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MAGAZINE

"More Than Just Paper And Ink"

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Lucile Driftmier Verness, Publisher

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LETTER FROM LUCILE

Dear Good Friends:

Every year when October rolls around, those of us who are responsible for seeing that this magazine is started on its way to you always draw a long, deep breath and say: "If only we could be getting our December material together when everyone else is concentrating on Christmas and it's all we hear on every side!"

With deadlines being what they are, this simply can never be, of course, so then we hope rather wistfully that there will be a series of days that are dark and nippy to help get us into a Christmas mood. Some years this happens, praise be! But since I'm given to stating facts exactly as they are, I must tell you that here in southwestern Iowa we've had to handle this December issue during an autumn that has broken all records for high temperatures and glorious days of perfect Indian summer. This has been wonderful for people whose daily bread depends upon such weather, but to write highly personal accounts of what goes on pertaining to holidays, such sunny, warm weather makes for troublesome complications.

Well, with all of this aside I'll just plunge into the day right at hand and go on with the comforting feeling that you understand how things are.

Thanksgiving will find two of us Driftmiers right here in Shenandoah—Howard and I. Howard and Mae are having their daughter, Donna Nennenman, her husband, Tom, and their daughters, Lisa and Natalie, down from Omaha to enjoy the traditional turkey and trimmings. They have also asked Mary Lea Palo and her family to join them. They will come from the same general area (Offutt Air Force Base) and there must be non-icy roads for any of them to arrive.

I am hoping that we can work out an arrangement whereby they will come over to my house to eat good old mince pie and pumpkin pie as we all sit by the crackling fireplace blaze to sharpen the sensation of Thanksgiving. Since Lisa and Natalie are now very grown up, we

will be happy to have Isabel and Christopher on deck to contribute to the fortunate feeling that there should be small children around for major holidays.

For many, many years, we always had Thanksgiving with the folks at our old family home; suddenly, I am reminded of something that happened when Juliana and Jed were in town—the only time that Jed has ever been here for Thanksgiving. I thought it was funny then, and today it seems even funnier.

Mother was always given to looking ahead to the next meal, and this habit was so powerful that she began fixing up turkey casseroles the minute we finished eating our mince pie and pumpkin pie. We were so accustomed to this that we never gave it a thought. About ten o'clock Thanksgiving night, when we were sitting around our fireplace just a few houses west of Mother's house, Jed said suddenly: "You know, I can't think of anything in the world that would taste as good right now as a cold turkey sandwich. Do you suppose that if Juliana and I ran up the alley we could get enough left-over turkey for a sandwich?"

"I'll call," I said, "and see if the folks are still up."

I called. Then I turned to Jed and said: "Well, I'm sorry but Mother has already made up all of the turkey casseroles and there's nothing left for a sandwich."

Jed was dumbfounded. He'd grown up in a small family where people munched around on turkey for a week which gave him no preparation for hearing that there was nothing left for a sandwich out of a twenty-four-pound turkey. To this day, he mentions this experience whenever he starts carving a big turkey at his own table.

In our part of the country we refer to people who take off for warmer climates as "Snow Birds", and if we have a fine warm autumn they usually depart the day after Thanksgiving. This year my sister, Marge, and her husband, Oliver Strom, are "Snow Birds" in a new location. For a number of years, they've been going to the Tucson area in the winter, but now they're already settled in at Harlingen, Texas. I knew that Harlingen was very far south in Texas, but when I looked at a map I realized that it was just about as far south as you can go without getting into Mexico itself. Every year we get letters from Midwestern "Snow Birds" who've settled in at Brownsville, and Harlingen seems to be only a short distance from there. No doubt the Stroms will be running into some of these people.

Things have been going on very much as usual with Betty Jane and me. However, this pretty much unbroken routine was interrupted twice by brief visits with family and friends. Betty Jane's youngest daughter, Hannah, drove down from Minneapolis with Gary Sproule. The purpose of this trip was important: they



For many years, I have brought this glass dome filled with its dried late autumn flowers and seed pods into the living room as part of the Advent decorations. The ceramic figure of the Madonna and Child is Spanish. It calls up for me the universal sense of the true significance of Christmas.

—Lucile

came to make plans for their wedding in the summer of 1981. There are so many relatives involved from such distant locations, that it takes much figuring to get everything lined up for such an event into a reasonable pattern. Hannah met Gary over three years ago when she was a student at Fenster School in Tucson, so no one could call this marriage a spur-of-the-moment affair!

Our other guests were Mr. and Mrs. Gus Brohaugh who own the beautiful home high on the bluffs above the St. Croix River where Betty Jane and I have had two wonderfully relaxing vacations. They've been friends of Betty Jane and her family for years, and now I've seen enough of them to feel that I've made two extremely interesting and stalwart friends.

They are not the kind of people whom you feel you must entertain, but totally by chance it just so happened that during their visit they had an opportunity to indulge in one of their favorite activities: attending closing out sales of household items. Within a stone's throw of my house there were two sales involving people who lived right here when Russell and I settled down on this piece of ground thirty-four years ago. It was a gorgeous day on both occasions and the Brohaughs wandered back and forth to their hearts' content while countless items were being sold. If I had set out to rig up some kind of splendid entertainment I never could have come up with anything half as good as pure chance provided.

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DOROTHY WRITES FROM THE FARM

Dear Friends:

With the temperature in the sixties today, the big snowstorm we had a few days ago seems unreal. It really caught us off guard—I didn't have the snow tires on my car yet.

Our renter, young Dean Krutsinger, had started to combine the beans when his machine broke down. Before he was able to get it fixed, the snowstorm arrived, dumping several inches of very wet snow on the field. I thought surely the beans would be flat on the ground after that, and was happily surprised to find them still standing straight and tall (at least those I can see from the road). The ground will either have to freeze hard, or dry out before there will be any more fieldwork done around here.

Frank took advantage of the beautiful fall weather to go over his pastures with his brush cutter to try and get rid of the multiflora rose that has been spreading so rapidly over our uncultivated land. Frank says he is fighting a losing battle with this horrible plant. The farmers living in Iowa know all about this pesky problem. The multiflora rose is a very thorny plant that the USDA recommended and encouraged farmers to plant around their farm ponds and in the fence rows back in the thirties. Grown especially as hedges, it was considered good cover for wildlife, and since cattle wouldn't go near it, instead of building expensive fences, this rose was planted. The problem no one anticipated has been that the seeds are carried by birds and wind and now the pastures and timber are covered with multiflora rose plants which are next to impossible to kill. Although we didn't plant any on our farm, our timber pasture, which used to be excellent for livestock, is now so full of the thorny plants we can't walk through it and neither can the cattle. It is becoming a very serious problem.

We were hoping some of our Shenandoah family would be able to spend a weekend with us while the timber was at its peak of color, but they were all tied up with other plans. The weekend of the 11th Annual Covered Bridge Festival at Winterset, Iowa, was such a gorgeous day, three of my friends and I decided on the spur of the moment to drive to Winterset. Madison County is famous for its covered bridges and although it isn't far from here, I had never seen any of them.

My! What a crowd they had! For blocks around the courthouse square the streets were lined with cars—we must have parked at least six blocks



Dorothy Driftmier Johnson gave a demonstration of making Peanut Pixies at the KMA Cookie Festival.
—Photo by Blaine Barton

from the activities. Every inch of space on the courthouse yard and the streets around it were filled with booths from which every kind of craft items, foods and lunches were being sold. Demonstrations were going on all the time, sheep shearing, hide curing, rock grinding, candle dipping, canning, soap making, weaving, quilling, rope making, broom making, just to name a few. Entertainment by different musical groups was going on continuously on the courthouse steps.

Guided bus tours were scheduled to visit the bridges, so the first thing we did was to purchase tickets for the two-hour trip. Although the buses left every half hour, the first bus we could get that wasn't sold out was the one that left at 2:00 P.M., the reason being that this was the time the parade was to start. Sponsors and guides were members of the Tril Book Club. Our guide was Gretchen Casper, an ardent Kitchen-Klatter fan, who was dressed attractively in an old-fashioned dress and bonnet. The money the club clears is donated to the fund used to keep the bridges in repair.

There were sixteen bridges in the county at one time but now there are seven that are kept up by the county supervisors and checked by the engineer. We were taken to see four of

them. Since they were several miles apart, the tour included other historical buildings in the county. One of these was the old stone schoolhouse known as the North River School which was built in 1874, making it 106 years old. It closed in 1945 after being used for seventy-one years. It is kept in good repair.

The first bridge we saw is called the Hogback Bridge (I love that name). The bridges are open for car travel, but our big school bus didn't attempt to go over any. Mrs. Casper told us that when the bridges were built they cost between \$900 to \$1900. Timber was plentiful and so were the workmen, most of whom were local farmers who paid their poll tax by working on the bridges. The poll tax, or "head" tax, was levied by the county or township on every family, rich or poor. Until it was deemed unconstitutional, failure to pay the poll tax denied a person the right to vote in state and local elections. In the late 1800's, Madison County had a poll tax of about \$3.00. This money was used to repair bridges and maintain roads.

While we were driving from one bridge to the other, Mrs. Casper told us many interesting historical facts about Madison County. Back when the county was first settled, there were a great many

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FAVORS & DECORATIONS

Powder Puff Cuties: These make clever Christmas party favors, tree decorations or to tie onto packages.

Clown Cutie: Use a small powder puff for the face. Glue on sequins as eyes and nose. Use pinking shears to cut a small, pointed clown's hat of red or green felt. Fasten a white chenille ball on point end of hat and glue narrow, gold rickrack around the bottom edge. Place hat at a jaunty angle and glue to the puff. With needle and thread, attach red or green chenille balls, one on each side of the head, as earrings. From gold wrapping cord, fashion a bow and sew it under the chin of the clown face. Use this gold cord also to make a hanger on each cutie.

Jester: Follow ideas for clown, except cut a tricorn-shaped jester's hat of felt and sew tiny bells on the points of the hat. Decorate hat with sequins.

Angel: The powder puff face has blue sequin eyes with yellow yarn for hair. For the angel's skirt, cut a circle of white net, fold in fourths, then sew powder puff face to the point of the folded circle. Puff skirt out with your fingers. Glue on tiny white feathers as wings.

Snow Girl: Glue a powder puff face to a large circle of fake fur which thus becomes the girl's parka hood. Make bangs and eyebrows of black or brown yarn. Use small buttons for eyes and nose.

Grandpa & Grandma: Give him cotton whiskers and her a bonnet.

Sugar Plum Tree is made with a foam cone as the base of the tree. Stick multi-colored gumdrops (large and small sizes) on toothpicks and stick the picks into the foam cone until it is completely covered with the candies. Use green gumdrops to make about five circles around the cone first—small gumdrops at top, large ones toward bottom—then fill in with the rest. Make a drum base for the tree to stand on by covering half an oatmeal carton with red paper. The band at top and bottom of the drum and the crossed cords can be made of white or gold paper.

Window Shade Backdrop: This is lovely to use behind a Christmas table. Simply paint a pretty Christmas scene upon a light-colored window shade. Be sure the painted area is large enough so that when shade is drawn over the window, the picture fills the space. Outline the window frame with greens.

Holiday Sparkle

by
Mabel Nair Brown

Place the serving table in front of the shade-covered window for a most beautiful setting, especially for a tea table or a buffet.

Glowing Centerpiece Quickie: Simply fill a wire vegetable (some call it lettuce) basket with large tree ball ornaments entwined with a string of tiny lights. This may be placed on a round mirror for extra sparkle.

Rickrack Glamour Tree: Spray a flowerpot gold and fill with sand. Put a dowel stick into the pot for the center pole of the tree. (The size depends upon how large a tree you want.) Cut a circle of styrofoam so it is about four inches wider in diameter than the top of the flowerpot. Make a hole in the center so it will slide down over dowel to rest on the rim of the pot. Make a smaller foam circle and fasten to the top of the dowel. Cut lengths of gold rickrack, pinning them to top and bottom foam circles until you have filled in the complete tree shape. Using more rickrack, pin loops around the bottom circle and around edge of top circle. Fasten small tree ball ornaments to gold thread cut in graduated lengths, which are then fastened to the top circle so the ornaments hang down inside the rickrack tree, as well as among the rickrack streamers. Fasten more tree balls to white pipe cleaners in various lengths, then stick into the top side of the top foam circle. Wrap small boxes with gift wrap and place the packages around the center pole on the lower circle. This tree takes on added beauty if it can be spotlighted in some fashion.

