

THE HEPPNER GAZETTE-TIMES

MORROW COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER

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Our Happiness at Christmas

(Editor's Note: Guest editorial for Christmas comes from a member of the clergy following the custom established here last year.)

By REV. BILL ALSUP

Pastor The Assembly of God Church, Heppner

Christmas means a great many different things to all of us. As we think of Christmas, Santa Claus, reindeer, stockings hanging by the fireplace, sleigh bells, a Christmas tree with mysterious packages under it, good things to eat, and friends and relatives gathered in a festive atmosphere, all find their way into our thinking. To all of us these things are synonymous with Christmas. They are a part of the heritage that has been handed down to us from generations gone by.

These things are all good and wonderful; and the spirit of fellowship and good will promoted by these things are pleasant to the heart of God. God desires that His creatures enjoy themselves, in the things of life that are good, wholesome and pleasant.

In the final analysis, though, these afore-mentioned things are just the trimmings to our Christmas. To center our thinking on the accessories until they become central in our Christmas thought is to impoverish ourselves.

Some would do away with the tinsel and tinkle of Christmas entirely and admit only to the essentials of the Nativity. This is unnecessary, in their proper perspective, and give pre-eminence to the things which are pre-eminent.

Christmas is first and foremost the birthday of our Savior. This may seem to be a trite statement but we need to keep this fact ever before us lest it become obscured by the many lesser details. It is the birthday of one whose coming marked the turning of the tide for all mankind.

To understand the impact of Jesus on all the succeeding generations of men, it would perhaps be good to dwell for a moment on the reason why it was necessary for such a earth-and heaven-moving development as the incarnation.

Man, the one creature of the universe, created in the image of God and specifically for fellowship with his Creator, has by a willful act marred that image and severed that fellowship. Through the ages many were afforded many avenues of return, but none of these were found to be effective. Finally the reconciliation of God and sinners rested upon a final act. All previous efforts were to no avail simply because all mankind was under the sentence judgment through sin and therefore none could be found worthy to atone for his brother's sin. John caught a glimpse of this; it is recorded for us in the Book of Revelation: "And no one in heaven or upon the earth or under the earth was able" (Phillips).

John then says, "I began to weep bitterly." And who wouldn't. For how sad our plight would be had there not been One found that was worthy.

Since neither God nor man could bridge the gap alone, they would do it together. God the Son laid aside the glories of heaven and though equal with the father, "counted Himself of no reputation," and was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the virgin's womb, the creator becoming one of His creatures that He might woo them back to Himself.

One hymnist described the event of His birth in Bethlehem thus: "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight."

Another said, "Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."

At last a way to dissolve the long standing enmity between God and man had been found.

We who believe in His birth, His life, His death and His resurrection and have come into a personal relation with God through Christ, know the Peace of which the angel spoke to the shepherds and the hymnist captured in the carol. Why shouldn't we be happy?

Chaff and Chatter

Wes Sherman

WHAT FINE talent our schools have in their music and drama departments! This is apparent in the Christmas programs presented in the pre-holiday season.

Heppner has had three excellent programs this year to provide relaxing interludes for parents in the busy days prior to Christmas and to provide an opportunity to see their children perform. The youngsters always do very well.

It is evident, though, that the programs were not designed for relaxation for those behind the staging of them. Teachers and department heads spent many hectic hours of toil and preparation with the children.

Mrs. Maurice (Janet) Groves brought some innovations here with the high school program done so beautifully in black lighting Tuesday night. It attracted a large crowd and included enchanting and clever pantomime scenes as well as drama, singing and dancing. Mrs. Groves worked day and night for several weeks on that program, and the production reflected the detail work she had done. The students themselves built the colorful sets. Programs and plays of her staging here are becoming known for the extra little touches that add so much, and through them she brings out the talent in the young people with whom she works.

The program for the lower grades continues to attract the largest crowd as parents delight in watching the youngsters in their "cute" ages. Mrs. Ola Mae Groshens' talent, and that of other teachers of the grade school, was evident in the Christmas program Wednesday night. Think of the hours that go into the making of costumes, getting sets ready, and coordinating the musical scores of such programs.

As always, the band plays an important part in the Christmas programs as it did this year. Arnold Melby has a big job with all the instrumental students in the upper grades and high school under his direction. Their Christmas music adds to the spirit of the season.

Undoubtedly, all those working in the school system on these programs get many compliments, but we want to add this public word on behalf of the community.

Mrs. Groves was worn to a frazzle when the high school program was over the other night. It was the first time that a variety program had been attempted by the high school for Christmas, but it was such a fine success that the school just about has no other alternative but to continue next year. They'll probably have to find a bigger place than the multipurpose room to hold the crowd next time.

