

Points East

By:
Ike Adams

Early in the summer of 1986, for lack of nothing better to do and with an abundance of spare time, I hooked up with a couple of nonprofits and a local school system and convinced a bunch of responsible adults that the thing I was most cut-out to be was a role model for Appalachia's poor and destitute teenagers.

After all, I had grown up "poor," a fact that I never realized until somebody finally explained poverty to me in my early twenties, and also, as a matter of fact, destitute, because my parents had never been able to afford indoor plumbing and I had grown up taking a weekly bath in a number two wash tub and trekking fifty yards through all kinds of weather to an outhouse complete with the requisite Sears, Ward's, Penny's and Spiegel's catalogues and last week's issues of Grit and The Mountain Eagle whenever an urgency of the bowels or bladder came upon me.

Somewhere along the line I learned that you could use two semi-colons in a single sentence and I'm sure they both could have been used above but the great thing about being over 50 is that most folks don't grade your English and if they do you can snicker out loud if they give you an F. Same thing for commas. Remarkable qualifications, I believed at the time, to give professional guidance and counsel to Appalachia's troubled youth.

So early in the summer of '86 I took it upon myself to straighten out a bunch of misbehaving, run-out-of-school "at risk" teenagers I'd never met and put them on the path of righteousness and responsibility. I knew practically every business owner in the county on a first name basis. The Superintendent of the

school system was a close and personal friend and he made sure that I could come and go through the halls at the high school with more freedom afforded most of the teaching staff. In short order, the high school principal and I became acquainted but he was too busy for us to ever become bosom buddies.

But in shorter order I became a Pied Piper of sorts. Word got out that if you needed a little help after school or a place to have a little fun without spending any money, the thing to do was hook up with Ole Ike because I was the Mister Adams stuff be done away with right off the bat.

The Christian Appalachian Project made available a building of maybe 2,000 sq. feet of flat space it had been using as a thrift shop broom factory and promised, besides putting me on their payroll, up to \$500 in renovations of the place. The best estimate I could get to put toilets in separate rooms was just over \$2,000 and the place still needed painting. There was a city ordinance (I checked) about outhouses and porta-johns on the property and they were not allowed. So we went to the bathroom next door. Or ran two blocks to a drive in restaurant, or if it was after dark, we washed some tires.

In short order, CAP came through again. I came to work one afternoon and there lay sheets of dry wall and several dozen 2x4's and paint in five-gallon buckets. The paint had been donated by some big builder and so had several dozen, six-inch wide brushes. That evening the kids and I painted the place, walls and ceilings, from smoky yellow to hospital white and then decided we actually liked it better the other color. Next day car-

penters showed up, mad that we had broken into the paint but none-the-less, in short order, they had bathrooms walled up and pipes for commodes run in.

Two local hardware stores sent folks up to take a look and decided that our original paint job was a good

primer for other colors and agreed to mix colored paint for us at no cost. They gave us stuff to get all the paint we had dropped on the floor removed and even came in to supervise. And all of a sudden kids who had been written-off by the merchants and business folks of one little town had

some credibility. When the bathrooms were finished and the floors cleaned upwards of fifty kids between 12 and 18 had a place they had helped build that they could call their own.

I could give you their names. I could rattle off name after name of

kids who show up at my house on Sunday afternoons because they consider me some sort of Godfather for their own kids or better yet, a father figure. I could also tell you about a few with whom we failed and the

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We might look like outlaws, but we won't rob you!

...Luke Gooch



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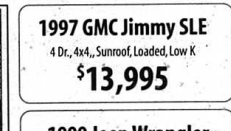
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Sweet and Sour

By: i Graves



World War III

So, War it! World war three will be my third to see begin and ????. Frankly, I am scared of this one. I know they are telling us not to be, but this is definitely different from the others I have witnessed. This time MY COUNTRY has been invaded and the most tragic results is there for everyone to see and share in. Sometimes I wish TV had never been invented to reveal things strange to eyes not used to seeing such devastation as starving children and streets littered with dying and dead bodies. The last scene of such horror, which will be haunting us for the rest of our life, was when the breath-taking, heartstopping, sight of New York and Washington, D.C. being attacked and blown up by hi-jacked planes, maneuvered by crews of suicidal terrorists, flashed across the screen at 8:45 a.m. on Tuesday, September 11, 2001. The hi-jackers, after subduing the pilots and passengers, took control and using the plane as the fatal weapon flew directly into each of the twin towers of the "World Trade Center," 200 stories high above New York City. The devastation, destruction and loss of a major part of New York City plus six thousand lives, lost that day, is beyond our imagination to comprehend.

In one swoop of terror by a legion of devils loosed by Satan himself has awakened America to the evils surrounding them. It at least has brought more people to their knees and hands clasped in love, or at least tolerance, of the person close by. But bringing a nation to its knees does not mean we

are crawling on our bellies. We can still stand tall and know God is still on His throne and will have the final say.

Many heads have been bowed in prayers, some perhaps for the first time, and God heard every one. We may not live to hear and understand His answer, but it will be answered in His own way. "Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord, I WILL REPAY."

Looking upward after meditation one day, I could almost see ten thousand Angels with folded wings, looking downward at the holocaust, gathered round the Throne asking, "what can we do?"

There were more volunteers, they just came, bus loads or trucks loaded with people of every color and sex. Money, fine clothes, nor pattern of speech separated them from those with worn-out overalls and runover shoes. The one phrase was common to all, what can I do? How can I help? Heaven had sent "Ten Thousand Angels." Each ready to lift a heavy load for a weary man, pick up a shovel and begin digging, bring a fresh pint of water, a bag of sand, a bag of sand, a bag of sand, slip an arm around a drooping shoulder and wipe away a tear from swollen eyes. Listen to another sad story from a broken hearted father, brother, sister or mother as he or she

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