ENTERTAINMENT

Christmas Shopping: Divide the group into two teams. As the leader calls out one of the letters of the alphabet at random, the first player on each side tries to quickly name some Christmas gift that starts with that letter. The player who is first to name a gift is given five points for her, or his, side. Another letter is called and the second players on each side try to see who can name a gift first, and so on until everyone on each side has had a turn. Points are totaled and the winning side receives a shopping bag in which are some Christmas candies or other goodies for the team to share.

Surprise Packages: Prepare several gift-wrapped boxes in which are wrapped such usual gift items as a pair of socks,

necktie, shirt, gloves, perfume, bath powder, etc. Number the packages. To play the game, pass the packages around so that the guests may feel them, shake them, etc. Then the players write down the package number and what gift they think is inside. The person having the most correct list of the package contents wins the prize.

Fill the Stocking: Beforehand, hide various small objects around the room, being sure to have two of every item (but hide each item separately). To play the game, divide the group into two teams. A captain is named for each side. The captains are each given a sock and a list of the hidden items. At leader's signal, everyone starts to search for the objects. The first team to fill its stocking with every item on the list, wins the game. If you want to make it a more difficult game, ask that the players find the items in the order they are given on the captain's list.

SNACKS

Edible Tree: Place a large, fresh pineapple upon a serving plate or tray and surround with greens. Stick small gumdrops, red and green maraschino cherries, raisins and dates upon toothpicks and insert in the pineapple for a "sugar plum tree". Or, use a variety of homemade candies (make the pieces small and dainty) and tiny bite-size cookies for a "sweet tooth tree".

SAY IT (SIMPLY) WITH MUSIC

The Christmas carols listed below may sound a little strange to you. They won't when you translate them back to their familiar forms. Can you recognize them in their polysyllabic disguises?

1. Move hitherward the entire assemblage of those who are loyal in their belief. ("Oh Come All Ye Faithful")
2. Listen, the celestial harbingers produce harmonious sounds. ("Hark! the Herald Angels Sing")
3. Nocturnal hours whose stillness is unbroken. ("Silent Night")
4. An emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good given to the terrestrial sphere. ("Joy to the World")
5. Adorn the buildings. ("Deck the Hall")
6. Exalted heavenly beings to whom we have hearkened. ("Angels We Have Heard on High")
7. During the nocturnal hours when guardians of ovine quadrupeds survey their charges. ("While Shepherds Watch Their Flocks")
8. Twelve o'clock on a clement night witnessed it's arrival. ("It Came Upon a Midnight Clear")
9. The Christmas preceding all others. ("The First Noel")
10. Small municipality in Judea southwest of Jerusalem. ("O Little Town of Bethlehem")

—Mary Scheffel



The soldier and the drum ornaments described by Inez Baker.

TWO CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

by
Inez Baker

Toy Soldier: Toy soldiers make charming and colorful items for Christmas tree ornaments, party favors or decorations for a child's gift package. They're easy to put together and can be a happy rainy-day project for children.

Paint the top part of a push-type clothespin from "neck" to "split" with red paint. Paint blue the lower part including inside the split. Using black paint or ink, add eyes and hair on the knob at top of clothespin.

Glue the center of a strip of gold braid to back of "shoulder" (about 1/4 inch below "neck"). Bring both ends of braid around and cross in front above "waist" (at top of split). At waistline, wrap braid around twice, like a cummerbund, and fasten with glue.

For arms, cut two strips of red felt a scant 1/2 inch wide and about 1 3/4 inches long. Taper one end of each strip a little and glue those ends to shoulders. Let these arms hang loose but glue them at bottom, at the same time gluing a bit of white felt under the ends to look like white gloves.

Glue red, fuzzy ball (cut from ball fringe) to top of head. If the soldier is a Christmas tree decoration, tie gold cord around the neck for hanging.

Toy Drum: The form for the drum can be any size and made of anything suitable, such as a small, metal sausage can, paper towel or tissue tube, cut to size, or styrofoam cut to proper shape and desired size. (Mine is styrofoam about 1 1/2 inches high and 5 inches around. Colors I used were red, green and gold.)

If the form is hollow (cut from tube) the first step is to cover both ends. Then cut

two red felt circles to fit and glue them onto top and bottom of form. Next cut a strip of felt, ribbon or fabric about 1 1/4 inches wide and 5 1/2 inches long. Glue this around the middle of the form, leaving a narrow margin of styrofoam or cardboard showing at both top and bottom.

Cut 2 strips of red velvet ribbon, each about 5 1/4 inches long, and wide enough to cover exposed edge at both top and bottom of drum, lapping over the green (body covering) a bit. Glue one strip around the bottom of the drum. Then glue the other strip around the top of the drum and, at the same time, glue both ends of a red ribbon or gold cord under the top ribbon to make a hanger. Glue tiny gold rickrack around drum in center of each strip of red ribbon.

Space 6 gold-headed pins around the drum at equal distances, 3 at the lower edge of the top ribbon and 3 at the top edge of the lower ribbon. Glue the pins in place. Next, wind gold cord around the drum up and down, over and under the gold pins, as in the picture.

Make drumsticks from toothpicks cut to fit across the top of the drum. They can be painted gold or left natural color. Glue a gold bead on one end of each drumstick and glue the stick in a crossed position on top of the drum.



JEWELED CHRISTMAS TREE

Materials needed for a framed Christmas tree are: 1 picture frame (such as 17x23"), 1 set of miniature lights, 1 piece of material larger than the frame, 1 piece of Masonite or plywood the same size as the frame, glue, masking tape, old jewelry (pins, earrings, necklaces, buttons, etc.), a pattern for a Christmas tree, and 6 small 1/2-inch screws.

Trace the Christmas tree pattern on the material and on the plywood. Bore holes in the plywood for the lights. Carefully place the material on the board. Cut small holes in the fabric to match the holes in the wood. Cover the plywood with household glue and glue the material on the board. Stick the lights through the holes and tape them in place on the back of the board. Outline the tree with glue. Place beads on the glue in an outline. After the tree is outlined, spread glue in small areas on the material and place the jeweled items in these areas. Continue all over the tree until the outline is filled in. Place the frame on the front of the picture by boring tiny holes in the plywood and run into frame a short distance. With the screws, fasten the frame to the plywood. Cover the back with brown wrapping paper and use the masking tape to attach it to the plywood back.

—Mrs. Ken Rieke



THE MANGER

(A Christmas Recitation)

by
Annette Lingelbach

This is a recitation which can be developed with the help of children, even very small ones. Let each child choose which character he would like to be and add more narrative in his own words if he wishes. Suggest that each develop his own props: the Star could draw a star and then color it or cover with foil, the Shepherd could find a stick or cane to become his staff, the Animals could draw and color a picture of the ones they represent, the Innkeeper could find a record book, etc. This can be a fun and different kind of presentation.

Place a simple manger at front of stage and arrange children behind it, each holding the prop or picture to represent his character.

The Star: I was the Star, who lighted the way to the Manger at Bethlehem.

A Wise Man: I was one of the Three Wise Men who followed the Star to the Manger at Bethlehem.

Shepherd: I was a Shepherd who an Angel told of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem.

First Angel: I was an Angel who told the Shepherds that the Christ Child was born at Bethlehem.

Second Angel: I was one of the Angels who sang "Peace, good will to all the world."

Innkeeper: I was the Innkeeper who said, "No room at the inn," and, O, how I wish I had invited the travelers in.

Horse: I was a horse who slept in the stable and saw the Christ Child wave his hands.

Cow: I was a cow who stayed in the stable and heard the Christ Child coo.

Lamb: I was a lamb with my mother there, when I saw the Christ Child smile.

A Neighbor: I was a neighbor who heard of His birth and wondered if He was the Messiah.

First Angel: Today Christians don't wonder if He is the Messiah, for we know He is the Son of God.

Second Angel: And we all wish Him a Happy Birthday.

All Sing Together:
"Happy Birthday to you,
Happy Birthday to you,
Happy Birthday Baby Jesus,
Born in Bethlehem."



OZARK PUDDING, TRADITION OF LOVE

by
Mary Feese

How do family Christmas traditions come into being? My choice example is baking Ozark Pudding, which always brings with it bittersweet memories of the most memorable Christmas gift I ever received. You see, a strong friendship had grown up between a gritty, little old lady and myself; despite a fifty-year difference in age, we discovered we were on the same wavelength in our thinking. As a working woman, most of my errands got relegated to Saturday mornings, after which I often dropped by Mrs. H's house for coffee and a chat before going home.

I'd noticed my ninety-three-year-old friend growing frailer as the months went by, but simply attributed this to old age. She lived alone, still kept her house immaculate, and herself as well. Even when friends came unexpectedly, she always had attractively arranged hair and fresh, tidy clothing—none of the slipshod ways into which many elderly people can slip. She'd laugh and joke, never a word of complaint about her health or of the loneliness of having outlived most of her family and friends.

On the Saturday morning just before Christmas that year, I dropped by with several gifts for her. She met me at the door with a hug. "I just knew you'd be here this morning. You'll have to stay awhile because your gift is still in the oven." Meanwhile, opening her packages, she was delighted with the new cosmetics and pillowcases (chosen in a print bright enough to be appreciated even with her failing eyesight). "Oh, they're lovely and will go on my pillows right away." With a chuckle, she added, "At my age, I'm sure you didn't expect me to save them."

Then, slowly and carefully, she made her way to the kitchen to check the baking, holding to every solid object along the way to protect her unsteady balance. The big glass baking dish was taken out of the oven, wafting delicious fragrances over the kitchen. "It'll have to cool," she said matter-of-factly, and continued chatting. She'd risen at five that morning, groomed herself for the day, had her usual hot breakfast, taken two hours to assemble the ingredients

for the Ozark Pudding, chop the apples, get the batter mixed and into the oven. (I realized all too well that she'd used up her entire stock of energy for the day by the time she'd finished.) She inadvertently let it slip that this was also the entire extent of her Christmas baking, and the only gift of any kind that she was giving. The only gift, and to me? I felt her love as never before.

"Don't return the baking dish," she said as she wrapped her love offering for me to take home. "I want you to keep it." Somehow, I knew she'd never need that baking dish again, so I accepted it. With her failing eyesight, she couldn't see that by this time the tears were streaming down my face. With effort, I kept my voice steady to thank her, trying to follow

her gallant example and act as though we'd still have many more Christmases together.

I never saw my beloved friend again. The next news of her came from her neighbor, telling me that Mrs. H was in the hospital and was not expected to live. She died shortly after the message came to me. Surely she had known for months that her time was limited, but not once had she ever, by words or action, expressed self-pity. She had kept our relationship full of love and cheer to the very end.

And so she gave to me a tradition of love. Every Christmas, I get out that same big glass baking dish, and in my friend's memory bake yet another Ozark Pudding.

JUST IN CASE!

The first time I heard about a Just-in-Case gift was on a snowy afternoon shortly before Christmas. I had stopped to see Eva and Meg Stratton to find them busily wrapping the last of their Christmas gifts.

"You've forgotten the name tags on these," I said, pointing to a small pile of gaily wrapped packages.

"Oh, those are special," explained Meg. "They don't need name tags. They are Just-in-Case gifts."

She laughed when she saw my bewilderment. "Well," she said, "these are ready just in case we receive a gift that we hadn't expected. It's good to have an extra gift ready to give in exchange, then no one is embarrassed."

As I plodded home through the falling snow, I kept thinking about those Just-in-Case gifts. It meant looking ahead and preparing for any unexpected turn of events. But *just in case* means more than careful anticipation of the unexpected. It means an openness of heart and spirit that recognizes that there will always be surprising turns, often when least expected.

There are people whose lives always seem to be filled with exciting occurrences. These are the ones who meet life with anticipation and enthusiasm. Events come to them because they welcome them. A *just-in-case* attitude affirms the immediate possibility that something is going to happen. It appreciates the excitement and solid comfort of trying to foresee the unexpected, and then to prepare for it.