THE HIGH school program took an unexpected turn at the end when the cast let fire on the audience with a bombardment of candy kisses, a unique delight, especially for the kids in the audience. Only trouble was, the kisses felt like marbles when they hit. Apparently the cast was trying to get some of the candy far back into the crowd, but this took a pretty hard throw, and they soon had the audience ducking for cover... but the candy was good.

IF A POLL were taken on the most popular single subject for publicity releases during the year, one of those ranking high on the list would be tips for preventing Christmas tree fires. We could just about fill one section of this newspaper on releases that have been sent us on the subject—from the Oregon State health department, the OSU extension service, insurance companies, and others we can't recall at the moment.

This happens every year, and somewhere tree fires happen every year. But if you haven't learned it yet, keep the tree moist and keep anything away from it that will cause it to ignite.

THE ROD MURRAYS got their Christmas present early this year, on Friday, December 13. A new son arrived on that date, about which they are not in the least superstitious, and both mother and baby are fine. One of the early reports that came in, though, brought indications that this was more than the usual birth story. Someone popped in the office to tell us the boy weighed 12 pounds, 8 ounces. This would not be a new world's record by any means, but might be newsworthy just the same.

In checking with Rod, we found that our informant had the pounds and ounces reversed—8 lb. 12 oz. This in itself is the record for the Murray children.

"BONANZA" isn't the same any more since Orville Cutsforth reported that Garnet Barratt might be on the TV program. We wish the judge in Arizona would get around to reading this column and send us the word—true or false.

On Sunday night, we were trying to get caught up on a few things when the children rushed out excitedly saying, "He's on!" "Who's on?"

"Mr. Barratt on TV."

All make a mad dash for the television set. Face of old weaned cowpoke character filled the screen.

"Is that him?" the children ask eagerly.

"No, that's not him."

"Back we go about our business."

"Daddy! He's on now! Hurry!" We scramble around chairs and cut corners through the office, kitchen and dining room to get to the TV set again.

"Nooo, that's not him." (Belongs to sound like Dick Shawn's old comedy routine.)

Back again. One more false alarm and the kids give up for this program, but chances are we'll be going through it again next Sunday night.

Maybe one of these times, Garnet, garbed in a ten gallon hat, will slide into a TV set near the Ponderosa, and we'll hear his familiar voice drawl, "Howdy, p'odner."

TO THE EDITOR...

To the Editor:

I would like to make a correction to news items, "Firemen Practice as Historic House Goes Up in Flames."

You stated the house was built by Henry Johnson many years ago, but it was built by Robert (Bob) Wills around the year 1896-7. The Wills family, consisting of Robert and Phoebe Wills and their two sons, Elmer and Ruben lived there till Mr. Wills died a suicide. Mr. Wills was the carpenter contractor on the new court house. Vic Groshen's father worked on the stone work. At that time, the Johnson family were living across the street from our big house on Water street, but moved to the Wills house shortly after the death of Mr. Wills, and had not lived there very long before the flood piled up a big stack of hay on the front porch. Mr. Johnson built a new house across Hinton creek on lower Main street, but soon sold it and built one of the first houses on court house hill. I do not know who owns it now.

Mr. Wills came from Lexington where he operated a store when that town was booming, trying to have the county seat located there. Then he came to Heppner and worked as a carpenter, but also operated a store on Main street. I think it was a clothing store, but he also carried a small stock of groceries. I used to play around that old house when they were building it.

O. M. Yeager
Castle Rock, Wn.

Paul Jones Heads ASC Committee

Recent ASC elections resulted in the reelection of Paul W. Jones as chairman of the Morrow ASC county committee.

Farmers in each community elected committees to represent their areas in the administration of Federal Farm programs. The chairman of the nine committees met on December 9 and elected the county committee for the calendar year 1964. The county committee administers all Federal Agricultural programs at the county level.

In addition to reelecting Jones, Roy Partlow was also reelected. Each has served for the past four years.

The third member elected was Orville Cutsforth, Jr. Alternate members elected were Hershal Townsend and Harold Campbell.

The acceptance of farm programs by farmers is influenced by the attitude of the county committee, whose members are considered farm leaders in the county and their selection important to all residents.

Get restaurant guest checks and salesbooks, both carbonized and non-carbonized, at the Gazette-Times.

Precautions Told To Prevent Fires At Holiday Time

"Fire is no respecter of holidays—even the happiest one of all, Christmas," states Doctor Richard H. Wilcox, Oregon State Health Officer. "Far more serious, the lives of children and parents alike are seriously endangered by these fires. Everyone interested in fire safety should make a special effort to remind people of the precautions they need to take."

