

Letter to Miss G

by Loweta Kimball

Dear Miss G:

It's been quite some time since I last wrote you. But I want you to know I think of you often, especially when good things happen around me. I've used many of your training techniques to help my students grow into responsible citizens.

Last week I visited with Brenda S. Who is now in home hospice. It was good to hear her chuckle as we remembered the time you tied our shoe laces together, stood us in the doorway to our room because you were tired of our bickering and said, "Your future lies beyond this doorway. You can go through it as friends or as enemies but you will go through it. Now what will it be?" The choice we made that day saw us reach heights we never thought possible thanks to you. Over the years, Brenda and I traveled together, worked together and raised our children together, as friends.

In the last letter I wrote I introduced my parents to you. I'm sure you've met them by now. They were in the group of parents who built the cabinets in the school library the year you took us on a field trip to the horse farm to learn animal husbandry. The horses were still surviving after we left. As recent as last month, a group of alumnae volunteered to paint and spruce up the place. I helped paint Brenda and my old room and doorway. We also stained the wooden cabinets in the library. I got a little teary-eyed when I saw writings along the door frames. Many were still legible.

Brenda and I thought so fondly of you this week as we watched the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the march on Selma, Alabama. We wished you were here to see it. We were so proud of you for travelling to Selma during those turbulent times. You taught us, by your actions, that talk was cheap. We needed to put action to our words. We wished we could have gone with you to Selma and Montgomery but our physical challenges prevented activities at that level. We saw you on television and prayed you wouldn't get injured. We remembered how exhausted you looked when you returned. We committed ourselves to the voter registration process in 1968 knocking on doors and registering students on college campuses. I promised myself to continue registering voters as long as life permits.

Do you remember the green suspenders you bought us from Alabama? Green for 'go forward' and stretch beyond the obvious. And the lapel button that read 'never'? We thought the word 'never' meant 'never quit'. Little did we know the people of Selma had a different mind. Brenda had me look in an old trunk in her attic to find her suspenders and the button. She plans to wear them when she transitions.

Thank you, Miss Greenberg. You gave us your best and we tried to pay it forward.

Loweta Kimball

