

Dear Anna,

Dusan and I want to say how much pleasure knowing Datus has given us. We will miss him very much. We can't help smiling when we think of him leaving us fishing, but we both would have liked a few more fishing trips with him ourselves, a few more dinners, a few more walks before saying goodbye.

We think of you every day, and offer any help with anything. A great big hug from each of us and we hope to see you sometime soon.

Love,

Loree

Dan



Tibet Collection

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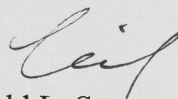
August 20, 2003

Dear Mr. Proper

I just finished Pheasants of the Mind. I am sorry it ended. As I grew up in Indiana and live in Georgia, I have not hunted pheasant often. After reading Pheasant of the Mind I wish I had.

The book is a tour de force. You have enriched. I will read it again.

Thanks,



Ronald L. Steenerson, M.D.

THOMAS E. CROCKER

August 2, 2003

Dear Anne,

My brother-in-law, who lives in Livingston, sent me the clippings from the Bozeman papers this week with the shocking & very sad news of Datus' death. Subsequently, I saw the piece in today's Washington Post, a copy of which I enclose for you (I thought it was well done). I wanted you to know that my thoughts are with you & Scott on this difficult occasion.

I never knew what to say in this type of letter, as words are so inadequate. However, I will approach it as Datus might have: direct & honest. Datus was not just my boss. He was a good friend. I genuinely enjoyed his company, shared on so many occasions riding to & from work at the old Embassy in Tucson, at lunches with political contacts, at off-hours "brain sessions" trying to figure out how to do our jobs better, delighting in our shared culture of political repudying. But Datus was also a superb boss — right up there at the top as I look back over my career. He believed in me. He supported me. He lifted me up. I still have, as treasure, an efficiency report he wrote on me in 1979. He wrote beautifully, as you know, and he understood me. The insights & support in that report were a high point in my life, & I shall never forget it. Finally, I must say how much I enjoyed his interactions with me in writing cables — on a daily basis really. Never over-bearing, always improving, a wonderful collaborator & editor.

I have one more thought about Dads I want to share:
his life mattered. There are many people who lead incredibly
constricted & compromised lives. Dads did not. He lived
it on his own terms, uncompromised. He led an adventurous
& fascinating life in the Foreign Service, became an accomplished
& respected author & lived where he wanted to in Montana
doing exactly what he wanted to do: hunting & fishing. His
honesty & integrity, as much as his innate abilities, touched all
who knew him, myself included. Dads led a life that mattered.

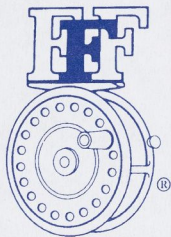
In August 2000 I was in Livingston, Montana for the
first time & found your number in the phone book. I started
to call but then thought I wouldn't bother you about Dads. Near
I upset out I did not call. However, I finished some of
his work & spent a glorious week in the land that he loved,
as it touched me deeply. I knew why he valued it.

This letter is not about me. It is about a man whose
memory I will always treasure. But since we have not seen
each other since 1979, I might let you know that I left
the Foreign Service in 1981 to return to law practice. I
got divorced in 1988, remarried in 1990 & now have two beautiful
sons, age 12 & 9. I am a partner in a large law firm,
doing interesting work, in Washington. I enclose a recent photo
taken in July in Maine, of me & my wife Beth, just to
show what we look like these days.

On my death, I wanted you to know how much Dads' life
passage through my life had meant to me. He was like an
older brother, & it was all too short. I share in your
grief, although I take comfort that he died doing what he
truly loved.

Best wishes -

Tom Crocker



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July 30, 2003

Mrs. Anna Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, MT 59714

Dear Mrs. Proper:

On behalf of the Federation of Fly Fishers, please accept my deepest condolences on the untimely and tragic passing of Datus. He was a great contributor to the lore and love of fly fishing, and all fly fishers will miss his writings on our sport.

Life eventually does what it is going to do for all of us – it ends. It is indeed sad that Datus' life was cut so short when he still had so many contributions to make. But as you are quoted as saying in yesterday's Bozeman Chronicle, "When he died he was doing what he loved." I'm confident that thought will sustain you and all fly fishers who will miss him in the years ahead.

Please contact me if we can do anything for you.

Sincerely,

Jim Rainey
Executive Director

DAVE CARTY

Freelance Writer

31 August 2003

Dear Anna,

This photo is how I remember Datus—looking for Huck. It was taken about ten years ago when we went to Carbon County for a late-season Hun hunt. The hunting was good, but Huck kept punching out of range. Datus never did get a handle on him, but he was one of the best dogs I ever hunted over.

And Datus was one of my favorite partners. Despite the twenty year difference in our ages, I found we thought alike, and appreciated the same things. We didn't get out much together the last few years, and that's something I truly regret. We had planned to get together this season, and I was looking forward to it. Hunting with Datus was always relaxing and fun, because we both appreciated the same things.

Datus marched to a different drummer, and I found that invaluable—he was so unlike most of the other people I know. I'm really going to miss him.

Sincerely,



Dave Carty

PS—If there's anything I can do to help you out around your place, please don't hesitate to ask.

Belmont, California
August 22, 2003

Dear Anna,

Although we've never met, my thoughts have been with you often the past three and a half weeks. Datus, my oldest cousin, was a larger than life person to me, and I still can't believe that he is gone. For you, the loss must be incalculable. But as you said to the reporter from the Bozeman paper, he died doing what he loved. It was just much too soon.

