

KEEP THOSE CARDS AND LETTERS COMING

One of the joys of Christmas is sending and receiving cards. This custom, I understand, began in England. I don't know who started sending a narrative report of family happenings along with the card.

You know the thing I'm talking about. It's usually a type-written, single-spaced, two page "to whom it may concern" sort of thing that tells you more than you want to know about the dear friends who have you on their list.

They start out so humbly: "This was just a so-so year for the Flintstone. Bob was made a vice-president of his company; now he'll have less time to play golf. Judy was homecoming queen, and after graduation she'll spend a year in Europe, you know, trying to see a little of the world before going into television work. Ha! Who knows—she may become another Barbara Walters. Robbie isn't sure whether he'll go to Yale or Harvard. It's hard to tell about him, even though he was voted 'most likely to succeed.' And oh yes, he caught the winning touchdown pass in their final game."

The letter goes on and on: "But this was a sad year for the Flintstone family. Aunt Clara who had been sick so long finally died and we've had to dispose of her things. Now we're stuck with another beach house. With all the volunteer work Ethel does we don't see how in the world we'll time to use the house in Florida and one on Cape Cod too. On top of that, the couple we met in Canada last summer want us to go on a cruise with them. Old Bob says we'd better live it up while we can!"

By the time you get to the finish line you've had about all you can take of this yuk and self-approration, masquerading as glad tidings of great joy. Maybe I shouldn't be too hard on folks who use this method to spread good cheer at Christmas. If counting their blessings has a salutary effect, then the practice must not be totally void of value. And too, it's a natural thing to share good news with friends you care about, so maybe it's alright.

But one of these epistles we received last year I must tell you about, as it fit the mold like none other we've ever gotten. It was from our good friend Virginia, who sends this kind of report every year, so we were not surprised. The first thing to fall out of the envelope was a recent photograph of herself. That should have told us something right there. Right off, she told us she had taken up modeling at two leading department stores in her town, and "this takes a big part of my time," she added. Big deal, I thought, so what else is new? "I have to take modeling lessons twice a week, so you can see how busy I am."

Then she casually mentioned she had been around the world for the umpteenth time. "Singapore, Cairo, Hong Kong—These are places you simply must see," she tantalized us, knowing we do well to get up to Indiana twice a year. Then she wrote of driving across the country all by herself—not once, but twice, and then she told of driving to Miami once alone and to Houston. In her spare time she had done volunteer work for a number of volunteer agencies and had received special recognition from the mayor. The

recitation of so many accomplishments sounded much like a Miss America contestant trying to impress the judges..

Finally, she wished us all a good Christmas and a prosperous New Year, closing with her usual hopes and plans for the coming year, which included, despite her battle fatigue, another trip to the Holy Land and speaking to the Gold Star Mothers at their national convention. At the very end she tacked on a personal note: “And I think that’s doing pretty well for an 81 year old lady!”

Well, I think so too, Virginia, and I take back all those spiteful things that have been nesting in my mind. If I had your energy and talent I’d be sending the word to all the world too. You’re entitled to that privilege. And more power to you!!

Yes, Santa Claus, there is a Virginia!! And a lot of them are right here in McKendree Village too—Telling the Story of Christmas every day they live. So keep those cards and letters coming, folks, not only at Christmas but throughout the year, for you have lots to tell!!

Talky Christmas Cards

One of the joys of Christmas is sending and receiving cards. This custom, I understand, began in England. I don't know who started sending a narrative report of family happenings along with the card.

You know the thing I'm talking about. It's usually a type-written, single-spaced, two-page "To whom it may concern" sort of thing that tells you more than you want to know about the dear friends who have you on their list!

They start out so humbly: "This was just a so-so year for the Flintstones. Bob was made a vice president of his company; now he'll have less time to play golf. Judy was homecoming queen, and after graduation she'll spend a year in Europe. You know, trying to see a little of the world before going into television work. Ha! Who knows? She may become another Barbara Walters!

"Robbie isn't sure whether he'll go to Yale or Harvard. It's hard to tell about him, poor kid, even though he was voted the 'most likely to succeed' in his class. And, oh yes, he did catch the winning touchdown pass in their final game."

The letter goes on, and on: "But this was a sad year for the Flintstone family. Aunt Clara who had been sick for so long finally died, and we've had to dispose of her things. Now we're stuck with another beach house. With all the volunteer work Ethel does, we don't see how in the world we'll have time to use the house in Florida and the one at Cape Cod, too.



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With

Bishop Holliman

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"On top of that, we met a real nice couple on our trip to Canada last summer who want us to go on a cruise with them. Old Bob says we'd better live it up while we can, who knows how long the Republicans can stay in!"

By the time you get to the finish line, you've had about all you can take of this yuk and self-approbation, masquerading as glad tidings of great joy.

Maybe I shouldn't be too hard on folks who use this method to spread good cheer at Christmas. If counting their blessings — "Name them one by one" — as the old hymn suggests, has a salutary effect on them, then the custom must not be totally void of value. And, too, it's a natural thing to want to share good news with friends you care about. So maybe it's all right.

But one of these epistles we received this year — I think we got five — I simply must share with you, for it fits the mold like none other we've ever gotten.

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It was from our friend, Virginia, whom we've known several years. She always sends this kind of card, so we were not surprised.

The first thing that fell out of the envelope was a recent photograph she'd had made of herself. That should have told us something right there. We hastily glanced at the Christmas card, then later, when we had an hour to kill, we read her narration of 1984 happenings.

Right off, she told us she had taken up modeling work at two leading department stores in her town, and "This takes a big part of my time," she said. Big deal, I thought. So what else is new? "I have to take modeling lessons twice a week, so you can see how busy I am," she added.

Then she casually mentioned she'd been around the world for the umpteenth time. Said she was really getting tired of so much travel. I could understand that.

"Singapore, Hongkong, Cairo — these are places you really must see," she tantalized us, knowing that going to Dallas to see the grandkids is about all we can afford.

Then she wrote of driving across the country all by herself — not once, but twice — which I thought was a crazy thing to do after viewing her photograph again. On top of that, she'd driven to

Miami once and to a meeting in Houston — alone.

In her spare time, she had done volunteer work for a number of charitable agencies, and had received special recognition from the mayor. The recitation of all her accomplishments sounded much like a Miss America contestant trying to impress the judges.

Finally, she wished us all a good Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year, closing with her usual hopes and plans for the coming year, which include, despite her battle fatigue, another trip to the Holy Land, her modeling work and a few speaking engagements across the country.

At the very end, she tacked on a personal note, "And I think that's doing pretty well for an 81 year old lady!"

Of course, I'm being facetious as I make tongue-in-cheek remarks about this kind of Christmas greeting. It's always a joy to hear from friends and receive a report of what happened to them during the year. Especially from Virginia, who travels over the world, drives her little VW to Texas to speak to a Gold Star Mothers Convention and who decided to become a model at age 81!

So it's all right if she wants to broadcast to the world her doings of the past year. She's entitled to that privilege, and if I had the energy and enthusiasm Virginia has, I'd send out a report of it too. So I take back all those spiteful things I've said about this kind of Christmas greeting.

Yes, Santa Claus, there is a Virginia!

Celebrate The 4th!

John Adams wrote that "The second of July 1776 will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America."

So why do we celebrate America's independence on the 4th instead of the 2nd of July? Because "July 4th" sounds more melodious and poetic?

No, we celebrate the 4th because that is the day the Declaration was actually approved by the Continental Congress, printed and signed by John Hancock, and eventually by 55 others.

The Continental Congress had declared two days earlier, on July 2nd, that the "Colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent states." Two days later, they made it official, and that's why we eat watermelons, go fishing, play baseball — and put on parades on the 4th instead of the 2nd!

John Adams would be proud of Cookeville's celebration of the Fourth this year. It's starting out with a bang! On the night of July 3, at 9:30, there will be a fireworks display at the Mall. Even though Adams, one of the most fired-up signers of the Declaration, was writing about the 2nd of July instead of the 4th, he said:

"It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games and sports, guns, bells, bonfires . . . from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore!"

Well, Dr. Robert DuBey and his fellow Kiwanis Club members are doing what they can to live up to the early traditions set for Independence Day



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celebrations, and the fireworks display is but a prelude to other exciting things set for the day.

DuBey, a retired Tennessee Tech professor and past-president of the Kiwanis Club, heads the Club's community service committee, and helping him is Bob Valentine. They've been at work for nearly six months now, planning a fantastic program for July 4th, and it looks like they're about to pull it off!

To start the day, next Wednesday morning at 8 o'clock, the "Eternal Flame" in front of the Veterans' Memorial Building will be re-lighted to honor the men and women who have fought for their country. The Flame, which first burned in 1964 when Maj. Vernie Tosh was Post commander of the American Legion, was extinguished in 1973 when the energy crisis hit. As part of the focus on liberty, the "Eternal Flame" will burn on special days to remind all of us that freedom comes with a heavy price.

Taking part in the re-lighting ceremonies will be Maj. Tosh, James Lynn, Mayor Vaughn Howard,

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Ernest Jones, Len K. Mahler and other members of the American Legion and VFW.

Then at 10 o'clock that morning, a traditional "Fourth of July" parade will begin its march on East 8th St., on to North Washington, to the Courthouse, and then west on Broad, ending up just beyond the Cookeville depot.

According to Mary Jean DeLozier, chairperson of the Depot Preservation Committee, the depot will be a focal point for parade viewers and participants. The depot will be open and Dr. Calvin Dickinson and Henry Ferrell will be there selling hotdogs and cold drinks, with proceeds going to support the depot restoration program. Jack Barton will display his model trains, and other railroad materials will be there for parade viewers to see.

And, DuBey says, fire trucks will be placed at the depot for youngsters to ogle over, and square dancing will go on in the parking area adjacent to the depot.

It sounds like the parade committee is on the right track in making the depot part of its parade package. The railroads, for sure, were at the forefront in the development of this nation, and it's not out of line to

single out institutions as well as great movements and giant leaders of history on this Independence Day.

A lot of folks will take part in the parade, DuBey says, and there will be something for everyone. Tennessee's Miss Junior Miss, Christy Darnell, daughter of Coach Gary and Sandra Darnell, will be riding a float, and it's not clear whether Clarcie Bush, Senior Olympics walking champion and director of Cookeville's Senior Citizen Center, will be walking or riding. But she'll be there!

DuBey's committee has some big names on it: County Executive John Gentry, Chamber of Commerce director Eldon Leslie, Councilman Raymond (Bull) Brown, Dr. Charles Golden, Tennessee Tech administrator, and former Chief of Police Bill Bilyeu.

The committee is pretty excited about these July 4th activities. They have worked long and hard in putting together this expression of patriotism, and we salute them for what they're doing.

A History Footnote: Both Thomas Jefferson and John Adams died July 4th, 1826, on the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Five years later to the day, James Monroe died. The nation viewed these deaths not as accidental occurrences but as signs of Divine Providence.

'Granny' And Prayer

I don't understand all this commotion over prayer in schools. Everybody knows that as long as they teach math and give exams, kids will pray.

The prayer squabble reminds me of the man who took his young son to Washington to see how Congress worked. When the session was over, the little boy asked: "Dad, why did the preacher come out, look over the group, then pray for them?"

The dad replied: "He didn't do it that way, son. The preacher came out, looked over the group, then prayed for the country."

My grandmother, I guess, could have set the people straight on this issue of prayer, as I'm sure she knew a good bit about praying. She lived to be 96, and her religion was the old-fashioned kind with a whole lot of good common sense mixed with it.

Born during the early days of the Civil War, she was a wiry, fiery sort of person, given to plain talk and plenty of it. She looked much like "Granny" on the Beverly Hillbilly TV show and had her strength and vitality. Like "Granny," she could set folks straight in a minute on most matters, and there was little doubt about what her position was.

In addition to her hard work, it was her common sense, natural instincts and faith that enabled her to survive 96 years without the help of computers, TVs and diet colas.



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My grandmother could predict the weather more accurately than the Channel 5 weatherman. She could tell, for instance, when it would rain by whether or not the "pot boiled dry." If her knees ached, that was a sign of dry weather. Gardening was one of her specialties, and she knew to plant corn when the moon was "right."

You didn't visit a doctor's office in her day, and none ever came to her house until she was passed 90 and had to go to the hospital for the first time.

A little dab of Watkin's liniment usually cured her aches and pains. If not, a dose of calomel would. A mustard plaster applied to the chest was more powerful than today's miracle drugs and was a sure cure for a minor illness like pneumonia.

During the week, my grandmother always wore an apron and a bonnet. No matter where she went — an apron and a bonnet. Except on Sunday when she

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would dress up in her finest, and that meant a blue dress and a hat with a wide brim.

