

## JACKSONVILLE Christmas Party Planned

By BETTE HOSKINS  
Jacksonville Police Chief Frank Carter has announced that a Christmas opening and children's Christmas party will be held for all Jacksonville children at the Community hall at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 19. Carter also announced that a prize will be awarded for the best decorated window display in any of the town's business establishments.

A group of women met in the fire hall last Tuesday to repair street decorations which were installed Wednesday.

The Jacksonville Lions club announced that their combined Christmas party and ladies' night will be held Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 7:30 p.m. at in the Community hall.

The December Garden club meeting will be Dec. 18 in the home of Miss Claire Hanley. Hostess committee will be Mrs. Grace Noble, chairman, and co-hostesses Mrs. Ray Coleman and Mrs. R. J. Teerault. The meeting will include the Christmas party and gift exchange.

A speaker will discuss holiday trimmings, and roll call will be answered by discussing your favorite Christmas decoration.

The Garden club's November meeting was held at the Community hall. Hostesses were Mrs. Leonard McKee and Miss Claire Hanley. The program included Guest Speaker service, who discussed conservation with intelligent use of natural resources and forest service methods of controlled tree cutting, slash burning, the care of roads and cleaning of

## Prayer Stop by Afghanistan Bus Is Institution, Liebman Says

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles by Jerry Liebman, 29, son of Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Liebman, 4282 Colver rd., Medford, who is on a trip around the world. This article continues Liebman's discussion of the bus trip across Afghanistan. At the close of the last article, the bus had stopped for prayers.

By JERRY LIEBMAN  
A great institution, those prayer stops. I wonder if there is any man more frustrated than a good Mohammedan on a long airplane ride!

These prayers are only part of the daily quota. Each time the bus takes off occasions the chanting of a prayer. A single voice intones the prayer and the entire bus joins in at the pauses, myself included.

If a wreck is passed on the road (an accident, I mean, not another bus), a special prayer is chanted.

Actually, there is a great deal beautiful and affecting in watching the lines of men at their daily prayers, especially at early dawn or in the last rays of the sun, deep in the desert. And yet, I can't help feeling that the prayer is too much a ritual, something to be done, after which the men can return to their thievery, lying and cheating, all of which are taken for granted in the Middle East and in Afghanistan. These men touch beauty in their lives while at prayer, and then . . .

Hazards of Bus  
The hazards of bus travel extend far beyond the tortures inflicted by the machine and driver. Bandits prey on the buses in this wild Afghanistan. The incidents are diminishing and yet are enough to have caused me much difficulty and, I'll admit it, a bit of anxiety. I found myself absolutely unable to find a seat on any bus from Herat on the Iran-Afghanistan border south to the Farah. I was getting a good old-fashioned

the Village church here called at Mrs. Reed's home.

Mrs. Rose Rippey returned this week after spending three weeks visiting in Fresno, Calif., at the home of her sister, Mrs. M. J. Reynolds.

Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Shepard are parents of a daughter born Dec. 6. She has been named Karen Lynn.

Mrs. Jean Hewlett and daughter, Hollie, left Tuesday to spend the Christmas holidays in Sherwood, N.D., at the home of Mrs. Hewlett's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Guy Haan.

run-around and couldn't find out why.

I found a bus leaving one evening, went to buy my ticket and was told the bus was not leaving. The next day I discovered the bus had left shortly after my inquiry.

Another bus, the next day, was filled, I was told. A strange argument since the driver gets an extra percentage for every passenger he can squeeze on. After two days of run-around, I was informed that the private bus lines do not take foreigners, but that the mail bus, which carries both passengers and mail, is authorized by the government to transport foreigners.

No Explanation  
No explanation of this rule was available. I applied to the postmaster himself, but was told I could not go, that he was unwilling to take the responsibility. Again, I could not pray out an explanation. Finally, after hustling after the chief of police of Herat, the government traffic officer and the government transport officer, I was given a policeman who forced a bus to take me.

I was left to form my own explanation, and I think it is the right one. Buses are juicy bait for bandits, and one with a foreigner aboard is a great temptation, possible government recrimination aside.

No bus driver wanted to take a chance with me. An American man and his Swedish companion had mysteriously disappeared in the Nerat-Farah area within the last year, and three Americans just before that.

