John Goddard’s Inspiration

John Goddard’s inspiration for his dream list was motivated by two events. He says: “At fifteen, I was seething with ambition, but I felt so dumb, so inexperienced, I decided to do something about it.” So in between his homework assignments, he wrote his original list of 127 items. His dream list was not comprised of fantasies, he said. As he wrote the list, he was thinking about how he might do each item on it. He encourages people to think about what they really want to do with their lives.

Another catalyst, John says, was a guest of his parents. A dentist had come for lunch one Sunday. John was in the breakfast nook doing his homework. The dentist asked how old John was. Fifteen. The dentist said, “What I would give to be that age again!” John remembers with sadness that the dentist sounded as if his life were over at 40. The dentist said the only thing he’s done in his life was to go to orthodontic school and practice dentistry. He’s never done the things he really wanted to do! John remembers deciding right then and there that he would never let that happen in his own life. And he hasn’t. The list you see here is only one of many. He has accomplished 200- other goals that do not appear here. Most recently he has flown an F-15 Eagle (goal 234 on another list) and he trained at Edward’s Air Force Base to break the civilian speed record he set flying the F-16 at 1,500 miles per hour. (The F-15 and F-16 were the top two fighter planes flown in Desert Storm-the Gulf War against Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait (1990-91).

**“When I wrote my dream list, I was programming my mind for success.**  As I wrote down each goal, I was thinking about how I might do it. My parents had total faith in me. They said, “John, you can do it.” They celebrated my achievements with ice cream sundaes. When I was eight, my uncle asked me what I wanted to be. I said an explorer. So, he bought me a pith helmet, a canteen, and a knife.”

John shares many adventures with his wife, Carol, a teacher of Consumer and Family Living. They have traveled to Katmandu, Olduvai Gorge, and taken three rubber raft trips down the Grand Canyon. They currently reside in Southern California with two horses, three cats, two dogs, and numerous birds, including a blue jay who lives in a tree just outside his window (Dusa, 1996).

2012 update: So far John has completed 109 of his original 127 goals.

A previous resident of La Canada, California, Goddard died on May 15, 2013 and did not believe in pursuing adventure for the sake of frivolous thrills, but used these experiences to achieve a worthwhile end. This end, for him, is scientific exploration, adding to the world's store of knowledge. "Digging out the facts is the real challenge," Goddard says in summing up his career. "The adventure is exciting and enjoyable--but secondary." Yet digging out the facts can be a hazardous occupation. Goddard has been bitten by a rattlesnake, charged by an elephant, and trapped in quicksand. He has crashed in planes, been caught in earthquakes, and almost drowned twice while running rapids. But his overwhelming desire to discover fresh knowledge and to complete his youthful list of goals has driven him on in spite of the danger until the end of his life(Goddard, 2012).

References:

Dateline NBC. 1996. Seven minute TV segment available at: You Tube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zy9510Mb16E>

Dusa, G. 1996. Personal interview.

Goddard, J. 2012. Available at: <http://www.johngoddard.info/life_list.htm> and <http://www.johngoddard.info/bio.htm>

**John Goddard’s Dream List** (x = achieved) (Dusa, G., 1995)

EXPLORE: PHOTOGRAPH: 73. Become an Eagle Scout x 107. Visit birthplace Grandf.

74. Dive in a submarine x Goddard in England x

1. Nile River x 42. Iguacu Falls, Brazil x 75. Land and take off from an 108. Ship aboard a freighter

2. Amazon River x 43. Victoria Falls, Rhodesia x aircraft carrier x as a seaman x

3. Congo River x 44. Sutherland Falls, N.Z. x 76. Fly in a blimp, balloon, 109. Read the entire

4. Colorado River x 45. Yosemite Falls x & glider x Encyclopedia Britannica

5. Yangtze River 46. Niagara Falls x 77. Ride an elephant, camel, (read extensive parts)

6. Niger River ostrich, and bronco x 110. Read the Bible from

7. Orinocco River 47. Retrace travels of Marco x 78. Skin dive to 40 ft and hold cover to cover x

8. Rio Coco, Nicaragua x Polo & Alexander the Great breath underwater for 2 ½ 111. Read some of works of

Minutes x Shakespeare,Plato,

STUDY PRIMITIVE EXPLORE UNDERWATER: 79. Catch a 10 lb lobster and Aristotle, Dickens,