In my collection of "unforgettable memories" there is that picture of her sitting on her front porch on a warm Sunday afternoon, still dressed in her "church" clothes. She had been reading her Bible and had fallen asleep. The book was open and her hand was resting on the page.

My grandmother would not have understood the issues flowing from the prayer amendment, nor would she have perceived the effects such legislation would have on public education. But that would not have bothered her. She would have been astonished that the issue even came up, and she would have wondered why people thought they couldn't pray anytime, anywhere.

The assertion that "God has been expelled from the schools" would have been a bunch of foolishness in her mind, I think. Her God was too big to be expelled from any place, and I think her response to politi-

cians and church leaders who make the claim that "God has been outlawed" would have been, "Your God is too small."

Prayer to her was a very personal, private matter, and she talked to God throughout the day, wherever she was — over the wash tub, the cook stove or at the kitchen sink.

No Supreme Court decision could have kept her from praying, because her God was not limited to the classroom, the principal's office or the Baptist church she attended. God was everywhere she wanted Him to be; but first He was in her heart, and she prayed to Him at odd times and in odd places.

No doubt she would ask why students can't do the same today, if they really want to.

I'm sure my grandmother would not expect the government to come to her aid in the exercise of her faith and the development of her prayer life. In short, I think she would tell the politicians to back off and find another horse to ride.

Finally, I suspect my grandmother's assessment of the whole furor about school prayer would be summed up this way: "Everybody talking about prayer these days ain't praying."

This article appeared in the Coconino Herald-Artisan in 1985.

TAKE OUT

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With Bishop Holliman 4/8/1984

FDR's Death Jolted Us

I suppose as time goes on the exact date President Roosevelt died will make little difference to the country and the world. With each year that passes, it matters less whether his death occurred in April, June or January. And in the long view of history, the year won't matter either.

But for us who were a part of that time and place, April 12 is a key to be punched in our memory bank, for it was on that date in 1945 FDR died, and it made a lot of difference to us then.

Folks old enough to remember will always be able to tell you where they were and what they were doing when word was flashed over the radio that this giant oak had fallen. Only Kennedy's death less than 20 years later could overshadow the events of that day and have a greater impact on the American people.

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Roosevelt, you see, had been on the national and world stage so long that many could not recall a time when he was not president, and his death, coming as it did on the eve of victory in Europe, seemed to be a cruel hoax to play on him and the rest of us who were looking to him to save us from Hitler.

Like our mothers, Roosevelt, we thought, was indestructible and would live forever. We should have known better.

But we who were there and were a part of that time and place still remember.

I was on a US Navy destroyer in Iceland when I heard the news. I recall the shock and grief we felt at the death of our commander-in-chief. Whether you were a Roosevelt supporter made little difference at the time. A memorial service was held aboard ship the day after he died, and we all wondered what effect his death would have on the war.

When my ship returned to New York several weeks later, I went down to the office of The New York Times to obtain a copy of the paper that came out the day he died. The price was only five cents and as I pulled out a nickel, the man said: "Take it — there's no charge." I still have the newspaper, now encased in glass and preserved for my grandchildren to read.

'A Pretty Good Place'

May 6, 1984



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When I found out nearly 20 years ago that we were to move to Cookeville, we subscribed to the **Herald-Citizen** a few weeks before we moved to get a feel for the town and to learn what was going on. Back then, the H-C was a twice-a-week paper, not nearly as streamlined and modern in its appearance as it is today.

Upon receiving the paper one day in Gadsden, Alabama, where we lived, we were startled to read in box-car letters across the top of the front page, "Town To Get New Street Lights." My children thought that was a pretty corny headline, and they wondered if other exciting things like that went on here. "What kind of town are we moving to?" they asked.

Well, I wasn't sure. We drove up here on a beautiful autumn day to house-hunt and look the place over. At that time — 1964 — only a small section of 140 was open. There were two restaurants, I think, in town, and the development of South Jefferson was several years away. This did not look like the place where we wanted to spend the rest of our lives, and we did not expect to.

A few months later, while driving down Dixie Avenue one Sunday morning and drinking, in the beauty of a Christmas card scene after an overnight snowfall, my children remarked: "Daddy you can move on, but we're staying here in Cookeville."

Now, as I look back, 20 years older and maybe a little wiser, I've decided that if getting new street lights is the hottest news story the local paper can run, then this must be a pretty good place to live and it is where I want to stay.

So let's not fret if the top story happens to be about the search for a suitable landfill or a quarry where we can gravel for gravel. If those are the stories that rate the big headlines, we're not in bad shape at all.

You Can 'Go Home Again'

Cookeville, TN

June 24, 1984

You can go home again — at least for a little while - in spite of what Thomas Wolfe said.

Recently, some of us went back, and for a brief, shining moment it was 1938 again and the band was playing Glenn Miller's "In The Mood."

We went back to where our roots were — a place called Irondale — a small town on the edge of Birmingham, and for a few hours we remembered.

We didn't need a calendar to tell us that time was moving with the speed of the fast express trains that used to split the town wide open.

No, the touch of gray, the fast-receding hairlines and an extra bulge here and there said it all, It had been a long time since this group had laughed and played together, gone swimming at Grant's Mill, and had written in a high school yearbook, "Roses are red/Violets are blue/Somebody loves you/You'll never guess who!"

But there we were on a June night. The call had gone out to the "boys and girls" who had been teenagers in the 1930s and early '40s to "come home again," and 140 of us answered the call. From Texas, Louisiana, Florida, South Carolina and Georgia, as well as Tennessee and Alabama, we came. Thank goodness for name tags!

It was a grand evening - nostalgia at its very best. Small-town America when grown-up kids return to try to recapture a moment of their youth, never quite willing to admit to the inevitability of time.

So we went back to savor the memories of growing up in a small town, ~~even though it was next door to a big city.~~ It was a bittersweet time for most of us then, for the Depression was on and World War II was pressing down upon us. But when viewed in retrospect, it was an innocent, carefree, simple time — incomprehensible to today's youth when measured by today's standards.

Irondale looked better than I'd remembered from my last visit. The houses seemed well-kept, the streets were clean, and the trees bigger and shadier. The Methodists have built a new church, and shopping malls now cover the ground where we used to play. In my day, one policeman, Mr. Nations, could patrol the whole town on foot; now it takes a regiment. Dr. Brock's drug store, which was the only cool place in town, has long since shut down, and that's a loss for humanity.

I visited Mrs. Griffin, who is 92 years old, and sat on her porch swing on a pleasant summer afternoon and looked down a street filled with memories of a long- ago and far-away time.

I remembered the big blizzard of 1940 when the hill froze over, and every night for a week we went sledding — a rare experience in Alabama. My youngest brother, with four of us aboard, rammed the homemade sled into a car parked at the bottom. That ended that fun.

I remembered the time our church group took a basket of food to a needy family on a cold Thanksgiving afternoon, and the warmth we got from that. I remembered the



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baseball diamond where we used to play, and the grocery store where I worked on Saturdays — both places now used for bigger things.

And finally, I remembered special people, places and events — the stuff dreams are made of when you're an 18 year old boy in a small town.

The dinner that evening was a memorable event, not unlike the kind you'd attend in Cookeville when folks come home again. Only the names would be different.

The invocation was given by Norman, the minister in the group; and he thanked God "for pleasant memories" and for teachers and friends who'd influenced our lives. The former town mayor, Marshall, paid tribute to deceased friends, and we all bowed our heads in a moment of silence.

There were no heroes in the group — unless you'd call all of them heroes. They all seemed to be solid, stable people who adhered the work ethic and whose traditional values had been shaped by the home, school and church when they and the world were younger. An acorn doesn't fall far from the tree, you know.

The "boys of summer": were there: **Ralph and James, Albert and Emmett**, whose baseball prowess may have declined some, but not much. **Betty Jo** had made it big in Georgia politics, recently having had her picture made with President Reagan.

Jo Helen spiced up the evening with her story about the crush a 13 year old girl once had on the new preacher's son. Gertrude touched our hearts with a sentimental poem about old times, and Claude read off the names of the 1934 class.

Charles, the class president, introduced the star of the evening, "**Mrs. Mac**," our Junior High English teacher, who told us how much she loved her "boys and girls," and she spoke with the same firmness and affection she used when we were in the seventh grade.

Numerous ones spoke of what growing up in a small town had meant to them; how their lives had been enriched by good teachers, good friends, and the inspiration older people had been to them in their young days. The recalling of fond memories would have gone on all night if "**Mrs. Mac**" hadn't rung the bell!

After **Mary Edna** presented gifts to some who had helped with the reunion and **Janice** distributed door prizes, we sang some songs, and it was over. We had gone home again!

Like fine wine, this was an evening to be sipped slowly and the aroma to be savored. But all too soon, it was another chapter in our book of memories.

In going home again, though, we are made aware that friends who helped shape our lives so long ago are still there, they still care, and this somehow ties yesterday to today, giving us something to hold on to as we face all our tomorrows.

Focus on Seniors

May 13, 1984

May traditionally is "Senior Citizens" month and Clarcie Bush, director of the Putnam County program for senior activities, tell me her program is going strong, touching the lives of about 1,000 persons throughout the county each month.

The Cookeville center currently serves 250 meals a day; provides Bible study classes; teaches others to crochet, paint, and develops hobbies and crafts for talented folks. On Thursday and Saturday nights they dance, play cards and shoot pool!

Browning must have known what he was talking about: "Grow old along with me," he wrote, "the best is yet to be." When I was growing up, my mother frowned on all three of those games. Dancing, card plying and shooting pool were considered sinful, and they were off limits. Now, senior citizens find them delightfully entertaining and not harmful at all!

Now, all over the country, older people are finding companionship, entertainment and new interests at centers just like the ones in Cookeville, Baxter, Monterey and Algood. But it was not always this way. Only in recent years has society decided to direct its energies and money to helping older people realized there is life after 65.

It's reported that of all the people who've ever live to be 65, one-fourth of them are alive today. That illustrates in dramatic fashion the gains made in life expectancy over the last 100 years. There is no doubt Americans are living a healthier and longer life than peddlers of doom and gloom would have us believe. A child born in this country today can expect to live 74.5 years. In 1900, it was 47 years.

Roy Byrd, local Social Security manager, reports that a woman, age 65, today can expect to live 18 years longer, and a man now 65 will live 14 years more. According to Roy, we already have around 26 million people over 65, and that number will increase steadily. By the year 2020, science's conquest of disease will add four more years to our longevity.

The political and economic clout of the "over 65" group is already enormous, and politicians, real estate developers and social planners curry their favor in strange and wondrous ways.

Some years ago, a study was made of 13,000 Americans over age 100 to find out why some people lived so long and others didn't. Here's a sample of replies the Social Security Administration got back:

"I got where I am by avoiding blondes."

"I try to follow the Ten Commandments."

"Always looking on the bright side."

"A swig of wine in the morning and a swig at night."

In 1900, about 100 out of every 1,000 infants born in this country died before their first birthdays. Today the rate is only 11 deaths per 1,000 births, and the infant mortality rate has been cut in half in the last 15 years.

Deaths from influenza, pneumonia and TB have



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declined sharply in the last 50 years. The big killers today are heart disease, strokes and related disorders. Records show that even cancer deaths have leveled off (except for lung cancer).

More Americans die in March than any other month, the supposition being that winter reduces resistance to disease. February and January are next. The month with the fewest deaths is August.

It's an indisputable fact that we are becoming an "older" population, with increasing numbers living well beyond 65. As time cuts deeper into the 20th century, we will surly see a continuing focus on "Senior Citizens" activities, and it is pure folly to think that we will not need nursing homes, retirement and recreational centers and income programs such as Social Security.

Somerset Maugham tells a story about a merchant in Baghdad who sent his servant to market to buy provisions. In a little while the servant returned, white and trembling: "Master, just now I was jostled by a woman in the crowd, and when I turned I saw that it was Death that jostled me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture. Lend me your horse, and I will ride to Samarra where Death will not find me."

The merchant lent him the horse and off he galloped as fast as he could go. Then the merchant went down to the market place and saw Death standing in the crowd, and he said: "Why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant this morning?"

Death replied: "That was not a threatening gesture. It was only a start of surprise; I was astonished to see him in Baghdad for I have an appointment with him tonight in Samarra."

More Americans every day are postponing their appointment in Samarra. Consequently, more of us will get a chance to find out if "the best is yet to be."

Mr. Jim Recalled August 12, 1984



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A few years ago, Minnie Pearl, the Grand Ole Opry star, wrote a book about her life. In plugging the book on TV, she told of her humble beginnings in her mythical hometown of "Grinders Switch," and she made some profound comments that bespeak of a wisdom not generally associated with the entertainment world.