When Meg and Eva wrapped the Just-in-Case gifts, neither could really predict with exactitude what *might* happen. They knew only what *could* happen, something exciting, delightful, fun. A gift might come unexpectedly, yet not as a complete surprise because they were ready to reciprocate. I'm sure Meg and Eva habitually received far more gifts than any of us because they were blessed

with an exuberant joy of giving and sharing that irresistibly drew friends to them.

Once I asked Meg what they did with the Just-in-Case gifts after Christmas if she found she didn't need them. She looked at me blankly and then replied, "But there has never been one I didn't need! There are always friends to give them to."

Perhaps this is the secret of the joy of the *just-in-case* syndrome. It is a paradox, because the Just-in-Case gift always turns out to be the one that is needed, one that was essential from the start. So it is with our *just-in-case* attitude. When it means a loving perception that causes us to be ready for whatever is just around the corner, it means that we have learned to cope with life. We can handle the unexpected because we have learned that change is a common part of living. Life becomes more interesting and you can be confident there is going to be something new and exciting just ahead.

—Dorothy Enke



Betty Driftmier's mother, Mary Crandall (Mrs. Julian), enjoys the pleasure of giving gifts to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her great-grandson, Julian, is fascinated with the small barn his great-grandmother is holding as well as the little plastic tractor in his hands.



MARY BETH REPORTS

Dear Friends:

The house is finally quiet this morning after a veritable blizzard of activity so, hopefully, I shall be able to write a sane report about our activities.

Last weekend, Katharine started moving her worldly possessions into our house. (I don't think it unreasonable to have been appalled that a girl of twenty-five years would have such flood of possessions.) First, she rented a U-Haul truck and, with the aid of her Madison friends, picked up and transported her belongings to our home in Delafield. Her furniture disappeared in one gulp into one end of our basement. I'm grateful for this climate for forcing us to include basements under our houses. I thought to myself, "Not bad. She really consolidated her things nicely." Wrong!

Three days later, Katharine drove into the driveway in a borrowed Scout Runabout and proceeded to cover the living room floor with a multitude of "things". Her plan was to carefully place these "things" in her compact Chevette, and leave the following day for the state of Maryland. I thought, after looking at the hours of work which lay ahead of her, that she would be hard pressed to leave a week from the day she hoped. Again, I was wrong. In my fifty-year-old thinking, I had failed to recall the energy and elasticity of the young. Katharine worked nonstop sorting, storing, and scrapping. She did delay her trip by one day but when Don and I came home from school yesterday she and her car and all of her "things" had vanished. The house, save for a few left-behind green plants, looked just as it did before her arrival.

I shall not tell you too many details of her move because she will want to write to you about them herself, but I can tell you that she has left her position with the University of Wisconsin where she was working with a doctor who has been at the forefront of the DNA cloning procedures longer than you or I ever knew it existed. Katharine wanted to work in the private sector. So, for two years she has been investigating various companies which would have need of her well-developed skill. A salesman from Bethesda Research Laboratories called at the laboratory in Madison and gave her glowing reports about his up-and-coming company. He encouraged her to give them a look. Last year she took a trip to Rockville to do just that and to have an interview. The Supreme Court has now ruled that scientists may establish patents on their new procedures and products just as the

infant automotive industry did with their automobile parts. As a result, this area of the science field has mushroomed. An example of what they hope to accomplish is the development of a synthetic form of insulin which presently is expensive to extract from living animals and vitally necessary to those suffering from diabetes.

So, Katharine is off on an exciting new venture in a part of the country which fills her with great interest. She intends to investigate every historical building and museum from Vermont to Jamestown. Her future reports will be interesting beyond a doubt.

Hence another of our children is off into the world and it surely leaves a void where we once had daily phone contact and at least twice a month shared a meal. I read with great interest the other day in



Preparations for the holidays are moving along rapidly in the Driftmier household in Delafield, Wisconsin. Donald is pictured with the beautifully decorated tree which stands in their home.

a magazine where the trend now is for children to come home to live, due, primarily, to the state of the economy. I had to chuckle to think that we are leaders in this field with Paul living at home again. It is stuff and nonsense for young folks to think they have to have their own pad (excuse the slang) the minute they graduate from high school. Paul could not live in Florida on his income even when there were three boys to split the expenses. Now that he is home, we are managing to eat our meals together in a more peaceful atmosphere than we had when Paul was little and we were constantly playing the part of disciplinarians.

Paul contributes his efforts toward yard work, household chores, repairs and whatever else we ask him to do. He contributes toward the grocery bill. So far, I have not yet required a token payment for his room. Many with whom I have spoken have voiced the comment that this is an error. I am not so sure. Paul

has a friend who gives his entire paycheck to his parents who then feed and house him, and pay his college tuition bills. He is a boy who goes wherever he pleases, comes in at any hour without their knowing when or if he will return, and just generally gives them no thoughtful consideration. Paul is very respectful of our house standards and I generally know where I can reach him in case of an emergency. When he gets financially established and can afford an apartment of his own or when a wife-type girl comes along, he will be ready to take on all his own expenses. In the meantime, we are enjoying one another's company and both parties are benefiting by the other's presence.

Adrienne reports that her midterm examinations have been very difficult. This term's engineering math courses are very advanced and technical. She is working! The report she gave us, which leaves me absolutely aghast, is that she is beginning to prepare her resume in anticipation of finding a job as close as possible to her graduation next year. In this present atmosphere of competitiveness for top jobs, the activities which a student has engaged during college are important.

Adrienne was jubilant to report this week that she was nominated and elected to be acting chairman of a committee which deals directly with the faculty in campus relationships between students and faculty. This will give her direct contact with teachers who may sometime write references for her on job applications. She is also attending meetings when prospective employers come to the campus to interview graduates. She will not interview this year, but she is acquainting herself with the successful approaches.

College is certainly different from back in the dark ages when I was in attendance. It is also fascinating to view, as the girls do now, the picture of their futures when it does not necessarily follow that they will marry after graduation. There is an option and possible varieties of opportunities for most girls nowadays. The entire mental picture is changed. When I came out of college, the primary goal of ninety-nine percent of us was marriage and homemaking. I'm still a strong proponent of homemaking as an honorable and fulfilling career, but if a girl chooses to marry only because everyone else does it, then we cannot be surprised at the high divorce rate. This attitude is changing. Options offer choices and this is healthy and good for young adults out of college.

I hope you and yours are together for a Merry Christmas.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth



CHRISTMAS WITH A DIFFERENCE

by
Harriet A. Buttry

(A meditation-story to use as a Christmas program or devotional for a club or church group.)

Call to Worship:

Now let us all together sing

The song that angels sang on high
Until the earth and heavens ring

With tidings that will never die;

For unto us is born this day

A Savior who is Christ our Lord.

Come, let us at His altar lay

Our gifts of love with one accord;

And sing His praise that all who hear

May live in peace and blessedness,

And come to serve Him without fear

In holiness and righteousness.

—Margaret Aamodt

Scripture: Matthew 2: 1-12

Hymn: "O Come All Ye Faithful"

Prayer:

Oh wondrous Babe of Bethlehem's first
Christmas Day,

Endue us with the gift that comes from

Thine own self;

Transform our lives and give to us the
living power

To touch and lift the souls of those with
whom we meet.

—Harriet Keeler Magee

Meditation-Story: When it comes to Christmas, I've always been a thoroughly American traditionalist—in fact, I want to celebrate in a most regional white Christmas manner. But through years of traveling with a military husband, I have learned some lessons about what makes this one day of the year so very special.

Our first Christmas away from familiar northern surroundings was in Florida. How would I ever feel the Christmas spirit in this balmy, warm climate? I needed to have a brisk north wind biting my cheeks in order to enter into the mood for shopping, baking and caroling. It was fine to buy a Christmas tree from the Boy Scouts, but it all seemed unreal when we drove home through orange groves and past coconut palms. Even the gorgeous eight-foot poinsettia bush out-

side our bedroom window couldn't quite make up for the lack of snow. Then, suddenly one night at choir rehearsal, the realization hit me. The carols were the same, the message was the same, the Savior was the same. I was filled with Christmas spirit in spite of being hundreds of miles from home in a semi-tropical climate. Besides, weren't palm trees native to Bethlehem?

A year sped by and we found ourselves getting ready for Christmas again—this time in England. We Americans share so many common traditions with the English, I should have felt right at home. Instead, the differences captured my attention. Why in the world would anyone carol for money? Then I found out that this was the way young English children earned a few shillings of their own to buy something for Mum and Dad. And the very idea of icing a fruitcake—might as well gild a lily. Yes, many of the customs were different. We were learning some new carols, but we also heard the familiar strains of those carols we had sung back home. Again the thought surfaced—the carols were the same, the message was the same, the Savior was the same.

After three wonderful and eventful years in England, we returned to the land of white Christmases—this time settling for five years in northern Utah. No need now to sigh for invigorating winter winds. Woolen mittens and scarves were the order of the day as we took our children through Santa Claus Village in Ogden's city park. Even if we didn't get fresh snow for Christmas Eve, there was certain to be plenty of it on the peaks of the Wasatch Mountains when we looked out our picture window. How we appreciated our own kind of Christmas again even though we knew the high point was still to come in the candlelight service at the chapel where we would be reminded that the carols were the same, the message the same and the Savior the same.

Christmas in yet another strange and different situation awaited us. We were to spend two long winters in the cold and windswept snow of northern Japan—where we were just as likely to have a white Easter (or maybe even Mother's Day) as a white Christmas. But here the differences were more basic. Less than one percent of the Japanese people are members of any branch of Christendom. The entire Japanese observance of Christmas seems to be borrowed from western patterns of materialism and commercialism. Take away all of our religious ceremonies, programs, songs, pictures and references, then magnify our commercial efforts, and you have the effect of Christmas in Japan. But out of all the clamor, we met some Japanese Christians who sang "Silent Night" and "Jesus Loves Me" and shared the true meaning of the birth of Jesus. It was there I learned my lesson with a greater

intensity than before, and hopefully learned it for good. Climate, traditions, languages, cultures and races may differ—but the carols are the same, the message is the same, and the Savior is the same.

Group Discussion: (if desired) Ask members of the group to share any memories they have of Christmases which were different. What are the traditions and experiences which make Christmas really meaningful?

Closing Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem", 1st and 4th verses.

Benediction:

My Master loved, and so must I:
And as He served, I too, must try
To give the cup of water clear
To all His children far and near.
And as I serve, Life teaches me
To greater love Humanity.

—Harriet Keeler Magee

ROLL CALL IDEAS

Opening Presents: Our family always opened their Christmas presents on Christmas Eve. Some of my friends open their Christmas gifts on Christmas morning, even when there are no children in the family. They seem shocked at my family custom of opening the gifts on Christmas Eve.

Which do you do in your home? Is it when it is most convenient for everybody to be together, or when the most dominant member of the family wants to do it, or is it just a matter of habit? Discuss this subject of when to open Christmas presents at your next Christmas party, and you probably won't need anything else for a program. Let every person state her or his preference, and tell why and how it became the custom in their family. This is such a warm, personal, and universal subject, that everyone will enjoy discussing it with each other.

—Annette Lingelbach

Christmas Cards: The lovely custom of the Christmas cards began in the early 1800s in England and it is generally accepted that Louis Prang, from Germany, introduced them to America.

Prang's first cards had flower designs such as daisies, forget-me-nots, roses or violets, instead of the Christmas designs we have today. It is said that by 1881 he was putting out five million cards a year. Today, his cards are greatly prized collector's items.

For a Christmas meeting, it would be interesting to have each person answer roll call by bringing and showing a favorite Christmas card, or an old Christmas greeting.

—Virginia Thomas



EMILY DICICCO WRITES TO US THIS MONTH

Dear Friends:

On August 2, the halls of Columbia Hospital for Women in Washington, D.C., echoed with the cries of a new member of our family—Stephen Louis DiCicco. The statistics: 6 lbs., 12 ozs., 19½ inches. It was a natural (unanesthetized) delivery, and Rich coached me throughout the seven hours of labor. He even had his camera at hand to record the first moments of our son's life.

Mom (Abigail Driftmire) arrived soon from Denver to stay with us the first week. The second week, Rich's mother, Josephine DiCicco, came to help. With these two experienced hands to orient us in the basics of baby care, we were launched into parenthood.

