



## **AHS “A” ASSOCIATION GATHERING, 2013**

**What an elite group...Drs., Lawyers, Indians and chiefs.**

**Thank you for this opportunity, again.**

**All of you look a little bit older than you did last year. Aren't you glad? It's better than the alternative.**

**With that in mind, we did lose some Eagles last year. What a wonderful thing to know that the Lord has them in attendance as they are walking around experiencing more than our minds could ever comprehend.**

### **1 Corinthians 2:9 (KJV)**

*“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”*

**Great food last night...and I'm sure today will be no different.**

**I saw someone eating last night that was a vegetarian. (No meat on their plate).**

**Vegetarians are a rarity.**

**Vegetarian is an old Indian word. It means, “Bad Hunter.”**

**Another rarity happened this year...**

**- Another Pope was appointed while the previous Pope was still living. This hasn't happened in over 600 years.**

**- I understand that to be a Pope, you can't be married. That is a shame. I don't want to even think about not being married to my sweet Sherry. But....People are different and have different needs.**

**You heard about the reporter who was writing an article about the monastery in Barcelona, Spain.**

**The monastery trained the future priests... The monks of the monastery studied here.**

**Reporter was met by the 80 year old Senior Priest who oversaw the student monks. While touring the facilities (monastery), the**

reporter noticed that the monks were translating the Bible...but they were using a translation that was completed after the 1<sup>st</sup> Bible was printed. He told the Senior Priest. The Senior Priest was astonished and was very concerned about whether the first translation might have been transmitted on paper wrong. He told the reporter that he had the original in a vault in the basement and wanted to check out whether there might have been a mistake by the younger monks many moons ago. While waiting for the Senior Priest to return, the reporter was just waiting around for further instructions. After about 20 minutes the reporter heard wailing and screaming coming from the basement. The reporter and the younger monks ran to the basement and as they came down the stairs they heard the Senior Priest scream... "No, No, they forgot the "R"... "No, No, they forgot the "R." The word is celebrate. The word is celebrate."

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Laughing...Good for you!

#### **15 Reasons Why Men Are Happier Than Women:**

- 1. Car mechanics tell you the truth.**
- 2. Wrinkles add character.**
- 3. New shoes don't cut, blister, or mangle your feet.**
- 4. Phone conversations are over in 30 seconds flat.**
- 5. A five-day vacation requires one suitcase.**
- 6. You can open all your own jars.**
- 7. If someone forgets to invite you, he or she can still be your friend.**
- 8. Three pairs of shoes are more than enough.**
- 9. You are unable to see wrinkles in your clothes.**
- 10. Everything on your face stays the original color.**
- 11. The same hairstyle lasts for years, maybe decades.**
- 12. One wallet and one pair of shoes...one color for all seasons.**
- 13. You can do your nails with a pocket knife...and never have to listen to the nail girl who says, "Pik a culla...pik a culla."**
- 14. You can play with toys all your life.**
- 15. You can do Christmas shopping for 25 relatives on December 24th in 25 minutes.**

There are many Scriptures about laughter...and the enjoyment of being joyful. However, I ran across some real good secular quotes on laughter. Here they are (I agree with all of them):

- When people are laughing, they're generally not killing each other. ~Alan Alda
- I've always thought that a big laugh is a really loud noise from the soul saying, "Ain't that the truth." ~Quincy Jones
- A man isn't poor if he can still laugh. ~Raymond Hitchcock
- A good time to laugh is any time you can. ~Linda Ellerbee
- With the fearful strain that is on me night and day, if I did not laugh I should die. ~Abraham Lincoln
- If you are too busy to laugh, you are too busy. ~Proverb
- Laughter is a tranquilizer with no side effects. ~Arnold Glasow

Yes, even these secular quotes help us to understand how important it is for us to laugh. However, it is sometimes difficult to laugh at ourselves; but, very easy to laugh at someone else.

The Bible has much to say about laughter; and, it is with these fundamental truths we base the premise of, "learning to laugh at the enemy who takes pride in making us sad and lonely...and ourselves...are cures for what ails the soul."