CULTURES IN: 10 “ abalone x Thoreau, Rousseau,

48. Coral reefs of Florida x 80. Play flute and violin x Hemingway, Twain,

9. The Congo x 49. Great Barrier Reef, Australia 81. Type 50 words a minute x Burroughs, Talmage,

10. New Guinea x 50. Red Sea x 82. Make a parachute jump x Tolstoi, Longfellow,Poe,

11. Brazil x 51. Fiji Islands x 83. Learn water and snow skiing x Keats, Bacon, Whittier,

12. Borneo x 52. The Bahamas x 84. Go on a church mission x & Emerson x

13. The Sudan x 53. Explore Okefenokee Swamp 85. Follow the John Muir trail x 112. Become familiar with

14. Australia x & Everglades x 86. Study native medicines and compositions of Bach,

15. Kenya x bring back useful ones x Beethoven, Debussy,

16. The Philippines x VISIT: 87. Bag camera trophies of Ibert,Mendelssohn,Lalo,

17. Tanzania x elephant, lion, rhino, cheetah, Milhaud, Ravel, Rimski-

18. Ethiopia x 54. North and South poles cape buffalo, & whale x Korsakov, Respighi,

19. Nigeria x 55. Great Wall of China x 88. Learn to fence x Rachmaninoff, Paganini,

20. Alaska x 56. Panama and Suez Canals x 89. Learn jujitsu x Stravinski, Toch, Verdi,

57. Easter Island x 90. Teach a college course x Tschaikovsky x

CLIMB: 58. The Galapagos Islands x 91. Watch a cremation ceremony 113. Become proficient in

59. Vatican City (Pope) x in Bali x the use of a plane,

21. Mt. Everest 60. Taj Mahal x 92. Explore depths of the sea x motorcycle, tractor,

22. Mt. Aconcagua 61. The Eiffel Tower x 93. Appear in a Tarzan movie \* surfboard, rifle, pistol,

23. Mt. McKinley 62. The Blue Grotto, Capri x 94. Own a horse, chimp, cheetah, canoe, microscope,

24. Mt. Huascaran x 63. The Tower of London X ocelot, & coyote (not chimp or football, basketball,

25. Mt. Kilimanjaro x 64. The Leaning Tower of Pisa x cheetah) bow & arrow, lariat,

26. Mt. Arat x 65. The Sacred Wall-Chichen-Itza, 95. Become a ham radio operator & boomerang x

27. Mt. Kenya x Mexico x 96. Build own telescope x 114. Compose music x

28. Mt. Cook 66. Climb Ayers Rock, Australia x 97. Write a book (on Nile trip) x 115. Play Clair de Lune on

29. Mt. Popocatopeti x 67. Follow River Jordan from Sea 98. Publish an article in National the piano x

30. The Matterhorn x of Galilee to Dead Sea x Geographic x 116. Watch fire walking

31. Mt. Rainier x 99. High jump 5 feet x ceremony (in Bali &

32. Mt. Fuji x SWIM IN: 100. Broad jump 15 feet x Surinani) x

33. Mt. Vesuvius x 101. Run a 5 minute mile x 117. Milk poisonous snake x

34. Mt. Diomo, Java x 68. Lake Victoria x 102. Weigh 175 lbs (still does) x 118. Light a match with 22

35. Grand Tetons x 69. Lake Superior x 103. Perform 20 sit-ups and 20 rifle x

36. Mt. Baldy, CA 70. Lake Tanganyika x pull-ups x 119. Visit a movie studio x

71. Lake Titicaca, S. America x 104. Learn French, Spanish, 120.Climb Cheops’ pyramid x

37. Carry out careers in 72. Lake Nicaragua x & Arabic x 121. Become a member of

medicine and explor- 105. Study lizards on Komodo Explorer’s Club &

ation. X Island (boat broke 20 mi.) Adventurer’s Club x

38. Visit every country in 106. Visit birthplace of Grandf. 122. Learn to play polo x

The world (30 to go) Sorenson in Denmark x 123. Travel through the

39. Study Navaho & Hopi Grand Canyon by foot

Indians x and by boat x

40. Learn to fly an airplane x 125.Visit the moon 124. Circumnavigate the

41. Ride a horse in the Rose 126. Marry and have children (has six) x globe ( 4 times) x

Parade x 127. Live to see the 21st century x \* Said Tarzan movie irrelevant boyhood dream