



“A” Association Annual Gathering Devotion (2014)

Devotion by Gerald Cumby

- ***Appreciation to Gerald Galbraith and (wife) for their hospitality. This is a wonderful place to meet and the idea that they are willing to have people like Andy back, there has to be some good in them.***
- ***We had a great time telling lies last night...didn't we?***

We are the only team in the U.S. that believe our lies are really true. We have told those tales and stretched the truth so many times that the rubber band is giving as well as our minds. Our grandkids remind us every once in a while that the lies weren't near as bad when they were a kid as they are now. We have gone from running a 4 minute and 30 second mile to a little over 4 minutes, jumping a little less than 26' broad jumping (really 23'1"), pole vaulting 15 feet (one time in practice), to catching a pass in the end zone that won the game (that was in practice when you were in the 7th grade). You made the winning basket that took you to the championship game (in the backyard at the neighborhood kid's tournament); don't forget hitting that homerun that was a walk-off hit that won the game for Coca Cola Bottling Company (Little League). We love those stories...and you wives could tell the story without notes, couldn't you?
- **I am going to write my next book called “Stretching the Truth, AHS Style.” Maybe a better title would be “Abilene High School “A” Association Tall Tales of Yesteryear.”**
- **I love every story. I love you guys...and I wouldn't change your stories for nothing. The grandkids will never hear the lies from my lips.**
- **Today's devotion is on “THE JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME.**

The Train of Life.....

Our Lives are like a journey on a train...with its stations and stops...with changes of routes...passengers hurrying to and fro.... and with accidents!

At birth we boarded the train and met our parents, and we believed they would always travel by our side. However, at some station along the way, they stepped down from the train, leaving us on this journey alone.

As time went by, other people boarded the train; and they were significant...our siblings, friends, children, and even the love of our life.

Many stepped down and left a permanent vacuum. Others went so silent and unnoticed that we don't realize that they had vacated their seats!

This train ride is full of fun, joy, sadness, sorrow, worry, fantasy, expectations, hellos, goodbyes, and farewells.

Success consists of having a good relationship with all these passengers...requiring that we give the best of ourselves.

The mystery to everyone is: At which station will we ourselves step down. It is the great mystery and remains unknown until our train suddenly stops. So, we must live in the best way - love, forgive and offer the best of who we are. It is important to do this because when the time comes for us to step down and leave our seat empty, we should have tried our hardest to leave behind beautiful memories for those who will continue to travel on the train of Life.

I wish you a joyful journey. Reap success by spreading happiness and give lots of love. And thank God for your journey!

Thank you for being one of the passengers on my train!

My Journey...

You have journeyed through areas, regions, the world I have not. Here's my journey:

- **I was dropped off at Abilene, Texas and taken to the Jim Ned community near Lawn and Tuscola, Texas.**
- **Loved to go shopping with my dad and mom on Saturday nights where I could get a Nu-Grape Soda pop and a Butterfinger candy bar.**
- **My next stop would be in Stephenville, Texas where Dad was the Supt. For Bailey Bridge Co.
1st grade, Trouble at school...suspended because I pinned a little guy against a tree with my new knife my dad bought.**
- **Next stop on my journey, Abilene, Texas... (Last of 1st grade at Alta Vista and College Heights Elem. in my 2nd grade year). Where my first sweetheart was...my teacher, Ms. Skiles...she taught me how to waltz, 2 step and put-your-little foot. Ms. Pace in the 3rd grade.**
- **Next stop, Channing, Texas...4th grade, my 2nd love in which I made a fool of. Patricia...I did a double flip over the handle-bars of my bike trying to show off (I really fell...hard). She was not**
- **Next stop, Childress, Texas...5th grade...where I made my first vault (5') with a round wooden dowel my dad bought me at the lumber company.**
- **Next stop, Abilene, Texas where Mr. Wainscott, Mr. Craver, Mr. Palm, and Ms. Hohertz taught and coached me well (6th and 7th grade). Charlie Harrison, Gus Mitchell, Charles Lacy, and others you know were my friends.**
- **Next stop South Jr. Mr. McCluskey was a mentor. Dad's death at the age of 13 (missed him then and I still miss him)...and David Parks, Mr. Beck.**
- **Next Lincoln Jr. High, Ms. Mauldin**
- **But...the best stop was at AHS, not realizing it then. I loved my days at AHS...but love the memories of those years even more.**

I met the love of my life there, Sherry.

- Then I went my way...every where, San Marcos, Wichita Falls, Fort Worth, Texas.