"Grinders Switch" Minnie said, "is a state of mind. "It's a place in our imagination where life is simple, love exists, and security is represented by family and friends."

As I listened to her tell about this place that exists only in her imagination,, I concluded that all of us need a "Grinders Switch" in our lives to give us stability — the North Star that helps us set our course and gives us direction.

"Grinders Switch" can be our Rock of Gibraltar — the source of our strength and courage to face the vicissitudes of life. It can be the line we draw between right and wrong. It can be the spot beyond which we will not go and from which we will not retreat. It can be the establishment of principles and values that give orderliness and to our lives in a very complex, confusing world.

Furthermore, our "Grinders Switch" can represent absolutes — things one can believe in, can hold on to. Knowing, that come what may, there is a place of refuge where truth, love and security exist. A person, a truth, or a home one can believe in and always come back to.

All of us need a "Grinders Switch" in our lives, especially in the embodiment of a person we can look up to, respect, and emulate.

Standing tall and straight as a California redwood, he did not bend or break when the winds of doubt and uncertainty swept through the forest. You see, he had his own "Grinders Switch" and consequently he was able to serve his church, his community, his family and business with integrity, assurance and conviction.

My first recollection of "Mr. Jim" was of a visit we made — soon after I came to Cookeville — to a prospective church member. Being a newcomer myself, I was reluctant to go calling on others so soon, but off he and I went one night to invite this person to attend our church.

In the course of the visit, we soon learned our host was a member of another church, had no intentions of becoming a member of our church, and furthermore, was more interested in serving alcoholic refreshments than he was in discussing the work of the Almighty.

Mr. Carlen and I retreated as gracefully as we could, assuring this "lost sheep" that his name must have been given to us in error, and that we'd make no further attempt to entice him from his own congregation.

Mr. Carlen loved to tell about this experience when he and I were together and the matter of church visitation would come up. He would always laugh heartily and, of course, embellish the story more and more each time he told it.

As the years passed, and I had the privilege of working with Mr. Carlen in other church and community activities, I was impressed by his sincerity and faithfulness to those programs and issues in which he believed and to which he gave his time and money.

In more ways than one, he was a "tower of strength," and it was refreshing and heartening to look upon one who still adhered to those values that inspire us for the living of these days.

All of us need a "Grinders Switch" in our lives, and James Carlen was one for our time.

My Republican Days

August 19, 1984



'Round-the-town

With
Bishop Holliman

As the Republican convention gets underway, I am reminded of how much my daddy, if he were still alive, would enjoy Ronald Reagan's speeches. He would like them because the President invokes the name of the Almighty so frequently, and my daddy would go for that in a big way.

I can remember how provoked my parents would get at President Roosevelt when he would make his fireside chats. "He never mentioned the Lord's name a single time," my daddy would say in righteous indignation. "No wonder times are like they are."

But my daddy would not have voted for FDR no matter whose name he invoked. My daddy, you see, was a Republican. Now, a Republican in Alabama in the 1930's was a rare commodity. Roosevelt was king, and to admit that you were not for him — that you were a Republican — was like admitting today you are a friend of the Ayatollah: You didn't do it unless you had to.

My father, though, was true to his convictions, and he continued to support the Republicans and their opposition to Roosevelt's programs. Nevermind that TVA was beginning to light up the South, that Social Security would provide him a retirement that his meager sayings were insured against bank failure. He was still a Republican.

The Party continued to put up a slate of candidates for state and national office each election year, knowing fullwell they could never win. But someday — just maybe — they could get that MAN out of the White House, and then the party- faithful would fall; heir to the choice political jobs; so, being a Republican might not be a total loss after all. It was expected to have its rewards.

In 1938, my daddy was chosen in the "smoke-filled" room to run for the state legislature. I remember boasting to my friends that "my daddy is running for public office" — then I would drop the other shoe "on the Republican ticket." And there would go that relationship.

But 1938 was not a good year for Alabama, Republicans. And not much better for the Democrats. Eleanor Roosevelt spoke in Birmingham, and the most provocative question she could get from her audience was, "What do you think of the Alabama football team?" She had wanted to speak to a mixed group, but police commissioner "Bull" Conner, who would later gain notoriety with his police dogs, vowed he would not have "niggers and whites segregating together."

So we all looked forward to 1940 when we knew the country would have had enough of the New Deal and FDR would not be able to run again. "It will be our time then," I recall my daddy telling me one night as we went to a meeting of the faithful few. "With your education, you'll get a good job in Washington."

But World War II was about to burst on the scene. Roosevelt was elected for a third term, and the years went by. When I came marching home again, Roosevelt

was gone and Truman was in the White House.

In 1946, the Grand Old Party, still trying to make a showing, put up a slate of young veterans to run for the state legislature, and I was one of those selected. I wouldn't tell anyone I was running for fear of losing my job. Folks in Alabama still laughed at you if you told them you were a Republican, and they would ask if there had always been insanity in the family.

But I was only paying my dues for what surely would be my reward in 1948, when there would be no way the Republicans could lose. On election day that year I was solicited for a donation to the cause. We don't need the money," the party official told me, "but it will look good on the record when we start filling jobs." It wasn't clear whether I would be Secretary of State or in charge of the clean-up detail at the Washington Monument.

Nevertheless, to the victor belongs the spoils, I told myself, as I went home to await the announcement by H.V. Kaltenborn, radio's Walter Cronkite, that Dewey had won. I would soon start packing. But I waited — and I waited and I waited. The victory announcement never came.

You know the rest. Even in Alabama, the Democrats became disenchanted with Truman, and with "I Like Ike" sweeping the country, it became more respectable to be a Republican. By 1952, many of the old guard, having been devastated by the 1948 debacle, had given up, and a new group was forming to take control of the party.

For me, the bloom had faded from the rose, and it was no longer a challenge to be a Republican, as increasing numbers were switching to the GOP. By the time Ike was elected, my daddy had retired, and I had changed careers, moved to another state and had given up politics as a way of life.

Neither of us ever got to Washington except as tourists, and we never received any reward for wandering through the political wilderness of Alabama for what seemed like a lifetime.

But when President Reagan enthalls the convention-goers and the country with his oratory, this week and calls upon God to bless his efforts, I'm sure my daddy will be listening.

Some Texas Jokes

August 26, 1984



'Round-the-town

With
Bishop Holliman

In Dallas, Texas, so the story goes, it's so hot in August the devil leaves the city and goes down to hell where it's cooler.

I can believe it. We spent the last two weeks in Dallas during the worst heat wave in years. Last Sunday night at 8 o'clock, the temperature was 103.

But the heat doesn't keep Dallas from moving, outward and upward. About 8,000 new people move into the city each month and unemployment is less than 4 percent. Everywhere you turn, a new skyscraper, shopping center or new residential area is under construction. In last Sunday's paper there were 58 full pages of JO^B offerings, and in the last 12 months, 80,000 new jobs came open.

Texas boasts 38 of the 100 largest churches in the US. and nine of them are in Dallas. The city is known as the "Buckle of the Bible Belt," and its fundamental religion, flavored with a heavy sprinkling of patriotic fervor, is as hot as the weather.

But the real religion in Texas and Dallas is not the "old time religion" we sing of in Tennessee. No, out there, the "real" religion is football and politics. Especially politics.

Matching the heat wave in intensity this past week was the enthusiasm of the thousands of delegates to the Republican convention. Believe me, Dallas put on a show, and the GOP could not have found a more hospitable place to showcase their wares than this metropolis. Everything about Dallas looks Republican — its wealth, its opulence and affluence. It was definitely the place for them to be.

For days the whole area was drenched with political news and stories about visiting dignitaries and all the whoop-la planned for them. The mood of the city was such that even the hardest sinner, if he wasn't careful, might take the pledge and he persuaded to join this holy crusade that's marching, not to Zion, hut to Washington, DC.

But out of this Republican love-feast (the Democratic convention was more of a revival meeting) came some **tall Texas tales** that were being told between drinks at some of the parties:

A traveling salesman shows up at a West Texas that one night and, after a few drinks, shouts, "That Reagan is about as smart as a cow."

A huge cowboy walks over and says, "Stranger, them's fightin' words around here."

"I'm sorry," says the salesman, "I didn't know this was Reagan country."

"It ain't," says the cowboy. "It's cattle country."

And another: Mondale, on a swing through Texas, gets an urgent call from his manager. "Listen," says the manager, "you've to come to Houston right away. The Republicans are telling lies about you all over the city."

"I can't," Mondale replies. "I've got to go to Dallas."

"But, why?" asks the manger.

"Because," Mondale sighs, "Dallas is even more important. They're telling the truth about me up there."

That's what makes politics so much fun. The old dusty jokes are pulled out every four years, given a reread, and are then good for 10,000 more miles. Another one they were telling has been around 100 years or more:

Two men were eating supper one Sunday night. One said, "Did you hear that Old John Smith has joined the Democratic Party?"

"What? I don't believe it," exclaimed the other. "I just saw him in church this morning."

A good politician has to have a sense of humor and be able to turn out one-liners. Carter didn't seem to be able to do this. Reagan can. Example: With a bullet wound in his chest after- the assassination attempt in 1981, he looked at the doctors and quipped: "I hope you're all Republicans."

Another Reaganism: "I had an uncle in Chicago who was a Democrat. He received a silver cup from the party for voting in 14 straight elections. He'd been dead for 12 of them."

Sometimes, political jokes backfire. When Republican Teddy Roosevelt was speaking one time, he was interrupted by a man who yelled, "I'm a Democrat." Roosevelt asked why.

"Because my father was a Democrat and my grandfather was a Democrat," the heckler replied.

"Well, sir," Roosevelt said, "let's say your father was a jackass and your grandfather was a jackass. Then what would that make you?"

"A Republican," the man shouted,

One that's even older than Reagan's first movie is about the politician who'd made a speech in this town for the first time. He was feeling his oats for the good Job he'd done, when a man walked up and said, "listen, I've heard a lot of speeches, but that's the sorriest I've ever heard."

Well, the speaker was a bit put down, but a party member beside him spoke up in his defense: "Don't pay that person the slightest bit of attention. He's the village idiot and all he does is repeat everything he hears."

TAKE OUT

Other examples of Texas political humor emanating from the holy city during the gathering of the faithful:

President Reagan, a simple man, was born in a 15 room log cabin. . . He used to read by the light of the fire until his mother came in and said, "Ronnie, why don't you go to your room and use the electric light like the other kids?..."Nixon's library will consist mostly of cassette tapes....

The political joke, if used timely and discreetly, can provide insight for the voter, helping him or her to vote more wisely. To prove this premise is true, a budding politician asked the old Texan, "What is the difference between a Democrat and a Republican?"

The Texan answered, "A Democrat believes in the, exploitation of man by man. A Republican believes in the other way around."

Yes, it was hot in Dallas!

Where'd We Strike-Out?

September 23, 1984



'Round-the-town

With
Bishop Holliman

All of this talk about the need to return to "traditional values" bothers me. Was there ever a ^{time} when someone didn't say, "We ought to get back to fundamentals?"

What I would like to know is just when did we depart from old-fashioned honesty, integrity and virtue? Can anyone name the date?

Frankly, I think the presidential candidates have struck oil with their altar call for repentance and their demand that we lead a new life, forsaking our evil ways and returning to the fold.

"America back to God?" When politicians ~~re~~ talk like that, you may be sure of one thing – they're after the church vote.

I've gotten so worked up over this issue of "returning to the values that made this country great," I conducted a poll of prominent people in Cookeville to see if I could determine when it was we abandoned the virtuous life. My mother would have said, I'm sure, that it was when they started showing Sunday movies, but my poll revealed our decline began at other times and for other reasons- The first person I polled was **George King** an English professor, an actor and an avid baseball fan who trips off regularly to St. Louis and Atlanta to see major league ball. I hoped he could give me some information that would pinpoint the time things began to go had for this country — helpful hints I could pass on to **Reagan** and **Mondale**.

"Tell me," I implored, "when did this country begin to slide?"

"I'll tell you," George asserted strongly, "the exact year this country struck out. It was 1961, the year the Washington Senators baseball franchise was shifted to Minnesota."

Being a baseball fan, I found that to be an interesting commentary on the issue at hand. "Tell me more," I said eagerly.

"I will," George continued "As long as we had a president who threw out the first ball each spring this country was in great shape. The last president who did that was **Ike**, and you know how many errors we've made since."

"I say, get baseball back in Washington and elect a president who'll throw out the first ball as every president from Taft to Eisenhower did, and you'll see a rebirth of patriotism and prosperity. ¹"

"You look at it" George went on, taking another swing at the state of the art, "**Kennedy** got his kicks from touch football; **Johnson** like beagles and bourbon; **Nixon** should have been coach of the Redskins; Ford played golf; **Carter** was too busy for sports; **Regan** was an actor."