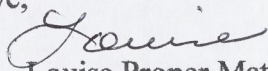
He was the big cousin who could swim farther, play cards better, climb higher (my sister remembers the treehouse at Woman Lake) than the rest. Later, he was the one who would travel the world and write books. When I was just a tyke and he was probably 12, he carved a nifty gun, which he gave to me and I still have. I originally thought this happened the summer I was five and we were all visiting our grandparents at Woman Lake, but now I think it was when I was about three, and we were visiting Yellowstone. My husband is impressed with the detail in the gun and the advance planning it required, but I suppose it was just part of the evolution of someone who was such an acute observer and creator.

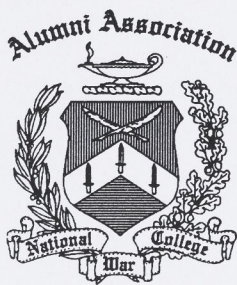
Although I only saw Datus a few times as a child, he was part of my consciousness as far back as I can remember -- kept vital by all the letters from his dad and mom over the years, as well as his own writing. Since his death, I've discovered two more of his books, *Running Waters* and *The Last Old Place*. I'm reading *The Last Old Place* now, very glad that I have this opportunity to know more of him, but sad, too, that we didn't make it to Montana to meet after he retired. What comes through so clearly in his work is how deeply and completely he loved you.

Just a few weeks before Datus died, I was going through some of my mom's old pictures and discovered a picture of the cousins, including Datus, posing on the shore of Woman Lake. That picture has since gotten buried under something, but it will resurface. In the meantime, I'm sending along several others of him that you may not have.

Rosemary told my sister Joyce that the gathering of family and friends for Datus's service was wonderful. I'm so glad all his siblings could be there.

I want you to know that you and Scott are in my thoughts and prayers. I hope that we will meet in person some day. With love,


Louise Proper Mateo



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION The National War College

Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C. 20319

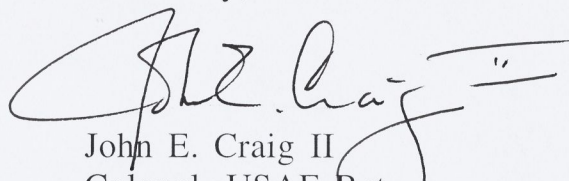
13 November 2003

The Family of Mr. Datus C. Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, MT 59714-8307

Dear Family Members,

The National War College Alumni Association has recently learned of the death of Datus C. Proper, Class of 1978. We are sure Mr. Proper had many fine memories of the National War College. We offer our condolences to you.

Sincerely,



John E. Craig II
Colonel, USAF Ret
Executive Director

Field&Stream has lost one of its most erudite and gracious of voices with the passing of contributing editor Datus Proper. Proper, who was 69, died while fishing this July. In his last hours his eyes reflected the Montana skies and his ears were filled with the song of the small stream currents that he so vividly painted in stories and books, including two classics of sporting literature, "What The Trout Said" and "Pheasants of the Mind." Known as much for his textured reflections on hunting and fishing as his elegant prose -- he had a gift for conveying the tapestry of an ordinary day afield in a way that many of us feel but few are able to express -- Proper is remembered by those of us who were fortunate to have known him as a generous host and a loyal friend whose boundless energy and boyish enthusiasms were impossible to resist.

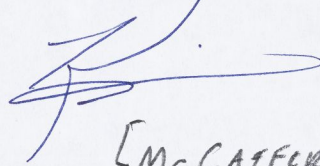
Before moving to Montana, Proper was a diplomat with the US Foreign Service, holding posts in Angola, Brazil, Portugal (the subject of one of his best books, "The Last Old Place, A Search Through Portugal") and Ireland, where he met his loving wife, Anna. Memorials in his name can be made to the Montana Wilderness Association, a nonprofit conservation group, at P.O. Box 635, Helena, MT 59624.

Good-bye, Datus. Say Hi to your old dog Huck and catch one for us in Humility Creek.

Anna, if there is anything that Gail or I can do to help you through these trying times, please let us know. Some day, if it's not too much of an imposition, I would like to talk to you about the possibility of writing a longer tribute in a magazine somewhere down the road.

I think it is a reflection of Datus's generous heart and the intimate bonds he forged with so many that in the last couple days, I have heard no fewer than three people speak of him as their very best friend. May God be with you in this hour of need. We know how you loved Datus and how much you and your son Scott must miss him.

With deepest sympathy,



[McCafferty]

Dear Anna,

This card reminds me of
Datus. He loved small fish
and small streams, rising to
dry flies. It seemed strange
for a man so tall, until you
brew his gentle spirit. I
will miss him. And now I'm
out of ink + words

Our deepest sympathies,

He
+
Gail

[MC CAFFERTY]



Brown trout chasing a fly under the butterbur, River Dove, England



stewart tabori & chang

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115 West 18th Street
New York, NY 10011

Artwork copyright © 2000 James Prosek
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Aug. 1, 2003

Dear Anna and Scott,

I was so sorry to hear about Dabbs' death. Over my years at Field + Stream, he has always been one of my favorite writers, and I feel lucky to have been able to meet him a couple of times. She was always so warm and gracious, and he had wonderful stories to tell.

My thoughts are with you at this time.

With sympathy,

Jean McKenna



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Dear Anna,

I WAS SO sorry to Hear of Datus Passing, and of your Loss.