I was asked what the differences are between raising children now compared to years ago. Perhaps the greatest single improvement is the convenience of disposable diapers. Although they are more expensive than cloth diapers, since I am a mother who works outside the home, I find the time saved to be worth the added cost. The second important difference is the attention given today in comparison to fifty years ago as to how the amount and kind of stimulation a baby receives influences its development.

In 1928, J. B. Watson wrote in *Psychological Care of Infant and Child*: "There is a sensible way of treating children. Treat them as though they were young adults. Dress them, bathe them with care and circumspection. Let your behavior always be objective and kindly firm. Never hug and kiss them, never let them sit in your lap." Watson's advice is a stark contrast to what is recommended today. According to Frank Caplin, in *The First Twelve Months of Life*, a baby who receives appropriate stimulation "tends to be more responsive to his mother, less irritable, and more interested in exploring his environment and rehearsing his skills as they unfold in their developmental sequences."

It is so rewarding to watch Stephen enjoy new experiences. Just this week he has learned to bring his hand to his mouth. It is truly amazing to watch such a simple motion become a significant step in his development.

I am fortunate to have a career that gives me a great deal of pleasure and fulfillment, but suddenly I find myself looking at my watch and heading home earlier than I ever imagined. My day was never long enough before, but now I find every minute torn in five directions.

The first few days that I returned to work, I brought Stephen with me. But I soon found that babies in the office are too distracting—not that he cried too much, but that everyone wanted to hold



Stephen Louis DiCicco was 5½ weeks old when this picture was taken.

him and I couldn't get any work done. He was the center of attraction. We were able to find an excellent baby sitter after several afternoons of telephoning and interviewing. Persistence and selection paid off in finding a woman who cares for him as we do.

One of the surprises of Stephen's arrival was the number of handmade gifts that we received for him. I wonder where these people found time in their schedules for such handwork. We received several blankets, one made by his aunt and godmother, Linda Confessore, who is Rich's sister. Aunt Lucile commissioned Ruby Treese to make a beautiful yellow sweater set that Stephen is enjoying this winter. And my dear friend from college days knitted a sweater set large enough for next winter. A very thoughtful present came from another longtime friend, Kitty Shaw. She made a booklet for "Shaw's Sitting Service"—6 one-hour coupons, 3 three-hour coupons and 2 weekend coupons. What a godsend!

In an era when several of my friends have not had children for one reason or another, it is heartwarming to know that they welcome the opportunity to help me. The Washington, D.C., metropolitan area certainly lacks the warmth of a small town, but a small circle of friends can be very reassuring.

The arrival of Stephen has been our only important event of 1980 (as if that weren't enough!). Our household activities on weekends resolved around our preparations for his comfort and our convenience. For example, we finally installed a central air conditioner to help us survive the horrible D.C. summers which are filled with heat and humidity. We also purchased a small washer and dryer. It is such a relief not to have to find a free evening to dedicate to the laundromat.

The one big event of 1980 that I had to miss was the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women, held in July in Copenhagen. Concurrent to this official event was the Mid-Decade

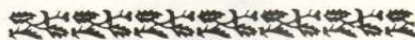
Forum, a non-governmental informal series of meetings on women's progress and action throughout the world. My organization, the Overseas Education Fund, was well-represented at these meetings. OEF also coordinated the participation of nearly fifty women from Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, who had been invited by the U.S. government.

These Copenhagen meetings were similar to those held in Mexico City in 1975. Now, at the midpoint in the decade devoted to the improvement of women's status, the consensus was that women still have a great distance to go to reach equality and opportunities for full participation. An interesting set of statistics sums up women's position in the world today. One-half of the world's population is female. Women work two-thirds of the hours worked. Women earn one-tenth of the total income. And women own one-one hundredth of the property!

I must conclude this letter now and tend to the accumulation of household tasks, but I want to share one humorous note about Stephen's arrival: Everyone had been on the alert for weeks, as the baby was late (according to the doctor's calculation). My parents were doubly on edge because my sister, Alison, of Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico, was also due with her first baby—a real horse race. After Stephen was born and I was in the recovery room, Rich telephoned my parents at Aspen, Colorado, where they were spending the weekend at a conference. The hotel clerk took the message, "Baby boy, 6 lbs., 12 ozs., 11:22 A.M.," and handed it to my parents. They were thrilled with the news, but immediately asked "Which daughter?" The clerk had his wits about him more than my parents. He consulted his watch and found it not yet 11:30 A.M., so the baby had to have been born on Eastern Standard Time. It was Stephen Louis DiCicco. Alison's baby arrived nine days later—but I'll let her tell that story.

Now on to the chores . . .

Emily



COVER STORY

The first year Juliana and Jed Lowey were married, they lived in a very small, furnished apartment just a hop, skip and a jump from the campus of the University of New Mexico. The only good point in that place was the front window, so Juliana and Jed used it as a background for their first Christmas tree. Most of the ornaments you can see on this tree are still being brought out of their box year after year to hang on the Christmas trees. Now the Lowey home is blessed with four people to pitch in and get the tree happily decorated for the holidays.

—Lucile

FREDERICK'S LETTER



Dear Friends:

Did you ever have someone give you a *Shiatsu* massage? Last week, a notice on the YMCA bulletin board said there would be a public demonstration of the ancient oriental art of *Shiatsu* massage. After calling the number that was listed for further information, I ended up not just seeing a public demonstration, but receiving a personal treatment. It was given at the Stonington, Connecticut, East-West Center by a young man trained in the "art". That word is in quotation marks, because I am not sure whether *Shiatsu* is an art or a medical treatment. It is similar to *acupuncture*, except that the person giving the massage uses the pressure of fingertips and toes rather than the puncture of needles. My arthritis had been getting more painful each day, and I was willing to try just about anything. I am not sure that *Shiatsu* helped me, but it did not make the arthritis any worse.

How did the treatment differ from that of an osteopathic treatment? Well, have you ever known an osteopath to walk up and down your spine? Have you ever known an osteopath to diagnose a liver problem by pressing hard between your toes? Have you ever heard an osteopath say: "I can tell that you have a stomach problem by the way you react when I pull on the thumb of your left hand?" What is that old saying: "East and West will never meet?" Ah, so! From now on, I shall just take aspirin for my aches and pains.

One day about supper time, I was down in front of the house feeding my swans and wild ducks (I call them *mine* simply because they have adopted me), when a car stopped and a very attractive couple approached me. The lady called out: "Frederick, how are Bonnie and Clyde?" Immediately, I knew that they had to be radio friends from the Midwest. It was Robert and Gwen Gevecker of Jefferson City, Missouri, people who have listened to the Kitchen-Klatter broadcasts for years. They were delightful people, and I was so disappointed that they would not walk up to the house to meet Betty. They knew that it was supper time, and they did not want to interrupt. When Betty heard about my visit with them, she was quite upset that I had not verbally overcome the Gevecker's polite reserve and made them come up to the house. Well, I did try.

A few days ago, we had a fine visit with Mrs. Leona Bischoff from Tecumseh, Nebraska. With Leona was her lovely



Mr. and Mrs. Bruno Boettcher of Spencer, Nebraska, are shown with Frederick (center) when they visited the Mystic Seaport Museum. Frederick gave them a special guided tour of his part of the museum. Several other Kitchen-Klatter friends from Iowa were in the group and they told Frederick they were having a great time touring New England during the beautiful fall foliage season—they were simply thrilled with the beauty of the countryside.

daughter, Carol Bischoff, a member of the administrative staff of the University of New Hampshire. The two of them had been over to the Mystic Seaport Museum and called us from there for directions to our house. We do love to meet our Kitchen-Klatter friends, and if ever you get out to this part of New England, be sure to get in touch with us.

Did I write about the sudden disappearance of Bonnie and Clyde and their eight young ones? One night, a total of 180 swans disappeared from our waterway. Our swan family went with them, and we have been hunting for them ever since. Wherever they went, they did not fly there as the eight cygnets had not yet learned to fly. For days, Betty and I went out in our boat searching for the swans in all of the little coves and bays along this part of the coast. I had made an inventory of the swans on the river just two days before they left, with a total of 264. Two days after their disappearance, the count came to only about 70 or 80 swans. The exodus had to have been caused by a shortage of food. Swans live on eel grass which grows along the edge of the water where it is not too deep for the big birds to reach the narrow leaves. All of the eel grass along the water's edge in front of our house

was gone, and the amount of bread and grain that I gave our swan family obviously was insufficient. They cannot live on bread and grain alone!

Every disappointment in life usually is balanced by a happy event. A few days after the first swan family left, another swan family moved in: Albert and Hortense and their three children. What a difference there can be in swan personalities. Albert and Hortense seldom become angry and threatening the way Bonnie and Clyde used to be. Perhaps it is because the new family of cygnets is older and in less danger of being hurt by some predator and so the parents are more at ease. We miss having Bonnie and Clyde and their children and wish they would come home—but we do love the new family. If you could have been here to see the young ones fly for the first time, all three of them taking off from the surface of the water together, you would have wept tears of joy just the way Betty and I did.

A rather sad incident happened recently. At Betty's family's factory, it was necessary to tear down one of the last *line walk* buildings in all of the United States. A line walk is a long building used for twisting lines of all kinds. They were used long before the invention of the modern machinery that is used today. This particular building was considerably more than twice as long as a football field—750 feet long, 50 feet wide, and 35 feet high! How would you like to pay the heating and insurance costs for that kind of a building if you had no use for it? That was the situation, and so it was demolished over the objections of persons who thought the building should have been preserved as a historical monument.

Each day during the demolition process, Betty and I would take her father up to watch what was happening. That building had been involved in such a big part of the family's life. It was there that several generations of children and grandchildren would be sent on rainy days—it was a great playroom. Betty learned to ride a bicycle in that one enormously long room. Back in the years when we had a summer home in this area, our children, David and Mary Leanna, played many an hour on the miniature freight cars which the employees used to move materials over the hundreds of feet of floor. It is all just a memory today. At some time in the future, a new, modern factory wing will be built where now there is only a field of winter rye along the banks of a beautiful river.

Betty joins me in wishing all of you a *Very Merry Christmas* and a *Happy New Year*. On Christmas Day we shall be thinking of you, and we hope that you will have us in your thoughts.

Sincerely,
Frederick

CHRISTMAS IS THE TIME FOR —

- Home and family
- Sharing and remembering and loving
- Kitchen smells and eating well
- Gifts and decorations
- Brotherhood and love and the smiles of children
- Giving—giving of presents, of course, but more, the giving of ourselves.



ALISON'S ACTIVITIES

Dear Friends:

Those of you living within listening distance of the Kitchen-Klatter radio program, or who have read the September 1980 issue of this magazine, have already received the glad tidings, but for anyone who missed the recent news, I am thrilled to tell of the arrival on August eleventh of our lively little girl, Lily Florence. And who could be happier? My parents, Wayne and Abigail Driftmier, are thrilled with the blessings of two grandchildren—happily one of each—Emily's and Rich's boy and Mike's and my girl.

It's a funny thing about the gender of babies. When I first became pregnant, I thought it would be nice for our first child to be a boy. But as the months progressed, I secretly began wishing for a little girl. By the time nine months rolled by, I was convinced I would give birth to a girl although I had no evidence to suspect it. It certainly holds true though, that when the time arrived we were so thankful for the miracle of a healthy child that the gender was of little consequence. Somehow, I can't help but wonder if there exists a subconscious maternal knowledge of such matters which precludes the understanding of modern science. As far as Mike's parents were concerned, they probably had wished for a boy, since in their family the granddaughters outnumber the grandsons by a score of eight to one. Oh well, they're overjoyed by Lily's arrival, and perhaps the future will someday add another grandson to their bunch to even the count.

Lily was delivered without any difficulties, and it was an experience shared by both Mike and myself. For several weeks prior, we had attended classes in prepared childbirth, and I highly recommend this education for any expectant parents no matter what type of delivery is planned. The lectures were very informative and did a great deal to dissipate the nervous fears of this first-time mother. I think it's also true that there is security in numbers. Just to be able to talk with other couples in our same situation was a real boost.

There was a charming pair in their fifties in our class. It had been thirty years since she had given birth to her own children, and they were going to be the coaches for one of the younger couples. One night she told our group that such matters were seldom explained when she was having babies; back then



Lily Florence Walstad posed for this picture when she was almost two months old. Alison said it was the day of her first real smile—only once the camera came out, she stopped smiling and just looked with curiosity into the lens.

most mothers went through the experience frightened and bewildered. She was so thrilled, she said, to have the mysteries unraveled after all these years.

