville, don't you go in the direction of Memphis?" His facial expression said, "Ma'am I wouldn't mind taking you to the grocery store, but to Memphis..."

To make a long story shorter, this 69-year old grandmother talked this young father trying to get home to take me in the direction of Memphis. He and I both knew that he would go near Memphis to get home but wouldn't pass the airport. I told him he could let me out at any hotel in the area. I'd get a cab to the airport. At that point, he smiled, shook his head and said, "I'll put your luggage in the back." Two states later, my new best friend and one of the nicest guys I've ever met, let me off in front of the Memphis International Airport.

When I got home several days later, I was telling my husband Jerry, a.k.a. "Left Brain" what happened. Toni was also in the office but having "lived" the story, was busy filing papers, her back to us.

Left Brain is a quiet man who seldom gets upset. This time, though. I could sense his concern about the two-state jaunt with a man I had never set eyes on. His exact words were, "Getting into a car with a stranger is exactly what we tell younger people not to do." He was correct, of course, but that's where I started adding what I thought would help my case. "He was a nice young man. He and his wife are active in their church. He does a lot of activities with his children and takes care of his mother. He had short hair."

Left Brain listened intently but I knew what was coming. His quiet manner turned to exasperation and finally he said, "Jeanne! I can't believe ... you got in a car ... with a man you didn't know ... to ride anywhere, much less across two states." At that point, he sought help from Toni, who was still filing papers with her back still toward us. "Tell her, Toni," he pleaded.

Toni dropped the last paper into place in the filing cabinet, slammed the drawer shut and turned around. "And I can't believe ... you got in a car ... with an Alabama fan!"

Happy Administrative Professionals Day, Toni and all other Admins out there.



**Jeanne Robertson**

**See Jeanne Live!**

**May 9, 7:30pm**

**High Point, NC**

**High Point Theatre**

[www.highpointtheatre.com](http://www.highpointtheatre.com)

Looking for Humor. See her new YouTube clip "Don't ask Left Brain to reserve rooms"

[www.JeanneRobertson.com](http://www.JeanneRobertson.com) or 1-800-962-6268

