

Rural Reflections--

BY MAUDE ZIEGLER
Mail Tribune Correspondent
APPLIGATE VALLEY—They took a journey away from Christmas. Perhaps it was a good thing. It didn't last long.

Of late years it seemed that Christmas wasn't as it used to be. They weren't a bit anxious about it. So many endless cards to get ready. They gave a few gifts, and Martha knitted some and wrapped small jars of blueberry jelly. The town was filled with gay things to buy, but what for? Pauline and Jim had everything they wanted. So did Ted and Kate. The kids had their own cars, and had owned watches and skis and every thing else from the time they were little tykes.

An orange once was a real treat on Christmas—and candy and nuts. But not now. People were tired of oranges. And some people made bold to say they wished Christmas was over. Maybe it was because Martha and Sam were not young any more.

There was a skiff of snow on the ground, and Martha dumped crumbs from her cookie sheet on the ground for the birds, and Sam put hay in the racks for the cows. At lunch time they talked about whatever was wrong with Christmas.

Then they read some things, even by Christian writers, which said that Christmas is pagan, dating from ancient days

of sun god worship. Also that there is nothing in the Bible about Christmas nor the date of Jesus' birth.

They read that those early pagan people watching the winter retreat of the sun, rejoiced wildly with its return toward the earth, and set mid-winter as the date of a great festival, and that the date has come down to us. Martha had to admit it was true. There was condemnation of giving each other gifts, and of cutting the fir tree as in Jer. 10:2-4. The Christmas wreath was symbolic of the round sun. Mistletoe was considered a disgrace because it was a token of revelry, as were the Yule log and candles.

Martha and Sam felt a little low, a little perturbed. Sam remembered 40 years ago when they sat around the heater in the middle of the school house and practiced their Christmas dialogues. One boy said he couldn't participate. This must have been the reason.

A carol came over the radio. It lifted their hearts and Martha saw clouds in vander sky that looked full of snow. Then she remembered. The Christ Child's birth is in the Bible. "And . . . she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

"And there were in the same

country shepherds abiding in the field keeping watch over their flocks by night.

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them . . ."

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not . . . For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Martha knew that the Spirit of the Christ Child in the risen Saviour abides in hearts—re-pentant hearts—on Christmas and all the days throughout the centuries.

Barbara Beck Is Prospect Queen

PROSPECT—The queen elected by the students of Prospect High School for their annual snow-ball dance was Barbara Beck, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Beck of Prospect. The girl is a senior at the school.

First princess was Diana Moore, a sophomore. Second princess was freshman Sharon McElmurry. Third princess was junior Rebecca Pitts.

The dance was well attended by the students. Only two parents turned out for the event, however.

Refreshments were served by the boys.



A CHRISTMAS TREE STORY — In many communities of the Rogue Valley, residents go out and cut a large Christmas tree to be erected in the center of town each year. But in Prospect, which is really in the Christmas tree country, this effort isn't necessary. The community is blessed with a real live Christmas tree in the heart of town. The idea of making this large tree Prospect's community Christmas Tree was first brought up in 1951 by Grace Larson, then a member of the Lions Auxiliary there. The idea was turned over to the men of the Prospect Lions. In December, 1951, a group of the men headed by Eugene Burrill and L. E. (Cleve) Cleveburg started the project with a fund of \$74. Each year \$20 is spent to decorate the tree and add more lights as it grows taller. Cleveburg designed a new star in 1961.

Regional Roundup

by Cleve Twitchell
Mail Tribune Regional Editor

The Christmas season usually brings with it a tide of editorial comment in newspapers and magazines. Occasionally, some really memorable words are written.

One of our favorite Christmas editorials appeared two years ago in a little magazine, one that isn't on the newstands and has a limited circulation. The thoughts expressed were not new, but we liked the way they were arranged. It went like this:

"The 1961 Christmas season is beginning in a world torn by strife, dissension, fear, and a confused uncertainty toward the future. In city streets, Christmas lights, bells and other decorations are hung beside signs pointing to buildings designated as 'bomb shelters' and to 'emergency evacuation routes.' In food stores, counters which have been piled high with Christmas goodies, have at the other end a stack of plain cartons labeled

'survival food kits. Keep one in your car and another in your home at all times.' The postman brings us a handful of gaily decorated Christmas cards with the caption, 'Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward Men'—and a grim little booklet entitled 'How to Survive a Nuclear Attack.'

