



KCC Newsletter

Winter 2001

Kasilof Community Church

Issue 5,
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The results of a recent poll of American citizens revealed that more than 55% of men and almost 50% of women rated

Thanksgiving as their most favorite holiday of the year.

At first this might seem kind of surprising, but when ques-

tioned why they felt this way, the number one reason given

by both men and women is that they enjoyed Thanksgiving be-

cause it allowed them to be with family. This was very

encouraging to hear, that fami-

ly bonds are still important to so many of us. The commenta-

tor went on to explain that Christmas didn't make the

number one ranking because Americans are becoming dis-

gusted with over-commercialization of the

whole season. I agree with that assessment. But, I am more

than a little dismayed that we would make Thanksgiving our

number one holiday based up-

on the importance of family, while we rate Christmas as less important because of the nega-

tivity of it being so commercialized. In Matthew 2:10-11 we read about the wise men's response when they followed the star that led them to Jesus:

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him.

What a wonderful picture that is, people expressing exceedingly great joy at the birth of our Savior. In this issue of the KCC Newsletter you were asked you to share past memories of special Christmas's or perhaps offer insight as to what Christmas means to you. I hope you find these stories uplifting; more importantly my prayer for all of us is that **we all have an exceedingly joyous Christmas!** Merry

From the Pastor's PC

Why does Christmas happen? There are certainly a number of reasons that could be suggested. The most obvious one is that God has given us a cultural memorial by which we remember Christ's birth.



In spite of its suggested perversions, we would do well to see Christmas in a wonderful and positive light. Christians commonly complain about the materialism surrounding Christmas. I often slip into such complaints myself. But I heard recently of a wise pastor who warmly observed that the entire world stops to catch its breath and glorify God during this season. He noted that even our economy gets a boost from honoring Christ. What a redemptive way to see “materialism”!

Others point out that Christmas is really a pagan holiday that was adapted to accommodate Christianity. They believe these roots pollute the meaning of the season and, therefore, refuse to celebrate with the rest of Christendom. But Satan often seeks to preempt God's plans with a counterfeit. Herod proclaimed himself “King of the Jews” – a position that God intended for Christ. The anti-Christ will deceive the world by rising to power just before the return of Christ. I suspect in the same way, the pagan holiday closely approximates the birth of Christ in order to serve as a distraction.

We should not allow ourselves to lose focus over these things. It is appropriate to set aside dates during our year that honor God. God instructed His people in the Old Testament to do so with feasts, sacrifices, stones of remembrance and a host of other rituals that proclaimed His desire that we know Him. Commemorating the birth of Christ certainly fulfills that same desire. Let's honor our Lord with a warm heart this season. May God give us grace to do so.

Your servant for His glory,
Pastor Paul

THOU SHALT NOT SKIM FLAVOR FROM THE HOLIDAYS

By Craig Wilson, USA TODAY

I hate this time of year. Not for its crass commercialism and forced frivolity, but because it's the season when the food police come out with their wagging fingers and annual tips on how to get through the holidays without gaining 10 pounds. You can't pick up a magazine without finding a list of holiday eating do's and don'ts. Eliminate second helpings, high-calorie sauces and cookies made with butter, they say. Fill up on vegetable sticks, they say. Good grief. Is your favorite childhood memory of Christmas a carrot stick? I don't think so. Mine isn't either. A carrot was something you left for Rudolph. I have my own list of tips for holiday eating. I assure you, if you follow them, you'll be fat and happy. So what if you don't make it to New Year's? Your pants won't fit anymore, anyway.

1. About those carrot sticks. Avoid them. Anyone who puts carrots on a holiday buffet table knows nothing of the Christmas spirit. In fact, if you see carrots, leave immediately.
2. If something comes with gravy, use it. That's the whole point of gravy. Pour it on. Make a volcano out of your mashed potatoes. Fill it with gravy. Eat the volcano. Repeat.
3. As for mashed potatoes, always ask if they're made with skim milk or whole milk. If it's skim, pass. Why bother? It's like buying a sports car with an automatic transmission.
4. Do not have a snack before going to a party in an effort to control your eating. The whole point of going to a Christmas party is to eat other people's food for free. Lots of it. Hello? Remember college?
5. Under no circumstances should you exercise between now and New Year's. You can do that in January when you have nothing else to do. This is the time for long naps, which you'll need after circling the buffet table while carrying a 10-pound plate of food and that vat of eggnog.
6. If you come across something really good at a buffet table, like frosted Christmas cookies in the shape and size of Santa, position yourself near them and don't budge. Have as many as you can before becoming the center of attention. They're like a beautiful pair of shoes. You can't leave them behind. You're not going to see them again.
7. Same for pies. Apple. Pumpkin. Mincemeat. Have a slice of each. Or, if you don't like mincemeat, have two apples and one pumpkin. Always have three. When else do you get to have more than one dessert? Labor Day?
8. Did someone mention fruitcake? Granted, it's loaded with the mandatory celebratory calories, but avoid it at all cost. I mean, have some standards, mate.
9. And one final tip: If you don't feel terrible when you leave the party or get up from the table, you haven't been paying attention. Reread tips. Start over. But hurry!

Cookieless January is just around the corner.

BAKED BLUEBERRY ROLL

Submitted by Lynda Wandler

2 cups flour	1 egg
3 teaspoons baking powder	1/2 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 1/2 cups blueberries
1/2 cup shortening	3/4 cup sugar

Sift together into a large bowl the flour, baking powder, salt and one tablespoonful of sugar; cut in the shortening. Beat the egg, add the milk to the beaten egg, and blend ingredients to make a soft dough. Roll into a ten-inch square. Combine the blueberries and three-fourths cup of sugar and spread evenly on the rolled out dough. Roll up as you would a jelly roll and pinch the edges together. Bake in a 425⁰ oven for 30 min.

Serve warm with blueberry sauce:

1/2 cup sugar	2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour	1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 cup boiling water	1 cup blueberries

Combine the sugar, flour and boiling water and cook three min; add butter and stir until melted. Add lemon juice (or extract) and blueberries, serve warm over the roll slices.

Alaskan Blueberry Coffee Cake Recipe

[<http://www.acplace.com/recipes/blueberry.htm>]

1 1/2 c All-purpose flour	3/4 c Sugar
2 1/2 tsp Baking powder	1 tsp Salt
1/4 c Vegetable oil	3/4 c Milk
1 Egg	1 1/2 c Blueberries
1/3 c All-purpose flour	1/2 c Brown sugar, firmly packed
1/2 tsp Cinnamon	1/4 c Firm butter (1/2 stick)

In a medium mixing bowl, blend together 1-1/2 cups flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, oil, milk, egg and 1 cup blueberries. Beat thoroughly for 30 seconds and spread in a greased round 9x1-1/2-inch pan or an 8x8x2-inch pan. Combine 1/3 cup flour, brown sugar, cinnamon and butter. Sprinkle over batter and top with the remaining berries. Bake in a 375F oven for 25 to 30 minutes, until done. Don't overbake.

THE GIFT

The Gift

The Godhead came to earth,
A virgin girl to give Him birth.
This is the way He chose,
A gift,
Laid in a manger wrapped in swaddling
clothes.

Praised as the King most High,
On a wooden cross He did die.
Heralded in with Angelic voice
Rejecting Him was man's choice.