This reminds me of how much attitudes about pregnancy and childbirth have changed over the past few generations. Today's pregnant women are encouraged to exercise, keep their weight down, deliver their babies without medication if possible, and breast-feed their young ones. Having tried to follow these guidelines, I believe it's sound advice. If I failed in any areas, it was probably overdoing the exercise and eating too much. Although my doctor had no qualms about tennis, horseback riding or swimming, he was quite chagrined to learn that I had decided to take scuba diving lessons on a trip to the South Seas in my fourth month of pregnancy. Fortunately, the coral reefs where I dived were quite shallow and no harm came of it. As for fighting prenatal weight gain—I was never endowed with the virtue of will power, so my overindulgent sweet tooth and I were in constant battle.

Despite all these shortcomings, things went well at the hospital on August eleventh. In fact, throughout my labor

I LIKE MY CHURCH

I like my church where music swells,
And songs of gladness the organ tells.
I like my church where people come
To praise God's love for everyone.

I like my church where we pause to pray,
And learn to be patient day by day.
I like my church where we hear God's
Word,

And stories of Jesus are always heard.
—Evelyn Witter

my dear, sweet doctor kept saying, "Get the green stamps, nurses, this girl's getting a bargain delivery." Whether true or not, it raised my spirits and helped toward keeping the positive attitude which is so important in a natural childbirth. I stayed in the hospital only twenty-four hours, and we were able to bring our precious Lily home the next day.

How did we pick the name? Her middle name, Florence, was taken from my maternal grandmother, Florence Morrison, who lived in Onawa, Iowa. My mother's middle name is also Florence. It's a beautiful and feminine name, and seldom heard nowadays. Her first name, Lily, did not come from a family name, it just struck my fancy one day. I have always liked the flower names, and Lily seemed simple and very pretty when written in script. It's nice to choose a girl's name that looks attractive when written out in longhand.

Although my mother had just spent the previous week with Emily and her new son, she and my father arrived the day after Lily was born. They stayed for a week, helping to get the three of us situated. Mike took a few days of paternity leave from his job; with all of these helpers, Lily and I were well cared for.

Since that time, Lily has been an agreeable little newborn, and not too difficult to cope with most of the time. We have taken advantage of her portability and have taken her several places. When she was two weeks old, we put on a barbecue cookout with another couple and entertained about seventy-five people, cooking fifty pounds of pork ribs. At the gathering, there were six little babies under six months old. Their playpens were lined up in a row under a big walnut shade tree. All day everyone took turns walking up and down the line admiring the assortment of babies.

In September, we took a weekend trip to Denver to visit Mom and Dad. On the way we stopped for a night in Albuquerque to see cousins Juliana, Jed, Katharine and James Lowey. When we arrived in Colorado, it was a beautifully warm weekend, and on that Sunday we took Lily to the Denver Bronco football game. The cheering of seventy thousand fans didn't bother her a bit—she slept through the entire ball game.

Our plans for Christmas include a brief trip to spend the holidays with Mike's family. There will be a reunion of sorts, and I imagine our six nieces, aged eight to fourteen, will be quarreling over who gets to baby-sit. Lily will get to spend time with her great-grandmother, Ann (Nanny) Lackner. It's exciting to think of four generations together at Christmas!

I hope each of you has an enjoyable Yuletide, and that your families experience the kind of joy brought to us by the arrival of our dear Lily.

Sincerely,
Alison Walstad



RECIPES for the Holidays

HOLIDAY EGGNOG PIE

- 2 regular-size pkgs. vanilla pudding and pie filling mix (dry)
- 1 3/4 cups dairy eggnog
- 1 3/4 cups milk
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 9-inch baked pie shell, cooled
- Whipped topping and maraschino cherries

Combine the dry pudding mix, eggnog, milk and nutmeg. Put over medium heat and cook, stirring, until boiling and bubbly hot. Cool for about five minutes, stirring a few times while cooling. Pour into pie shell. Cover and chill for several hours. Just before serving, decorate with whipped topping and maraschino cherries.

—Dorothy

EASY POPCORN BALLS

- 1 large package marshmallows
 - 1/2 cup margarine
 - A few drops of Kitchen-Klatter flavoring (your choice)
 - Food coloring (optional)
 - Popped corn
- Melt marshmallows and margarine over low heat or in double boiler. Stir in flavoring and food coloring. Mix in the popped corn and shape into balls.

EXTRA SPECIAL BARS

- 1/2 cup butter
 - 2 cups firmly packed brown sugar
 - 2 large eggs
 - 1/4 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter black walnut flavoring
 - 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
 - 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter burnt sugar flavoring
 - 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1/2 tsp. baking powder
 - 1/4 tsp. salt
 - 1 cup ground nuts
 - 2 cups sweet chocolate morsels
- In a heavy saucepan, put the butter and brown sugar. Stir constantly until butter melts. When bubbly, remove from heat. Pour into bowl and cool.

Beat eggs. Add flavorings to beaten eggs and then stir into the butter-brown sugar mixture after it has cooled. Sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Add the ground nuts to flour mixture. Stir into first mixture. Lastly, fold in chocolate morsels. Spread evenly in greased 9- by 13-inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for about 35 minutes. Cool and cut into bars.

—Lucile

BUTTERSCOTCH-PEANUT FUDGE

- 2 6-oz. pkgs. butterscotch chips
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 16 large marshmallows, quartered
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter burnt sugar flavoring

Dash of salt

In saucepan, combine chips, milk and marshmallows. Heat and stir over low heat until chips and marshmallows are melted. Remove from heat and stir in the peanut butter, flavorings and salt. Stir until blended. Pour into greased 8-inch square pan and chill until firm. Cut into squares.

—Betty Jane

OYSTER-CHEESE SPREAD

- 1 3-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 1 4-oz. jar smoked oysters, chopped
- 1 Tbls. mayonnaise
- 1 Tbls. milk
- 1 tsp. onion juice
- 1/2 tsp. paprika
- Finely minced chives

Combine all ingredients. Chill. Serve on toasted rye bread or crackers.

SPECIAL STRAWBERRY BREAD

- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp. soda
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 10-oz. pkgs. frozen strawberries
- 1 1/4 cups salad oil
- 4 eggs, well beaten
- 1 tsp. red food coloring

Sift dry ingredients together into bowl. Make a well. Add strawberries, juice and all (see note below), oil and eggs. Mix well by hand. Stir in food coloring. Spoon into two greased and floured loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour. Cool on racks before removing from pans.

NOTE: If desired, take out 1/2 cup of the strawberry juice and combine with one 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese to make a delicious spread. Slice bread and make into finger sandwiches with this filling. If you do not want to make the spread, just add the juice to the bread. For some reason, it doesn't make any difference in the finished product! Either way, this quick bread freezes very well. Neighbor Dorothy gave it to me late last fall. She uses it especially for holiday meals.

—Evelyn

CRANBERRY-ORANGE-HAM PLATTER

- 1 5-lb. precooked ham
- 4 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut in thick slices
- 6 to 8 peeled onions
- 1 cup water

Place ham in roaster. Bake for one hour at 325 degrees. Add sweet potato slices, onions and water. Cover and cook one hour longer. While ham is cooking, prepare the following sauce:

- 1/2 cup water
- 2 Tbls. Kitchen-Klatter orange flavoring
- 2 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 8-oz. can whole cranberry sauce
- 1/2 cup orange marmalade

Combine the sauce ingredients in a saucepan and cook until thick and bubbly. Remove meat and vegetables from roaster onto platter. Spoon the sauce over all. Place any remaining sauce in bowl and pass.

—Robin

CREAMY CRANBERRY SALAD

- 1 3-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups frozen whipped dessert topping, thawed
- 1 11-oz. can Mandarin orange sections, drained (reserve a few for topping)
- 1 14-oz. jar cranberry-orange relish
- 1 1/2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 1 8 3/4-oz. can crushed pineapple, drained
- 1/3 cup chopped nuts
- 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter lemon flavoring

Beat the cream cheese and topping together. Fold in the remaining ingredients. Spread in pan and chill for several hours. Serve on lettuce bed topped with a Mandarin orange section. Delicious with fowl or ham.

—Betty Jane

LUCILE'S MINCEMEAT BARS

- 2 cups mincemeat
- 3/4 cup shortening, softened
- 1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. soda
- 3 cups uncooked rolled oats
- 1 cup chopped nuts (pecans preferred)

Cook mincemeat until hot. Stir while cooking. Allow to cool slightly.

Cream the shortening and sugars. Beat eggs along with the flavoring until frothy. Add the beaten eggs to the creamed mixture. Combine the flour, salt and soda and mix into creamed mixture. Beat well. Add the rolled oats, nuts and mincemeat. Place in a greased 9- by 13-inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes. Cool and cut into bars. (May be frosted with powdered sugar icing, if desired.)

LIME-COCKTAIL SALAD

- 1 3-oz. pkg. lime gelatin
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 can (any size) fruit cocktail, undrained
- 1 Tbls. vinegar
- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup whipped topping
- 1/2 cup finely chopped nut meats

Dissolve gelatin in the boiling water. In blender, blend well the fruit cocktail, vinegar and softened cream cheese. Add to gelatin mixture. Stir in whipped topping and nuts. Pour into individual molds or 8-inch square pan. Chill until firm.

—Hallie

CHOCOLATE MINTIES

(A rich and delicious bar cookie)

- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 Tbls. butter or margarine
- 1 6-oz. pkg. semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 1/2 to 3/4 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter mint flavoring
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 1/4 cups unsifted flour
- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts

Place the first three ingredients in top of double boiler over hot water. Cook, stirring occasionally, until chips melt. Add flavorings, then set aside.

Cream the 1/2 cup butter or margarine and brown sugar until thoroughly blended. Add egg and beat until light. Mix in the flour, then add rolled oats. Press two-thirds of the mixture into greased 9- by 13-inch baking pan. Spread chocolate mixture over top. Add the nuts to the remaining creamed mixture and spread over top of chocolate layer. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes until edges are light brown. Cool completely before cutting into bars.

—Verlene

SOUR CREAM FUDGE

- 3 cups light brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1 cup dairy sour cream
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 4 Tbls. butter or margarine
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter burnt sugar flavoring

Combine the brown sugar and sour cream, stirring until the sugar is dissolved. Place over heat and cook, stirring occasionally until mixture begins to boil. Cook, without stirring, until candy thermometer registers 240 degrees, or soft-ball stage is reached. Remove from heat; add salt, butter or margarine and flavorings. Beat until candy thickens and loses its gloss. Stir in nuts. Pour into well-buttered 8-inch square pan. Cool and cut into squares.

—Hallie



This autumn Billie Oakley and radio station KMA once again put on their annual Cookie Festival in Shenandoah, and it was a tremendous success. There were hundreds of people and thousands of cookies! This photograph shows Billie Oakley and Ed May (president of the May Seed & Nursery Company) extending their joint welcome to the big crowd.

—Photo by Blaine Barton

DOROTHY'S PEANUT CLUSTERS

- 1 1/2 12- or 14-oz. pkgs. raw peanuts
- 6 pieces chocolate bark
- 2 or 3 pieces almond bark

Place raw peanuts in shallow pan. Put in 350-degree oven for about 45 minutes. Stir peanuts occasionally. Cool.

Melt barks in top of double boiler over warm water. When melted, add peanuts. Drop by spoonfuls onto waxed paper and let set.

AMBROSIA SPICE DROPS

- 1 cup coconut
- 1 1/2 cup orange juice
- 2 cups sifted flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 unbeaten eggs
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 1/4 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter butter flavoring
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts

Several hours before preparing cookies (or even overnight), soak the coconut in orange juice. Then drain. (Use any drained-off orange juice for another purpose—it is not added to the cookies.)

