

July 4, 2017

To: Aunt **Audrey Alcena Day** ... and her friends, family and kin,

I wish I could have been with you all to say a little something myself. But, fortune does not always deal us the winning cards. I, therefore, hope it is not too heavy a burden on my sister, Connie, whom I asked to read this message to you all for me.

I am sure others will express many memories, more than I could ever recall about Aunt Audrey. While that is sure to frame your thoughts of her during this sad time and to bring forth many tears, I had these thoughts to add as well.

Aunt Audrey was a mother of five wonderful, loving kids; my cousins. When I look back over the years I am still amazed at how well these babes of hers turned out. It is not often, in current times, that anyone would wish to bear this many and bring them into the world, let alone figure out how to help raise them all the right way. She did that.

But, not just that. She spent many years changing and washing diapers, real cloth diapers no less, and feeding and clothing these children of hers, while no doubt also sewing many of their clothes from scratch or, at the very least, repairing them, washing them and replacing them as her children grew and wore them out. I know this because I spent many a day running around in her back yard or up and down the streets where they lived. Yes, we played together while trying to figure out ways to get our clothes dirty or torn. Mothers like her are to be thanked for these and the many other efforts they take over the years to raise us all... the right way. Kids are a LOT of work to raise. And Aunt Audrey managed to raise all five of hers w/o too many complaints. She was a champ. And I'll bet she slept well each night, thanking her lucky stars, once all the rest were safely tucked away.

Imagine if you will, for just a moment, all the meals she must have cooked and how she probably sprinkled in her own spices made of love to feed all those mouths, right along with some extra mouths when others in our families came calling. Imagine all the trips to stores to buy all the things they needed as they grew and went to school. And imagine all the days she got up, fixed breakfast for all, sent them packing off to school, and then went to work herself in order to help provide some extra income along with her husband in order to put a roof over their heads, gas in the car, pay the bills, cover the cost of trips, school or sports and activities; and much, much more.

I recall the many times we visited and played games in the back rooms of her loving home; games like Risk or Monopoly, or how we'd venture outside playing whiffle ball, tag or hide and seek. I remember how we boys played with our toy soldiers and guns and how **she** showed limitless patience as we conducted our fights. Imagine all the Band-Aids she probably stuck on our wounds after wiping off all the blood or after we burned our skin when playing too long in the sun. And I recall the way Aunt Audrey and mom would send us out to pick some blackberries, growing down the street, and how we would bring them back so they could cook us some berry cobbler for dessert, after preparing yet one more wonderful meal we could enjoy together.

You know, they just don't make them like her any more. She was the oldest, the one who probably looked out after all the rest. She was probably the leader of the band. I know she did a lot more for this world than I can ever say. But, the point is this... these and many other things are why I will miss her, why we will miss her, and why I am sure these are just a few of the reasons the world will miss her.

Good-bye Aunt Audrey. I love you, and always will.

Chuck