There he hung on that day,
Between two thieves on display.
They were charged and guilty found

He was innocent but still was bound.
This was the reason he came to earth
For through His death it gave rebirth
So take His gift and in Jesus believe,
Life everlasting you will receive.

by Lynda Wandler

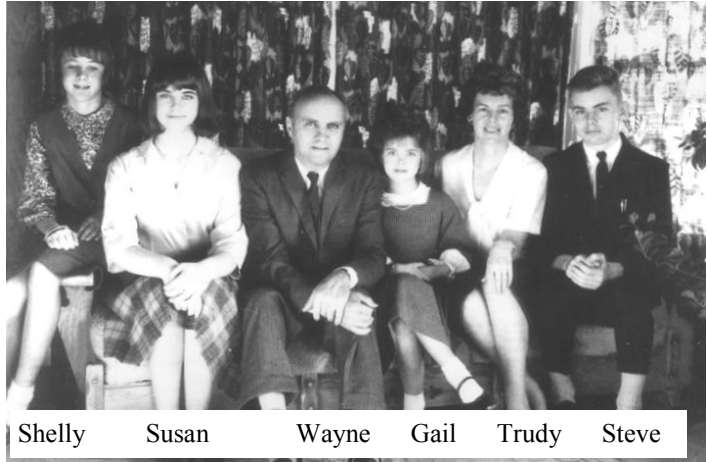


Cartoon by Mark Parisi posted with special permission.

For many more "off the mark" cartoons, please visit Mark's site at: www.offthemark.com

BRIEF HISTORY OF A PIONEER KASILOF FAMILY

She was a nurse working for the Boeing aircraft corporation in Seattle when Trudy met a man by the name of Wayne, who was with the Army Air Corp. Wayne worked on a crash boat, which basically is a PT boat with one less engine (two engines instead of three). Trudy's brother, Lowell, was the captain of the vessel Wayne was assigned to. In 1945 the courtship ended in blissful matrimony when Trudy Thorsness became Trudy Webb. They were married in Iowa.



When WWII ended, Wayne

sought to muster out of the service, but was finding it a difficult thing to do in the lower 48, so he and Trudy boarded a steamship for Seward. Trudy remembers that they arrived in an 80mph gale. Welcome to Alaska. The primary purpose for the trip was to expedite getting out of the service because that is where Wayne originally signed up. Thus, Trudy really hadn't contemplated a permanent move to Alaska, but life is full of all kinds of wonderful surprises. Trudy's just happens to be more than 50 long.

The newly married couple took residence in Anchorage. A few months later Trudy remembers feeling ill, which was later diagnosed as her first pregnancy; Susan was born in March of 1947. Wayne had applied for a homestead and received an extension (because of the war) in fulfilling the homestead requirements, so after Susan was born, Wayne headed for the Kasilof River and began making plans to build a cabin on the present day Webb home site. Trudy and baby Susan traveled back to Iowa to visit family. Wayne dug the basement by hand and then made a deal with Abe Erickson to secure some logs for the cabin. He made the trip upriver to "slack water" where Abe had stored the logs and together they got them all rafted for the trip downstream. However, the next morning when they went to begin their journey, there were no logs to be found. The rope holding the log raft to shore had been cut, so the search began. The end to this story is that the logs were later found, still all bundled together. It appears that a beaver

had come along and cut the rope, perhaps with the idea to dam up the entire Kasilof River. Wayne was able to hook on to the bundle of logs and head on downriver to the home site. The plan involved him and another fellow and went something like this. When they got to the present day Cohoe Cove landing (Pete Jensen owned it then), they would pull into shore and Wayne would jump out with the lead rope and make four or five loops around a big stump on the shoreline. Everything went as planned, Wayne jumped out, made the loops around the stump and waited for the current to swing the log pile into shore. But, when the big pile of logs got to the end of the rope, the pull was more than the stump could take, and out she came. To you and I, it would have been a funny thing to witness, but I'm sure after the juvenile delinquent beaver and an uncooperative stump, patience was probably about shot. Wayne had to round up 6 or 7 men with boats and outboards (9.9 hp back then) and together they all were able to hook on to the log pile and pull it back upriver to the landing. From there, a jeep was used to get the construction material to the house site.

It was in January of 1948 that Trudy got on a plane from Anchorage (on the connecting flight from Iowa) and landed at the present day Kasilof airstrip. She recalls looking over the country as the pilot approached the strip, and asked, 'Who's going to pick me up?' New snow had fallen and it appeared to Trudy that nobody lived in this country. The pilot dropped her and baby Susan off and said, "don't worry, there will be lot's of people here in no time." To Trudy's delight, he was right, as very soon people like Bill Crosky, and Gladys Erdman and Florence Dalbow (two missionary ladies who lived in the George Jackinsky house at the time) were there with her husband Wayne to greet her. Trudy's first impression of Wayne after not seeing him for a few months was, "my goodness, he needs a haircut!" From there they rode to Wayne Feller's home and then put on snowshoes (the first time in Trudy's life), and with baby Susan in backpack, they headed for "home," crossing the Kasilof River on the way. It wasn't until later that Trudy comprehended what everyone kept asking Wayne, such as, "did you get the door in?" or "did the windows arrive?" Apparently, he had been busy right to the last day getting the front door hung and windows installed for the family's arrival.

Wayne worked as a carpenter for Libby McNeil Libby in Kenai (at the present day Ward Cove site), which required walking the beach from Kasilof to Kenai. He would stay there for a week or ten days at a time and then walk the beach back home. A year or so later Chris Jensen offered to sell his setnet fish operation to Wayne and Trudy, and

early in May, 1948, the Webb's became commercial setnet fishermen in Cook Inlet. Trudy still owns the same permit today.

It was during one of these early years of fishing that a near tragedy was avoided thanks to some quick action by Trudy and the helpful hands of a couple other well known Kasilof pioneers. Wayne had headed out in an old wooden dory in some big swells to set the nets when Trudy heard a terribly loud noise.



Wayne Gail Steve Susan Shelly Trudy

Young Steve, who was born in 1950, was on the beach at the time and witnessed the whole thing. The dory had ridden a breaker to its crest and had flipped end over end (bow to stern) pinning Wayne underneath with a bunch of heavy silk nets. Trudy, who was 7 months pregnant at the time, remembers running from the beach cabin to their Jeep, hoping she could remember how to tie the one knot that Wayne had taught her. The boat was upside down getting pounded in the surf and Trudy said she prayed like she had never prayed before and was able to wade out and grab the bow-line and tie it to the rope attached to the Jeep. To everyone's surprise, even to this day, the Jeep was able to tow a very heavy, upside down wood dory up onto the sand, with the bow digging a furrow as it came. Just about that time, Trudy looked up to see another wooden dory coming to the beach awfully fast. It was the Hermansen brothers, Alfred and Hermon, who had witnessed what was going on while they set their gear. They ran over to the dory, and to Trudy's amazement were able to flip the boat by themselves, freeing a busted up Wayne, but thankful to be alive. He ended up with numerous broken ribs and a good story to share with all of us.

The Webb family grew in numbers during their early years in Kasilof. Susan was born at Providence Hospital in Anchorage in 1948, Steve followed in 1950, also at Providence. Shelly was born in Seward in 1952, and finally Sylvia (Gail) in 1956 at Providence hospital. Retelling the story of Steve's birth brought a chuckle from Trudy as she remembered that at that time there was a plane service from Kenai to Anchorage just for pregnant mothers. She was having serious labor pains, but told her good friend and neighbor Ann Ramsell (Archie Ramsell's wife) that by the time they got her to Anchor-

age, the pains probably would all go away and she would be made to look like a fool. Like many good programs, this one had been abused by some people wanting a free trip to the big city. It seems that pregnant ladies would feign labor pains only to have them subside after getting off the plane. So, Trudy was just sure that once they got in the air the pains would go away and she would look like one of the freeloaders. Well, the pains did stop shortly after she arrived in Anchorage, which bothered Trudy, but Steve eventually was born at Providence hospital.