**Psalm 126:2** ESV "*Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."*

**Psalm 37:13** ESV "*But the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming."*

**Philippians 4:4** ESV "*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."*

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On a more serious note: I would like to take up where we left off last year. Remember I used the idea of the EAGLE as an acronym for the lesson to take with us. We are Eagles...and proud of it. I used

**E = Excellence**...Spirit of Excellence.

**A = Accountability**...accountable to yourself, to others, to family, to God.

**G = Gracious and Grateful**

Teachers, coaches

**L = Loyal**, to Team Mates and to family, to God.

**E = Endurance**- Determined to fulfill responsibilities.

**S = Sacrificial, sacrificing** to help your team win.

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**Today I want to use “A” Association: What the “A” Association represented and how it can be part of our life now.**

**A=Appreciative/Acknowledge**...Appreciation for all of the mentors of our lives. If they weren't our parents, they were teachers, coaches, other students who stood for truth and those that you could and can depend on. I say, "Let them know. Acknowledge them...Call them. Email them. Stand toe-to-toe with them and look them in the eye and say, "Thank you." Acknowledge that you can't make it this life without some help from others.

**A = Affirm:** Be an affirmer, an encourager; telling others how much their friendship means to you; their action that helped you choose the right way. It can be your spouse, family...your friends, pastor or next door neighbor.

Could have used many other words or character traits that starts with an "A." However, many would not affirm you...lift you up, it would build a wall between us...you to them...instead of a bridge in which character is built on.

Bad character traits---agitator, alibi, argumentative, angry, angelic (could go both ways), annoy, artificial (not real, not a person in whom you can trust).

- **Athletic** = Great word to build a person up (usually male)...but, not really a character building trait. In Abilene, very few with athletic talent...did not have to work at their sport. I don't count the word athletic as a character trait that I would necessarily appreciate. Most of the "A" Association members worked hard to get where they were athletically. They had that "Spirit of Excellence" we talked about last year.

**Admirable Attitude** = One of the greatest compliments one can give is while telling about someone is that they have an admirable attitude. An attitude that complements, an attitude that is one of giving... instead of getting. An attitude that appealing to others, an attitude of love instead of hate. An attitude that is amenable (willing to follow advice or suggestion; responsible to authority; accountable; open or liable to testing, criticism, or judgment).

**American** = I don't know about you, but I am very concerned about America today. I am concerned that this generation does not understand what it means to be an American.

To me...and I know to you, A real American is loyal, faithful, active (not lazy), affective in his endeavors, and dependable in doing his job. We need to pray for our country, pray for our troops, and pray for our family. Prayer is not enough, we need to teach our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, the real American traits. I don't apologize for calling myself an American...do you?

**Some statistics:**

**During the Korean War, the U.S. sent about 480,000 troops to support South Korea in their quest for peace and protection of homeland.**

**The war began in June, 1950, and ended with an armistice signed in July of 1953. The 3 year war cost our country 33,741 precious loved ones that returned in body bags. There were 92,134 brave young soldiers that came back home wounded; some severely. There were over 4,820 missing in action....never to be heard from again by those weeping mothers and fathers. Of the 7,245 U.S. Prisoners of War (POWs), 2,845 died while being held in a POW camp.**

**As much as we have hated to hear of all the young soldiers losing their lives in the Iraq War (approximately 4,500 at this time), there is no equal comparison as to what happened in "the Forgotten War" (Korea).**

**Don't get me wrong or feel that I am minimizing the Iraq War casualties and wounded soldiers. Every precious son or daughter who has given the ultimate sacrifice for their country is a hero and deserves the highest honor a country can bestow; but, as far as being a war of wars, Iraq did not have near the number of soldiers killed daily, monthly or annually that the Korean War did.**

**The Iraq War began in March, 2003, and offensive tactics have been suspended since September, 2010. Where the Iraq offensive by U.S. troops had casualties of an average of 615 per year or 51 per month on the average, the Korean War had over 11,240 plus per year; an average of 912 per month. Now you can see why the moms and dads, brothers and sisters, wives and children were crying themselves to sleep at night as their loved one went off to the "Forgotten War"**

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**The Vietnam War began in 1954 (though conflict in the region stretched back to the mid-1940s).**

**More than 3 million people (including 58,000 Americans) were killed in the Vietnam War; more than half were Vietnamese civilians.**

**By 1969, at the peak of U.S. involvement in the war, more than 500,000 U.S. military personnel were involved in the Vietnam conflict. Growing opposition to the war in the United States led to bitter divisions among Americans, both before and after President Richard Nixon ordered the withdrawal of U.S. forces in 1973. .**

## **Personnel**

**9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the Vietnam Era (5 August 1965-7 May 1975)**

**2,594,000 personnel served within the borders of South Vietnam (1 January 1965 - 28 March 1973)**

**Another 50,000 men served in Vietnam between 1960 and 1964**

**Of the nearly 2.6 million, between 1 and 1.6 million (40-60%) either fought in combat, provided close combat support or were at least fairly regularly exposed to enemy attack.**

**7,484 women served in Vietnam, of whom 6,250 or 83.5% were nurses.**

**Peak troop strength in Vietnam was 543,482, on 30 April 1969.**

### **Casualties:**

**Hostile deaths: 47,359**

**Non-hostile deaths: 10,797**

**Total: 58,156 (including men formerly classified as MIA and Mayaguez casualties).**

**WIA: 303,704 - 153,329**

**Severely disabled: 75,000, 23,214 were classified 100% disabled. 5,283 lost limbs, 1,081 sustained multiple amputations. Amputation or crippling wounds to the lower extremities were 300% higher than in WWII and 70% higher than in**

Korea. Multiple amputations occurred at the rate of 18.4% compared to 5.7% in WWII.