"The only 'harbinger of hope' we have is they won't put lights in Wrigley Field. That's what I call holding on to traditional values."

"I see what you mean," I said, ^F moved on to touch base with some other folks. But I was glad George could give me a specific date as to when our downfall started.

The next person I met was **Mrs. Frank (Jo) Britnell**. Jo travels all over the world as a tour guide, so I knew she would have special insight into the question I was posing.

"When did this country sink into the mire that Reagan and Mondale talk so much about?" I asked her.

Would you believe, Jo could give me the exact day and year the skid began? It's not often you can get such precise information from a pollee.

"It was September 1, 1963, when **CBS News** went from 15 minutes to 30 minutes," she replied without a moment's hesitation.

"I don't understand," I stuttered. "Looks like if we got more news we'd be better informed, and it follows if we're better informed, we'll be able to respond more intelligently to the problems facing us."

"That's not the way it works," Jo wisely countered, "When the news went to 30 minutes, it just gave politicians, kooks and weirdos more exposure, encouraging them to do their thing...get more attention. ~~It's~~ been down hill ever since."

"Well, I sure hadn't looked at it that way," I responded. "but you may have a point."

"Whatever you do, don't let them expand the news to an hour," Jo warned. If they do, we're all gone."

I could see that my poll was eliciting information I hadn't even thought about, and I could tell it would be valuable to Reagan and Mondale as they remonstrate about the foibles of the people.

Finally, I called on Dr. Robert DuBey, a former professor. Dr. DuBey is a great train buff and he had just returned front a meeting of the National Railway Historical Society in Cincinnati. I was sure he could cite some propitious moment in history that would tell me when America entered into its ~~its~~ moral decline. He didn't let me down.

"This country got off on the wrong track in the late 1930's," Dr. DuBey began "when the railroads switched from steam locomotives to diesel engines." Then, without flinching, he declared, "We reached the end of the line in May 1971."

"What in the world happened then?" I asked, as I couldn't recall any recent event of such magnitude.

"That was the month and year the railroads gave up their passenger service and Amtrak took over the operation of passenger trains," he replied sternly, like and engineer with his hand on the throttle. "We've been on the wrong track ever since."

Picking up speed as he talked. Dr. DuBey said, "A lot of Americana went down the drain with the retirement of such trains as the Pan-American and the Dixie Flyer, and many of our traditional values were derailed with the trains."

I could tell Dr. ^{Dufey} Dufey was pretty steamed up over this issue, but I was pleased he could give me the exact date and reason this country's pursuit of excellence got sidetracked. If the trains were to run again, we might even get better mail service, I thought.

The kind of grass-roots information my poll brought to the surface ought to be valuable to Reagan and Mondale as summer fades into autumn. If they use this material, at least they can speak with more authority as they issue their summons for us to return to the mourners' bench!

IN MY MERRY OLDSMOBILE

One of life's simple pleasures fell by the wayside when interstate highways and fast automobiles came on the scene. I'm referring to the leisurely Sunday afternoon drives that families once enjoyed before we entered the dot com age, a time when life moved at a slower pace and we had time to "watch the world go by."

The Sunday afternoon drive was almost a ritual after going to church and getting the funnies read. Gasoline was only twenty cents a gallon, roads were two lane and one could drive at a reasonable speed without fear of being rammed by the car behind.

Our Sunday afternoon drive out of Birmingham usually took us by the Cahaba River, around Lake Purdy, or over the mountain to see the fancy houses the well-to-do had built, or down the Florida Short Route past the bubbling brook we called "The Narrows." Sometimes we'd get on the main highway to Anniston or Gadsden, and that's when we'd have the most fun because those highways were sprinkled with Burma Shave signs that brought laughter with their pungent prose.

If you can remember when Kate Smith brought the "Moon Over the Mountain" each week, or Fibber McGee's closet, or the New York World's Fair in 1939, then you've been there and you know what I'm talking about. Well, what happened to those signs? They've gone the way of penny candy, nickel cokes and ten-cent bread. That's what. They are no more. But I've resurrected a few of those juicy jingles that once brought us merriment to add to your collection of "Remember When," and here they are:

Here lies the body of William Blake
He stepped on the gas instead of the brake.
!

Around the curve lickety split
It's a beautiful car wasn't it!

The midnight ride of Paul for beer
Led to a warmer hemisphere>

Speed was high, weather was hot-
Tires were thin—X marks the spot!

Cautious rider to her reckless Dear:

“Let’s have less bull and a lot more steer.

Don’t lose your head to gain a minute
You need your head—your brains are in it.

Shed a tear for Luther Stover-
He tried to toot two state cops over.

Brother speeder, let’s rehearse:
All together: “Good morning, Nurse.

Drove too long-driver snoozing
What happened next was not amusing!

Wail one wail for Adolph Barr-
He just would drive a one-eyed car.

Bill Muffet said his car wouldn’t skid-

This monument shows it could—and *DID!*

No matter the price—no matter how new,
The best safety device in the car is *YOU!*

Shed a tear for Samuel Crane who lost his race with a speeding train;
He reached the track, got nearly across, but Sam and his car were a total loss.
The sexton softly tolled the knell, speeding Sam on his way to---well,
If he’d only stop to look and listen, he’d be living now instead of missin’!

Those were the days, Remember

Take Me out to the ball game

Conventional wisdom has it that “you can’t go home again,” but on a recent sun-filled afternoon a couple of old-timers did their best to prove that you can.

I was one of those “old-timers, and my long-time friend, Huck, was the other one, and on this particular afternoon we were just two young boys trying to recapture a moment of our youth at a place that was dear to our hearts, ~~at~~ Rickwood Field, once the home of the Birmingham Barons baseball team.

Huck, whose real name is James, lives in Birmingham, and our friendship goes back almost to the Dark Ages. We grew up together, played ball together, hiked in the woods and acted silly around girls. I’ve always called him “Huck” and he calls me “Tom”, and ~~our love affair with baseball goes back to the days when the game was King in~~ Birmingham.

On this afternoon we got our act together one more time and went back to Rickwood, “our field of dreams, and we could hardly hold back the tears. It was just as we remembered it from days of long ago, the 1930s and early “40s, when going to see the Barons play was ~~almost~~ as close to heaven as two young boys could hope to get. If there ~~is~~ such a thing as “stepping back in time,” this was it.

Rickwood Field is the oldest baseball park in America, having opened in 1910, and the Barons played there until 1987. Now on the National Register of Historic Places, it is open to the public, and visitors are free to roam the grounds and wander through the stands as their memories lead them. And that’s just what “Huck” and I did—we roamed and we remembered.

Our tour over the hallowed, sacred grounds began at home-plate, down the first-base line, ^{will, then across outfield, 410 feet from home plate} stopping long enough to peep into the dugout where our heroes of yesteryear had sat. Then we ~~meandered down the foul line~~ ^{all the way to the right field} all the way to the right field stands. There we crossed to the deepest point in the park, the center field wall, 410 feet from home-plate, stopping at the score board in left field that still carried the names of Southern League teams from that golden era, Mobile, New Orleans, Chattanooga, Nashville.

But most of what “Huck” and I did on our visit to Rickwood was remember. We sat for a long time in the box seat section along the third base side, looked out on a field of green that sparkled like..well, like a diamond, and we remembered.:

We remembered the time we had to walk home because we’d spent our carfare for a coke. We remembered our first time to see a night game, about 1937. We remembered the double play combination that graced the Baron infield when were young lads:

{Bancroft to Cortazzo to Clancy. We remembered how we studied the box scores in the afternoon paper each day and knew the batting average of every player and the won-loss record of all the pitchers. In our mind's eye we could see the ghosts from years past scampering around the bases and sliding into home-plate. *PRECIOUS MEMORIES*

That's how it went until we'd finally used up all our "Do you remember ^{WHEN ...} that time....., and we knew it was time to go. It was the ninth inning and the game was over and the Barons had won again!

As we made our way down the exit ramp we looked back again , probably for the last time, onto our "Field of Dreams." We had done our best to "Go home again,"and we were not disappointed. We had experienced again the wonder, the romance and ~~innocence~~ of the game. The way baseball was meant to be played...at least in the hearts and minds of a couple of old-timers,

(A more elaborate)

This article appeared in the Cortezville Herald Citizen

set 28, 1984

'Frivolous Pursuit'

There's a new game out called "Trivial Pursuit." If you haven't seen or played it, you will. It's a stimulating game that creates not only a sense of accomplishment if you win, but you acquire some information along the way that may be useful.

I've created a spin-off of "Trivial Pursuit," and I call it "Frivolous Pursuit." My game doesn't require a board; you don't roll the dice, and you don't have to pass GO. Any number may play, and the game goes on until the players start pursuing each other.

The rules are simple: You simply select a subject — sports, religion, politics, government, education, etc. — and you cite it as the object of your fruitless, futile, frivolous energy spent in dealing with the issue. In other words, "Frivolous Pursuit" of whatever it is that's bothering you.

The only object of the game is to vent your frustrations and create a lot of discussion among the players. The one who incurs the wrath of the other players the longest is the winner.

I introduced the game at a party the other night, and I must say the guests caught on right away. It was really an ice-breaker, and those who weren't friends when the game began — well, they weren't friends when it ended either!

The Republicans in the group immediately pounced on the presidential race and said the most frivolous pursuit of all times was Mondale's race against Reagan. They even labeled this pursuit "futile." No surprise there.

There were a lot of sports fans at the party, and high on their list of "Frivolous Pursuits" was Tennessee Tech's efforts to produce a winning football team. In fact, this topic provoked so much discussion



'Round-the-town

With
Bishop Holliman

we had to penalize some of the players for delaying the game.

Vanderbilt's team also got kicked around a good bit, and was cited as a prime example of "Frivolous Pursuit." The trouble with the Commodores, they said, is every time they win two games in a row, the Nashville sports writers headline the news: "They've turned the program around!"

A disenchanted Vandy fan said the Vanderbilt program has been "turned around" so many times "the players don't know where the goal posts are, and that's why they can't ever score. They don't know which end is theirs."

One of the liberals at the party thought the most frivolous of all pursuits was our effort to control the Pentagon. He started to use the term "get a handle on it," but then he realized a "handle" could add another \$500 to the cost.

"Futile" — and not "Frivolous" — seemed to be a more apt description of our attempts to bring this bastion of military might into line.

The proposal by the Tennessee National Guard to spend \$250 million to build a training area in Ten-

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ROUND...

(Continued From Page 1)

essee was viewed as a frivolous way to spend a fabulous amount of money. One party-player paraphrased the late Sen. Dirksen: "If every state spent a quarter of a billion dollars that way, pretty soon you'd be talking about real money."

As the game continued, the players became more serious. Some thought our way of choosing a school superintendent was a frivolous way to run a school system.

"If we want excellence in education, we ought to remove the chief administrator from politics, and let him or her concentrate on running the schools," suggested one of the educators at the party.

Another who looked like he knew what he was talking about chimed in: "Let the school board set policy and determine the level of excellence it wants; then go out and hire a professional who knows how to operate a quality system and let him or her do it."

That didn't sound so frivolous to me.

I suggested the pursuit of reduced deficit spending was "futile" — not "frivolous" — as long as the public demands the services, protection and benefits that only government can provide in this complicated, complex, computerized age. And before anyone could say my idea was frivolous, I hastily continued:

"The other night I heard two candidates for congress engage in frivolous debate about this elusive goal — a balanced budget. As they talked, I wondered how in the world they would complete dams, build highways and continue to pour money into defense, and balance the budget — without raising taxes."

The "Frivolous Pursuit" party was about to break up when someone advanced the noblest idea of all. She said, "The only way to ever control government spending, reduce the deficit and balance the budget would be to make it 'a conflict of interest' for a congressman or senator to vote on an issue that would pour federal dollars into his state or district."

Of course, that idea is so frivolous no one will ever pursue it.

A War Story...

One of the inevitable results of growing older (old?) is the accumulation of so many things to remember. Each day, almost, commemorates some event in one's life, and despite the fact not many care to listen, the older we get the more we're consumed with the desire to tell about it.

I used to work with a man who never let a day pass that something or someone didn't remind him of a World War II happening. It became a guessing game each day as to how soon Norman would break into the conversation with something like, "That reminds me of this goof-off that was in our outfit." Except he didn't use the term "goof-off."

Old soldiers, like folks blessed with age, don't fade away — they keep on remembering.

Bob Poteet, the hardware man, asked me recently when was I going to recite my account of crossing the Delaware with George Washington. Wayne Nichols claims he's not old enough to identify with some of the events I write about. Like the picnic table on my patio, their sense of humor is badly warped.