Christmas's for the Webb family in those days was much simpler than it is today, but that doesn't mean they were less memorable. In fact, the opposite is probably true. Trudy remembers that the Sears catalogue was a very important part of life back then, with many of the purchased Christmas gifts coming from those famous pages. Oh, there was the one year that they didn't have Christmas



Betty Thorsness (Trudy's sis) Trudy Wayne Susan

until February because the mail package arrived late. And, when it did arrive, it had sorghum all over everything. Apparently, there was a jar of sorghum in the mail package and the lid had come off covering everything with the gooey substance. Trudy also remembered that you had to be a good meal planner too, as a full year of groceries were ordered at a time out of Seattle. The center of Christmas activity for the community was the little school, which was held in the McClain building, located near the Kasilof air-strip. There was a little stage for the kids to perform on and Trudy was always amazed at how many people the place held. Most of the church services were conducted in local homes. Steve remembered the kids having little Christmas concerts at the school playing their three-note flutes. There even was some percussion to back them up. Enod McClain was the teacher then.

Getting to school was also somewhat of an adventure, at least for one Webb child. Wayne would drive Susan over to Pete Jensen's dock, then they would jump in the dory for the trip across the Kasilof River where Susan had to climb the hill to Wayne Feller's place. Once she got there she would either walk or ride her bike a mile or so to the school. She often would meet moose on the way and Steve and Trudy fondly recalled

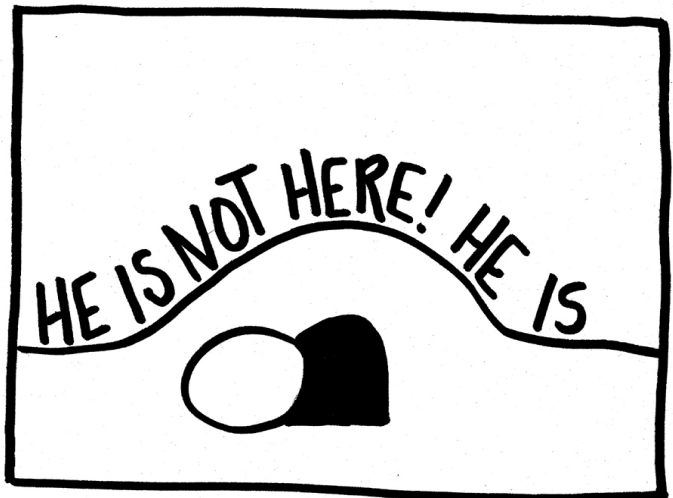
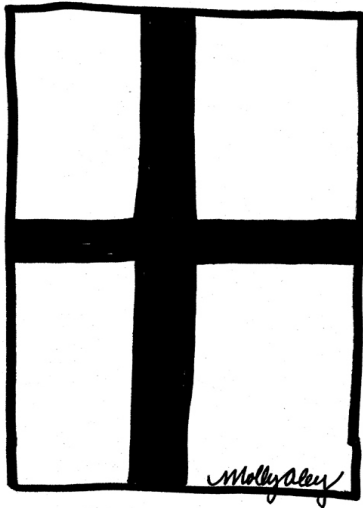
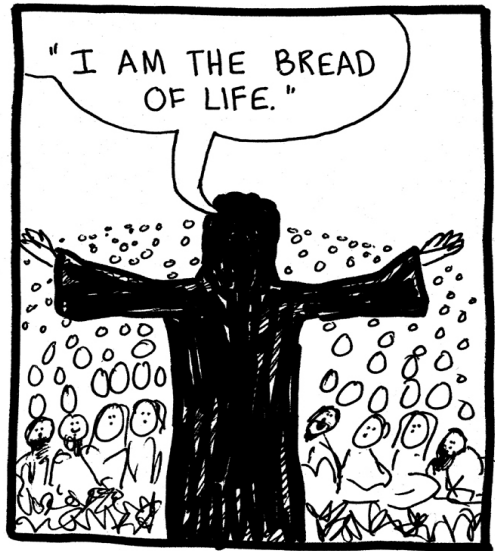
Susan's ability to calm these moose by talking to them. At the end of the school day, the trip was taken in reverse. They both laughed at what the authorities would do to a mother who made her child take a trip like that in today's culture.

Trudy also fondly recalled the friendship her family formed with their neighbors, Archie and Anne Ramsell. The Ramsell's didn't have any children and they would take the Webb kids for hikes and other outings. The Webb's and Ramsell's shared a lot of meals and very good times together.

As is the case with many of us, life has dealt the Webb family some difficult times too. In 1980, Gail's husband was killed in the crash of an Anchorage-to-Kenai commuter flight. The plane had veered significantly off-course and crashed, killing everyone on board. Then, approximately six months later, while on vacation in New Zealand with her brother Steve, Gail drowned while on a morning swim. Somehow a strong under-current had formed on the beach she was swimming at and she apparently was unable to make it back to shore. Steve also shared the fact that a very close friend of Gail and her husband's was accidentally electrocuted while working on his roof about six months after Gail died. Steve was recalling all of these events when he looked up at me and said, "I remember sitting at a table with these three people and then a year later all three had died of accidental deaths." Finally, in 1982, Trudy's husband and Steve's father, Wayne, died of a massive heart attack. One can only conclude that it was God our Father who sustained the Webb family through these difficult times.

I would like to thank Trudy and Steve Webb (and even Susan as she stopped by for the last part of our conversation) for allowing us to "peer" into their lives. During our conversation, I often found myself trying to imagine what it must have been like growing up on the banks of the Kasilof River, ordering an entire years worth of groceries at a time from Seattle. When I asked Trudy if she was shocked at arriving at her new home on a pair of snowshoes in a land that was unfamiliar to her, she just kind of chuckled and said, "I guess I was more prepared for this than most." Although Trudy is too humble to say it, I believe it was her faith and pioneer spirit that helped her prevail all these years.

Trudy and Steve, thank-you for sharing a part of your life with the rest of us.



RISEN!

Skyview Lady Panthers Make It To State Championship Game

My, oh my, in three short years the lady Skyview volleyball team has progressed from a struggling program with a new coach to a group that played for the right to be called the very best team in the state. That's what some might call, "improvement!"

By now most of you are aware that our very own Coach K (Sheila) started coaching the Skyview lady volleyball team in 1999. It usually takes a little while for a new coach to implement their philosophy of how the game should be played, but Coach K must have given this team a crash course. Numerous players on the 2001 squad received individual honors throughout the season,



however, the thing that really stood out about the lady Panthers is that this really was a team effort. They did not have a dominant player that everyone referred to when talking about Skyview. No, they had a team that complemented each others strengths and weaknesses.

The lady Panthers finished the regular season in first place in the southern division of their conference with a record of xx-xx and a season record of xx-xx. They traveled to Wasilla to compete in the conference tourney where they beat Kodiak in game one, lost to Palmer the next night and then had to fight their way back on the final day by beating cross-town rival Soldotna and then finishing in third place by beating Kodiak again. Our conference sent three teams to state, which meant Skyview was heading to the "big dance" for the second year in a row, to be held at West High School in Anchorage.