I spent But a short few DYS in the field with Datus here in arizona, but in that Breif time I was impressed with what a Truly genuinely good person Datus was.

He made a great Contribution in the field of outdoor writing and the quality of His work will set a standard for generations to come.

I'm SO sorry to Hear of your Loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Take Care,

Web + Nicole [PARTON]



PET 980-1

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JOHN POPE
24 WEST 69 STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10023

212-873-2967

9/5/03

Dear Anna Proper —

As president of the Exeter class of 1952, it's my sorrow and my pleasure to write on behalf of all his classmates who loved and admired Datus — saying how sad we are, how we'll miss him, and offering you and your children the support and love of a lot of old geezers.

It was really too bad that Datus did not get to our 50th reunion — so many people asked for him.

But Exeter is not everything, and even at our age the future seems infinitely long.

Datus was not only a fine person, but a fine writer. I read his books and gave copies to my fisherman sons.

When I talked to Datus on the phone in the late nineties, he was HAPPY. And it seems he went out doing what he loved.

Well, I don't need to tell you any of this.

We loved Datus, and we miss him.

May all of us rejoice in his memory!

J. R. Pae

Leigh H. Perkins
Mays Pond Plantation
5097 West Lake Road
Monticello, Florida 32344
(850) 997-4105

11/19/04

Dear Anna,

I was so sorry to learn of the loss of Datus and our hearts and thoughts are with you.

I haven't stopped by to see you the last several years and it is my loss. Datus and I had lots of interests in common and I very much enjoyed my visits to your home.

Good for Scott working on his PhD in computer science.

Our love to you Anna
Leigh

8/13/03

ROBERT H. BATES
153 HIGH STREET 7 RIVERWOODS DR.
EXETER, N.H. 03833 C-209

Dear Anna and Scott,

We were deeply saddened to learn of your loss of Datus, but, as you have said, he was doing something he loved doing. His enthusiasm for hunting and fishing was obvious even when he was a student at Exeter, where each year he caught a fine trout in Pickpocket stream, where nobody else could.

In all my years teaching at Exeter I never had a student I enjoyed so much. His general enthusiasm was delightful. Unfortunately we never saw him when he was working in Lisbon or Ireland, but in later years we enjoyed tremendously two different evenings with you in Alexandria, savoring the pleasure Datus had shot and your delicious fudding.

Sadly we never came to Montana to visit you, but we were happy that you had such

a pleasant home there.

We hope very much that his final book will be published.

Anna, if you or Scott come to New England, we would love to welcome you here.

We celebrate in Datus the life of a remarkable and special human being.

With love,

Bob + Gail Bates



Anna,
I was deeply saddened to learn about
Datus. My heart goes out to you
and Scott.

Datus touched many people in important
and lasting ways. As a writer, he was a
master at transporting his readers from
their armchairs to the bird fields and trout
streams. And he did so with the eye of
A naturalist/outdoorsman who valued the
outdoor experience.

I loved being in the field with Datus for
many reasons, not the least of which was
that he always put the welfare of his dogs
(and anyone else's dogs) far above his shooting.

ego. And all of us who had the pleasure of sharing the bird flocks with Datus knew that he could outwalk most bird dogs and all his human companions.

I will remember Datus not so much as a "gentleman" -- which he certainly was -- but as a gentle man who never used his considerable intellect to bully anyone. And I will always admire Datus for bringing his own breakfast to the table in a plastic bag and not caring a whit about what anyone said or thought.

Datus was a very special man, but then you know that better than anyone. It was a privilege to know and work with him.

Fondly,


Duncan Barnes

August 3rd

Dear Anna,

I am deeply saddened to hear about Dotus. He will be greatly missed by so many of us who worked with him & admired his wonderful originality & creativity. It was a delight to have shared an Arizona Quail hunt with him. Dotus had a warm & pleasant manner to go with his understanding of our sport. I consider it a special privilege to have made the drawings for "Pleasant of the Mind."

Please know that you & all your family are in my



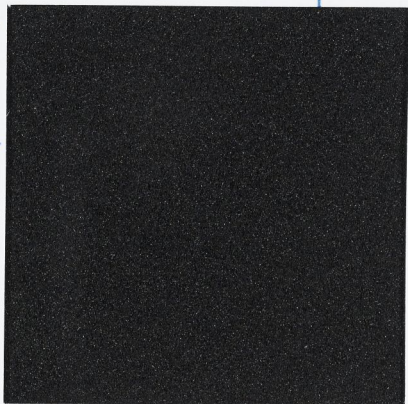
thoughts & prayers.

Sincerely,

Elmer Hardin

Dear Anna,

Some voices from the past who
have many fond memories of you
and Datus. We send you and Scott
our love
prayers
want you
our lives
enriched
of Datus.
& legacy
behind
Foreign Service.



and
and
to know
were
because
and what
he left
after the



...with each passing day

Anna - It is a huge loss in so
many ways. You may not have
known that I used Datus' writings
to Train all the generations of Foreign
Service Officers I encountered until
I retired. Datus was the perfect
Model - not just because of his
writing, but for his caring & humor, too.