This week was the anniversary of an event that almost slipped by without my mentioning it and, since I qualify in every respect, I remembered, and I have to tell about it.

July 10, 1943, was the date, and the event was the invasion of Sicily — one of the big battles of WWII that most folks wouldn't even know about if there weren't veterans like me around to tell them.

I was a radioman aboard the USS Butler, a destroyer, one of the ships in the invasion fleet on that long ago day. The Butler had engaged mainly in convoy duty, chasing off German subs that came within earshot, so this battle was to be her baptism of



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fire — as Rev. Billy Graham would say, "The moment for which she was born."

For several weeks prior to the invasion, we had been in the Mediterranean, plying the northern coast of Africa and taking on ammunition and supplies in Oran, Algiers and Bizerte. All around us, everywhere we went, there were battle ships from all the Allied nations, and we knew that something big was brewing. Our moment with history was not far off, we felt.

Finally, on July 8, we lifted anchor and sailed from Bizerte, zig-zagging our way across the Med to rendezvous with the hundreds of other ships in the battle fleet. The captain then announced what our mission was: To invade the island of Sicily. He warned us we could expect to be bombed from the air, torpedoed from the sea and shelled from the beach.

He went on to describe the role the Butler would play in all this commotion. "I expect to fight this ship to the last man," I distinctly recall the "old man" saying. Such determination did not bode well for my future, I thought.

All the time we'd been in the Mediterranean, the sea had been as calm as Center Hill Lake. Then early

(See ROUND, p. 2, col. 4)

'Round...

(Continued From Page 1)

Friday afternoon — just hours before the troops were to hit the Sicilian beaches — the winds came up and began blowing almost with hurricane force. The ships were tossed about by the gigantic waves like toys in a bathtub, and surges breaking over the bows made it dangerous to be topside. It looked for awhile like God was no longer on our side.

For supper that night we were served the best the Navy could offer — you know, the kind they give a condemned man before he walks his last mile. If the ship went down, we'd at least go with a full stomach.

But by chow time most of us were deathly sick; we couldn't eat anything, and that made matters worse. We were in horrible shape. There was talk even that the landing would be postponed because the troops were paralyzed by seasickness.

Nevertheless, we were to assume our battle stations at 11 o'clock that night. "Zero hour" was set for 2:45 the next morning — July 10. Not many of us thought we'd live to see it — nor cared.

My battle station was in the radio shack, and I made my way to it ahead of time while I could still function. There were several men who served this duty station in time of battle, and we shared respon-

sibilities. Our assignment was to transmit and receive coded messages from other ships in the battle area — not the kind of duty designed to produce heroes.

Having arrived early at my station, I inflated my life jacket, used it as a pillow, lay down on the deck of the radio shack and thought, "If I never get up, it will make no difference."

Later, much later, I was awakened by the sound of the captain's voice over the loudspeaker. He was telling the crew the moment of truth had come — it was do or die time. He also read some verses from the Bible and recited the Lord's Prayer. He had wanted to have a religious service, he said, but the rough seas prevented it.

The remainder of the night, amid the roar of guns and bombs, seasick sailors spelled each other at battle stations, while in between they obtained whatever relief they could in whatever way they could.

The next morning the sun came up, the troops had landed and the Butler claimed the disreputable credit of having shot down some of our own planes. But the "end of the beginning" to crush Hitler was well underway.

Years later, a little boy asked, "What did you do in the big war, Granddad?"

"I slept through the invasion of Sicily," the old man replied, "and it takes nerves of iron and steel to do something like that!"

Thinking Ahead

About the only complaint many of us have, as 1984 winds down, is how fast it went.

Ever since those men walked on the moon, the clock has speeded up. Never mind the changes they caused in the weather. That's nothing compared to what they did to speed the passage of weeks, months and years — especially the years. Just turn your head — Oops! — There went another one!

If you can remember the year Joe DiMaggio was first paid \$100,000 to play baseball (1949); or the year "I'll Never Smile Again" was number one on the charts (1940); or the year the first Cotton Bowl game was played (1937), then the years are passing with the speed of the 20th Century Limited that used to run between New York and Chicago.

That was the train, you remember, where they rolled out the red carpet each evening for passengers to board, and on that train you could take a shower or get your hair cut on your way to Chicago.

Someone once asked the engineer of that famous train what he thought about as he sat at the throttle of that mighty engine, clipping off a mile or more a minute through the dark of night.

His reply was: "About a half mile down the track."

It occurs to me the urgency and speed of our time requires that we ask our leaders "how far down the track" they're thinking as we enter a new year. Are they thinking far enough ahead? In effect, what does 1985 have to offer?

At Cookeville General Hospital, administrator Walter Fitzpatrick Jr. said the hospital has two important innovations it hopes to make in 1985 that will benefit hospital patients and their families.

First, they plan to install a heart catheterization service for heart patients; and second, provide equipment and facilities for radiation treatment of cancer patients.

Addressing heart disease and cancer needs, Walter says, is a service vitally needed in



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Cookeville, and will eliminate patients having to go to Nashville to obtain treatment.

Mrs. Mary Jean DeLozier, chief engineer of the Depot Preservation Committee, says her goal is to move full speed ahead in restoring the Cookeville depot and converting it into a museum.

Many people have pledged their support, Mary Jean says, to make the depot and the grounds around it an attractive and educational facility that will revitalize the westside of town. They have visions of a small downtown park, along with the museum, and 1985 is the year they hope will bring to fruition their dreams and plans.

The City of Cookeville has several projects on the front burner that will be completed in 1985 — projects that bode well for the city's future.

Luther Mathis, city manager, says work will be completed on the sewer projects in DeBerry Heights and Hillsdale by midsummer. The Parkview swimming pool is getting a face-lift, and work should be completed by the time the 1985 swim season kicks off. Before that, though, there will be the official opening of the long awaited Cane Creek Lake and Park.

Motorists will be glad to know a number of streets will be repaved this coming year. Mathis and **Bill Ogletree**, street superintendent, will get their heads together soon and decide which streets will get a new coating. Work will get underway, I suppose, when the weather warms up.

Finally, the city expects to obtain help from the Department of Energy to do a study on the feasibility.
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ty of thermal heating as a way to dispose of garbage. If this project materializes — a thermal heating plant would have to be built — the benefits from it would be significant and would help shape the growth and development of Cookeville about as far down the track as one can see.

James Lacy, who heads his own real estate development firm, predicts 1985 will be a good business year — "I'm optimistic. People have been waiting to buy new houses, and now may be the best time."

Interest and mortgage rates are coming down, and James thinks this will help buyers as well as business generally. "The housing industry affects so many other businesses, and when housing prospers, so do other related industries," James said.

"Improving school-community relations" is the

theme school superintendent **Bob Hargis** and his staff will emphasize in 1985.

"We want the community more involved in the improvement of schools," Bob said. "We have over 8,000 students and 425 teachers, and we want the public to know what we're doing and we'd like their help."

Bob added that one of his goals is to improve the curriculum by encouraging student participation in science projects and providing science training institutes for teachers.

And so, just a few indications of what some folks are thinking about as we enter a new year. Studies show the average number of days people keep a New Year's resolution is 40 for men and 44 for women. It may take longer than that for some of these programs to be completed, and I guess we'll wait on them if they're not ready.

But time, as it has a way of doing, moves rather quickly, and we'd better think at least a "half-mile" ahead if we are to continue to improve the quality of life in Cookeville.

GTE 'Good Citizen'

How long has it been since you picked up the telephone receiver, cranked the handle and heard a friendly voice up at "Central" ask if she could help you?

I'll bet it's been a long time, if ever, because the hand-cranked telephone has long since gone the way of the rumble seat, penny candy and the street car.

In all small towns across the land the "operator" used to be the one person you could get when an emergency arose. She could tell you who had called the doctor, who the preacher was visiting and who had died. She knew all the gossip because she had a connection, literally, to just about everybody's house, and folks came to depend on her for news and information. If she said it was so, it was so.

But for better or worse, those days are gone, and today when you want to "reach out and touch someone" — a cross town or across the world — you simply punch a few buttons, and quickly you are in touch. No more going through Central.

"GEE!" you say. No, GTE!

"Good corporate citizens" is how Eldon Leslie, Putnam County Chamber of Commerce executive director, describes those industries and businesses that do more than provide jobs and pay taxes. This county is blessed with many such citizens, and surely General Telephone, with its 200-plus employees, is high on the list of "good corporate citizens."

GTE's contribution of \$5,000 last week to the Put-



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nam County Volunteer Fire Department is evidence of its recognition of responsibility to the community it serves and the community that serves it. The corporate gift to the Fire Department is another instance of GTE's answering the first ring when duty calls.

Now I'm sure General Telephone is ringing up sales everyday, and paying out \$5,000 will have little effect on its net earnings when the profit and loss statement is prepared at the end of the year. And you can argue that this contribution is part of their advertising budget, is simply good business and really won't cost them a cent.

That may be the case, and it's all right with me. Big corporations, as well as small businesses, know, or they should know, that their success generally depends on the prosperity and well-being of the people they serve. You know, "a rising tide lifts all boats" sort of thing.

I've noticed, though, that General Telephone is
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always up front when it comes to civic involvement of its workers. That's been the case here in Cookeville in the past, and it's the way it is now. The importance of good public relations apparently is drilled into their heads at every stage of recruitment and training because this commitment is so evident at every turn.

Traditionally, GTE workers here contribute overwhelmingly to the annual United Way drive, and last year's drive chairman was Tal Carver, one of their own. He'll be president of UW this year. GTE general manager Ed Jared currently serves as president of the noon Rotary Club, and Jim Andrews, customer service manager for the Cookeville area, is vice-president of the breakfast Rotary Club.

Both Ed and Jim have headed civic and charitable drives in Cookeville, and they serve on other committees now. Jim was instrumental in getting the YMCA program started here and is currently on the board. Ed works with special programs at Tennessee Tech in addition to his other community work.

General Telephone employees answer the call

when the Red Cross Bloodmobile rings. They had so many contributors this last time, the Bloodmobile made a special visit to telephone headquarters to collect the donations.

I don't pretend to understand the new telephone set-up under deregulation, and I don't like it when rates are increased. Nor do I know if I should buy my phone or rent it outright. My wife is sure we're paying too high a fee for our telephones, but I tell her "Central" says no, we're not, then we're not!

So, I go on and do what the telephone company say do. Mainly, I'm sure, because I have no other choice. And I guess that's how it is in all our dealings with business, big government, and big institutions. We do what they say and we go on our way.

But when the corporate structure is a "good corporate citizen" like GTE, and you have confidence in the folks who are running it, you view things differently. Good public relations doesn't cost business anything — but it sure does pay a lot.

We are fortunate to have many good citizens at GTE in this county, and we can be grateful not only for the jobs they provide, but also for the leadership service, and financial commitment they and their employees make to the well-being of us all.

Excuse me, now — I've got to answer the phone

Duriron: More 'Quality'

The "openhouse" which Duriron Company put on for its employees, their families and the public the other Saturday was a public relations gesture of the first water.

It was my first time to view this relatively new industry, and I was glad manager Ken Stegemiller provided the opportunity for outsiders to get a close look at his magnificent plant. Bill Green, maintenance supervisor, gave me a guided tour, and I was impressed with the operation as he described it.

I don't have a mechanical mind and I don't pretend to understand such terms as "butterfly machinery," "Durco Seal and Shell Test," and "control valve department," but Bill did the best he could to explain what his company does. Being sort of awed by all of it, I would simply nod my head, pretend I knew what he was talking about and say, "My goodness!"

I do understand, though, some of the economic benefits that accrue to this area because of Duriron's presence here, and I left the plant with a greater appreciation of this industry and its people who contribute in so many ways to the quality of life we enjoy in Cookeville.

"Quality industry" is the term Eldon Leslie, executive director of the Chamber of Commerce of Putnam County, would use to describe the Duriron Company and other industries that employ upwards of 8,000 workers in this county.

I talked to Eldon recently in his office, following a meeting of Beth Smith's "Homecoming '86" committee, and I was surprised to learn of the scope of manufacturing that goes on, the volume of goods produced here and the role the Chamber of Commerce plays in this beehive of activity.

When I came to Cookeville in 1964, the Chamber was housed in a small building at the corner of Spring and Jefferson, and it seemed to project a low profile, though I soon learned that men like Ed Hooper and



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Judge Luke Medley — to name just two — had done a great deal of work through the Chamber to bring Cookeville up to the level it was 20 years ago.

Later, the Chamber moved on up (or down?) Sparta Road to its present location, and Eldon became its chief administrator. Since then, he has traipsed all over the country, speaking up for Cookeville and Putnam County and doing what he can to entice "quality industry" to locate here. And I guess the general consensus is he's done a pretty good job.