This year's state tournament had kind of a deja-vu feeling as Skyview once again drew the Service Cougars as their game-one opponent. Service has been the power-house team in the sport of volleyball for the past 20 years and they beat Skyview last year in

game one (it took five sets) of the state tournament. So, nobody really would have been surprised if something similar happened again this year. Most would have just chalked it up to bad luck for Skyview drawing the power-house team of the state two years in a row. Well, Coach K and her Panthers had a little different frame of mind this year. They came out and dominated the Service squad in three straight sets to take game one of the tournament. For those who saw the game, it looked like a mismatch, with Skyview being the dominant team. Game two found Skyview matched up against the girls from Juneau, a team they had played twice during the regular season, winning one and losing one. The first set went to the Juneau team as it was apparent Skyview was not quite running on all cylinders yet. They turned things around in set two and then never looked back as they won the game in four sets. It wasn't until my family and I walked out of the West High School gym that night that it really sank in that Skyview would be playing in the title game the following evening. In Skyview's relatively short history as a school, the only other team that has competed at this level is the wrestling team, so Coach K and her volleyballers were in limited company. Skyview would face the Wasilla Warriors for the state title, a team in their own conference, which was nice, but a team that was also undefeated, having dominated most of their opponents, including Skyview earlier in the year. But, this was the state championship game and past records don't mean anything. Skyview came out ready to play taking set one 15-9. A stirring in the crowd occurred as some began to wonder, "could Skyview really do this, beat both Service and Wasilla and take home the state crown?" Wasilla jumped out to a big lead in set number two, but the Panthers came roaring back before finally losing a close game 15-12. Now the match was tied up at one set apiece. The third set went easily to Wasilla 15-3 followed by a Warrior win (15-9) in set four, which gave them the state title and a perfect undefeated season.

For those of you who have never played in a state championship game, it's hard to understand all the emotions involved. For Skyview, just getting there was a loftier goal than most thought possible, perhaps even the players themselves. In the November 11 *Peninsula Clarion*, "Coach K said that when she asked her players at the beginning of the season if they could picture themselves playing for the state championship, they just laughed and said no." But, they represented themselves and Skyview High School very well, which says a lot about the coaching they received. Coach K went on to say, "I hope it (this past season) changes the mental attitude (and proves that) kids are capable of doing something they didn't think was possible."

Congratulations to our Lady Panthers and to Coach K. You made us all very proud!

BASKETBALL ON THE KENAI

The month of December brings a lot of excitement to our lives as we all look forward to Christmas and all of the wonder that it brings to our lives. But, it also means the beginning of a new season for many high school athletes. That season is basketball. If you're looking for a great way to get out on one of those cold, dark, December, January, or February nights, why don't you load up the family and head off to one of our local high school basketball games. There should be plenty to choose from.

Like last year, KCC will be well represented on the basketball floor, with numerous players and coaches that all call our church their home church. For the Skyview Panthers, Sheila Kupferschmid (coach K) will once again be at the helm of the JV program. This will be coach K's second year with the lady basketballers and if she can bring just a little of the success to the same gym that the volleyball program generated, then look for big things from her girls.

On the boy's side of the court, you'll find the Blossom brothers, Dave and Doug, heading up the Varsity and JV boys' teams. Skyview will start the season with only three seniors that have much playing experience, but one of them is Mark McGarry. Mark was a consistent player for the squad last year and Coach Dave Blossom is expecting Mark to fill a critical role in team leadership this year. Look for Mark to be an integral part of any success that Skyview attains this year. At the JV level, Kaleb Shields will find a role as a key player. Coach Doug Blossom finds himself in a rather unique position this year, that being, that on any given night he might not know who he will have as a squad until the game gets underway. The reason for that is that Skyview has a lot of young players, and, depending upon how they progress during the season, this will determine how much Varsity or JV time they see that week. Kaleb will be one of a number of players that will be looked at as a "slider," meaning he could see some time with Mark at varsity, depending upon how he develops as a player.

Down the road at Ninilchik, the Wolverine boy's team will be depending a lot on Jessy XXXXX. Jessy knows how to get up in the air and he brings a lot of excitement to the Wolverine program. There's no doubt that Jessy will find his way on the top of the stat sheet numerous times this year for the Wolverines. On the girls team, the ever prominent Molly Bosick can be found sprinting her way up and down the court. The Ninilchik girls team has something of a "national" reputation and Molly will be right in the middle of all the attention that is focused on this team. If you want to watch a good

game of girls basketball, pick out one of Ninilchik's girls games against a Kenai or Skyview, or perhaps a CIAA or Seldovia. You won't be sorry. To the best of my knowledge we don't have any basketball players from KCC on the SoHi Stars or CIAA Eagles squads this year, but that doesn't mean you can't get out and support these teams. In fact, why not make a point of attending a Skyview or Ninilchik game when they are tangling with SoHi and CIAA. **For team schedules, log onto www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us and follow the links to the high school of your choice.**

Back row: Coach Gary Ram sell, Zack Rohr, Aaron Singleton, Ryan Geller, Sonny Lavea, Andrew Smith, Linson Lavea;

Row 5: Coach Dave Blossom, David Thornton, Zack Rowell, Liola Lavea, Justin, Adam Cooper, Garrett St Claire, Josh Rowell, Levi Macki, Tony Lewis, Adam Kosydar, Eric Malmquist, Kaleb Shields, William Vanhooose, Jake Mork, Jim Reed, Kj Kircher, Coach Sheila Kupferschmid;

Row 4: manager Laura Cooper, Donna Sadler, xxx Smith, Katie Lewis, Maria Rich, Ruby Baxter, Jessica Humphries, xxxxxx, Christina Shadura, xxxxx, Jackie Rainwater, Coach Carpenter;

Row 3: Matt Mattarrese, manager Alyse Delbom, DeeDee Thompson, Ashley Waldrip, Sarah Gar-rant, Christina xxxx, Sammy Dalebout, xxx Thornton, Amanda Dreyfurst, Annie Atkinson, Melissa Fowler, Jessica Hiler, Coach Trujillo;

Row 2: Kendra Tobin, Amanda Fay, Laurel Creel, Katie xxxx, Christina Colvin, Jamie Beaver, Jenny Carpenter, Anne Verba, Lindsey Gephardt;

Row 1: Matt Travers, Mark McGarry.



STATE CHAMPIONS AGAIN

**“Whether you think you can
or think you can't --
you are right.”
Henry Ford**

For the fourth time in Skyview High School’s relative short history, the wrestling squad has brought home the coveted title of **state champion**. If success were measured purely on the titles that teams win, then Skyview wrestlers would need a pair of strong binoculars to locate the next nearest athletic program at their school. However, like many successful programs, there is more to the bottom line that wins and losses.

Somewhere about mid-season coach Gardner realized that it was time to “step it up” and instituted two-a-day practices. This meant his wrestlers had to be to school very early in the morning for the first practice and then again after school for the regular practice. This seems to have paid great dividends. Most prognosticators would have placed their bets on the Nikiski team taking home the trophy as they had a squad full of the very young men who dominated everyone they played on the football field. Moreover, these guys were experienced wrestlers. It should come as no surprise then that it wasn’t until late in the final day of the state tournament that Skyview emerged victorious.

Kasilof Community Church was well represented on the Skyview team with Nate Morse, Joel Morse, and Mark Rozak all making significant contributions to the successful program. Moreover, Jeff Aley also took to the mats as one of the assistant coaches. Skyview entered the state championship tournament as the area-4 champions, having easily won the area tournament held at Seward. Vance Gaddis was the only Panther to win an individual championship at the state tournament held in Kenai, so the Skyview victory was very much an entire team effort. Mark Rozak picked up a 6th place at state; Nate Morse was second at the area tournament and is currently wrestling at the Reno, Nevada “tournament of champions”; finally Joel Morse took first place at the area tournament in the 275 lb class (heavywt).

The next time you see one of these guys, go give them a hug or a manly handshake and congratulate them on their very successful season, but a word of warning, if they start mumbling things like “head and arm” or “double-leg” or “shoot,” you had better get go-

SPECIAL MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS

Many Christians complain about the secular nature of the Christmas celebrations. I agree that we have lost much of "the reason for the season", but I'm also an opportunist. We need to realize that during these "holy days" many folks are willing to tune into the spiritual nature of the holiday, if only for a little bit. We can and should be witnessing to them while they are open.

As a child, I loved Christmas carols and enjoyed singing them with our school choir for the annual Christmas program. My love for Christ grew each year as a result of singing and hearing these beautiful melodies. When I became a Christian, I wondered how I already knew so much about the deity of Christ, the reason for His coming, and the reason for His death. It finally came to me that I had learned not only love from these songs, but also sound, profound doctrine.