Some of the best times on my journey... the memories of AHS.

I was not a good looking boy in HS. Duck tails on the side and a flat-top...on top.

- I was not a cute kid when I was born. The doctor took one look at me, flipped me over and said, "Just what I thought...twins."
- My mother had morning sickness after I was born.
- She took me to a "Dog Show" once...and I won.
- I had my first blind date when I was 13 years old. We were to meet on the corner, just south of the Paramount Theatre. I got there early. Several girls passed, but finally one kept looking around. So I went up to her and asked, "Pardon me, but are you Linda?" She looked me up and down and asked, "Are you, Gerald? I said, "Yes." And she said, "Well, I'm not Linda." I'm telling you...I don't get any respect.
- I was asked out one time at local joint, the woman said, "Hey, you...out!"

Back to my journey, I have been all over the U.S., into Canada, Israel, and some of the Mediterranean areas.

My journey is finally coming to the home stretch. Hopefully, I will have a few more miles on this train. But until I get to my final destination...let me give you some things to think about:

Just about 2 weeks ago, I noticed on the front page of USA Today, "63,000 Bridges in Need of Immediate Repair."

These 63,000 bridges, all across the country, are crossed 250,000,000 times every day. The Federal Transportation Authority made that statement in trying to get Congress to pass a bill covering the cost to repair. They were asking for about \$26 billion. You know my Father and my family worked and built bridges all across the State of Texas and Oklahoma. They are still standing...but like anything else, they deteriorate over time.

With that in mind, those things I want you to think about are these. To help remind you of the points, I want you to take these M & Ms (passed out packages of M&Ms)

First “M” to take notice:

- 1. Mend Broken Bridges** that you know about. All of us have them. A neighbor, a loved one, someone who is hurting and you have never asked forgiveness for the hurt you caused them. To remember them by...take these M & M's to remind you of my suggested points of interest:
- 2. Minimize Regrets** – Kids we have failed to call. Friends that are dying and you haven't spent time with them. Regrets can be minimized. It is not hard. Once someone is gone, moved somewhere, passed away, etc. You are the one who is left thinking, “I should have....fill in the blank.”
- 3. Meditate on Worthwhile Memories**
...Memories that matter; memories that master the good in mankind. That Coach that helped you get your scholarship. That preacher that led you to a better way of life and helped you to know what you are to do to become a **Christian**. Romans 10:9 says, “Confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that He was raised from the dead, you will be saved.” Then let the world know that you have made that commitment by being baptized.
That family member that prayed for you. That friend who was by your side when you lost a

loved one...or you were in the hospital not knowing whether you were going to get out. Let them know that you appreciate them. Minimize that regret where you won't have to live with it when you won't have another chance to do so.

Meditate on that memory...but, do something before it is too late.

Remember....It is good to remember the catch in the end-zone or the 1st place medal at the State Track meet. But, there is nothing like meditating on life's challenges that have affected you and others today.

4. Maximize Your Faith.

It is easy to get caught up in the news. You have the good...the bad, and the ugly. But, it is your faith that will be the difference in the end. You came out here today for a reason. You either wanted to honor Gerald, the one who brought the devotion, those high school friends that meant so much to your life many moons ago. Or, you thought, "Maybe Gerald Cumby might say something that would encourage me to keep on going on this train of life.

One thing all of us know, this train is gradually coming to a stop for us...and we will get off. It might be 20 years from now...or it might be this year.

Thomas, the Disciple (one of the 12) doubted what the other disciples said when they told him that they had seen Jesus. He had indeed

been resurrected. Thomas said, "I will not believe unless I place my hands in the nail-prints of his hands ("I saw him die.").

When Jesus showed up, Thomas fell to his knees and did not have to touch his hands to believe. He said, "My Savior and Lord."

Jesus said to Thomas as Thomas was before him crying and yet rejoicing. Jesus said, "Thomas, you believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who have not seen...yet believe.

We who believe are going to receive a blessing that even the disciples will not receive. Jesus said it.

To maximize our faith, we have to believe that the Word of God is true. I believe it....what about you?

I love all of you. I want all of you to go with me on my journey after the train stops. My journey will never end because I will be heaven with my Savior.

Father God, bless my friends who I truly love and who I have thought about many times over the years. May their days be long on this earth...but, if not, may their days be one of praising you for what you did when you sent your Son to die for us.

Love them. Take care of them. May You get the glory for it all.

In Jesus name, Amen.