Our love and prayers To
you and Scott.
Ed Powell & Liz



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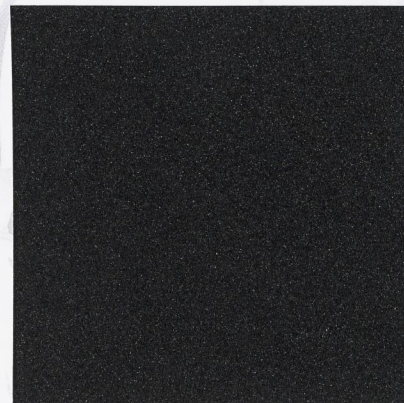
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Wishing you
peaceful moments,



renewed strength
and hope for *tomorrow...*

July 30, 2003

Dear Mrs. Proper

I wish to express to you my deepest sympathy for the recent loss of Datus. I was very saddened to learn of his passing when I heard of it on National Public Radio, Tuesday morning. I did not know Datus, nor had ever met him, except through his books, "What the Trout Said" and "Running Waters"~ both cherished volumes on my bookshelves.

In addition to what he wrote, I was much taken by his photo on the book jacket of "What the Trout Said."~ I just loved him posed in his "hippers" holding that small trout by its tail.

Such publicity photos ~~ran~~ counter to all fishing writers posed cradelling a "bellemouth" trout in their arms.

When I saw that photo, I knew I had to have this book. I knew instantly that here was a man~ a fisherman~ who knew what he was talking about, who had wit, and possessed deep knowledge about our waters and finny-friends. Furthermore, reading his "Running Waters," I could see he was no "fly fishing purist," and would sling a spinning rod with a worm or minnow as part of an arsenal to capture and learn about fish and fishing. I will now cherish those two volumes.

I just wanted you to know that there others out there in the world who share your grief, your loss, and will mourn the passing of

(over)



Datus. I will miss looking for more of his books and becoming intimate with him through his words and wisdom. I only wish I could have known him, fished with him.

Again, you have my deepest sympathy and best wishes for the future.

Sincerely,
Ralph Scott
2726 Shaia Way
Billings, MT 59101

SAM CURTIS

13740 COTTONWOOD CANYON

BOZEMAN, MT 59718

(406) 763-4225

sgcurtis@mcn.net

7/29/03

Dear Anna,

I am so saddened by the news of Datus' death. He had become a good friend over the ^{last} year or so, during our times spent together. I had come to admire his fine sense of humor, his great smile, and the twinkle in his eye when he talked of you. He loved you dearly, Anna, that was clear.

I will be thinking of you and Datus in the days and weeks ahead. And I will be taking solace in knowing that on his last day Datus was fishing and then he was gone.

I'm sorry that I must be out of town through the end of the week and will miss the memorial service. Know that my thoughts will be with you. And if there is anything at all I can do for you in the

months ahead, Anna, please don't hesitate to
call. I will be in touch.

Love,

Sam

Dear Anna:

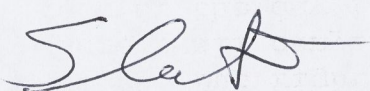
I am so very sorry to hear about Datus. He was, as you know so well, a really remarkable person.

I've been fortunate in my career to have worked with a lot of really talented writers. Datus was certainly one of the very best. But he was more than just a writer. He was also a teacher who unselfishly helped others--including me.

One of the highlights of my life was catching a big brown trout in the spring creek behind your house. It was a great moment. But right after that, Datus headed us up to one of those small canyon creeks he loved so much. We spent the rest of the day flicking dry flies into small pockets for small brook trout. It was his way, I am sure, of reminding me that size really doesn't matter. He just wanted me to keep in mind that great things also come in small packages.

I also remember sitting on the porch with Datus and Huckleberry and talking about fishing and other pursuits. I was always a better angler after fishing with Datus. More important, I was a better human being as well.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Slaton White', with a stylized, flowing script.

Slaton White

With Heartfelt Sympathy

Slaton



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175 USA
250 CANADA



July 31, 2003

My Friend Datus Proper

He looked like Ichabod Crane, and walked a little like Ichabod too. Those long legs came in handy out in the wild, especially hunting. Datus could almost step over a barbed wire fence, where the rest of us have to squeeze through, catching our jacket on the barbs.

He was thin and got cold easily, so his garb was always a bit comical. Long johns and gloves, even on a warm day. Tape rings to hold his hip boots up. Anna always sent him off with a good lunch, usually including cake and dried mangos (at least I think that's what they were) and several toasted sandwiches. Datus was never very hungry when he was busy hunting or fishing, and never ate much. But he didn't want Anna to be disappointed that he didn't eat more, so he'd give me whatever was left. It was delicious.

Most hunters train their dogs to quarter back and forth in front of them, hopefully staying within shotgun range. If the hunter turns left or right, the dog is supposed to turn its search pattern accordingly. Not Datus' dogs. They learned the natural way. Datus just turned old Trooper, Huckleberry, and later Molly, loose and tried to keep up. He let them set their own pace and look for birds in their own way. He would just follow. It was a little difficult for Datus' hunting companions to keep up or keep track of where he was or where he was going, but it wasn't boring.

Datus served in the foreign service in many countries, and he would hunt and fish wherever he was. He caught Dorado in Brazil and tarpon off Africa. But he liked the small streams and wild trout best. And he liked to keep a few, especially little brookies, to clean butterfly-style and give to Anna to cook. I think he had the Native American outlook on fishing: it's better to kill and eat a few than to play with endless numbers of fish by catch and release.

He was not into numbers or "keeping score." He liked to enjoy the total experience and try to figure out what was going on. Learning what made one fish tick was more important to him than catching a lot of them.