Now I regard this season as an opportunity to make an appeal for Christ through hearts that may be softened as mine was. I particularly enjoy those folks who emphasize "peace on earth" and ignore the Lord. We need to remind them that what the angels said was "Glory to God in the highest, AND on earth peace, good will toward men". Peace does not come because we wish for it; God gives us peace when we pray for it.

It's up to us to put Christ back into Christmas, one heart at a time.

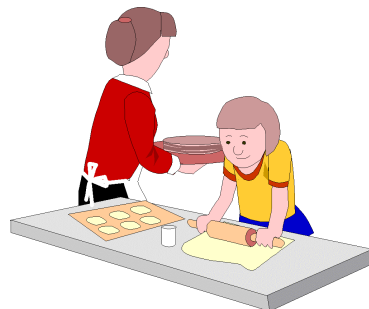
Ruth Lawler

On The Outside Looking In

Peggy Moore

This was my first Christmas as a single parent and I had made up my mind that I was going to make things as good as possible for my little family. I had always tried to create an atmosphere of wonder for my children at Christmas time. I enjoyed decorating and creating traditions I envisioned my children would eventually carry on to their own families when they grew up. As the holiday drew near I would talk with my children about the REAL meaning of Christmas. We would read brightly colored stories about Jesus birth and talked about what it meant to the world. We would set up the nativity scene and ponder what it must have been like to be turned away from the inns in Bethlehem, or the wonder and awe the shepherds must have felt when the angels appeared to them in the fields that night. And, of course, we talked about why Jesus came to earth for each and every one of us. Those were times I cherished in my heart.

As the days drew closer to Christmas the children and I spent many wonderful hours baking Christmas cookies and candies, often sampling our treats in the process. We made up plates of goodies and took them to share with others. It was a joy to see their excitement and willingness to give. Their love reminded me of the childlike qualities Jesus spoke of so fondly.



Well, that Christmas my children were to spend the holiday apart from me so I found myself alone on Christmas Eve. While I put on what I thought was a pretty good show of cheerfulness, I was feeling quite sorry for myself. I had turned down several offers from friends to join them for the evening and then proceeded to have a real “pity party”. I couldn’t believe how unprepared I was for the emotions of being separated from my children for the holiday. About that time, the phone rang and it was my son asking if I would please bring he and his sister some toys to play with and some personal items they had forgotten at home.

Happy for something to do and the opportunity to see them, I gathered together their things and hopped in my car. When I arrived at the home where they were staying I

jumped out of the car and started toward the front door. It was snowing, those big fluffy flakes that are perfect for a Christmas Eve, the house was lit up with colorful lights and I could hear Christmas music coming from within. It was picture postcard perfect right down to the scene in the window that stopped me in my tracks. Through the glass I saw my children, their faces glowing and their eyes sparkling as they played around the Christmas tree in the warmly lit living room. And there I was, on the outside looking in.

My heart leapt as the kids saw me through the window and raced to the door to greet me. I quickly dashed the tears from my eyes and put a smile on my face as I greeted them on the front porch, hugged them soundly, wished them a “Merry Christmas” and gave them their things. Then, before I knew it, the door closed and I was alone again.

I trudged back to my car and drove slowly home, all the while replaying the scene over in my mind. All the cheerful decorations I had put up at home did nothing to lighten my mood and the carols on the radio made even more depressed. I was working up to really feeling sorry for myself when I began to think about Jesus – about being one of His children. And, much like my situation, about how often the very Jesus whom we celebrate at Christmas is on the outside looking in.

It was then that I realized Jesus was standing outside the window of my heart at that very moment, looking for the display of childlike wonder, for that excitement and open spirit that loves so freely. I could only imagine how His heart ached with desire to join me (and the rest of His family) in celebration of His birthday. Oh how he must have longed to see me smile with eager anticipation rather than sitting there with tears of self-pity welling up in my eyes. Startled by the image of my precious Jesus standing sadly on the outside, I chose to open the door wide and invite Him in so we could celebrate together.

Although I missed my children, I will remain ever thankful that God used that time of separation as an opportunity to more fully reveal His love for me. I will treasure that year as the one when I was the one who received the gift of the REAL meaning of Christmas – Jesus’ love for all His children! May I always be mindful to keep the door to my heart open and never again leave Jesus on the outside looking in.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH WINTER PARTY

Dave and Ann Letzring recently hosted a party at their house for the kids that Ann teaches in the KCC children's church program. A group of 16 kids showed up (not counting Arnie), hungry for some pizza and a day of sledding. From the reports that surfaced about this event, it sounds like everyone had a great time.

The KCC Newsletter was contacted with a request to make sure the Letzrings were made to know just how much the party was appreciated. So, Dave and Ann, if you are listening **THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**



Back Row: Caleb Nelson, Ben Brown, Ross Skjold, Adam Byrne, Daniel Rozak, Cody Brown

Front Row: Jason Johnson, Brittany Mills, Chloe Nelson, Ginger Johnson, Noah Nelson, Jessie Brown, Alyssa Mattox, Molly Byrne, Brendon Webb, & Dylan Webb.

THE GIVING SAINT

... inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to Me.

Matthew 25:40

Many Christian parents wonder what to tell their children about Santa Claus. Some see red (no pun intended) when they think of that jolly old elf. Others view him as a delightful fantasy than can do no harm. But have you ever thought that Santa can provide a springboard for reinforcing young minds with the true meaning of Christmas?

For example, when a child asks, “Is Santa real?” a mother or father might answer, “No, but hundreds of years ago, there lived a man named Nicholas (later known as St. Nicholas) who gave to others because he loved Jesus. He was born in AD 280, and when he was still just a boy his parents died, leaving him great wealth. Early in his life he devoted himself to serving God. Later, as a bishop in Asia, he gave away much of his wealth to the poor – especially to children. When he was persecuted and imprisoned, he always shared his meager provisions with the inmates. He believed that giving to the needy was the same as giving to Jesus. And that’s what the Bible teaches us to do.”

Such an answer, coupled with generous giving, whether it’s food for the needy, presents for loved ones, or financial support to missionaries, can impress young minds. As they see how much we love Jesus for coming into the world to die for our sins, they will learn what Christmas is all about. Let’s be giving saints. Our children will remember that for a lifetime. D.J.D.

Action Suggestion

Decide this Christmas to give a gift to someone who is lonely or has a special need. Ask God’s guidance and give in Jesus’ name.

God’s highest Gift should awaken man’s deepest gratitude.

From Radio Bible Class Daily Bread

Canticles of Christmas by Brent Johnson

The memories of Christmas are ever sweeter as we age. Each Christmas offers its own set of circumstances, bringing families together or forcing them to be apart. Parents plan to make the current Christmas a gathering of joy as children untie Yuletide surprises.

I grew up with Christmas carols being about the only connection to Christ. We played carols constantly and consequently I still sing them, all year round. Our children are obvious music lovers for they oft request me to hum something to the tune of "Silence is Golden".

My family didn't talk much about Jesus, in spite of older sisters who became active in churches. Still Christmas was great fun. Great food, presents, and visiting. I can't think of an unpleasant Christmas back then.



The best Christmas was when I was in college. My friends were headed home for Christmas, but not me. No sireee! Judy was in Minnesota with her parents, visiting relatives. We had been going together for about 7 months then, so I just invited myself to her aunt's house in Minnesota. The good-natured woman never complained. Neither did Judy. Then too Jesus was making His way into our life. Being together after several months of separation made that Christmas special.

Then came a crummy Christmas. I was seeking God and noticed that Jesus said nothing about remembering his birth. He did stress that we should remember his death. That year I decided we would not "keep" Christmas. We went at it whole hog. No tree. No presents. No holiday cooking. No fun.

