

## County Extension council meets

By Delpha Jones

The Morrow County Council of Extension met at the home of Marlene Currin on Thursday for the Christmas meeting and potluck dinner. The meeting was presided over by Isabelle Jones from Irrigon. A letter was read concerning the need for more reading for children and educating them to enjoy reading. The program will sponsor a reading program for a year, which will include presenting new mothers with books to read to infants, hopefully to get them in a reading habit. Evelyn Miller of Irrigon will chair this project.

The National Extension Homemakers Convention will be held in Portland in August and Marlene Currin and Delpha Jones

have signed up for the days, Aug. 25-27. This will be held at the Jantzen room at the Red Lion Motor Inn in Portland. Others are urged to volunteer to help during this week. Tote bags are to be presented at this time with each study group making several.

Several topics for lessons for the coming year were discussed. Breads were exchanged and recipes for these given to those present. Present besides the chairman and hostess were Delpha Jones, Carol Bennett, Evelyn Miller, Wanda Cox and Hazel Lewis. Plans will be made later for the Morrow County district meeting which is scheduled for April 4 at the St. Patrick's Center in Heppner.

## Weatherization aid available

Low income senior citizens may drop by the Neighborhood Center Monday through Friday to apply for weatherization assistance through the LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program). Applications are now being processed. Handicapped people are also urged to apply this month.

On Friday, December 14, from 1 to 3 p.m. the Neighborhood Center is having an open house. This will be an opportunity for the communities of Ione, Lexington, Hardman, Ruggs and Heppner to meet the new center coordinator, Joyce Breeding, and members of the board of directors.

## Condon Lutheran Mission plans Christmas service

On Sunday, December 16, at 2 p.m., Condon Lutheran Mission will hold its Christmas service of carols, scripture, and sermon at the home of Jeannet Bisek, 327 South Oregon, in Condon.

Pastor Stan Hoobing of Valby Lutheran Church of Ione will deliver

a Christmas message entitled, "Where is God at Christmas?"

After the service there will be time for fellowship and refreshments. Visitors and friends are most welcome to attend this festive service and all other services that are held in Condon.

## Heppner Christmas mealsite Dec. 19

The Heppner Mealsite will be serving their Christmas dinner with baked ham and all the trimmings on

December 19. There will be no dinner served on December 26.

## Local churches plan Christmas programs

### Valby Lutheran

December 16, the third Sunday of December, a service of Holy Communion will be celebrated at 9 a.m. at Valby Lutheran Church. Pastor Hoobing will preach on the theme 'Light in Our Darkness', based on a reading from St. John 1:6-8 and 19-28. Prior to service the children will practice for their Christmas program.

'The Christmas ABC Story' — readings and songs that tell the story of the events of the first Christmas and their meaning — will be presented

by the members of the Sunday School of Valby congregation. Those participating as readers are Jodi Carlson, Leland and Lonnie Rill, Amber and Christopher Peck, and Kasie Peterson.

'The Christmas ABC Story' will be presented to the congregation members, family, visitors and friends at 6 p.m. at Valby Lutheran Church 16 miles west of Ione on the Gooseberry-Ione Highway. A special coffee hour will follow the program.

### Ione United Church

'The Christmas Scene Revisited' is the title of the Ione United Church of Christ holiday program to be held Sunday, December 16. The program begins at 5 p.m. in the church sanctuary with all of the children from pre-school through sixth grade participating.

The young people will sing

Christmas carols while slides are shown of them in costume portraying the Christmas story.

Following the program a potluck dinner, sponsored by the deaconesses, will be held in the church basement. Everyone is encouraged to attend both the program and the potluck dinner.

### Hope Lutheran

Christmas is a time when people of all ages hear again the story of the Christ Child of Bethlehem. Jesus was born a child and lived as a child. He knows the joy and sorrow, the fear and excitement, and all the emotions with which children are confronted.

Christmas is also a time when children get caught up in songs and stories about Santa Claus and the excitement of what they want and what Santa brings them. Sometimes Santa and gifts overshadow the real meaning of Christmas, the birth of the Christ child.

'Wow, It's Christmas' presented by the youth of Hope Lutheran Church and the Sunday School classes, under the direction of Carol Hoobing, looks at the meaning of

Christmas. The first part of the program the children talk and sing about shopping, Santa Claus, trees and decorations and then the emphasis shifts to the story of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem and visits by shepherds and wisemen.

'Wow, It's Christmas' will be presented to the public at Hope Lutheran Church on Sunday, December 16 at 11 a.m. Visitors and friends are welcome. There will be a potluck dinner after the service.