Sift dry ingredients together. Cream butter or margarine and sugar until light and smooth. Beat in eggs and flavorings. Gradually add dry ingredients, mixing thoroughly. Fold in nuts. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheet. Make a dent in the top of each cookie and press into it one-half to one teaspoon of the drained coconut. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

—Evelyn

NORTH POLE PUDDING CAKE

- 1 regular size white cake mix (dry)
- 1 1/3 cups milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1/4 cup cocoa
- 1 3/4 cups boiling water
- 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter burnt sugar flavoring
- 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring

Combine dry cake mix, milk, eggs, 1 tsp. vanilla flavoring and pecans. Pour batter into greased and floured 9- x 13-inch pan. Cover pan tightly with foil. Place in freezer overnight.

Next day, preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix brown sugar, cocoa and boiling water, and remaining flavorings. Blend well. Pour this mixture over frozen cake batter. Place in oven and bake 40 to 45 minutes. Cool. Cut in squares and serve upside down. Top with whipped topping or ice cream.

—Verlene

GNOCCHI

- 2 cups milk, heated but not boiling
- 1/2 cup cream of wheat
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/4 cup margarine, cut into chunks
- Dash of cayenne pepper
- 1 cup grated Cheddar cheese
- 1 egg, beaten with fork

Place warm milk, cream of wheat, salt, margarine and cayenne pepper in top of double boiler. Place over low heat and stir frequently until margarine is melted. Remove from heat and add cheese. Slowly stir in beaten egg until blended in. Spoon into greased casserole and allow to set at room temperature for about an hour. Bake at 350 degrees for about one hour or until nice and brown on top.

A nice side dish to serve with any meat.

—Robin

BUTTERNUT SQUASH PIE

- 2 cups cooked, mashed butternut squash (2 small)
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. ginger
- 1/2 tsp. cloves
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter burnt sugar flavoring
- 1/4 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter butter flavoring

1 tsp. salt
1 1/2 cups half-and-half
Unbaked pastry for 2 8-inch pie pans
Combine cooled, cooked squash and eggs. Add remaining ingredients and place in unbaked pie shells. Bake at 375 degrees for about 50 minutes. (Test for doneness as you would a custard.) Serve with whipped cream, whipped topping or vanilla ice cream.

—Dorothy

CARAMEL-CHOCOLATE CANDY

- 3/4 cup evaporated milk
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 12 light caramel candies, unwrapped
- 1 cup real chocolate chips
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter burnt sugar flavoring

2 cups salted peanuts

Combine milk and sugar in heavy pan. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Add caramels and cook and stir until caramels are melted. Cook for four minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the chocolate chips and flavorings. Stir until chips are melted. Add the peanuts and drop by teaspoonfuls unto waxed paper. Let set.

—Dorothy

BLENDER FRUIT BREAD

- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp. soda
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter orange flavoring
- 1 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter butter flavoring
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 1/2 medium, unpeeled apples, cored and sliced
- 1/4 of an unpeeled orange, chopped
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts

Sift together the flour, soda, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

In blender, place the orange juice, flavorings, eggs, shortening and sugar; blend well. Add the apples and orange and blend until chopped. Add the raisins and nuts and blend for 10 to 15 seconds. Stir blended mixture into flour mixture. Pour batter into a large greased and floured loaf pan. Bake for one hour and 15 minutes at 350 degrees.

—Betty Jane

**EVELYN'S STUFFING & MEAT DISH**

- 2 cups dried bread cubes
- 1 tsp. poultry seasoning
- 1/2 tsp. dried sage
- 1 tsp. seasoned salt
- 1 Tbls. instant minced onion
- 1 Tbls. parsley flakes
- 1 Tbls. dehydrated celery
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1 cup milk or chicken broth
- 1 egg
- 1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
- 1/2 lb. ground sausage
- 1 pkg. instant onion gravy mix
- 1 pkg. brown gravy mix
- Water as directed

Combine bread cubes, seasonings and milk or broth. Add egg, beef and sausage. Form into a loaf and place in baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Then make a gravy from instant onion gravy mix and the brown gravy mix, using the amount of water given in directions. Combine and pour over meat loaf. Return to oven and bake for 15 or 20 more minutes or until the gravy has thickened and the meat loaf is done.

For dressing made on top of the stove, combine the bread cubes, seasonings and liquid (milk, chicken or turkey broth). Place in lightly greased heavy skillet on top of stove. Cover tightly. Cook over low heat, stirring gently a few times to keep from sticking, until the liquid is absorbed and the flavors from the seasonings have permeated the mixture. Serve hot as desired.

HILLS & VALLEYS DESSERT

- 1 regular size applesauce cake mix
- 3/4 cup water
- 1/3 cup cooking oil
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter burnt sugar flavoring

Reserve 1/3 cup cake mix for topping. Combine remaining cake mix with the rest of the above ingredients and blend. Beat at high speed for two minutes. Pour into greased and floured 9- by 13-inch pan. Prepare the following topping:

- 2 Tbls. margarine
- 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter coconut flavoring
- 1/3 cup reserved applesauce cake mix
- 1/4 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 cup coconut
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans

Cream the margarine and flavoring. Cut in the remaining ingredients, making a crumbly mixture. Sprinkle over top of cake batter. Bake in oven preheated to 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes. Prepare the following glaze:

- 1/2 cup powdered sugar, sifted
- 1/4 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 3 to 4 tsp. milk

Combine glaze ingredients and drizzle over warm cake. Delicious served warm.

—Juliana

RAISIN-CHERRY COOKY

- 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup margarine
- 1/4 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter vanilla flavoring
- 1/4 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter maple flavoring
- 1/4 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter butter flavoring
- 1 egg
- 1 1/3 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped maraschino cherries

Cream the sugar and margarine until fluffy. Add the flavorings and egg and beat well. Fold in the raisins and cherries. Sift together the flour, soda and salt and add to the creamed mixture. Drop by teaspoon onto greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes.

Cool and frost with the following:

- 1/3 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 3 Tbls. evaporated milk
- 1 Tbls. butter
- 1/2 tsp. Kitchen-Klatter cherry flavoring
- 1 cup powdered sugar

Combine the chips, milk, butter and flavoring in a heavy pan. Place over low heat and stir until chips are melted and all ingredients are blended. Add the powdered sugar and blend well. Frost the cooled cookies.

—Juliana

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THE TELEPHONE IS HUMMING

by Evelyn Birkby

Humming: Full of activity (*Webster's New World Dictionary*).

If Robert were writing this article, he would state that our telephone is humming ALL the time, but, of course, he is wrong. The time when it is filled with the greatest activity is during the weeks preceding the holidays and this week is no exception.

Just a short time ago, the telephone rang and it was Jeff calling from his new home in Bozeman, Montana. It is the first house he has ever lived in since he left home to attend college. The owner of the house is in California for the winter and his time to be gone and Jeff's need for a place to live in Bozeman coincided.

Jeff reported that the Montana mountains are beautiful this year. The snow came early to the high country—always a good omen for the ski resorts. Jeff had a chance to be up in the Glacier National Park area before he left Helena when the aspen leaves were all golden. He also visited one of the great cedar forests, stayed near Avalanche Lake and appreciated the beauty of three large waterfalls. If all goes well, Jeff hopes to go with one of his good friends up to the area near Glacier during the time when the salmon spawn and die. The part of nature's cycle which is so exciting to see is the approach of great flocks of eagles which come to the spawning grounds to feast on the dead fish.

Jeff is happy to be back in Bozeman doing some interesting research and writing in his primary field—botany. After working for over a year in geothermal energy with the Natural Resources Department of the State of Montana, he has returned to Montana State University.

Some of you may remember the summers Jeff spent in Miles City with the Weather Modification Research group doing studies on prairie grasses and the effect of various moisture levels on the native plants. While he was involved in that research, he started one of his own—the effect of ant mounds on plant life.

When we visited in Miles City, Jeff showed us the grass research plots with which he was working. Then he pointed out the earth mounds with the cleared area where the ants had eliminated the grasses around their homes. Jeff did all kinds of experiments with his ant mounds—temperatures inside, moisture, rate of growth of nearby grasses, etc.

Now Jeff is in the process of organizing the various research subject matter and putting them into a form which can be printed. He said the first deadline is an article which is to be in the office of

the Montana Natural Resources Department by the end of January. Perhaps, when he comes home for Christmas, he can bring some of his notes along. I don't expect to understand most of them, but it will be interesting to see his work anyway. He has also promised to bring along some of his slides of wildflowers, part of a series he put together for public school use.

Craig has completed his rotation at the Blank Memorial Children's Wing of the Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines. He phoned the day he left to report it most worthwhile; the physicians were very helpful and willing to talk to the student doctors and answer questions. He had a variety of experiences from his work in the infant intensive care area to the unexpected events in the emergency room.

One evening Craig called after spending several hours in the emergency room. His evening had included treatment of one boy who was sliding down a banister and fell at the bottom hitting his head, another who cut his hand badly while whittling on a toy and a third who arrived in a diabetic coma (he and his family didn't even know he had diabetes). Never a dull moment, Craig concluded.

Now Craig is back in Iowa City at the University Hospital and deep into a six-week rotation in Internal Medicine. This is, he has been told, one of the most difficult areas in which the third-year medical

students work. Since it is also one of the most varied, Craig is finding it a most interesting experience.

While he was in Des Moines, Craig had sublet his Iowa City apartment to a fourth-year medical student, Peter Funness, from Oxford, England. Peter's home is near Leeds, England, which is the city from which Craig's Birkby ancestors came when they emigrated to America. Peter's wife arrived in Iowa City about the time Craig returned from Des Moines. By that time, the Funnesses had found an apartment for the two of them and Craig settled back into his small one-person-size home.

Bob spent many weeks this fall doing trail building for the National Forest Service, so we went for longer than normal without a phone call from him. (Even when he was on his Appalachian Trail Hike he would call almost every week.) Most of Bob's work was done near the Oregon-California border. Twenty miles of the route were actually on the Pacific Crest Trail, an area which brought much delight to Bob's outdoor-loving nature. The scenery was magnificent with Mt. Shasta (which Bob called the Mt. Rainier of northern California) gleaming under its glaciers just to the southeast. The Pacific Crest Trail is quite new in that area, so the crew found an enormous amount of debris on it as the back slope tried to settle itself into its previous form.

Bob's fellow workers were Jay and Janice Cooper. They have been good

(Continued on page 20)



The Birkby family enjoys every bit of the Christmas holidays, even the picture-taking sessions. The boys set up the wild evergreen tree on the porch, put the game board on the old barrel and arranged their parents, then took their places. Robert and Craig are playing caroms, Jeff is standing behind his father, Bob is seated on the floor and, surrounded by her handsome men, is Evelyn.



Come Read With Me

by
Armada Swanson

Since that special time of year is fast approaching, this column will be devoted to ideas for Christmas giving. So here goes . . .

Marjorie Holmes is a favorite inspirational writer. In 1977 when she was on a book promotion tour, I was pleased to meet this vivacious lady at our local bookstore. My sister, Amy, sent information about the newest book to come from this popular author. Author Holmes is now promoting her latest titled *God and Vitamins* (Doubleday & Co., Garden City, New York, \$9.95). Whenever people meet her, the inevitable question is always, "Where do you get your energy?" and her answer is "God and vitamins." She prays a lot and takes a lot of vitamins. In this book, she reveals the secrets of her glowing health and shares how we can experience the same through exercise, diet, vitamins, and faith. She reminds us that we are the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the thoughts we think. Her soundly researched book can help a person understand what each vitamin and mineral does for the body. She emphasizes that we need the wisdom of trained physicians, and does not encourage readers to "play doctor".

Marjorie Holmes is an avid and long-time health enthusiast who believes that taking care of the bodies God has given us is absolutely essential to our physical, spiritual and emotional well-being. She expresses these thoughts well in her book, *God and Vitamins*.

A book written about life in the early 1920s called *Cutover Country: Jolie's Story* (Iowa State University Press, So. State Ave., Ames, Iowa 50010, \$6.95) by Jolie Paylin tells of a somewhat simpler age than 1980. It concerns the author's family's first year in the wild cutover country of northern Wisconsin. Her mother yearned for the comforts of civilization, but her father was determined to succeed at "diversified farming" in Upset Rapids. Jolie was a plain but spunky eleven-year-old, with normal amounts of curiosity. Even with endless farm chores, she had time for her companions: a bull terrier named Spark, and Bill, the fleet-footed Indian pony.