Having circled past that mistake, I managed to ruin another Christmas a few years later. By then I was an elder at a church. Elders help people having problems and a particular family was doing just that. They were fighting like children and their marriage was about to split. They had two small children. The father was suicidal, the mother nearly

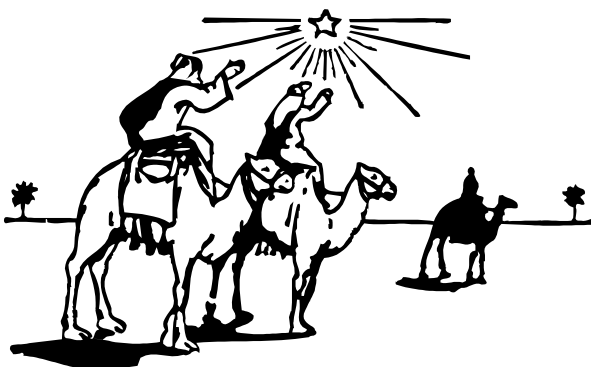
homicidal. We had met with them and the pastor and mutually decided that they should stay with us over the holidays in hopes they would behave better around other people. They didn't.

My parents and other relatives were a few minutes from showing up Christmas morning when this couple uncorked. It was a nightmare. Thankfully, before long they left in separate vehicles. Sadly, their marriage soon parted too.

Numerous times we've invited people who were potentially lonely over for Christmas dinner. This usually offers refreshing discussion and good fun. A good Christmas is happy children, a dinner that goes smoothly resulting in a happy wife, and peace in the family.

When our son, Chris, was a senior, he had cold weather asthma. He needed to get somewhere warm and moist, so Carey, Chris, and I flew to San Diego. We got a hotel room and toured the town. A day before Christmas Eve, Carey and I soured on San Diego and flew home leaving Chris to fend for himself. If home alone is sad, away alone on convalescence must be a gut wrench.

I don't know that Jesus is all that interested in us remembering His birthday, (which most likely is nowhere near Dec. 25). Our culture is interested in it however, and the tradition of Christmas offers good things. We get to focus on God's gift to humanity; gather as families and renew our kinship; feast and enjoy the abundance God has given us; and proclaim peace for the season.



Maybe you can make something from the songs and memories of the season. I do.

THE GIFT A BLIZZARD BROUGHT

memories from Dale Dolifka

As I lay in my Grandmother Callie's roll-away bed listening to the blizzard raging outside, pangs of self-pity came upon me. It was early on Christmas morning of 1973. I had come to my Grandmother's house the night before to take her to my parent's farm on Christmas day. Grandmother Walker lived in Flagler, Colorado, a small prairie town 120 miles east of Denver. I had grown up in a Mennonite farming and ranch community 25 miles north of Flagler. As the youngest of six children, I was the "single" Uncle to several nieces and nephews. I had served as Santa Claus for the past few years at our family Christmas gatherings. I also had coordinated many "Baby Jesus" family skits with mangers, hay and all the trimmings. This year was to be no different. Now I lay wondering - who would be Santa and who would coordinate the skit and who would organize the traditional games in the old Mennonite Barn? Christmas at the farm simply would not be the same without me!



The moon had been shining brightly when I had arrived at my Grandmother's home late on the night of the 24th. But sometime in the night, a "Norther" blew in to bring the prairies to a standstill. My car set in a huge drift of snow with no sign of let up in the storm. Some Christmas this would be - just Grandma Callie and me!

Suddenly, my Grandmother's voice rang out, "Come and get it!" Breakfast she meant. There was no mention of the blizzard as we ate our meal. I'm sure that by her way of thinking there was a storm that we could do absolutely nothing about and we would just make the best of it. Thankfully, by the time breakfast was over my self-pity had vaporized.

As Grandmother washed and I dried the dishes, little did I know that my most "lasting" Christmas present was about to unfold. To make conversation, I asked her to tell me about her favorite Christmas memory. "Oh, that is easy!" she exclaimed. "That

would be when I was 10 years old and I received my only store-bought toy - a porcelain doll!" She went on to explain that the doll had burned in a house fire in Arkansas.



After the dishes were put away, we made our way to her sofa and out came her family albums. For the next several hours, interrupted only by lunch and dinner, I sat mesmerized as this dear eighty-nine year old woman shared her life with me. I had known and loved this intriguing woman for 23 years but now I realized how little I really knew about her. This much I did know - Grandma Callie was born in the Ozarks of Arkansas, she was raised a staunch Southern Baptist, in the early 1900's she came to

homestead the prairies of Colorado with her husband and five small children, she was widowed in 1933, her favorite milk cows were slaughtered and buried by FDR's government agents during the depression, and she was a cook at the local hospital for many years.



What I did not know was that her uncles had split nearly even between the North and the South during the Civil War. I learned that my Grandfather's family were Northern sympathizers and that Grandmother's marriage to him caused a rift in her family. I also learned that she didn't care - she loved him and he loved her and that was that! One intriguing fact of her childhood was the presence of the Klu Klux Klan in her hometown. She chilled as

she spoke of men who were Baptist deacons on Sunday and then wore the ghostly sheets of the Klan during the week. Even now, at her age, Grandmother remained incensed at this despicable Order. She gleefully told about riding on the "colored" train cars and singing old gospel hymns with the Negroes. She relived with devilish delight how angry the white porters would get with her as she boarded the "colored" cars. But what were they going to do to a diminutive white woman - arrest her! Well, there was the

time she almost got arrested for drinking from a “colored only” water fountain in Little Rock. My Grandmother’s concern and love for Blacks remained fervent until her dying days.

My Grandmother’s favorite album was her “missionary album”. The first few pages were made up of photos of Billy Graham’s family. She was one of Graham’s earliest supporters and his Organization had faithfully sent her a family photo each Christmas. After the Graham entries came page after page of her son and my uncle’s missionary endeavors in the Philippines. Uncle Elbert was a joy to all who had known him. At the age of thirty-nine, this fine man’s life was tragically taken. As I listened to my Grandmother speak of him, I had a new and enlightened understanding of the Sovereignty of God. As much as she had loved and cherished this young son who had enriched her life so fully and who had left a young wife and two small children behind, there was not one ounce of bitterness or even questioning in her spirit. At her age, she knew it would not be long now until she would join her dear son and beloved husband in Heaven. She hoped that I would join them someday!

Shortly after lunch, Grandmother brought out my present. My gift for her was unfortunately at the farm. Suddenly, I had an idea! The doll I purchased for my niece was in the trunk of my car. With a shovel in hand, I made my way through the storm to my car and retrieved the doll. I wrapped it and handed the gift to my Grandmother. She was delighted with her new “store-bought” doll and rocked that baby for the rest of the afternoon!



After supper, Grandmother retrieved a small box. In the box were a few cards that were old and yellow. I only remember one of the cards. That card had a note that said - “thought you would like to know that Billy finished his internship!” Turns out that Billy had been born to an unwed mother, the author of the card. Billy was born in the Flagler Hospital. For seven wonderful days, between her shifts as hospital cook, my Grandmother had rocked and cuddled Billy. Before mother and child returned to the Midwest, my Grandmother had helped with a Baby Shower for

little Billy. The mother had stayed in touch with Callie ever since - so blessed was she by my Grandmother's kindness. I also had my vocabulary forever altered that afternoon! In the course of the conversation about Billy, I referred to Billy as an illegitimate child. My Grandmother kindly but firmly informed me that there was no such thing as "an illegitimate child". God created Billy, loved Billy, valued Billy and had richly blessed the now "Doctor Billy".