Eldon and his staff have set up a display in the Chamber building of products made here in Putnam County, and it makes quite an impressive show. A "Harlem Globe Trotters" uniform hanging on the wall immediately catches your eye, as does the Kansas City Royals baseball uniform. My grandchildren were excited to learn that most of the major league baseball teams "dress-out" in Cookeville-made uniforms.

And the beat goes on. A Chamber publication lists 84 industries that make exotic and useful things ranging from appliances to vacuum oil filters, from karate attire to hospital beds. In the Chamber display, there are a lot of other gadgets and contraptions that bear a Cookeville label, making it worth your while to stop and have a look at what's made in Baxter, Algood, Cookeville, Monterey and points in

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Combatting Illiteracy

"One out of every five adults in Putnam County can't fill out an application, read the newspaper or read directions on prescription medicines."

That's what the Putnam County Adult Basic Education Program people say in the pamphlet they've put out.

I'm surprised that the number of "functional illiterates," as these people are called, is not higher. How many of us can read a doctor's scribbling? Or fill out a tax return properly? Or understand President Reagan's explanation of how to reduce the deficit? Not many, I'm sure.

I'm joshing, of course, but you'll have to admit it's tough enough under the best of circumstances to get by in this complicated, technological society in which we live. Imagine how difficult it is for a person who makes his signature with a "mark" and who can't read "Snuffy Smith" in the comic strip.

He's in trouble — and so are the rest of us who are sensitive to the plight of these folks who are burdened with the inability to read and write well enough to cope with the problems of ordinary living.

Mrs. Jared Maddux is president of the Adult Basic Education program, and last week she gathered a flock of concerned citizens to the Tennessee Tech campus and explained the mission of this organization.

"The main goal of the Adult Education Program," Mrs. Maddux said, "is to help combat illiteracy by making the public aware of the problem here and to enlist the help of people who can do something about it."

The interest and concern in such an endeavor was evidenced by the large turn-out of educators, business people and public officials, and I suspect



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that most of them were encouraged to learn there are people like Mrs. Maddux who are willing to give their time and effort to this problem that faces the county.

Program coordinator for the Adult Basic Education Program is Mary Alice Spain, and she told the group, "The reading program is a free service for adults with low or non-existent reading skills."

The two pressing needs at the moment, she said, are to make the public aware of the program so referrals of adults may be made to them — and for volunteer teachers.

The featured speaker at the Adult Basic Education meeting was Dr. Jim Akenson, TTU associate professor of Elementary Education and an expert in the study of adult illiteracy in the South. Dr. Akenson described some of the dramatic changes that have occurred in the lives of adult illiterates who've learned to read and write through such programs, and he told how they have become more productive and useful citizens.

Persons who want to participate in the adult education program may contact Ms. Spain at 442 East Spring St.; or call her at 526-9777.

National Secretary Week — It was "Girl Friday" day at the Noon Rotary Club this week, and Sharon

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Rodgers, vice-president of Professional Secretaries International, told the Rotarians and their secretaries about the organization she represents.

Sharon, who is executive secretary at Universal Plastics here in Cookeville, talked about the "professional growth" of secretaries and how their work contributes to the success of their employer. "Your own development and improvement will benefit you as well as the company you work for," she said.

Virginia Plummer, former professor in business administration at Tennessee Tech, says there are four traits a secretary appreciates in her boss: the ability to delegate responsibility; professionalism in their relationship; understanding of the secretary's problems, and appreciation for the job she does.

Today, about 53 percent of all women are in the workforce, so what they think and do matters a great deal to the business world. It bodes well for the business community in Cookeville that the Professional Secretaries Association is involved and concerned to the extent it is.

The Right Track — For more years than he'll probably admit, **Marvin Nash** was with the Railroad Retirement Board and was stationed in Nashville.

His job was to untangle the mass of red tape that determined whether a railroad worker got his or her pension and how much it would be. He was a hard worker, a man of integrity, and he earned every penny the government paid him.

Mr. Nash retired from railroad employment a few years ago, and now he pastors a church in Monterey. "I'm on the right track at last," he confesses.

The name of his church is the **Monterey Community Church and Sunday School Christian Life Center** — "Where Everybody Is Somebody." He has a full program of church activities for all ages, and his work there seems to be prospering mightily. His weekly newsletter contained a story worth passing on:

"An unbelieving farmer, desiring to mock the church, once wrote an editor about an experiment he had made. He told the editor he had set aside a certain field which he cultivated and harvested only on Sunday. That fall, he said, he sold that portion of his crop at a better price than the crop he took care of on week days. He concluded, "I have been busy proving the law of the Sabbath is wrong."

Anxiously he watched for the printing of his letter and a commendation by the editor. The letter was there to be sure, and the editor wrote, "That you have been busy is about all we can say for your report, except to say that God does not settle his accounts in October."

'Friends' Boost Library

"I'm glad I had a mother who read to me" — That was the sales pitch the book company had its sales people use some years back when I tried my hand at selling encyclopedias.

Not only was it a sound business approach, but there was a ring of truth and worth to it. It's pretty well established that children who are exposed to books and reading develop mental faculties early in life and do better in school.

"How fortunate," we would say to the would-be book buyer, "is the person whose mother read to him," hoping we'd touch the pocketbook as well as the heart as we sang the praises of our book and told them of the many happy hours they'd have reading the encyclopedia.

It was the profit motive, pure and simple, that led us then, but such is not the case for **Friends of the Putnam County Library**, a new kid on the block that spotlights our library in observance of **National Library Week**. The "Friends" want children — and all of us — to read, and the library is their catalyst for launching their crusade for a more literate, well-informed community.

With about 50 persons already enrolled, "Friends of the Putnam County Library" was organized just a short time ago, and **Wanda Jared** is their president. Other officers are **Ted Haselton** and **Betty Langford**, vice-presidents, **Marguerite**



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Pointer, secretary, and **Morris Irby**, treasurer.

Library Friends do just what you'd expect friends to do. They're there to support the library; to foster closer relations between the library and the public; to promote the development and growth of library facilities, and to encourage all of us to use the library.

The bottom line to all of this, of course, is to get folks to read. An educator on a TV talk show the other night said there are 60 million "functional illiterates" in the nation, and that's disgraceful, he said. The cycle of illiteracy is repeated, he stated further, when parents do not teach their children to read by reading to them themselves.

The talk-show expert noted that it's much cheaper to teach children to read than it is to house them in prison or give them handouts later

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on if they can't function as useful citizens because they never learned to read. Educators, taxpayers and public officials ought to take note of that fact, and the general public should be more supportive of libraries and other efforts to enhance the reading skills of children. It's far less costly in the long run, as children are more apt to become productive, taxpaying citizens if they can read and write.

I realize folks who cannot read are not likely to visit a library. But a community's support of a library system and an organization such as "Friends of the Library" sends a message to the public that we place a high value on literacy; that we cherish our heritage, and that we are concerned with the quality of life we have now and will have in the future. A library sets a good example.

A membership in "Friends of the Putnam County Library" will help buy a number of items the library needs to maintain an adequate level of service. High on its "most wanted" list are films and projectors, a lighted lectern, display cases and equipment for the archives room.

A new addition to the library will be completed soon and will provide space for a children's library, a large conference room and other facilities. Furnishings will be required for this new space, so the Library Friends have their work

cut out for them. **Lois S. Anderson** is membership chairperson, and I'm sure she'll be glad for those of us who had a "mother to read to us" to contact her.

"Our purposes are worthy, our goals are worthy, and our people are worthy of your support," reads their membership application form.

Library Notes and Quotes — **Geeta Pratt**, Putnam County librarian, tells me our library contains 47,000 volumes and checks-out about 150,000 books a year...On an average day, some 100 patrons visit the library... "Branch" libraries are located in **Algood** and **Baxter**... **Judy Owen** and **Janet Kolff** are new additions to the library staff... **Faith Holdredge**, former librarian here, is now director of the **Caney Fork Region** and has her office in **Sparta**. It's Faith's job to see that libraries in seven counties are supplied with books, and I guess you could say she is successful when her plans get "shelved."

The top five cities where citizens make the most use of their libraries are: **Seattle, Wash.**, **Dayton, Ohio**, **Tacoma, Wash.**, **Toledo, Ohio**, and **Birmingham, Ala.**...About 99 million US adults read a book "now and then"...The average person spends 11.7 hours a week reading books, papers and magazines, compared with 16.3 hours watching TV and 16.4 hours listening to radio...Book readers tend to be female, white, under 50, college-educated and affluent.

That's what a survey done by the **Book Industry Study Group** showed.

Help The Rescue Mission!

The term "do-gooders" took on a bad image some years ago, as it came to be identified with some groups and individuals who were not satisfied with the way things were but who were willing to risk personal ridicule to bring about change.

I never did think the "do-gooders" deserved the scorn that was heaped upon them then, and I don't think they do now, if in fact that's how they're still perceived.

History is replete with instances of men and women who "dared defy the crown," and I suspect that many of our great social advances have come about because some man or woman was willing to pay the price for what he or she believed in, and who "found their lives by losing them" in service to some great cause.

And I suppose history would record that such folks were nearly always seen as being out of step with conventional society, and the common herd would invariably ask, "Why do they do it?"

Now, I'm not suggesting that **Larry Self** and his **Cookeville Rescue Mission** folks fall in the category of "do-gooders" as that term was popularly viewed some years back. Nor do I claim that what they are doing will change the course of history in any discernible way in our lifetime.

I do know, however, the Cookeville Rescue Mission does a great deal of good for folks who are cut off from the mainstream of life, and while its activities are minimal in shaping the course of society, they loom pretty large in giving hope and help and love — as well as food, clothing and lodging — to individuals caught up in the throes of a complex age.

"Somebody has to do it," we say, and folks like



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Larry Self and the other dedicated ones who serve with him take on what to some of us would be the unpleasant tasks of feeding the hungry, ministering to the sick and helping the helpless. Most of us are glad "somebody" is willing and available to do these things without asking whether the recipients are worthy or not of our beneficence.

Now, the spotlight is on the Cookeville Rescue Mission, for that agency is our "somebody" who dares to step out in front of the crowd and do good to folks who, because of accident of birth, or age, or education, or because of the absence of love and family, or for other reasons we can't fathom, need a particular kind of help along the way. The Mission is there to render that help because the help is needed, and they don't ask many questions.

But the Rescue Mission also needs help — **OUR HELP**. It can't operate without personnel, a building, supplies and equipment. To operate effectively and fulfill its purposes, the Mission needs our voluntary services, our donations, and, at this special time, our **MONEY**.

This afternoon, from 2 to 4 o'clock, a radio show will be broadcast live from the Cookeville Mall over WHUB, and the public will be invited to give money
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One such trip recently was an 18-mile hike through the Virgin Falls Pocket Wilderness area in White County, an all-day outing supervised closely by Durley, Martin, and some other adults they invited. The students loved the trip, and one boy who had been planning to quit school liked it so much he has now changed his mind.

"We teach wrestling, and we have a strong physical education program going—the activity is good for them in more ways than one," says Durley.

The students and teachers are currently trying to raise funds enough to buy more physical education equipment so they can learn such skills as rope climbing

"We have to learn help raise funds by having car washes and bake sales—it helps teach them that nothing in life is free," says Martin.

Durley and the teachers have also sought out many of the educational resources here for the students. Professionals in athletics, nursing, and music from Tennessee Tech have helped the school. So have mental health and social work professionals.

Durley believes the problems his students have reflect broader problems throughout society and believes "the cause of many problems in our society is inactivity."

"I hear continually in Cookeville from parents that there's nothing constructive for

go to the Mail and check it," he said.

Martin believes children today suffer "because they have no heroes to look up to."

Both teachers are currently looking for some kind of meaningful project, some kind of constructive work that teenagers, especially troubled ones, could do in the summer months.

"It would be so good for our students," said Durley.

He does not say so, but it is clear that the intensive parenting required in teaching at the Alternative School is a job that should not be interrupted by summer vacation.

Students may go away in the summer, but their problems don't.

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to reduce the debt on the Mission property and building. They lack only \$13,000 having the whole bit paid off.

The radio show will feature **George McCormick** of the Grand Ole Opry, **Morris Irby** and the Gospel Crusaders, **Daniel Farris** and **The Sounds of Victory**. **Harold Weakley** and **Daniel Farris** will M/C the show, and it should be a rollicking good time for the children also, as professional clowns will be here to entertain.

In just one month this past winter, the Mission provided 251 nights of lodging and 753 meals; 110 persons were clothed, and food baskets and furn-

ture were supplied to a dozen or so other families.