I admire Datus as a writer. One of his mentors was Vincent Marinaro, the legendary Pennsylvania limestone fisherman who wrote the forward to Datus' first book, What the Trout Said. Incidentally, it was the only forward Marinaro ever wrote for anybody. Besides Marinaro, Datus rubbed shoulders with the likes of Nick Lyons, publisher of a couple of Datus' books, Norm Strung, the outdoor writer who lived up Cottonwood Canyon, Bill Tapply, and John Gierach. Datus had a sweet way with words. "Sweet" in this sense: if a golfer hits a long drive right down the middle of the fairway, he is said to have hit the ball "right on the sweet spot." He wrote four books, all of them minor classics. He was a sort of homespun naturalist philosopher, with plenty of wry wit thrown in.

The man definitely had a sense of humor. When I took him fishing or hunting, as we walked out to the car he would shout back to Anna "You don't have to look so happy that I'm leaving!" He would tell me off-color jokes, with appropriate accents, often involving a black Irish character and an English aristocrat. As he got older he wrote his jokes in a little notebook so he would remember them.

He spent much of his youth in Yellowstone Park. He once showed me the old stone duplex where his family lived. It's one of those houses along the road that goes past the Visitor Information building in Mammoth Hot Springs. He was one of two Park Service kids to be selected for a national scholarship to attend Phillips Academy Exeter, one of the nation's top boarding schools located in New Hampshire. From there he went to Cornell, majoring in English. He was a bright kid who grew into an intelligent man, an incisive commentator on human beings, the weirdest animals on the planet. His writings were really all essays on the human condition as seen through his unique naturalist lens.

He loved Anna. He often told me how lucky he was to be married to her. Of course he sometimes grumbled about her, but that was the simple outgrowth of day to day living with the one you love. He cherished her and depended on her.

There is a certain pool in what he called Humility Creek (not "Humidity Creek" as the Bozeman Chronicle had it) where a rainbow of at least five pounds resides. On one of my last fishing outings with Datus, I watched him fish that pool. He crept through the tall grass and positioned himself, on his knees, in casting range. He then watched the pool for at least ten minutes before starting to work line out. He did not get the rainbow to take his hand-tied fly that day, but he persisted for a long time. As I watched him I realized he was as much a part of that pool, and of Humility Creek, as the fish.

I have felt Datus' spirit there in recent days.

That pool is on our property, ~~and~~ Mary and I have decided that henceforth it shall be known as "Datus' Pool."

--Harry Piper

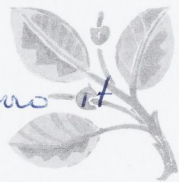
Martha Chaverra,
3391 Prairie Smoke Rd.,
Bozeman, MT 59715

September 4th /03

Dear Anna:

I read the news of your husband's death in the newspaper and was truly saddened by it. We have briefly met at church once. I do have the picture of you and your husband in my mind. He is softly laying his hand on your neck while you are both singing. I always thought: "What a lovely couple." When I spoke to you, one day during a Sunday Service, you told me of your decision to leave the choir so you could accompany Datus during the Service. Again I thought: "How special, and what a lovely bond they seem to have."

I've experienced death of loved ones before and I know it is a difficult journey but I also know it is helped by the support of



friends and family. So I hope Anna, that this new path is full w/ love from all the people that care for you and your son.

Warm regards,

Marta Chaverra



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CARLTON CARDS
TORONTO, ONTARIO M8Z 1S7



July 29, 2003

Dear Anna,

It was a shock to read about Datus in the Chronicle. I'm sure it was a terrible shock for you and that you are having a hard time adjusting to his death. I've been thinking about you a lot and praying for your comfort.

Although I didn't know Datus well, I always enjoyed being with him. He was such a fine person and respected and loved by many people. When I was calling people to sing in the choir, everyone I spoke with was very eager and willing to sing at the memorial service. There was never any hesitation about committing to sing. The choir loves you, both individually and collectively.

As one who lost a loved husband, I feel that I can share your grief. As the days go by I think you will be very glad that Datus died doing something he loved very much, and not dying a lingering, miserable death. My husband, too, was an avid fly fisherman, tier of flies, and hunter. He derived great joy from just being out in nature and enjoying the beauty and stillness.

Please know that you are in the thoughts and prayers of many people including me. If you ever want to talk, please don't hesitate to call. Please express my sympathy to your family.

My love to you,

Judy Swank

[VALERIE HEMMINGWAY]

for a cup of tea or whatever when you have time. My phone number (unlisted) is 586-7175. When you have a chance, please telephone me.

Once again, my thoughts and prayers are with you at this sad time.

Valerie

August 22, 2003

Dear Anna,

I want to extend my sympathy to you and Scott on Datus' sudden and untimely death. I know it is a great sorrow and loss for both of you. I'm glad I was able to attend the funeral. I hoped to meet with you and your sister while she was here but I left almost immediately for a week and then have been deluged with guests until now.

Would love to meet with you



3020½ R Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

August 2, 2003

The Family of Datus Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, MT 59714

Dear Friends,

I felt a sharp pain to the heart upon reading in today's Washington Post of Datus' death. I worked for him as an officer in the U.S. Embassy Political Section in Lisbon during 1980-82, and I recall him vividly as a genial person, a kind and helpful mentor, and a man of many parts.