MIA: 2,338

POW: 766, of whom 114 died in captivity.

Reservists KIA: 5,977

Once upon a time when our politicians did not tend to apologize for our country's prior actions, here's a refresher on how some of our former patriots handled negative comments about our great country.

JFK'S Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, was in France in the early 60's when DeGaulle decided to pull out of NATO. DeGaulle said he wanted all US military out of France as soon as possible. Rusk responded, "Does that include those who are buried here?" DeGaulle did not respond.

You could have heard a pin drop.

When in England , at a fairly large conference, Colin Powell was asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury if our plans for Iraq were just an example of 'empire building' by George Bush. He answered by saying, "Over the years, the United States has sent many of its fine young men and women into great peril to fight for freedom beyond our borders. The only amount of land we have ever asked for in return is enough to bury those that did not return."

You could have heard a pin drop.

There was a conference in France where a number of international engineers were taking part, including French and American. During a break, one of the French engineers came back into the room saying, "Have you heard the latest dumb stunt Bush has done? He has sent an aircraft carrier to Indonesia to help the tsunami victims. What does he intend to do, bomb them?"

A Boeing engineer stood up and replied quietly: "Our carriers have three hospitals on board that can treat several hundred people; they are nuclear powered and can supply emergency electrical power to shore facilities; they have three cafeterias with the capacity to feed 3,000 people three meals a day, they can produce several thousand gallons of fresh water from sea water each day, and they carry half a dozen helicopters for use in transporting victims and injured to and from their flight deck. We have eleven such ships; how many does France have?"

**You could have heard a pin drop.**

**A U.S. Navy Admiral was attending a naval conference that included Admirals from the U.S., English, Canadian, Australian and French Navies at a cocktail reception, he found himself standing with a large group of officers that included personnel from most of those countries.**

**Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks, but a French admiral suddenly complained that, whereas Europeans learn many languages, Americans learn only English. He then asked, "Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?"**

**Without hesitating, the American Admiral replied, "Maybe it's because the Brit's, Canadians, Aussie's and Americans arranged it so you wouldn't have to speak German."**

**You could have heard a pin drop.**

**Robert Whiting, an elderly gentleman of 83, arrived in Paris by plane. At French Customs, he took a few minutes to locate his passport in his carry on. "You have been to France before, monsieur?" the customs officer asked sarcastically. Mr. Whiting admitted that he had been to France previously. "Then you should know enough to have your passport ready."**

**The American said, "The last time I was here, I didn't have to show it." "Impossible... Americans always have to show their passports on arrival in France !"**

**The American senior gave the Frenchman a long hard look. Then, he quietly explained, "Well, when I came ashore at Omaha Beach on D-Day in 1944 to help liberate this country, I couldn't find a single Frenchman to show a passport to."**

**You could have heard a pin drop.**

**I am proud to be an American**

**It's the Military, not the politicians, that ensures our right to life,  
liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.**

**It's the Military who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag,  
and whose coffin is draped by the flag**

**A = Accountable**, to family, to our teammates, to God...and to ourselves. We go through life making choices. Some have been good, some bad. All of those choices we have had to buckle up and accept...to be accountable for our mistakes, our less than perfect acts. Our coaches taught us that. We were accountable to our team. Drop a perfect pass from the quarterback. Missing a block and it caused injury to the running back. Drop a baton, and your team loses.



We were accountable to ourselves. How we handled that was very important to our actions in our life...then, later and now.

**We must understand that we are accountable to God.**

**Quote: Romans 12:1-2, I beseech you therefore, Brethren, by the mercies of God...that you present your bodies, living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God which is your reasonable service.**

**And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God...through Jesus Christ our Lord.”**

**I close with a truth, an important statement made by a great man of God...and a wonderful Statesman, admired by many presidents.**

*‘We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!’*

Abraham Lincoln: Upon proclaiming a National Fast Day (30 March 1863).

**Devotion given by Gerald E. Cumby, 2013**