Jolie saw problems during that time which still plague us, such as prejudice against certain people. Some of the most moving moments in the book are ecological, such as the doe trap, and wildflowers carpeting the land. Running through the book is family life true to that era. *Cutover Country* is a charming and nostalgic story, with memories winding from childhood into adulthood. Jolie



—Photo by © Rolf Bruderer
Marjorie Holmes, writer of inspirational books, recently received the Distinguished Service Award from Buena Vista College, Storm Lake, Iowa. She is a native of Storm Lake, and attended Buena Vista College.

Paylin now lives in the woods of Michigan's Upper Peninsula with her logger husband. She is a poet, artist, gardener, and homemaker.

A fascinating and grim book is *Hostage to Heaven* (Potter Publications, distributed by Crown Publishers, N.Y., N.Y., \$10.95) by Barbara Underwood and her mother, Betty. It tells of four years in the Unification Church for Barbara. This gives a disturbing look at the dangers of cult life, and a testimonial to the power of family love. Barb's family suffered anxiety and anguish, and the ex-Moonie, Barbara, gave four years of self-denial to the point of physical and emotional exhaustion. There was also the excitement from a sense of mission for Barb. The court hearing of the "Oakland Faithful Five" was where mind control was the central issue in a court of law. *Hostage to Heaven* is an important book.

A bird identification calendar illustrated by John Sill and prepared under the direction of the Massachusetts Audubon Society has been a favorite of mine this past year. While recording dates, it has been a pleasure to enjoy the beautiful bird paintings. This year, bird identification calendars for 1981 are available in two editions: *Birds of Eastern North America* and *Birds of Western North America*. Bird facts in the center of the calendars give much helpful information. (Calendars available from the Stephen Greene Press, P.O. Box 1000, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301, \$6.95 each.)

A bird identification engagement book for 1981 is also available showing 53 birds of North America, in original watercolor by John Sill. At the end of the year, you can remove the diary pages and have a bird book. (Stephen Greene Press,

\$8.95.)

There is a joke at this household about my always taking family pictures, especially at the Christmas gathering. So when I read *The Perfect Christmas Picture* (Harper Jr. Books, 10 E. 53rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10022, \$6.95) by Fran Manushkin, I had a good laugh. This I CAN READ book for children ages 4-8 tells of Mr. Green and his family. Mr. Green starts taking the family's Christmas picture in the spring because he needs a whole year to make them stand still! Each time he tries, something silly happens so that every picture is a delightful disaster. *The Perfect Christmas Picture* is a story that children will love. Warm, funny illustrations by Karen Ann Weinhaus add to the enjoyment.

Oh, yes, I'll be taking family pictures again this Christmas!

CHRISTMAS PLANTS

Botanically there are no real flowers of Christmas, except those grown for that purpose in greenhouses or in tropical climates. But through the years certain flowers and leaves have come to have a special meaning for us at Christmas.

One of the big favorites is the poinsettia. Nowadays, we see these beautiful plants everywhere during the holidays. Doctor J. R. Poinsett discovered the plant when he went to Mexico in 1828 to restore his health. He later brought the exotic plant back to his garden in South Carolina. It has since become the favorite Christmas flower in our country.

The holly is a close rival in popularity to the poinsettia, as it has long been a favorite Christmas green. It is said to be a symbol of the burning bush and flaming Christian love.

Today, the mistletoe holds a frivolous meaning at our holiday season, but it once had a reverent connotation. This strange plant, growing out of the oak tree was known as the "Golden Branch" and was greatly prized for it was thought to possess healing power. Wreaths of mistletoe were hung on early Christian altars at Christmastime as emblems of Christ's healing power. Branches were placed over doorways where Christians met and gave each other the kiss of peace and good will.

The bay tree was a favorite yule decoration in early days. Legend tell us that lightning will never strike the bay tree because it once sheltered the Holy Family in a storm.

Another legend has come to us concerning rosemary. It's said that it was upon the branches of the rosemary bush that Mary laid the little garments of the baby Jesus and that because of this the white blossoms of the rosemary turned to lavender to match Mary's violet cloak. Perhaps that is why we say "rosemary for remembrance." —Mabel Nair Brown



A Memorable Christmas Eve

by
Fern Christian Miller

On a dark, cloudy Christmas Eve in the forties, our little one-room country school, Maple Grove, had its Christmas program. My husband, Albert, and I were opposed to school programs at night in the winter because the country roads were not at all good, making it dangerous to drive at night. Besides, cars didn't have heaters then and had to be cranked to start. But the weather had been dry and open that December, and the teacher wanted the program at night to show off the new electric lights the R.E.A. had recently installed in our school.

When Albert came in to supper he remarked, "I think we will get snow by morning. You kids may get your white Christmas after all."

"Goody! Goody!" the kids exclaimed in the age-old way of children.

But like all mothers I felt anxious. "If only it holds off until after the program," I commented quietly. I hurried the six children to the table to get our light supper over so we could finish dressing for the program.

Albert finally got the car started, and we covered up well with quilts for the two-mile ride. It was really cold, and dampness was in the dark air. We managed the trip without any problems although Albert was worried because the lights kept flickering. The kerosene lantern he always took along at night, just in case of an emergency, was securely in its place in the car.

Once inside the cozy schoolhouse with its gay Christmas tree and bright decorations, we settled with our neighbors to enjoy the program the young teacher and the children had gone to so much trouble to prepare. My husband and I kept exchanging smiles as the same carols were sung that we had sung as children in this same schoolhouse. After the rainbow-colored lights were lighted on the tall Christmas tree, the children's delight was something to hear. It was the first electric-lighted tree our school had ever had.

After that merry program, Santa Claus came from behind the curtain and gave out the gifts and treats placed under the tree. Bowls of homemade candies were passed about among the parents by the teacher. The party lasted quite late.

When finally the men wrapped up and

went out to start and warm up the car motors, a blast of snow-laden air swirled in from the doorway. "Whoops, its snowing a regular blizzard out there," exclaimed the first man outside. Indeed it was! Six inches of soft wet flakes had already piled up on everything, and the snow was continuing to fall thick and fast. We all hurried out and covered up well for the trip home. Our car slipped and slid to the big road behind several other cars, and followed close behind as our lights were still very dim.

As we turned on the last mile toward home, we were the only car on the road. Suddenly, the lights went out. Albert got out, pulled out the kerosene lantern and lit it on the sheltered side of the car. Then he told our eldest son, Keith, who was about fifteen years old, to carry the lantern along the side of the road so we could tell where we were and wouldn't slide off into the ditch—if we did, we knew we would get stuck right there. Unfortunately, Keith simply couldn't see clearly enough to tell when he got too close to the edge of the road, so he kept tumbling off into the ditch himself. Finally, Albert fastened the lantern to the front of the car and told Keith to try to walk down the middle of the road ahead of the slow-moving car. He trotted along in the snow and we crept slowly behind, sliding and slipping in the deepening drifts. I held the well-covered sleeping baby, and silently prayed that we could get our family home safely. We were all getting very cold as the window had to be kept rolled down so Albert could see where Keith was leading.

The Good Lord must have been listening, because we finally drove into our own driveway and up to the back gate where we all piled out and hurried into the warm, dark house. But when we tried the light switch, we found the electricity was already off because of the storm. Since I kept kerosene lamps ready to light in an emergency, we soon had two shining brightly. Albert opened up the drafts on the trusty old coal stove, and we were soon warm and dry again. Then we all donned heavy pajamas and robes, and sat talking over the program before climbing into our cold beds. I listened to prayers, tucked the baby in his bed by the fire, and sat down to act as "Santa's helper" as soon as small eyes were tightly closed in sleep.

My husband grinned at me, "I am sure glad no one has to go anywhere tomorrow. I will see what I can do about that car's lights. I never did like to have programs at night in the winter. We are real fortunate we got home without sliding into the ditch. Keith, you did real well as our guide." This last statement Albert called through the door to our eldest son, but Keith was already sound asleep.

"My best gift is getting home safely without car lights," I smiled shakily as I looked lovingly at my good "Santa".



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SUGAR SCOOP

by
Erma Reynolds

"Pass the India salt, please." This request was sometimes heard at meal-times in Europe's early days.

"India salt? What's that?" you question.

Would you believe? It's sugar!

Not sugar as we know it, but a crude variety brought from India by traders, thus its descriptive title, "India salt".

Alexander the Great is believed to have been the one who discovered sugar cane about 327 B.C. in India. With the passing years, the cane was gradually spread by traders and conquering armies, and put into use in the various European countries.

Sugar in the 15th century was a far cry from our white sugar. The juice obtained from the cane was like black dough, which had to be refined by continuous long cooking, until it could finally show an amber color. Sold in small cakes, this was a costly "prestige food".

It was not until the 17th century that sugar manufacturers were finally able to get a whiteness in their product. This improved grade sold at about \$8 a pound under the trade name, "Emperor's Sugar". At such an exorbitant price, "Emperor's Sugar" was beyond the means of most common folk who had to



Andy and Julian are good to pose for pictures whenever someone gets out the camera. Julian has a good arm-lock on his big brother's neck. Could it be he'll sample wrestling as one of his sports when he is as grownup as Andy?

satisfy their sweet tooth with brown sugar or molasses.

Soon after the discovery of America, sugar cane was introduced to Santo Domingo and from there spread to the adjacent islands.

About 1741, sugar cane was brought from Santo Domingo to Louisiana by Jesuit priests. At first, the canes were used mostly as a fermenting agent to make "taffia", a beverage similar to rum, but gradually, with the passing of time, they were used more and more to make sugar.

In America's early days, the more affluent households always kept loaf sugar on hand to be used for company. This was packaged in a large cone covered with blue paper. The loaves had

to be cut into smaller pieces and rich ladies, with plenty of time to spend, would perform this chore with quite a little ceremony. Using specially made scissors, they would cut and then meticulously arrange the sweet bits on a silver salver, which in turn was placed on a polished table in readiness for expected guests.

How do you handle sugar in your household?

Brown sugar sometimes becomes too hard to use, but there are ways to soften it. 1. Put the sugar in a shallow pan, or wrap in a piece of foil, and heat in oven at low temperature until it becomes manageable. Use immediately, because it turns hard again quickly. 2. Place sugar in a bowl. Soak a dish towel in very hot water. Wring out and cover bowl with it. Repeat this process until sugar softens. 3. Place sugar in top of a double boiler and cover. Put about three inches of water in bottom section of boiler and bring to a boil. Continue the boiling until sugar softens.

Store confectioners' sugar in an airtight glass container to prevent lumping. But should it develop lumps, put the sugar on a large sheet of waxed paper and roll smooth with a rolling pin.

At the cost of sugar, do you shudder when you watch your youngsters spoon heaps of sugar on their cereal? Put the sugar in a large kitchen salt shaker, and it will cut down considerably on their liberal use.

Did you ever try sifting confectioners' sugar through a lace paper doily onto the top of an unfrosted cake for a pretty decoration? A toy flour sifter works fine for this sifting bit.

Colored sugar is nice for fancy purposes. To make this, place a supply of granulated sugar on waxed paper. Add liquid food coloring, a drop at a time. Then, with fingertips, work the color into the sugar until it is evenly distributed. One drop of coloring will tint one to two tablespoons of sugar a pastel shade.

Another decorative touch is to put a drop or two of food coloring on sugar cubes, letting the liquid absorb into the sugar. Let the cubes dry before using.

Sugar cubes can be "painted" with an icing decoration on each. Make the icing by beating an egg white and adding powdered sugar until a thin paste results. Make a cone from parchment paper (the kind used for cooking). Measure a foot square and cut it diagonally to form a triangle. Fold and fasten into cone shape. At the tight, small end, cut off a tiny snip. Put icing into cone. Then press it out through the snipped end, making a tiny decoration on each sugar cube.



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Needle Notes

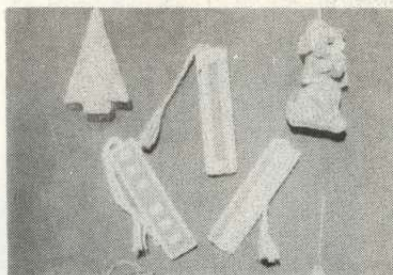
by
Brenda Carl Rahn

Preparations for Christmas loom large in our plans for the coming days. Since we each have our own way of making the holidays special, I thought a "stocking" full of varied ideas would be a useful inspiration.