Even then, he was preparing the publication of what I gather has become a classic work on trout lures--the first of several well-received books in fields one might not have anticipated from a Foreign Service Political Officer.

But Datus was among the best-grounded diplomats I have known--serious about his work but determined to balance it with a broad range of other interests, particularly those involving the outdoors. That, in turn, reflected the fact that his keen intellect was well complemented by a sensitive and sensual--even earthy--side. (I have never forgotten Datus' favorite expression to describe any politician who made a bad mistake or otherwise tripped up: he called it "wetting the rug!")

I personally benefited from his flair for writing through the lessons he taught me when editing my reporting cables in Lisbon. We continued our friendship while both serving in Washington shortly before he retired. Thereafter we lost touch as I spent most of the ensuing period overseas until retiring myself from the Foreign Service three years ago. It is for that reason that I must address this letter to you, his family, as a group rather than by name as individuals, since I do not know, for example, whether his wife Anna, whom I knew in Lisbon, is still among us to mourn today.

It came as no surprise to me when Datus told me long ago that, in anticipation of retirement, he had acquired a

spread in Montana bisected by a trout stream, and knowing him, I am sure he put a lot into life and got a great deal out of it during his many post-State Department years. It is sad and ironic that such success has been cut short prematurely by an accident involving his favorite hobby. (The obituary said he apparently slipped on rocks and drowned while fishing in a stream near home.) I only hope that it may be said, and will be of some solace to you, that he died still at the top of his game and doing what he loved most.

Please accept my heartfelt condolences. If and when you have the time to write, I would appreciate knowing where he has been laid to rest, since particularly if it is in Montana, I will likely be in the area in the next couple years and would like to pay my respects at the gravesite.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marc E. Nicholson".

Marc E. Nicholson
m.e.nicholson@verizon.net

Paul F. Vang
Freelance Writer
2828 Goodwin Street
Butte, Montana 59701-4128

Phone: 406-494-5736

Email: pfvang@in-tch.com

August 18, 2003

Ms. Anna Collins-Proper
1085 Hamilton Rd.
Belgrade MT 59714-8307

Dear Ms. Collins-Proper:

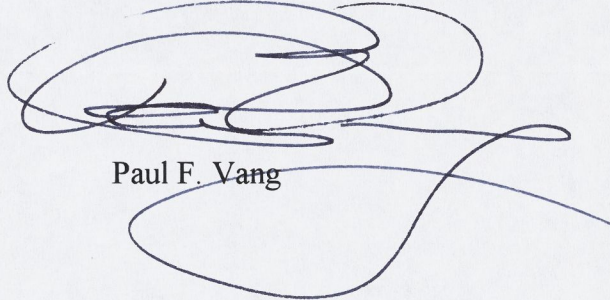
I would like to extend my condolences to you and your family on the death of your husband.

I never met your husband, but through his many writings he had always seemed like an old friend. Whether the topic was flyfishing or pheasant hunting, we shared many interests, and I always enjoyed and admired his elegant style of writing.

I am enclosing a copy of my column from last Thursday's Montana Standard with my tribute to Datus.

If I can ever be of any assistance to you, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Paul F. Vang', with a large, looping flourish extending from the bottom right.

Paul F. Vang

Dear Mr. Proper,

9-29-04

I'm a friend of Carolyn Sears and she recently lent me her copy of Datus' book "The Last Old Place - A Search Through Portugal" and I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed reading it. I rather like to read travel books slanted to a particular author's own observations and experiences rather than just a more objective account and Datus book was just perfect. He really makes the subject matter come alive. I also enjoyed his comments on the various battles in Portuguese history, his comments on fishing and on the differences between Americans and Portuguese. What shines through the pages is the thoughtful, gentle and humorous personality of your late husband.

I intend to borrow the book from Carolyn again in a year or so because

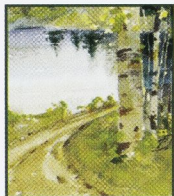
With Sincere Sympathy



I think it's a book I would enjoy reading again.

Sincerely,

Vanda Gallagher



www.narfe.org

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recycled paper.

May you find comfort...



in treasured memories

JAMES L. LAUERMAN



James L. Lauerman
470 E Fairland Cir.
Menominee, MI 49858

March 16, 2004

Dear Mrs. Proger,

I was saddened by the news that Datus had passed away. I read the notation in Field and Stream, and then in the Eptis Bulletin.

Fifty two years ago, Ben Lohins, Charlie Eaton and I took a trip West after graduation from Eptis and stopped to see him at Glacier National Park.

I did not hear of him again until I read his article in Field and Stream. I wrote, and he sent me his fishing book and I sent him a Marbles Hunting knife. I had hoped to see both of you at our 50th reunion at Eptis.

I also had planned a fishing trip 2 years ago, but it fell through. I am very sorry that I missed that chance to fish with him.

Our, Mauran and my, prayers and thoughts are with you and your family.

Sincerely,

Jim

James L Lauerman Eptis '52

Dear Mrs. Proper,

Nov. 6, 2003

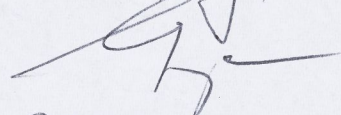
I read with great sadness, in STATE magazine, about the drowning death of Datus. I immediately called an old Foreign Service colleague, Wayne Hoshal in MN. who used to send wild rice to Datus. He, too, was shocked. We both agreed that though very unfortunate it happened doing something he loved.