"A spokesman, looking down upon this planet from the vantage point of true culture, might wonder at the colossal ego that prompts us to consider ourselves a race of intelligent beings. Yet the fact that we still celebrate the Christmas season indicates that there is intelligence among us.

"One of our great weaknesses as a world race is that we tend to follow, almost blindly, those who have achieved what we consider to be 'success.' We always think of success in terms of wealth, social position and political or military power. We feel that those who acquire these things are the 'Great Men' of their time, and therefore should be followed and imitated as closely as possible.

"Jesus of Nazareth, whose birth the Christmas season celebrates, if judged solely by these standards, would have been one of the greatest failures of all times. He had no wealth at all, no social position and no political power; yet we remember Him and have long since forgotten the successful men of His time . . ."

We personally like to look upon Christmas as a day in tribute to all men in history and those living today who—like Jesus of Nazareth—have been willing to buck the social conventions of their day in order to do what they felt was right.

Happy Camp Legion Post Gathers Books To Go to Hospitals

HAPPY CAMP — The Happy Camp Post 530 of the American Legion has gathered together about 375 paperback books which were taken to the Red Cross center for distribution to veteran hospitals in California, according to L. A. Bright, commander of the local post.

The Legion and its auxiliary unit here have also contributed money each year to buy gifts for hospitalized servicemen and veterans.

According to Commander Bright, American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary contributed a total of \$1,550,000 toward welfare of children in 1962.

Santa Claus Pays Annual Visit to Hornbrook School

HORNBROOK — Santa Claus made his annual visit Thursday evening at the local elementary school and distributed sacks of candy, apples, and oranges to all the children in the community, beginning with the preschoolers, and continuing through the sophisticated high schoolers, who approached the old gentleman with sheepish grins on their faces.

Santa's appearance followed the presentation of the school Christmas program. A play, "The Late Christmas," written by Ronnie Watt, was presented by the members of the sixth and seventh grades.

Kathy Slavens was the author of the skit given by the eighth grade, and was a takeoff on the Matt Dillon TV play, complete with a very authentic "Chester," portrayed by Larry McMaster. An appreciative audience responded with laughter to the efforts of the youngsters.

Next on the program was a selection of songs and a Christmas folk dance by the children of the third grade under the direction of their teacher, Mrs. Hazel Rohrer, who furnished the piano music for the dance.

The first and second graders, with music played by their teacher, Mrs. Alice Rutledge, also gave a selection of appropriate songs and folk dancing. A Nativity Tableau was portrayed by the students of the fourth and fifth grades, with a background of songs.

Principal Willis Jones also directed the eighth grade pupils in a group of Christmas carols.

Justice Court Cases Increase at Gold Hill

GOLD HILL — Norman R. Matteson, judge of the Gold Hill District Justice Court, reports a total of 925 cases from Jan. 1, 1963 to Dec. 13, 1963, which is an increase of 119 cases over the previous year, from Jan. 1, 1962 to Jan. 1, 1963.

To Dec. 13 there have been 875 traffic cases and 38 other cases making the 925 total, he said. In comparison to the previous year Jan. 1, 1962 to Jan. 1, 1963, there were 781 traffic cases and 25 others making a total of 806, he noted, for the entire year.



C. M. Litwiler



Mrs. Litwiler

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Regional News

Varied Christmas Program At Tiller

TILLER — Tiller Elementary School presented a varied Christmas program to a full auditorium Thursday night.

The three bands, beginning band, cadet band, and the senior band played several numbers. Miss Peggy Tibbets played a piano solo, "Starlight Waltz". Grade school chorus sang "Jingle Bells" and "Up on the Housetop". Skits were "Christmas Dinner" by the fifth and sixth grades; "Christmas in Other Lands" by the third and fourth grades; and

"Santa's Elves" by the first and second grades.

After the program Santa Claus arrived from the North Pole and distributed sacks of goodies to the children. School will resume at Tiller Jan. 2.

RECOVERING WILDERVILLE — Word has been received that Mrs. Gladys Combs of Wilderville is recovering from her bout with pneumonia although she is still in Josephine General Hospital.

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