Last year the Mission served meals to 6,596 persons, gave lodging to 2,275, gave clothes to 857, food baskets to 71, provided furniture to 55 households and gave Bibles to 93 persons. In one 30-day period, 780 attended chapel services conducted by the Mission. "Man does not live by bread alone," you know.

The Cookeville Rescue Mission operates under a broad of directors headed by **Marion Bohannon**, whose title is president. Other officers are **John Hendrix**, vice-president; **Will Ray**, treasurer; and **Carol Williams**, recording secretary.

The remaining board members are **U.L. Whitson**, **Otto Phillips**, **Joe Wilmoth**, **Moris Irby** and **Lee Webb**.

"Do-Gooders" — Everyone of them!

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Entice Retirees Here

Oregon Transplants — Fred Vossel, who now lives in the Forrest Hills section of Cookeville, came here about five years ago from Oregon, not just because he'd heard this was a good place to live but because his son, the doctor, **Fred Jr.**, is located here with the Internal Medicine Group.

Having retired from his job with a high-powered company, Fred and his wife, **Dorothy**, were glad to locate in a place where life moved at a slower pace and traffic jams were at least 80 miles away. Of course, being near their three grandchildren, **David, Keith and Debbie** hasn't displeased them a bit in their decision to move to Cookeville.

Fred is a native of New Jersey; it was from that state he enlisted in the US Navy during World War II, and therein lies the connection that makes him the subject of today's column.

Fred, you see, was also in the invasion of Sicily, the WW II skirmish I wrote about a few weeks ago. In fact, we were in the same place at the same time, only on different ships. Within rock-throwing distance, you might say, if there had been any rocks to throw. As they sing down in Disney World, "It's A Small, Small World."

As a hospital corpsman, Fred was cooped up in an LCI — a small landing craft — and he had to do double duty as a sailor at sea and an infantryman when they hit the beach at Gela, Sicily. (Double jeopardy,



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I think you would call it.)

"When that hatch opened the morning of the invasion, I was the first one up and out," Fred recalls today. "Nothing could have stopped me from getting off that jam-packed ship."

I was glad to hear from Fred (we've chatted a couple of times over the telephone) because he backed up my story about the rough seas on the day of the invasion, and he refreshed my memory about several other incidents that happened on that eventful night so long ago.

I suspect if Fred and I swapped stories regularly about our Navy days in the Mediterranean, the seas would become rougher, the rations skimpier, the bombs would fall closer to the ships, and shore leave in Casablanca would become more bewit-

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ching and tantalizing!

That's the way old salts are!

The settlement of people like the Fred Vossels in Cookeville could bring new growth and development to this town, and it's a movement city government and the Chamber of Commerce ought to push with all their might.

You will recall a short time ago a national survey listed Cookeville as one of the top cities in the country as a retirement place, and we ought to capitalize on that recognition and do what we can to entice folks to come here.

During the recent city election campaign, I heard **Frank Britnell** say that getting people to settle in Cookeville upon retirement was the equivalent of a new industry.

We're not suggesting another "Fairfield Glade," but rather simply making Cookeville a desirable location for retired folks who want the stability and conveniences of an established city that contains a cross section of people.

Think about it — retired people have a guaranteed income, and they spend their money with regularity. They do not require new schools and playgrounds. The services they demand are minimal — maybe a sidewalk in front of their house, garbage collection, and assurance there is

adequate police and fire protection. No big investment by the taxpayers that often accompanies a new industry.

Cookeville's future does not appear to be out there in space with Saturn, even though we may expect some spin-off from that astronomical venture down at Spring Hill.

Executive Director of the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce, **Eldon Leslie**, told Noon Rotary Club members the other day there had been a decline in employment in every major industry here since 1980.

His point, I think, was that in the future Cookeville's growth and stability will not depend upon industrial acquisition and expansion, but rather on service-oriented jobs in education, medicine and related fields.

Cookeville can truly be the service-center of the Upper Cumberland area, Eldon went on to say, and he used terms like "innovative leadership," "livable" and "good attitude" in describing the attributes we need to focus on in our quest for growth and status.

Retired folks are looking for orderliness, cleanliness and dependable government in the communities where they settle. Match those features with cultural and religious programs and adequate medical care and you have a combination that spells success in attracting people who know what the term "work ethic" means.

Yes, we can use some more Oregon transplants like the Fred Vossels.

Some 'Shaggy Dogs'

At a recent dinner here in Cookeville, Joe Gibson introduced L.A. (Sonny) Allen Jr., an executive with Adams Plastics, with what I call a "shaggy dog" story.

Now, in case you don't know, a "shaggy dog" story is a joke of a sorts that is so ridiculous it's funny — sometimes. And like all good stories, it contains a moral. You may have to search to find it, but it's there. The moral, that is.

The story Joe used to introduce "Sonny" bears repeating since it is a plausible one and contains an obvious conclusion.

When "Sonny" was a small boy, so Joe's tale goes, "Sonny's" father bought him and his brother each a pony. The trouble was, they couldn't tell the ponies apart, so there was a constant hassle about which pony belonged to which brother.

In an attempt to solve the problem, they cut off the mane of one of the ponies to identify it from the other, but the mane grew again and they were back where they started. Next, they cut off part of the tail of one pony, and that worked petty well for awhile, but then the tail grew back. They were back to square one.

Finally, the wiser of the two boys (not "Sonny") got out a steel rule and measured the height of the two ponies as a way to identify them, and, lo and behold! — he discovered the white pony was two inches taller than the black one!

Upon hearing Joe's "shaggy dog" story, I was sure there must be other tales around town we ought to hear, so I called some folks whose wit half-way matches their wisdom, and now I pass on some moral lessons you otherwise would not have known.

Dr. Martin Peters, dean of the Graduate School at Tennessee Tech, says one of his favorites is about a fellow driving along a country road, when all of a sudden a terrific blast rents the air. Looking over the hill, he sees smoke billowing skyward, and he decides to investigate.

When he arrives at the scene, everything is in shambles. The farm house has been burned to a crisp: the corpse of a woman is reposing in the yard,



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along with barbecued pigs and cows.

Looking at the charred rubble, he spies the form of a man near a grove of trees, flat on his back, with a spear sticking deeply in his side.

Excitedly, he asks the wounded survivor: "What happened?"

A voice from the prone figure replies: "An enemy of mine came along, dynamited my house, murdered my wife, killed all my livestock and abducted my four children."

The stranger is aghast at this recital of blood-thirstiness, but sympathy for the only living creature on the scene holds sway, so he asks him: "But that spear in your side — doesn't it hurt you?"

"Only when I laugh," the man answers.

Rev. Charles McCaskey, pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, always has a good story to tell, and I knew he would have one with the kind of "moral" my quest called for. He didn't let me down.

Charles's story is about the man who survived the historic Johnstown flood. Everywhere the man went, he would tell of his deliverance from death. At church, lodge meetings, at work — everywhere — he had to tell how bad it was, how deep the water got and how he was miraculously saved from the raging torrent.

Folks got so tired of hearing him testify to his experiences, they were sorry he had lived through it all.

Finally, he died and went on to join his brethren in the great beyond. The first thing he wanted to do, as you can imagine, was assemble all the people there so he could recite once again how he survived the

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Johnstown flood. After much pleading, he persuaded St. Peter to let him proclaim to the great throng the mighty adventure he'd experienced back on earth.

"All right," St. Peter agreed, "but I must warn you, Noah will be in the audience."

Dr. Pete Helton, president of the Noon Rotary Club, swears that Ken Fuller, manager of the JCPenney store, made up the following story:

This poor guy's eyes bulged and there was a constant ringing in his ears. The first doctor he went to said: "My poor man, I've got to take out your appendix."

So he did, but when the man recovered from the surgery, his eyes still bulged and his ears still rang. He was referred to another doctor. This MD said:

"For goodness sakes, you need your tonsils removed." So out came the tonsils. But still his eyes bulged and there was the ringing in his ears.

The next time, he went to a specialist who immediately sent him to a dentist. The tooth doctor exclaimed: "Yipsey! I must extract all your teeth." So he did. With appendix out, tonsils removed and teeth all gone, the man's eyes still bulged and his ears still rang. What to do? What to do?

The patient needed a new shirt, so he went to the haberdashery and asked for a size 15 white shirt. The haberdasher looked at him and said: "You surely don't mean size 15? You should wear a 15½ at least."

"Look," the poor man countered, "I've been buying my own shirts for 40 years. I know what size I wear, and I want size 15."

Said the haberdasher: "OK. You shall have size 15 and like it, but I guarantee your eyes will bulge and your ears will ring."

There's bound to be a moral in these stories somewhere!

Old Habits

"Raise up a child in the way he should go..." You've heard that advice all your life.

Raymond Case will tell you that such training will do the trick for a dog as it will for a child.

During one of the rigorous cold spells we've had, Raymond and his Norwegian Elk Hound were out walking on the University campus when "Sheba" decided to wander off. She had been in the Case family all her life — she's nine years old — and losing her would have been a doggone shame. It would have brought special grief to their son, Alex, now in medical school, because "Sheba" was HIS pet, and you know how close the attachment can be between a boy and his dog.

All afternoon and into the night, Raymond searched for "Sheba," but to no avail. He got up early Monday morning, went back over their route and searched the Tech campus. Still there was no trace of "Sheba."

Later that morning, Cameron Hess, the Rector of Raymond's church, called him — Raymond — at work at First Tennessee Bank and informed him that "Sheba" was at the church. She apparently had been there all night, seeking refuge from the cold.

Raymond has taken his dog to the church — St. Michael's on Washington Ave. — a number of times, he says, and tied her up outside while he attended the services and programs, so "Sheba" was familiar with the surroundings. Thus, when she got lost from her master, the church became the haven for her, and she probably wondered why Raymond didn't



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come there to look for her. Raymond wonders too, now.

The moral to this story Frank Layne, H-C sports editor, would be quick to point out, is that old habits die hard — especially church-going habits. The skeptic, though, might ask why "Sheba" couldn't just as well have found her way home if she could find the church. Maybe the Rector can answer that.

SNOW BUSINESS — Bill Ogletree, head of Cookeville's street department, estimates his men have scraped 1000 miles of streets in removing ice and snow in the last five weeks. They've used 200 tons of salt. "It's been the worst five weeks I've ever spent in the street department," Bill shivered.

On the other hand, the city electric department has had relatively few problems. Tony Peek, engineering and operations officer, reports they've had no poles cut down and no lines broken by ice. "We've been very lucky," Tony said.

I asked him if Cookeville has sufficient power to
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keep us warm during these arctic blasts that are as common now as political promises. "We have plenty of power, and there's no need to worry," Tony assured me.

Those were heart-warming words, I thought, but I wouldn't dare ask what the cost of that warmth will be, for I knew his answer would have a chilling effect on me.

Often, in our tribute to public servants, we single out first the policemen, firemen, postmen, and nurses and doctors for what they do in weather such as we've had this winter. Let's not forget the mundane jobs that have to be done to make life more liveable for us all — regardless of the weather — and let us be grateful for those who make our roads passable, for those who collect the garbage and others who contribute to our wellbeing during these times.

I'd take my hat off to them — if it wasn't so cold!

OTHER HEROES — Cookeville dentist Rex Rader and his assistant, Mary Jane Heuer, left this week on a special mission to Grenada where they will work two weeks with other volunteers from Tennessee in providing health care and spiritual enrichment to the people on that island.

Hammock and Jerry Wall have made similar trips to the Caribbean area as mission workers from their

church to help build houses, churches and to teach the rudiments of sanitation and personal hygiene to folks not as fortunate as we.

I suppose I would be out of line to suggest that more activity of this kind by churches might preclude the need to send the military into those places.

YANKEE-DOODLE DANDIES — Robert DuBey and Charles Golden are already planning Cookeville's July 4th parade, and they promise, come rain or shine, come sleet or snow, we'll have a rip-roaring, old-fashioned Independence Day parade this summer!

Both DuBey and Golden predict the snow will be gone by then, and they say Cookeville can expect a display of marching bands, flag-waving girl scouts and boy scouts, fire trucks and patriotic music. A real honest-to-goodness George M. Cohan rendition of the Fourth of July!

I hope the parade will end up again at the depot, and we ought to have tubs of cold lemonade and ice-cold, red-ripe juicy watermelons for everyone, and the band playing "You're A Grand Old Flag!" Wouldn't that be something?

From the World of Medicine — According to Bob Hagens, president of the local chapter of NARFE (National Association of Retired Federal Employees), there's a new tranquilizer out: "It doesn't relax you but it makes you enjoy being tense!" By the way, NARFE will have its monthly meeting Tuesday night at Bob Cowles Steakhouse. Dr. Whewon Cho, Economics professor at Tennessee Tech, will speak.