Our evening together ended at Grandmother's kitchen table over a hot cup of chocolate with some good-natured bantering about local high school sports - without a doubt my favorite topic of discussion! Because of a quirk in school districting, our farm was 2 miles from a point where 4 school districts met. Grandmother's Flagler Panthers and my Arickaree Indians had played many "barnburners" in the old local gymnasiums. I'm sure my Grandmother wasn't really interested in my old stories about upsets, "buzzer-beater" shots, trips to State, packed out District tournaments, unique athletes that had come through the communities, how much fun it was to beat the "rich" Woodlin Mustangs (Daddy's had oil wells), or how amazing it was that the Arriba Aces had so many trophies with so few students. But she acted like she cared very much about my sport's stories, and that made the conversation very memorable.



Suddenly, it dawned on us that it was very late. After we had set up the roll-away, my Grandmother took my hands into her hands - hands that were worn from toil and crippled by arthritis - and thanked me for making this a special day "for an old lady". That night as I lay reliving the day I had just spent with Grandmother Callie, I thanked the Lord for the raging storm outside that had been the cause of this awesome day. It has been amazing to me how many times over the years that I have reached back to the events of that Christmas day to draw strength and courage to deal with life's twists and turns!

Recipe for Angel Food Cake by Michael Pearl

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For information about “No Greater Joy Ministries, please visit <http://nogreaterjoy.org/newsletter.htm>

You may be tempted to use your mother’s old recipe. If you liked her cake, fine, but if it fell when baked, or slid off the plate, or left a bad taste in your mouth, then you will need to be careful not to fall into old habits that have already proven less than satisfactory.

In preparation for the cake, place your opinions in a disposable bowl and grind them into fine powder. If you have any books on psychology you can throw them in along with the approval of your friends. This will make a stinking, gooey mess, but if you will burn a candle scented with the book of Proverbs it makes the odor easier to bear. You can place this mess in a bio-safe container and mail it to the nearest university doing a study on child behavioral disorders. It will speed up their work and save millions of dollars in government grants. Don’t include a return address.

To make angel food cake, you must use all natural ingredients, no drugs. You must keep your working area sterile. Periodically use the word of God to disinfect your working area of such bacteria as psychology, therapy, social services, pastoral opinions, and public schools.

Start with two, big heart-shaped bowls, inseparably joined together in the middle. Fill them up with hope, joy, love, and peace. Stir these ingredients together until both bowls are running over. Now we are not making cake yet. We are just getting ready. You may think that since the bowls are full there is not room for the cake, but this is no ordinary cake. Just leave these ingredients in the two bowls until they start making bubbles that sound like giggles. You will then have the perfect environment for your cake.

Gather your basic ingredients: fine flour, well sifted; buttery praise; oil of grace; for seasonings you will need a mound of mercy, just a pinch of the salt of rebuke, and a bunch of instruction. You will want to have an inexhaustible supply of words of honey. You will need a good paddle to occasionally whip the ingredients into a workable consisten-

cy, but you do not want to whip the batter too much or you will cause it to fall. The object is to get the mix to rise higher and higher until it is fit for the angels to eat. You don't want a heavy, over worked mix. It could stick in your throat. You must have sensitive hands and a delicate touch to make quality angel food cake.

Some people have started out with the right ingredients but put them in the wrong proportions and ended up with devil's food cake. If you get too much rebuke and then fail to whip the batter into a yielding consistency the whole thing may harden in the bowl and you will never be able to shape it.

Place the finely sifted flour into the two heart shaped bowls. You will notice that there is some overflow but the flour quickly soaks up the love, joy, and peace. Liberally stir in the honey of your words. Everyone will notice the sweet smell immediately. Stir in the praise and grace. Hold on to the mercy. You will need it later. Stir the bunch of instruction in slowly, never more than can be assimilated, but continue until you have exhausted your supply. If you run out, you may need to get down on your knees and look for some more. You will find more mercy and grace at the same place.

According to flavor, occasionally stir in the salt of rebuke. Believe it or not, it makes everything sweeter. Honey alone will not sweeten the mix. Without the salt of rebuke the whole mess gets syrupy sweet, but will not stand firm in the oven of trials. When everything is stirred together, and you find the honey of your words and salt of rebuke have failed to sweeten the mix, it is time to use the paddle to whip the ingredients into a malleable consistency. Go gently but firmly until the salt and honey soak into the flour. As I pointed out earlier, if the other ingredients are not in the right proportions the paddle may harden the mix and keep it from ever rising. If it does get too hard, eat the mercy yourself, stir in some more honey of your word, and proceed forthwith.

When the mix is to your satisfaction, it is ready for the oven of trials. Some people are afraid to turn loose of the mix, but the time comes when you must commit it to be baked. If you have done your job well, it will come forth from the oven a cake fit for the angels.

Repeat for each new layer. Ice with thanksgiving, and serve with a scoop of humility. Your guests will be delighted. So will you. ☺

A HUNTER IN THE UNMAKING

By Brent Johnson

Many of my friends like to hunt. I like to eat and hate to hunt. It's not that I have anything philosophical against animals dying, I just don't like to watch them do it. The thrill of shooting things has contrasted with watching animals thrash about afterward. It doesn't look like everyone is having fun.

Ron P or I got a BB gun. I don't remember whose it was, but I remember the thrill of trying to shoot sparrows. It was fun to sneak up on them, a challenge to hit them. It was disgusting to watch them die, but die they did.



Dad liked to hunt and encouraged my brother and I to hunt. He gave us guns at a young age and praised us whenever we came home with game. Spruce hens were our most common prize, although we bagged bear, moose and lots of other legitimate game. We shot at seagulls, loons, bottles, and clothespins from the list of taboo targets. We aimed and a chance was in the chamber. We squeezed and suddenly everything changed for something. A little crack from a .22 or an obnoxious roar from a 30.06 sent a piece of lead hurtling hundreds of miles an hour. The impact is impressive.

I've gone from a perspective of really liking to just shoot, to just not really liking to shoot. I think it is accumulative shock. When I was in about 6th grade, my brother launched a bullet from a high-powered rifle through the floor of our house and not that far from my foot. From the get-go, Jerry was always more responsible than me. It messed with my mind to think an accident like that could happen to someone responsible.

Pat Z and I were on a mission to kill a seal when I was a freshman. I was running the outboard toward where the fish-eating varmint had dove. When it suddenly surfaced, I killed the motor, grabbed my rifle and drew a bead. The boat, no longer under power, began to spin 90° as the out board caught the tide. Pat was standing in the bow looking at the seal. I was gazing down the sites intent on making a squeeze, when suddenly Pat's head swept into view. That event absolutely unnerved me. Today I still find it unsettling.

My parents were away somewhere when Bruce P and I were juniors or seniors. It was late in the fall and we had got hold of some hard liquor. Trying to be big shots, Bruce and I drunk ourselves into the twilight. Then we decided to go out on the deck and shoot guns. Puking that night and puking at school the next day helped adapt my present attitude toward alcohol. The thought of two high school kids shooting guns while drunk makes me weak in the spine.

I wrestled a kid from Palmer. Later Palmer named their High School after this boy. Unfortunately the honor was reserved for the dead, a victim of a shooting accident. Replay that time and again. Bullets often don't go where intended. I've read or heard the sad news too often.

Looking at where a bullet exits an animal is an eye opener and a half. Recently Oscar and I butchered pigs. A 30.06 bullet exiting a pig head takes a kerf from the turf. People may be hard headed, but certainly not more so than pigs. Guns need to be given the utmost respect.

Everyone enjoys watching animals. From flippant rabbits to stately caribou, we think they're neat. Most of us enjoy a good steak or roast. To have the best of both worlds, I'll let someone else do the dirty work.

