

A Monk's View at 79 3 April 2017 Norman, Oklahoma

Patty Gayle's 'Egg Call' yesterday was a day some of us will remember for a long time: "How do you want your eggs?" was a serious question and the rest of us were amazed at the different ways they were prepared because it didn't matter (even with grits) she could prepare it. Thank you Sister Gayle as you made our day with the eggs, toast, fresh preserves, strawberries (Rodney picked these out – they were as large as baseballs!) shortcake, pineapple upside down cake, **and** a big bowl of leftovers for Preston!

Greg was observed placing 'items of interest' in his go bag and I heard him say the big bowl would fit well in his kitchen, of course Kelly kept wondering why her food kept disappearing.

Jim showed up a bit before Karen arrived and their family made the day. Thanks to both of you for sharing – and letting me pick on Bre Preslee, as she was the star of the show! We all noticed how close she and Corey are which is both heartwarming and humorous. Jim, again, thanks for letting me pester her. Truly, ('literally' as Corey said) she told me *"I am tougher than nails!"*



This shot reflects three generations of beautiful women noting the cell phone photography is lacking but I did get all three together – and even the cook in the background. I will say again how gratifying it was to have you all share this day with us yesterday!





Did catch Preston leaning away from this shot but did get both him and Angie – who would have done a whole lot better with the photography! She added to the joy of the day by upping me one with her “Glad you got to see me Uncle Gary” comment...all I could do was blush red and smile back!

We all know, and Jim leads the choir on this, how special the grandkids are. I was intrigued with Corey’s comment that he could remember his first birthday and it came to me to try and engage with him on something you all probably did not know that happened. Greg sparked my thoughts here with his question of asking Corey how old he was on his first birthday. On reflection late last night when I played my tape back, I should have added a verse. This addition is really for Corey, me, and Jim.

I asked Corey to do some math on a piece of paper and he ardently complied by adding some numbers for me. Given the 79 number of the day and dealing with a nine year old boy (actually nine on the 22nd of November) I asked him to add 70 to the number 2017 which he did. And when I told him to look around to remember this day because he should remember the year 2087 he will be 79 years old. Yes, I know the idea/thought/fact may not be absorbed by him but, again, he is an amazing child.

The profoundness of looking to 2087 is just almost more than I can take. It is humbling. First of all, some of us there yesterday, will not be around for this event. If someone had asked me in 1947 where I would be in 2017 I would not have been ANY where near an idea of where/what and how this event could even take place – would have done well to have imagined the next year!

The added verse then, if I could marshal my ole grieving 79 year old brain, I would have asked for Corey to add the number 10 to 2017 and have him reflect where he thought he would be on his 19th birthday - with his 79 year old proud grandfather standing there with him. (Noting again, with tears in my ole eyes, some of us will not be at this birthday either.)

Kelly and I on the way home were reflecting on how well the day went, how well everyone looked, how wonderful the food was, and the joy of having a family together again and see folks we have not seen in a while. We discussed those of us who are getting well and we remembered those who are no longer with us and both were pleased at the laughs, joy, and wholesomeness of the day.

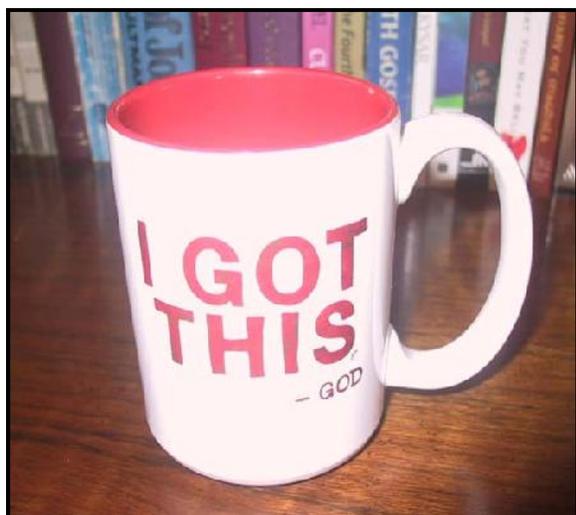
One highlight was Jamie’s comment on how (what was the word?) “fulfilled,” “gratified,” “relieved” she was when Karen picked Breana up and gave her ‘the’ zoo spanking.

Like unto this was the ‘moment’ for me when Jamie and Angie looked at Kelly’s humming bird and at the exact same time (and in unison) sighed and gasped out loud at the significance.



Want to close this 'thank you' note to all of you for sharing a very special day – and remembering the days in the past - and those to come – and leave you with a picture of the cup (a splendid addition for my Monk Work) Patricia Gayle and Rodney gave me as it not only holds a verse of what we should reflect on more often, but helps me with the sentiment for the day after yesterday:

"There ain't many of us left!"



Mail from Pat 4/3/2017

Gary, what a wonderful tribute to our family!! I am amazed at the splendor of your writing and composition!!

I personally was thrilled beyond words to have so many of our family together & having such a fun "party" for Gary Leon and Jimmy Hobart!! The comments, the questions, the looks (especially from Preslee!!!!) were simply downright fun and shows the deep intelligence of you ALL! I am so proud to be associated with not only an exceptionally intelligent witty family, but just downright beautiful !

My gosh we have some beautiful Kids, Grandkids AND Great Grandkids!!