Fire statistics show that Christmas is a time to be more—not less—heedful of fire dangers. Many of our traditional Christmas customs—trees, colored lights, decorations, Yule logs in the fireplace—add substantially to a home's fire hazards.

Sometimes a combination of active children and preoccupied parents brings the one moment of carelessness which is all that fire needs.

For a fire-safe Christmas in your home, follow these rules:

Trees: For a natural tree (fir spruce, pine), pick a firm-needed one, no bigger than you need—the larger the tree the greater the hazard. Saw off the butt at an angle an inch or more above the original cut. Stand the tree in water until it is brought into the house, keep it in water until it goes out. Don't rely on chemical coatings or solutions to "flameproof" your tree; none is truly effective. Support it well. Locate it away from radiators or fireplace, and never where it might block your escape in case of fire. Take it out of the house just as soon as possible after Christmas.

Metal trees, for all practical purposes, won't burn but they conduct electricity. So use only indirect lighting; lighting strings on the tree may create a dangerous shock hazard.

Plastic and metalized plastic trees will burn; use only ones clearly marked as made of slow-burning materials. Those with built-in electrical systems should carry the Underwriters' Laboratories (UL) label to show they have been tested for electrical safety.

Lights: Check lighting sets for frayed wires, loose connections and broken sockets. Never use wax candles on or near the tree. Make sure tree and other inside decorative lights are turned off before retiring or leaving the house. For outdoor lighting, use only sets listed for outdoor use by the Underwriters' Laboratories. When setting up or adjusting keep power off to avoid shock hazard.

Decorations: Use noncombustible decorating materials (metal, glass, asbestos, etc.), where possible. If combustible—

One-Shot Roscoe

As Told By

ORVILLE W. CUTSFORTH

(Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of articles about Roscoe Cox, legendary Morrow county resident who died this year.)

By ORVILLE CUTSFORTH

About Old Roscoe, one shot Roscoe. You know, one time he was working for Bob Thompson, Old Roscoe and his two dogs. Old dogs were always with him. Bob took a couple of green herders and their green dogs and headed for Joseph to bring home a band of ewe lambs.

"You know," said Roscoe, "he was going to bring them home with those green herders and I didn't think he could do it."

So Roscoe says, "you better take me along."

But Bob said, "You do what I have you doing. You finish that and I'll get along."

Old Roscoe hurried and finished what he was doing and he worried about Bob and the green herders and that band of ewe lambs. It took him two days to finish what he was doing and he took his two dogs and struck out a foot over the mountains to meet Bob Thompson, the green herders, the green dogs and the ewe lambs.

Well, he walked to meet those dogs and those sheep and he met that band of lambs at Enterprise, 12 miles from Joseph. It took him two days to walk the 120 miles. His dogs were foot sore, Roscoe wasn't, and the green herders were sure glad to see him.

Yep, Old Roscoe could do the impossible.

like flocking—be sure they are "flameproofed." Untreated cotton batting, polystyrene foam and paper ignite easily, burn intensely. Don't use polystyrene foam for candle holders or for table or mantle decorations where wax candles are also used.

Wrappings: Dispose of gift wrappings promptly. Don't burn them in the fireplace.

And: Watch your smoking habits around the tree—a lit cigarette or match can start it burning. Most of all, plan in advance escape routes and other actions needed for the life safety of your family in case of fire.

Looking for mimeograph stencils? The Gazette-Times has them for sale, including special church bulletin style.

Rhea Grange Honors William Bergstroms

Potluck supper followed the regular monthly meeting of the Rhea Creek grange held at the grange hall Friday night.

During the evening members having birthdays in the past four months were honored. Mr. and Mrs. William Bergstrom, who celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary, were also complimented at the meeting.

The grange Christmas party will be held December 21, at the grange hall with a potluck supper, program and gift exchange.

The HEC women will meet at the hall in the afternoon (December 21) to decorate for the party and hold their December meeting.



Coming Events

Heppner High Basketball Heppner vs. Condon High school. Friday, Dec. 20, New High school gym. Jayvee game, 6:30 p.m. Varsity game, 8:15 p.m. Support the Mustangs!!

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT Combined church choirs. Sunday, December 22, 3 p.m. High school multipurpose room.

SKIING AT ARBUCKLE 6' to 20' packed snow on hill. Tow operating Saturday, Sunday. Skiing hours, 12 noon to 4:00 p.m.

SEASON'S GREETINGS Our wish to everyone—A very Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year!

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