We followed each other around the globe - Portugal, Brazil, Africa and shared the same love for fishing. In his last letter he mentioned he always wanted to go to New Zealand where I served for 4 years. I would have loved to take him on my next visit, but -

I have only one of Datus' books - What The Trout Said. If by chance you would have extra autographed copies of the others I would be pleased to have them. I will send you a check for them plus postage of course.

So, please accept my condolences at this time, and I wish you the best for the future.

Sincerely,

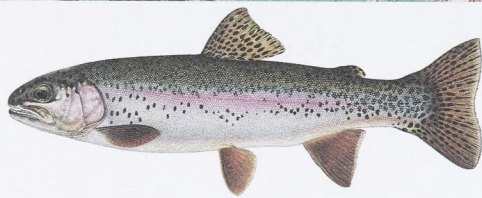


GEORGE CLEE

P.S. Just returned from 4 week vacation in Azores. Datus hunted quail at Lajes AFB. I spent 2 years in Sao Miguel at Consulate.



George Clee
269 W Mountain Rd.
West Simsbury, CT 06092



1/24/04

Dear Mr Proper + family,

I was saddened to read of the passing of Datus Proper in last month's FlyFisherman. I greatly admired his writing, especially what the Trout Said and Pheasants of the Mind. I wrote to him a number of years ago when I was recuperating from an operation + had read Pheasants. I appreciated that he could speak about his joy + regret of hunting such beautiful birds. I recounted to him that I shared that duality of feeling, even lifting spiders up to put them outside. He wrote back that he

often shoved them off the woodpile
before Mrs Proper spied them -
it made me smile to think
of that.

I have fished Montana a
number of times, often finding
a sense of peace in the
beauty of the Last Best Place.
I hope that you all find
peace in the time to come.

Sincerely,

Howard Kligerman

[CALLEY DOBECK]
APRIL 9, 2003

(1)

Dear Anna,

It was good to hear from you even if the news was so tragic.

I am so sorry you have had to go through this.

My heart goes out to you and your son. I am so glad your faith has helped you through.

I know your husband was a good man as you always spoke highly of him.

I have just been working all the time it seems.

I'm now on spring break and trying to get caught up on appointments that are always put off till I have time. The boys have had 2 dental appointments and 1 eye doctor this week + they are a bit angry about spending their vacation time

on the appointments. Anyway, (2)
today's will be the end of appointments
for them during their break.

I am also working on getting
estimates for my pool work. It
doesn't look liked any place
will be able to start the
job for another 3 wks then it
takes about 2 wks for them to
ch the job from what I have heard
from the 1st guy to show up. At
least I should have everything
set up by the end of my break.
I talked to a lawyer about
Dan being behind in child support
etc. He advised me to go to the
D.A.'s office for back child support
& to take a look at my file at
family court to see if I have my
complete file. The lawyer charges
\$300 an hr. Dan became current
on child support the day after I
talked to the lawyer so I'm glad
the lawyer advised me to try to
take care of some of this stuff myself.
I need to change the visitation
schedule anyway or Dan will
have the boys for the month
of July. Last yr. he dumped them
in M.T. for most of the month.
Since I am off this summer
& Dan is "always working" I think
he will agree to 2 wks with
the boys in the summer. Anyway
when I pick up the paperwork
to change visitation I can review
my file. The boys go back

(3)

to school next week + I am off so I have a lot planned to get done while they are in school + I'm still off. I always plan to get so much more done during breaks than I actually get accomplished. It is frustrating. I need to focus on what I do get done instead of what I didn't.

Right before we went on break I found out I don't have to take any tests to be a "highly qualified teacher". All I have to do is send them 3 yrs. of evaluations and proof of 10 credits over my bachelors. When I got their letter I found out they have known this for 5 mo. while I have been worried about what test or tests I need to take. When I retire I'm going to write Catch 22 number 2 the school District. I'm really relieved that I don't have to take

any tests. Alex's friends' mom⁽⁴⁾
Robin Molberry, wrote a book
called Lost in the Woods.

The first thing I did on
the spring break was read
her book instead of the
2nd book I had purchased
to study for tests. The book
was really good + brought
tears to my eyes a couple
of times.

I better wrap it up as
once I get started writing
I could go on forever. I'm
not very good at all with
doing E-mail. I had a lot
of trouble with it + finally
found out I needed to update
with Interact. I hope to get
people's addresses in my computer
this summer + get that going.
I may start earlier, but I am
so busy these days I don't have
time to watch my head spin.
I have about 9 weeks of school
left this yr. I can't wait for
summer. Take care. I sure
miss you. I would love to visit
M.T. this summer but really
don't trust my current van for
that kind of trip. I haven't quite
given up on the idea of a summer
visit though.

Love,
Calley



Extending deep
and heartfelt sympathy
to you and your family.

Lots of Love,
Cally



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In Sympathy



[AUG. 21, 2003]

Dear Proper Family ~

We are very sorry to hear of your loss. We were acquainted with Datus as we frequently chatted with him while tending to a neighboring property on Hamilton.

He was a kind, gentle man. We send you our deepest sympathy ~

Tim & Beth Murphy

July 30, 2003

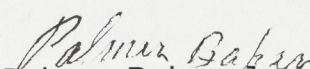
Dear Mrs. Proper:

I was so sorry to hear from Bob Berls that Datus has passed away – which I know is the end of a long and difficult illness. He and I got to know each other when he was kind enough to publish some of his writings in The Bulletin of The Angler's Club of New York. I was the editor at the time and I loved the process with him. At another time he and a fishing companion stayed in my fishing cottage on the West Branch of the Neversink River in the Catskills. The fishing at first was terrible because of the cold weather, but later there was an enormous Hendricksen hatch and with it some lovely trout.