For me hunting is synonymous with walking through brush. Growing up as the son of a land surveyor, I got my fill of walking through brush whilst my arms are loaded with things hard to carry. Our cabin was 2 miles from the highway. The walk to the bus, carrying a rifle along with books and lunch, somewhat soured me for carrying lots of stuff when walking. We frequently had success with the rifles and added spruce hens to the "carry-ons".

I like the woods. Especially when they're dry. Hunting and dry are not usually found together. Once while hunting with my brother, darkness and rain fell before we located ourselves. That night under the tree in the rain is one of many less than comfortable hunting memories.

Mosquitoes love hunters. One sacrifices itself by flying up my nose or in my ear. While distracted, hoards of its friends



draw their straw deep in my blood. In Alaska, the mummy bag is not designed for warmth, but for escape from mosquitoes.

A few years back, Pat H returned from an extended hunt, empty-handed. This would absolutely ruin a hunt for me, but my friend was quite pleased. He had such a good time being in the woods, close to nature and close to God.



Now let me tell you something weird about God. He likes cities. Strange as that sounds, it's there in black and white. In the end of Jonah, God asks, "Should I not be concerned about that great city?" In the Gospels we see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. In the end, a City of God comes out of Heaven. While I don't like hunting, I also

don't like cities. Cities are dirty and don't have enough plants and animals. I like to watch animals. I admire forests. The dense green growth of the Pacific Northwest evokes an image of Eden. The thick swamps of the Mississippi Delta are a delight of life. Even our own humble Peninsula forests were flush with flora and fauna, before the beetle kill and before too much people came.

Many men are programmed to hunt. They can't help themselves. In the same way women are programmed to cook. They'll get up a great while before it is yet day to begin preparing a holiday dinner. Mom does this still at 82. I have no concept of the sense of it. I'm helpless against pies heaped to Heaven and tasty turkey roast to a but-tery perfection. Do they really need to work at it so hard?

I've decided to accept the crazy cooks and the happy hunters. Peace to all and to all good appetite!

Twas The Night Before Christmas

Adaptation by Peggy Moore

Twas the night before Christmas in
Bethlehem town, When Mary and Joseph
had just settled down. The stable,
once musty, was cleaned with great care
In hopes that the Christ child would
soon be born there.

Most people were nestled all snug in
their beds. While visions of Caesar's
decree filled their heads. They'd traveled
to Bethlehem from across the land,
Not dreaming a miraculous birth was at
hand

When out of the sky there arose such a
voice, As heavenly hosts brought news
to rejoice! The angels' announcement,
melodious and clear, Soon lead them to
know they had nothing to fear.

The shepherds awakened, aware in a
flash, To the City of David they knew
they must dash. So they left their poor
sheep, not counting the cost, To seek
out the One who would save all the lost.

The moon on the breast of the city below,
Gave the luster of midday, a heavenly glow.
When what to their wondering eyes
should appear, But a humble manger
and a baby so dear.

The events in the pasture had happened
so quick, But their memories were vivid,
this wasn't a trick. More rapid than
eagles, the angels they came, To announce
Jesus birth and to call Him by name.

Emmanuel, Christ the LORD, Wonderful
Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace
and our Eternal Father They sang
Glory to God, man's saved from the fall
Now peace on earth! Peace on earth!
Peace be to all!

The Shepherd's glad tidings, like arrows
did fly, As news of the Christ Child
was spread by and by, What Gabriel the
angel told Mary was true, And she
treasured these things in her heart all
anew.

With a round little face and dimples just
so, Awake or asleep, the Babe was
aglow. As Joseph and Mary gazed
down at their Son, They knew in their
hearts He was God's precious One

The angels and shepherds, they all
bowed in prayer, With praise and
thanksgiving for a gift so rare, This
child was the Savior, God's love and
pure light, Blessed Christmas to all
and to all a good night!

On Call

Meezie Hermansen

As a small town veterinarian in a two doctor practice, I spend every other week on call. During these weeks, I am responsible for handling any after-hours emergencies that come in, whereas, on my off-weeks, my evenings and weekends are my own.

There is quite a difference in my lifestyle from week to week. When I am not on call, my life is a little, well, lazy. Knowing that I am not going to be called out in the middle of the night gives me a certain sense of freedom. I tend to stay up later. I allow music to lull me to sleep. I make plans to go out and do things. Oh, and I am not as careful about the fuel level in my car.

The night before I pick up the pager my life starts to change. I do enough laundry to carry me through the week. I set out extra food and water for my cats so that they have plenty in case I have to spend the night at the hospital. I make sure I have extra clothes and reading material in my car for the same reason.

During my on call week I am less relaxed. I try to get to bed a little earlier, never knowing how many hours of sleep I will get in a night. I sleep without music since I tend to be a really heavy sleeper. (My roommate in college had to kick me out of bed once because I thought the dorm fire alarm was my clock so I just repeatedly hit the snooze.) In fact, I tend to sleep a little lighter when I am on call, probably due to my concern of possibly missing a call. I don't make plans that cannot be broken at a moment's notice. Oh, and I make sure my car has plenty of gas to get me to town and back home so I don't have to buy fuel in the middle of the night. Basically I am on alert, ever ready for the pager to sound that it is time to go.

This contrast in my life brings into focus a certain parable about 10 virgins waiting for the expected groom. Five were wise, having extra provisions knowing that the call could come at any moment. Five were unprepared and missed the feast due to their need to buy fuel in the middle of the night. The key is to live life on call; to be on the alert, ever ready for the trump to sound that it is time to go.

Security

In the arms of my Savior is where I want to be, with
His robe of righteousness wrapped tightly around me.
He hides me in the cleft of His rock when the enemy doth surround,
I put my trust in Him alone He is my solid ground.

He is the vine and I am the branch,
There is nothing that happens to me by chance.
He is the potter and I am the clay,
He continues to mold me day by day.

No matter what trials or temptations befall,
I know my Savior is with me through all.
I can count them all joy for they keep my humble,
And He is faithful to catch me err I stumble.

So if I abide in Him and do all He doth command,
I know beyond these earthly bounds,
I will see His
Promised Land.

Lynda Wandler
10-21-01



Final Thoughts

Growing up in a family dominated by the female gender sure had its “ups and downs.” For example, to this very day, if I walk out of a bathroom with the toilet seat up, I feel a very cold shudder deep in my bones. I contend this is the result of numerous years of torture perpetrated on a young impressionable boy by the “tender-gender.” I had to endure serious threats made to my fragile youth, threats that I took serious enough to cause me to sneak into the bathroom after one of my sisters left to make sure the seat was down when they got done. You can never be too sure.

Life can sure be funny though. It wasn't too long before three of my sisters joined their older brother in leaving the nest to start families of their own. That left only my little sister and me at home, you remember her, she is the one that played with Barbie dolls that didn't have any heads. Oh ya, and I played baseball with a glove that didn't have any leather laces. Back to the story though. I couldn't believe it when one day I actually had to admit that I had started missing my sisters. This truth only made Christmas all the more special at our house because it was **the** day of the year that our family made every effort to be together on. Back in those

days, people still used real trees at Christmas (there, that felt good) and you could be sure that when those sisters of mine walked through the door they would say something like, “Nice tree Pat, this one is uglier than last year.” It didn't matter. I remember sitting on our couch in a strategic position that would allow me to quickly detect the headlights of any car that drove up in our driveway. At the first sign of light, I would yell out the name of whoever had just arrived and then run out to begin helping haul in suitcases and of course presents. Usually one of my sisters would say something about how pretty my complexion was (“nice pimples Pat”) and I would know that all was well.

Sitting around the kitchen table listening to the laughter and watching my family interact is one memory that will always be with me. We would all complain about how our stomachs hurt as we grabbed another piece of homemade candy or another chip and dip combo. Then, more laughter as one sister would make a comment about how much one of the others was eating.

To this day, the seat stays down in my home in honor of those goofy sisters.