### United Methodist

The Sunday school classes of the United Methodist Church will present a Christmas program during the regular church service Sunday, Dec. 16 beginning at 10:30.

A potluck dinner at the church will follow the program. After the potluck the Sunday school children are planning on going caroling.

### HHS cheerleaders offer cheer-o-grams

The Heppner High School cheerleaders will be offering a special service this holiday season—Cheer-O-Grams.

For \$2.50 your wishes along with a Christmas Card, will be delivered to friends and family.

Orders may be placed until Dec. 21 and will be delivered Dec. 22 and 23.

To place a Cheer-O-Gram, and help support the cheerleaders call Dana Reid, 676-9973, Tonja Morrel 676-5884 or Shannon Zumwalt, 989-8193.

### 'Christmas' is story hour topic

Christmas stories will be read by Pam Sagely at the Heppner Public Library's Children's storytime on Dec. 17.

Story time begins at 10:30 a.m. All children are welcome and there will be a treat for each child.

### Wright wins FFA contest

Jeremy Wright, 14, a freshman at Heppner High School won the Blue Mountain District FFA creed speaking contest held in Stanfield Dec. 6. He will compete at the sectional contest at LaGrande in February.

Jeremy is the son of Linda Stubenrauch, Hermiston and David Wright, Heppner. Bill Umbarger is the FFA advisor.

## Off the Wall

By Merlyn Robinson

Christmas is a time of nostalgia that brings out the small child feelings hidden inside of us. The magic of Christmas carols, the beauty of decorations and the glow of people guarding holiday secrets accentuates a special time of 'doing unto others' in keeping with our Christian principles.

It's also a time to reflect on Christmases past while remembering those who are no longer present to share in our holiday traditions. And it's when we share with others through the medium of Christmas cards.

Nothing piques me more than receiving a card with only the signature of someone that I haven't heard from all year. Even a duplicated form letter gives an insight into the lives of people you care about. But I prefer a couple of hastily-scribbled personalized lines.

It's good to live where people treat those less fortunate to food baskets, warm clothing and children's toys. School and church programs that add to the true meaning of Christmas are created through the energy of those willing to share their time and talents.

Special holidays of the past stand out in our minds. The warmth of family ties is always a blessing. Having been born into the lifestyle of the depression of the '20's things were a lot different then, but those were also special times. There were always lots of relatives and friends to share the occasion and homemade gifts had a special meaning.

I especially remember waking up on Christmas morning thinking I would be the first one to be up and about. And we would rush downstairs to pounce on our folks. Not until years later did we realize that our Dad had already been up to light the gas lantern and fire up the wood stove so we wouldn't freeze our fannies while dashing about in flannel nightgowns.

Gifts then were usually something truly needed, like a warm jacket. But the stand-out gifts of those years were a homemade wagon, a Montgomery Ward doll and a newly-painted second-hand sled.

The tree was trimmed with popcorn, cranberry and paper chains that we created before Christmas. Small candleholders were clipped to branches though we never got to light the candles. And the tinfoil covered star at the top was a magnificent creation or so we thought.

December was hog-processing time. Hams and bacon were put down in brine and then smoked. Head cheese, pickled pigs' feet, lard and sausage were part of the lengthy process. After the last squeal was forgotten, the cracklings were the goodies we enjoyed the most.

It was then time to capture the birds that would be the main Christmas dinner entree. These turkeys had the run of the ranch. And with unclipped wings their roosting places were sometimes in trees. However with the aid of a lantern, it was possible to catch them at night.

On one lone chicken-catching mission, our mother had her sights on a bird while standing atop of the hog fence. Her feet slipped and she landed unceremoniously in the hog wallow below. She never quite forgave us for rolling on the floor with laughter after she dripped up to the back door with only the whites of her eyes recognizable.

However neighbors shared with neighbors; once the turkeys were plucked everyone had a holiday bird. Vegetables from the summer garden were ready in jars and carrots were dried from the frozen ground. Along with store-bought hard candy there were sugar cookies, cream pies and fluffy divinity. Living on a ranch had distinct advantages as cows and chickens provided rich food substances. And no one had heard of cholesterol or hardening of the arteries.

There were neighborhood parties held in an old school house if weather permitted. However when snow drifts or snow made roads impassable, there were the farmer telephone lines. You could crank the old wall phone and everyone on the line could get into the conversation.

Times change with many new things to enrich our lives. Take care, count your blessings and have a safe memorable holiday. Buckle up, it's the law now, and don't eat more than your seat belt can accommodate.

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