The Last Old Place is one of my favorite books. Only a special person like Datus could have written it.

Again, I would like to express my sympathy.

Sincerely,


R. Palmer Baker, Jr.

/kah

Saturday, July 23, 2005

Dear Mrs. Proper,

I recently discovered the book Datus wrote in an out of print bookfinder web page. I bought & read the one about pheasant hunting.

I am an avid reader. I was so impressed with his writing that I bought a second book. I especially enjoy the history he weaves into the writing. He had an excellent vocabulary & equally outstanding education.

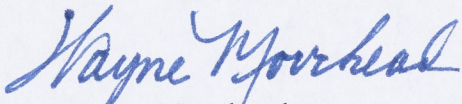
After reading 2 of his books, I wanted to correspond with him. I discovered that he was deceased. A sad way to go for a man who spent most of his life in trout streams.

Did he have any books in process or is there a biography about him.

I am finishing the last of his book (Portugal). They will be in my library forever.

Again, you have my sympathy about his untimely death.

Respectfully,



R. Wayne Moorhead
1012 Johnston Drive
Raymore, MO...64083

Tel: 913-402-6008

I called & said I would let
him know if there was another
book.

10 December 2003

Ms. Anna Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, Montana 59714

Dear Anna:

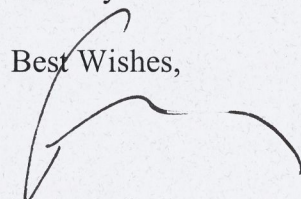
I certainly don't expect you to remember, but in the spring of 1987, when I was editor of *Trout Magazine*, you kindly invited me to stay for dinner at your home in Virginia. The next day Datus took me to Shenandoah National Park where we spent a couple of days fishing for little wild brook trout.

Datus wrote a wonderful story about his experiences with Shenandoah brookies, which I published in *Trout* the following spring, illustrated with a number of photographs I had taken during our hikes. Enclosed is a copy.

As a tribute to Datus, I would like to re-publish this piece—with fresh graphics using some of the same imagery—in our coming spring 2004 issue of *Fish & Fly*. I think many of our readers would appreciate hearing from Datus one more time, as well as enjoy seeing him again in such beautiful places along those clear-flowing mountain streams he loved so much.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Best Wishes,



Thomas R. Pero
Editor and Publisher

Nick Lyons

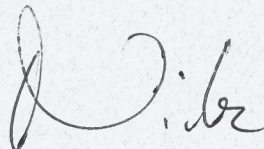
11 January 2004

Dear Anna:

That's good news that you'll be working on Datus's hunting book. My best thoughts for now would be to get all the chapters, or essays, double spaced and printed out separately. Then the challenge will be to arrange them in some logical order. For this, the best route is probably to keep "like" with "like"--having sections (if this fits what's there) on Guns, Pheasants, Ethics, and the like. Three to five sections would be a good way of establishing a shape to the collection, and each could contain anywhere from two to ten essays or chapters. If Datus did not do an introduction to the book, an outside author of some stature could provide this--and tie the book together. Jay Cassell at my old firm is an experienced hunter, former executive editor of SPORTS AFIELD, and now editorial director of The Lyons Press. He'll know just what to do. Let me know if I can give you any other advice.

When you're ready, I can make a host of suggestions concerning Datus's hunting and fishing things, depending upon what your desires for them are. I've had a lot of experience with the museums (for fly fishing), auction houses, and individual collectors and will let you know what I know that might help, and you can pursue what is most appropriate for your needs.

Best,





THE ORVIS COMPANY, INC.

March 29, 2004

Mr. Ross Bruner
114 Hitching Post Rd.
Bozeman, MT 59715

Dear Ross:

Under separate cover, we are sending a rod to you for Pheasants Forever in honor of Datus Proper. The rod is a T3 8' 4" 2-piece 3-weight Mid Flex. As an old fishing companion of Datus Proper, I know he enjoyed light-line rods for spring creek fishing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Leigh Perkins".

Leigh H. Perkins

LHP:m

August 6, 2003

Dear Anna,

I am so sorry about our loss of Datus. I am grateful that he had a wonderful life of fishing and adventure with you. I will read his published words now with tinges of sorrow. We will all miss him dearly, and again you have my sincerest condolences.

Love,
David C. Jetch

P.S. I look forward to seeing you at the Co-Op.



BY CHOICE HOTELS

October 25, 2003

Anna,

We spoke by phone a couple weeks ago and I gather you are now in Ireland.

This is just to let you know I stopped by the Meadow View cemetery this morning to pay my respects at Datus' grave.

It's a beautiful spot and - how appropriate - there's a stream (no doubt with trout!) a few hundred feet away and deer were running through the nearby fields.

I see you have your own backyard stream, as Datus once told me.

I hope you had an enjoyable and comforting sojourn with your relatives in Ireland.

Sincerely,

Marc

Marc E. Nicholson
Washington, DC

Bozeman Comfort Inn

1370 N. 7th Ave.
Bozeman, MT 59715
Phone: 406.587.2322
Fax: 406.587.2423