Passengers With Guns  
Almost every passenger on my bus carried a rifle and I had pointed out to me a shop where I could purchase almost any sort of gun for myself. The temptation was great, believe me. I think Afghanistan must surely be the only country on this earth today that encourages the visitor to bring a weapon with him. The visa application takes it for granted that the visitor will bring such protection.

I'm convinced the roads of Afghanistan are especially designed to aid the bandits. I have never seen such a superb collection of ambush spots per running mile in all my world travel. I probably was overly aware of such spots admittedly.

Most of Afghanistan is a wild, unmapped, mountainous area, and road traffic labors slowly through defiles and clings to cliff edges, all perfect spots for a bandit ruse.

On the road from Kandahar to Kabul, the bus was

surrounded at each village stop by armed soldiers. Curiously, no one would admit the real purpose of the soldiers, and took any mention of bandits as a personal affront.

Bandit Country  
The Khyber Pass, Afghanistan's link with ancient India, is a notorious bad stretch of bandit country. The nomads, who owe allegiance neither to Afghanistan nor to Pakistan, will surround their selected bus or truck prey with flocks of camels, forcing the vehicle to a standstill. They then rush aboard, grab the goods they need and disappear into the wild canyons known only to themselves.

A few years ago, an American Marine, riding at the back of an embassy truck and armed only with a large stick, fought off such a mob for two hours until help arrived. For some reason, the nomads did not open fire, perhaps to avoid calling the guards of the pass to the scene.

I had a brush with violence during the bus trip from Farah to Kandahar, in the midst of one of the world's most terrifying brutal deserts. To avoid the blasting heat desert traffic travels at night and this incident happened at 2 o'clock in the morning under a magnificent Afghan moon which illuminated the stark desert scene with a brilliant blue light.

Bus Had Stopped  
The bus had stopped at the request of three road laborers who had popped up out of the desert vastness. The workers insisted on boarding the bus free of charge with their baggage and tools but the driver balked. The discussion grew heated, a bit of pushing around occurred, and the argument became more violent until one of the laborers picked up the huge chock of wood used behind the wheels and with a burst of fury dislocated the driver's shoulder. This block of wood is studded with two railway spikes that dig into the ground and these spikes gashed the head of the driver. This was the center skirmish of many now taking place in the desert area. The bus passengers had joined in against more road workers who had sprung from the desert night as mysteriously as the first three.

As for myself, I was painfully aware of just how far away was the nearest American Consulate (and any military help for that matter) so I kept a strictly neutral position in the bus. I was peaceful Switzerland w a c h i n g France and Germany clash away at each other. God knows what would have happened had a foreigner joined the fray, Afghans being a fickle and emotional lot of men.

Battle Ended  
The moonlit battle ended with the sand torn apart, the bus driver incapacitated, and many an Afghan drenched in blood. All this weird scene, its sudden violence over a trivial matter typical of the Middle East, had taken place on the wild, magnificent desert stage and lit by the burning moon. Personally, I'm willing to state that this is one of the attractions of travelling by bus in Afghanistan.

Third class bus voyaging meant I was leading a curious and amusing black and white, prince and pauper type life. In Iran, for example, I travelled by bus only to reach Tehran where two of my hosts were the Swiss Ambassador at the Embassy and Prince Houssein Firanz at the Summer Palace.

I held a letter to the Shah of Iran from a mutual friend safe in my dusty knapsack with my two shirts and one tired suit, washable variety. It took a bit of adjusting to step off a third class bus and to be confronted with Embassy luncheons, complete with seemingly miles of gleaming dishes, wines, and completely startling utensils, long grown unfamiliar through eating with fingers at utensil-less roadside mud huts.

Motion To Restrain Morgan Turned Down  
Salem—UPI—Circuit Judge Val D. Sloper Monday denied a motion to restrain Public Utility Commissioner Howard Morgan from conducting a public hearing on two applications for certificates to furnish natural gas in Wasco county.

Date for the hearing has been set for Dec. 22 at the Wasco county courthouse at The Dalles.

GET PAY INCREASE  
Paris—UPI—A government decree has raised salaries of French senators and deputies from \$714 to \$922.25 a month.

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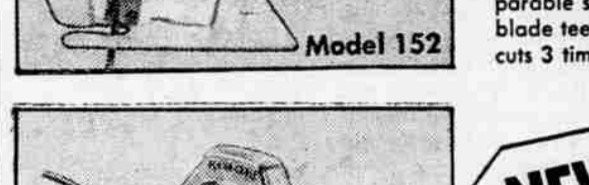
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