

# LIVING COOL IN THE 21 CENTURY

By: Leola P. Young

“.....Thou go not like a quarry slave at night  
Scourged to his dungeon  
But sustain ‘d and sooth ‘d by an unfaltering trust  
Approach thy grave like one who wraps the  
Drapery of his couch about him  
And lies down to pleasant dreams.”

--Excerpt from “Thanatopsis  
By William Cullen Bryant

The author of this poem was only 17 years old when he wrote these words. My English Composition high school class was assigned to read and critique this poem. I was intrigued by the **fact** that a teenager would express such deep thoughts about what it would be like to die. Still his words have stayed with me when I have thought about the end of life.

I chose the path I wished to travel early in life. I decided I would be an Anya Upper person instead of a Donna Downer. Curiosity may kill the cat, but I’ve found that it is essential to be curious, to keep alive that sense of wonder, and to never stop learning and taking in information.

This age of mind-boggling technology with instant communication can be daunting for those of us who are accustomed to a slower pace of living. I cannot keep up with all the modes of communication available. Snail mail I learned is passé. Email, talking on cells, texting, blogging, and the latest, twittering, are the current modes of communication. I choose to “pick the plums” -whatever works for me. I email family and friends, talk with them on my cell phone, and occasionally post something on the family Blog. The Internet, that wondrous network for sharing and acquiring information, never ceases to amaze me. I am hooked on Youtube. There is a BBC Life of Birds nature segment, entitled “The Eloquent Communicators”, hosted by David Attenborough that is absolutely fascinating.

Maintaining independence as long as I am able to do for myself is vital to my sense of wellbeing. I keep informed about health maintenance, and ask questions before following medical advice for treatment of ailments. I have found the Internet to be a great source of information regarding health issues.

I love to read and do crossword puzzles. I keep starting and quitting guitar lessons. I keep alive my love of music and sing in a community choir. I have a passion for ping-pong, and find that to be so much more fun than the drudgery of exercising. It is important to me to uphold freedom for all, and I withhold judgment of those who think differently or have different lifestyles. I hold dear that sense of wonder about all that is amazing in the world, and acknowledge the capable hand of a Master Creator.

My goal is to continue to live life to the fullest, so that when it is time to leave, I will be ready to wrap myself in my cozy, warm blankets and lie down to sweet dreams, and folks will say, “Now, that lady was cool”.