



Spoken From the Heart

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

Published

June 19th, 2010

Laura Bush was born in Texas and raised as an only child where she formed strong bonds particularly with her father. Little would she know that the years ahead would stretch beyond her chosen career as teacher and librarian to place her in roles as First Lady of the state of Texas and of the United States of America.

"Spoken from the Heart" is a detailed memoir of Ms. Bush's life which began in November 1946. The 432 page story is divided into eight chapters, each of which focusses on a particular era.

The author describes the cultural and family environment that formed a foundation for her growing up years in Midland. She describes friendships that began in that time of her life and continue to the present. She is also very open about the car accident she experienced as a teenage driver and the pain she suffered when she learned that a friend in the other car was killed.

Ms. Bush studied to become a teacher and describes experiences she had in positions she held working in lower schools where students from low socio-economic areas attended. Her love of books led her into further studies to become a librarian.

When friends introduced her to George Bush, she claims they were both "ready" to find a partner and start a family. They were married within three months of their meeting. As newlyweds, they enjoyed the common background which they shared as they were both raised in Midland even though they didn't know each other while growing up.

Ms. Bush goes on to describe the commitment that she and George made to her father-in-law's political campaigns and her involvement with such a large family. She also describes their struggles with infertility and the thrill of finally giving birth to twin girls.

George's quest for political office placed the author in the position of first being First Lady when he became Governor of Texas and later as First Lady when he served eight years as President of the United States.

The book is a very detailed account of Ms. Bush's experiences. She describes her trips to other countries, specific interests and the areas in which she worked to improve the lives of others.

The only complaint that I have about this book is that at times it reads as a disjointed collection of information. Just when I thought that I was getting a personal glimpse of the author as a person, she moves into a historical rant about a foreign country or interrupts the chronological format with flashbacks of earlier days. In fact, I believe that the book would have been much better if two things had occurred. One is that she would have written everything in her "folksy" first-person voice and secondly that much of the content had been edited out.

There are times I felt she had taken a personal journal and then had someone else pad it with unnecessary data.

The book as parts that are fascinating and provided ideas that were certainly new to me. For example, I had no idea that the First Lady was responsible to pay for her own extensive

and required wardrobe or that the President is invoiced every month for the meals that he and his family were served.

Ms. Bush visited 75 countries and hosted 1500 social events in the White House. She also worked at renovating and refurbishing historical settings and helped establish human rights projects around the world. In fact, she went to New Orleans 23 times after Katrina's devastation. The work was extensive and likely could have been narrated through several books rather than one volume.

I only wish that I could have finished the book thinking that I really had a stronger connection with Laura Bush the person! Instead, I finished thinking "she sure did a lot of things"!