To my three brothers.....I love you guys SO VERY much!! I love getting together with you!!! You clever questions to the kids tickle me pink!

Greg, the example of asking Corey how old he was on the 1st birthday was so cute! Did he answer "1"? And, thank you so much for giving the books to the Grandkids!! Reading good, informative and educational material is something I have always believed in and followed! Especially true stories of "Great" people in many different walks of life! Steve read many and appreciated them. Gala and all of hers read a LOT of books. Sadye Grace reads all the time, just like Phebe Jo!! (Actually, all 4 of the Arizonian great grandbabies read in their beds at night!! Seeing the need for night lights, it was my joy to get each of them reading lights w/clamps at Ikea! Spelling?)

Jim, Rod fell in love with Preslee's smile! He said she has the cutest smile!! I KNEW that!! She is a little doll! Corey tickled me so much when he said he would like 2 deviled eggs. SO, SO cute!! And, so SMART!!

Love all of you!!!!

Patricia Gayle

From Laura Kelly 4/3/2017

Yes, Aunt Pat!!!!

Great Party for the two brothers, dads, Uncles!

Such Intelligence from those sweet babies, I was thrilled when Jamie showed up at the door, Thank you Jamie!!! I have not been so enamored, in years, than when I met Presley and Corey for the for time at the family Reunion back in October, so I messaged Jamie and said we were getting together can you come???? Seriously, conversations with 9 and 5 year olds??? YES!!!! They are super captivating, innocent & uncensored!!!

Uncle Greg I second the watching but it is not lost on me the quick/smart intelligence that continues to get stronger through the years with each generation!

I really wish all the kids can come together soon, before they become the dreaded "teenager, young adult" creatures that we all were! Personally I just love Cory's and Presley's age! I could talk to them all night/day long! Uncle Jim you are a LUCKY dude!

I want to be added to the "Fall in love with Presley's smile!" That child is just captivating! Then there is Corey who just says what he says! Honest, no problem, it's what it is statements! I'd take them both home if Jamie and Michael would let me...Oh WAIT...I'd NEVER get past Grand Pa or Grand Ma! BTW...GiGi and Nemaw (?) respectively! :)

My time may or may not come but I am so fortunate to spend it with ya'lls!!!! WHOA that for sure sounded like a pining Granny????

Thank you for loving on our Dad! AND Uncle Jim! they are so worth it...it squashes my heart when I hear "Some of us won't be here for... time and life is SO PRECIOUS!

Dad you MOST definitely have the gift of story telling and writing...keep up the good work at documenting these times...

I LOVE MY (OUR, THIS) FAMILY SO MUCH (As my precious sisters says!!!!)

Let's do this again soon...really/seriouslysoon. :)

Preston you are amazing to always show up and be apart of this/your/our family!!! Typically at your age life is too busy, or whatever the excuse is, and WE LOVE that you care enough and love the food (btw me too, Aunt Pat has always been the Goddess of culinary delights!!! Quite the inspiration for me) to be there, even when no body but you and Aunt Pat are there. You are truly an exceptional young man! Please tell Brandon we love and miss him too!

Thank you for being part of the 4th quarter birthdays this past weekend!

Viva la FAMILIA!!!!

From Jimmy Hobart 4/3/2017

You summed up the day very well. You have a knack for writing.

Yes, thanks to P & R for the hospitality (and food).

By sharing what the Grandkids said, I'm bragging on them; here's a question from Preslee:

"GiGi, how do babies get out of their mommas' tummies?" I'm impressed with her thought process (especially as she is only 5 years of age).. Generally, when the GK's ask a question, I try to as intelligently as possible thoroughly answer their queries. This one however, I deferred to her mother.....

GBA JH

From Robert Gregory 4/3/2017

Let me include my concurrence to the thread and add: Thanks to RK and Sis for hosting and having a large gathering. One of the

highlights of 'reunions' is observing the young kids. We did this at the Campgrounds at Lake Murray years ago--even our aunts and uncles watched us grow and interact. To me this is the true joy.

Kel and I listened as Corey described play of his computer games. There must be a profound mental growth in learning the necessities of these games. I was very impressed. Further, Corey's ability to speak French is another example of how youth should be spent--acquiring knowledge through persistent effort.

His uninhibited response of "deviled" to Sis's "how do you want your eggs?" was priceless. He didn't mind a bit speaking up (when asked). I think he is very mature and responsible for his age. Kudos to Jaime and Mike.

Corey and Preslee are two good kids. It is interesting to watch the kids grow; they get along so well. A tragedy and shame I did not get along with JH when we were growing up. That will be invaluable to them both.

The book, "The Cardturner," I gave to Phebe, Claire, Grady, Emily and to Brandon and Preston (to give to Bre after they are through with it), is a short and easy-read novel for anyone interested in bridge and who knows nothing about playing bridge.

Sis, read it before sending to the kids if you like; same for Lisa and Kel.

rg

From Angie 4/3/2017

Gary, I loved this recap and that you included pictures. Time is so precious and I'm so thankful I made it back to town in time to spend some of my weekend with ya'!!! I agree with Greg, a visit with the entire family at a lake would be soooo fun!! (mainly to see all the littles ones interact together and meet some of those AZ babies!!!) Pat and Rod, thanks for the hospitality and Pat, the cake was delicious! We missed everyone that couldn't make it; you were missed!!

Love to all, Angie