A quick decoration for your table could be a *holiday table runner*. Purchase some linen or cotton in white, red or green. The runner needs to be only 20 to 21 inches wide, so if you purchase 45-inch fabric, buy half the measurement of the finished length. Hem all around the edges, then crochet, knit, or tat an edging, or leave it plain. To decorate the runner, cross-stitch, crewel or embroider holly leaves, NOEL, or any traditional motifs or words. If you don't do needlework, or don't have the time, fuse on appliques with *Stitch-Witchery*, or use your zigzag sewing machine to applique the designs to the runners. You can decorate just the two ends or all around the edges, it's all up to you.

If you have leftover fabric, or wish you had a place for all those pretty Christmas cards, you can make a *display holder* in the same manner. This time turn down a 2-inch hem on one of the narrow ends, leave one end open to slip in a dowel rod. A small diameter dowel rod can be purchased at most hardware stores for just a few cents. Use yarn to make a hanger; knot one end, insert needle through the back of the casing and bring it out a couple of inches away, still in the back where it won't be seen. Leaving several inches slack, bring the needle in on the other end of the casing and tie a knot in the back. Cut off excess yarn. Let the hanging take the place of a picture or fill up a corner during the holidays. Use double-stick tape or folded masking tape to fasten the cards to the fabric. They can easily be rearranged or removed to make room for next year's cards. Be sure to measure the area in which you wish to hang your card display so it will be the right size.

Needlepointers can make quick *bookmark* stocking stuffers using plastic canvas and leftover yarn. Cut a rectangle, diamond, or cross shape from the canvas; 1½ inches wide by 5 inches long makes a good-sized bookmark. Trim off the little nubs that remain to make the edges smooth. Needlepoint with your favorite stitch, continental and bargello look best on both the back and front. Whipstitch over the edges with a contrasting color yarn (starting at the tip of the diamond or top center of other shapes). Finish the whipstitching by making a tassel at the point where you began.



Brenda made these lovely holiday items from scraps. The tree and dog decorations are made from pieces of felt. In the center of the picture are three needlepoint bookmarks.

To make the tassel, leave 7 inches of yarn dangling free after last whipstitch. Cut 3 pieces of yarn 3 inches long, tie the yarn still attached to the bookmark around the center of the 3 pieces, with 2 to 3 inches left free. Fold upwards; with the free 2-inch piece of yarn, wrap the base of the tassel so the yarn ends stay upwards. Insert a needle into the center of the tassel wrapping and out the bottom. Thread the needle with the end

of the wrapping thread, pull needle all the way through, thereby securing the wrapping thread. Clip any yarn that comes through with the needle.

Other bookmarks can be made with felt, with initials or designs glued, embroidered or fused on.

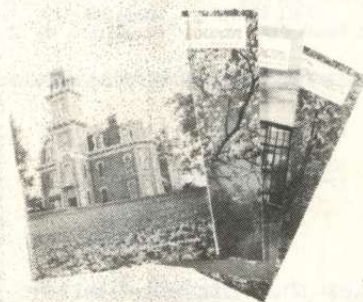
A super-quick *tree skirt* can be made out of felt and with attractive cutouts fused to the skirt.

Another idea to use up scraps of materials is a *bonbon garland*. The finished decoration looks like the paper-wrapped taffy candy. Take any long, narrow remnant, 2-3 inches wide. Fold it in half lengthwise and stitch down the open side. Turn right side out. Cut apart with pinking shears in 5- to 6-inch lengths. Tie a ribbon or yarn bow at one end, leaving an inch excess. Stuff the center 2 or 3 inches and tie the remaining end with a similar ribbon or yarn bow. Children can help with the stuffing and enjoy helping string the bonbons. Use a darning or plastic tapestry needle and

(Continued on next page)

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From Our Family Album

The winter months of 1960-1961 were the last that Russell, Juliana and I were to spend together at our home here in Shenandoah. We knew that when September rolled around Juliana would be enrolling at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and that never again would we have the pattern of life that had begun with her arrival into this world. We had just finished storing away all of the holiday decorations when this picture was snapped in our living room.

—Lucile



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TELEPHONE IS HUMMING — Concl.

friends since 1974 when all three were on the staff at the Philmont National Scout Ranch near Cimarron, New Mexico. Janice, I might add, served mainly as mule skinner and cook. Bob reported that since the two mules could carry 150 pounds apiece, they easily transported the gear and "enough food to choke an entire Southwest Iowa Boy Scout Council on a winter freezeout. With those mules, one tends to leave the freeze-dried noodles at home."

The day the work on the trail was completed, snow began up in the high mountains. Just a few hours before the snow reached their area, Jay, Janice and Bob came down from the peaks. The Coopers returned to their wilderness home near Jacksonville, Oregon, and Bob took a bus to Portland for a visit with relatives. Since his grandmother (Grandma Dulcy) was in Portland, it was an especially nice experience.

Bob is back in Seattle now, continuing his exploration of the far west. He has hiked much of the north section of the Pacific Coast Trail, worked on part of the south stretch and, I have no doubt, plans to fill in the spaces in between as time permits. He reports that THE MOUNTAIN (Mt. St. Helens) spat a few ashes his direction shortly before he went to Portland, but nothing to cause any difficulty. He thinks it was just showing off while his grandmother was visiting the area.

If all goes well, Bob will head for Iowa sometime the first week in December.

Jeff and Craig will probably arrive about December 22. Grandma will be back in Sidney by then and the holiday preparations will be in full swing.

A roast is cooking away in the oven, bread dough is rising in a bowl, and I plan to do some baking to put into the freezer to await the coming of these three hungry sons. The sewing machine is standing in the middle of the dining room waiting for me to continue the projects which must be finished soon and, not surprisingly, the telephone is ringing insistently again.

The Birkby family sends greetings for holiday happiness to each one of you, wherever you are.

NEEDLE NOTES — Concluded

some buttonhole thread and string them together by slipping the needle through one of the gathered ends, the center stuffing and out the other tied end. Push close enough so that the thread does not show but not too close to crush the gathered edges of the bonbons. Have fun alternating colors and fabrics. If the garland gets soiled, it can be hand washed and line dried. You can also add to it easily from time to time or remove a frayed piece.

These are just a few ideas to start off the holidays. Remember, love is the one thing that grows and grows the more it is shared. I wish every one a Merry Christmas.





THE JOY OF GARDENING

by
Eva M. Schroeder

Several house plant problems have come in recently. M.D. wants to know why her dwarf orange plant loses all its leaves even though the fruits persist. "It blooms, sets fruits and before the oranges ripen the leaves become yellow and fall off. I have it in an old jardiniere that sets on a fern stand near an east window where it gets morning sun. We heat our home with natural gas but my other house plants seem to thrive which pretty well rules out leaking gas, wouldn't you say? I have used fertilizer sticks in the soil at regular intervals."

The trouble probably can be laid to the container and to the repeated feeding with fertilizer sticks. Unless your jardiniere has drainage holes (I have never seen an old one that had any), your plant is no doubt suffering from over watering. Fertilizer salts also build up quickly in pots that do not drain. Repot your orange plant in a container with good drainage holes in the bottom and use soil mixture of one part sharp sand, two parts garden loam and one part peat moss. Prune the branches back severely and the plant should soon respond with fresh growth. Use the fertilizer sticks sparingly and only after the plant has greened out again. Do not fertilize house plants during the short days of winter when most of them want to rest even if they do not go dormant and lose their leaves.

Grow your orange and other citrus plants, such as Persian lime and lemon plants, near a sunny south window.

Mrs. K.L. writes, "A friend gave me a small potted Crown of Thorns plant which she had started from her huge beautiful one. How should I care for mine and when will it bloom? She told me that her plant required little care but she has a 'green thumb' and everything does well for her. I am not that lucky."

The botanical name of your plant is *Euphorbia* and belongs to the same family as the poinsettia. It needs the same soil as given above for the orange tree and a container with good drainage. This plant likes full sun, moderate humidity, average temperature 50 to 70 degrees, and infrequent watering. Let the soil dry out between waterings. When the days start to lengthen, give a diluted soluble plant food about once a month. Your plant will bloom when it is old enough and if you have followed its cultural needs. Occasionally, take it to the kitchen sink and gently rinse the foliage with tepid water. Your friend is correct that Crown of Thorns requires little care.

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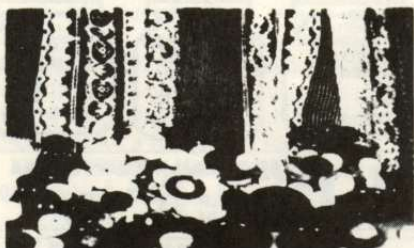
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St. Louis, Mo. 63101**DOROTHY'S LETTER — Concluded**
rattlesnakes. In 1849, the men who lived in the north part of the county challenged the men in the south part of the county to a rattlesnake hunt to see which group could catch the most. When they met at the end of the day to count the snakes, they had caught a total of 3,750. It was never settled as to which side won.

Winterset has one of the most beautiful city parks I have ever seen. It contains 120 donated acres which join the city. Madison County has a lot of limestone and so the many lovely shelters in the park are built of this material. One of the covered bridges has been moved to the park from its original location over the North River near Bennington. There is a large camping area, a playground and an old log cabin built of walnut logs.

If you haven't visited Winterset, I highly recommend you do so next October during the weekend of the Bridge Festival.

One evening one of my longtime friends from Shenandoah, Lois Radden, called and said she and her husband, Persh, were on their way home from northern Iowa and would be going through Lucas. She asked me to meet them in town and go with them to the Stephens State Forest, then on to dinner in Derby. Lois had been here before and was anxious for Persh to see as much as possible. I was so happy they got to see eighteen wild turkeys because they had never seen any before. Time was short and only permitted a drive around our beautiful Red Haw State Park before we came back to our house for a brief visit with Frank.

Our cows have begun to have some fall calves and couldn't have had more perfect weather for them to arrive.

They should get a good start before the really cold weather starts.

I am writing this too early to know what our Christmas plans will be for sure, but our grandson, Andy Brase, has been talking about spending the holidays with us. He spent his Christmas vacation with us the year when he was eleven and has always wanted to come back again. We hope this will be the year he will make it. I'm also hoping Lucile and Betty Jane can come, but the weather will probably decide that for us.

We hope you all have a wonderful holiday season at your house.

Sincerely,
Dorothy**LUCILE'S LETTER — Concluded**

Incidentally, in this particular block (and it is possibly the longest block in town) there now remains only one house that is occupied by the same people who lived there when we first settled on this street. Somehow, people who have always lived in cities get the idea that nothing ever changes in a small town, but they are very, very mistaken. When members of our family come back from years spent far from here, they say they can scarcely find a single familiar place. Even the countryside itself has changed unbelievably.

I took a twenty-minute break to have a big mug of coffee, and while I sat looking out over the garden, I suddenly remembered something connected with Christmas that I hadn't thought about for years.

I've always been a great one to order gifts by mail since I can't get out and tramp around in stores. When James was three years old, I came across a fire engine in some catalog that looked like the one perfect gift. This struck me as being so terrific that I ordered it immediately and hoped fervently that it would get from New York to Albuquerque in time to be waiting under the tree on Christmas morning. In my delight at finding such an excellent gift, I must have read the description too hastily, for the package did arrive in Albuquerque on December twenty-fourth BUT it had to be put together from scratch. Now, Jed is a highly competent engineer, but he finished getting that splendid (and complicated) fire engine together at five A.M. after hours of tortured work. I heard all about this in vivid detail in a phone call on Christmas Day, and I made up my mind then and there to pay more attention to the words "assembled" or "unassembled" in days to come.

To each and everyone of you, my most heartfelt prayer is that you will have a genuinely joyous and blessed Christmas.

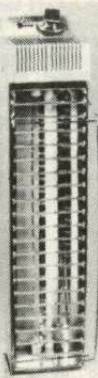
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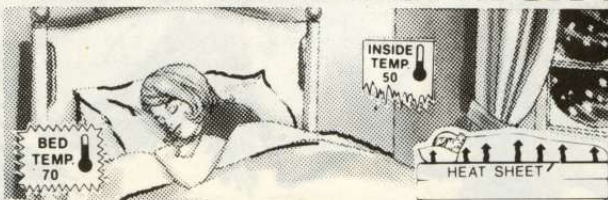
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