Services Excellent Here

An event occurred the other Sunday which, though it was a sad one for the victims, made me glad I live in Cookeville. I witnessed a display of the protective services the city provides, and I felt comfortable and secure with what I saw.

Two Sundays before Christmas, a house in our neighborhood caught fire. It was a balmy afternoon for a late fall day, and during a respite from leaf-raking, neighbors **Charles** and **Barbara Johnston** and I were chatting in the yard when someone yelled, "Call the fire department!"

We looked across the way and saw smoke pouring from a nearby house. Barbara rushed in and dialed 9-1-1 (another service that's mighty helpful), and by the time Charles and I could scurry across the street to do whatever one can do at a time like that, which is very little, we heard the fire sirens and we knew help was on the way.

When you see flames eating away at the side of the house, you think the firemen will never get there. But they do. In no time at all two fire trucks were on the scene, hoses were connected and water



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was dousing the fire.

Before the firemen arrived though, a policeman already was on hand to direct traffic and clear the way for fire trucks and other emergency vehicles.

Shortly, the paramedics came to give aid to anyone who might be injured and to transport them to the hospital. A city electric truck was there, and I saw an electrician checking the wiring to prevent further danger to the firemen and public.

The fire was soon under control, and all of it seemed to have been completed with a minimum amount of commotion, considering the efforts made
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to provide protection and security for the firemen and the passing motorists.

As I pondered all the activity that went on, I wondered if any city, no matter its size, could have done any better than Cookeville did in providing the basic elements of police, fire and health protection in an emergency such as this one. I felt good about what I saw.

JINGLE BELLS — According to **Bob Robinson**, public affairs manager for General Telephone, there were 10,752 operator-handled long distance calls made through the Cookeville toll center this past Christmas Day. The Cookeville center is the "umbrella" that covers 27 telephone exchanges in the Upper Cumberland region and includes Twin Lakes and Ben Lomand telephone corporations as well as GTE.

The peak day for long-distance, operator-handled calls was last summer when over 15,000 such calls were made. In addition to these numbers, there were the regular long distance calls made through direct dialing, attesting further to the growth of the telephone industry in this area and our dependency upon it.

"It is difficult to predict what the telephone service of the future will be because of technological changes that are coming," Bob said. The philosophy of GTE is to "provide universal telephone service at affordable rates," and Bob thinks his company is doing a pretty good job.

In Tennessee, GTE has a capital investment of \$72 million, 290 employees and over 42,000 access lines in operation. Some future plans call for in-

stallation of remote units to improve service in fast growing subdivisions and modernization of the Algood exchange.

NEW HORIZONS — The "Up With People" show held in December at the Drama Center broadened the horizons of a number of families in Cookeville who kept some of the young performers in their homes during their stay in our town.

The show itself was a heart-warming experience, and we who were lucky enough to be hosts can thank **Bob Luna**, or whoever was responsible, for the extra bonus we received.

The two performers who stayed at our house were from Switzerland and Belgium, and they were gracious and charming guests. They spoke five languages, and their English was as perfect and proper as my 7th grade teacher's was.

It was a delightful experience to get their views on world events, their impressions of America and to share personal judgments about philosophical matters.

Then a few days later came the announcement that Cookeville's own **Tommy Campbell** had been selected to join this group who sing and dance their way into the hearts of people everywhere. Tommy will be a splendid ambassador for our city and country as he visits in homes in other lands, and we wish him well in this experience.

I know it's naive of me to suggest that if we spent only a fraction of what goes into armaments on sending "Tommy Campbells" over the world to take the "Up With People" message of love, hope and goodwill, we would do more to eliminate barriers that impede friendship and goodwill than we do with our military might.

But, as I say, that's a pretty simple idea, and I doubt if it will get much attention.

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Talking About Lying

Wayne Nichols, who farms on the side in addition to working as a counselor at the Plateau Mental Health Center, has some interesting observations about people. His vast experience in human relations has given him a perspective about things that most of us don't have.

In chatting with him the other day about the prospects of his turnip patch this fall and whether he planned to share the harvest with his less fortunate friends, we stumbled on a profundity that engaged us in conversation for quite a spell.

It all began when I casually remarked that I don't trust any man who claims he's boss at his house, because "if he'll lie about one thing, he'll lie about everything else."

"Most people, I have found, are truthful," Wayne argued back. "People do not deliberately tell lies. They tell us what they perceive to be the truth, or what they wish were the truth, or what they imagine to be the truth."

He continued his discourse with this striking perception: "What folks tell you may be the truth, but remember, they may not be telling you 'all the truth.'"

And that is the reason, Wayne suggested, why two individuals do not understand each other when they think they're on the same wave length — "One may be telling the other the truth, but he is not telling all the truth."

At this juncture in the conversation I knew I was



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already in over my head, so I shifted to a lower key.

I was reminded of a book that came out several years ago entitled, **The Three Biggest Lies**. It was a compilation of the biggest "lies" told by various professional people, with a special focus on politicians and Washington bureaucrats. I thought if I recited some to Wayne, it would give the appearance that I was contributing something to our discussion.

First, the "three biggest lies" told by lawyers are these: 1) "I won't charge you for this meeting." 2) "Don't worry, I have the judge in my pocket. And, 3) "If we have to go to trial, we'll win hands down in front of a jury."

The biggest lies told by parents: 1) "This hurts us more than it hurts you." 2) "We're only looking out for your best interest." And, 3) "Someday you'll thank us."

Some others I'd read about came to mind as we talked further. The four biggest Congressional lies

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the fall. But she said she is discontinuing the annual April show and will hold a yearly show in October.

"I'm relieved, and I'm so glad it's over. Now I can start to rebuild," Mrs. Therrien's hus-

death.

Mrs. Therrien was returned to the Montgomery County Jail

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are: 1) "My position would be the same even if there were no defense plants in my district." 2) "The cost of the program will be more than offset by the additional revenue it generates." 3) "I work harder during a recess than when Congress is in session." 4) "The main reason for not seeking reelection is because I want to spend more time with my wife and children."

And more from Washington — the three biggest bureaucrat-ic lies are: 1) "If you count all the unpaid overtime I put in . . . 2) "In the long run, having a chauffeured limousine at my disposal saves money." 3) "The increase is necessary to keep them from taking higher paying jobs in private business."

Here are three gold-medal winners from a political press conference: 1) "Frankly . . ." 2) "I don't know the answer offhand but my staff will

look it up and give you the information in time to meet your deadline." 3) "That's a good question."

I could tell Wayne was fascinated by my sudden burst of knowledge and he obviously wanted me to continue:

The three biggest Senate lies: 1) "Men of goodwill can disagree without being disagreeable." 2) "I have the highest regard for my distinguished colleague's ability and integrity." 3) "Politics aside..."

The three biggest government switchboard lies are: 1) "I'm sorry, he is out of the office at the moment." 2) "Would you hold for just a second please?" 3) "If you leave a number, he will call you right back."

The single biggest White House Lie: "The president's trip is nonpolitical."

And finally, these three old bromides came to mind: 1) "The check is in the mail." 2) "I just want to make a few remarks." 3) "I'm from the government and I'm here to help you."

Wayne, I wish I could believe you, I really do — and that's no lie!



ANSWER: It generally takes two to three months to process a disability claim. The actual time depends largely on how long it takes to receive medical reports and other information and whether a special examination or test is needed.

'Bureaucrats' Defended

I know it's not fashionable these days to say anything complimentary about government employees, particularly those at the federal level. Some politicians have made a career of running against the Washington establishment, and they have found this a popular way to garner support for their cause.

Gov. **George Wallace** began the movement in his first campaign for the presidency, and he gained a lot of attention with his accusations against the "liberal bureaucrats."

Jimmy Carter got to the White House as an outsider, meaning he was not part of the federal bureaucracy and, therefore, was not to blame for the misdeeds of civil servants who worked in all those office buildings in Washington and across the land.

President Reagan is very successful in marshalling public opinion against his own employees — government workers — government agencies and some of the programs they administer. At times it's hard to tell whose side the President is on.

Yes, you can win votes and influence elections by taking out after the "gub'ment" worker at the local, state or national level. He or she is always fair game since these workers are always at the front where the action is, and they are the first contact the public has in their effort to fathom the mystery and vastness of



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government.

But I'm here to speak a good word for government workers — workers at the local, state and federal levels. Without them, I do not know how commerce and business could be carried on, how industry could thrive, nor how the fruits of the democratic process could mature and spread throughout the land.

It goes without saying that I speak not from an unbiased position as I cast my complimentary vote for the mail carrier, the teacher, the city clerk, the county social worker and the Federal Civil Service employee. I have been there, and I know what they do.

Specifically, at this point, I have in mind the local Social Security office under the direction of **Roy Byrd** and **Don Cavin**.

I'm sure most of Cookeville does not know the vast
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amount of work they and their staff produce each month nor of the efficiency and speed with which they do their work. If you are on the receiving end of a Social Security check or are the victim of bureaucratic red tape, you will have greater appreciation for them and what they do. Otherwise, you may not.

Meeting and dealing with the public is a tedious task — under the best of circumstances. When the occasion represents a traumatic event in the person's life, such as a death in the family, disability or retirement of the worker, the circumstance then is fraught with peril and requires compassion, understanding and an intelligent application of laws and regulations that govern the payment of benefits to the one in need.

The local Social Security office processes hundreds of claims each month, as well as hundreds of other actions that affect payments, such as address changes, work notices and other entitlement events, and they do all of this with an accuracy rate that is close to 100 percent. The work is accomplished in record time, making the Cookeville operation one of the leading offices in the entire nation.

Not every action the Social Security workers take has a happy ending and not all clients are satisfied

with results that accrue. The workers though are saddled with the responsibility of administering a very complex law — a law that becomes more entangled each time Congress attempts to simplify it, and the application of the law sometimes produces adverse decisions.

But the employees give it their best shot, and most folks who visit the local office are pleased with the courtesy, professionalism and good judgment shown them by these federal workers.

The Social Security employees are solid, stable workers, and most of them have been employed there for a number of years. Not only are they good workers but they are also good citizens, contributing to the growth and development of Cookeville through their participation in Civil Air Patrol, the Red Cross, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and membership in civic, religious and professional organizations.

Roy and **Don** are proud of the fact the office always has 100 per cent participation in the annual United Way drive and provides donors each time the Red Cross Bloodmobile visits here. Two of the workers, **Gene Evelyn Warren** and **Doris Hawkins**, have contributed over 15 gallons of blood in the course of their employment.

As politicians, in their quest for high office, berate public employees, I invite them to visit Cookeville to observe work being done here by government agencies at all levels. I think the office seekers would be surprised — and maybe pleased — to see the long arm of government in operation as it is here.

Unforgettable Christmas

Christmas Eve is upon us. If one ever has the sensation and clear knowledge that he is lifting his voice into space to be heard and answered by its own echo, it is on this night.

As I ponder the mystery and magic of Christmas 1984, I am transported back in time to Christmas 1943. World War II was on, and my ship was anchored off Portland, Maine — a long, long way from home. It was to be a sad and lonely time for me, I thought.

By the luck of the draw, though, I was invited to spend Christmas Eve with an elderly couple who lived not far from town. They were the "Harveys," and they lived alone in an old New England farm house — the kind you see in a Currier and Ives print. To this day, that Christmas remains my "most unforgettable," and each year I unlock my memory bank and cash a few checks on that long ago event.

Mr. Harvey picked me up at the base, and we drove over icy roads to their house out in the country. It was early afternoon, but Mrs. Harvey already was preparing supper on a cook stove that helped heat the house, as did the huge fireplace in the "parlor." They may also have used oil. I don't know.

The old couple seemed fairly secure in their setting, and they felt they were doing their patriotic bit having a service man spend Christmas with them. They didn't talk much, nor did they volunteer information about themselves. They were sharp peo-



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ple, though, and I could tell by what little they did say that they were knowledgeable on the issues of the day.

They were especially interested in life as I lived it "down South," and what I thought about FDR's third term. They didn't tell me what they thought.

But the memories I have of that experience are not of trivial conversations I had with my hosts. No, the thing that made this a "Christmas Card" Christmas was the show put on by Mother Nature and the folks in the community, with the help, of course, of the Harveys. As my grandmother would say, they "out-did" themselves to make this a Christmas I would never forget.

It was a cold afternoon, I remember, and the ground had long since been covered with snow. But just about dusk, the white flakes began falling again.

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In no time at all, the whole countryside looked like a white, fluffy ball. Across the way, little yellow lights from neighboring farm houses played peek-a-boo with us as we stood at the window, gazing at the winter wonderland.

After supper, we sat in front of the big fire and talked a little. The war seemed far away at the moment, and we didn't dwell on it much, except when the old man asked me about the ship I was on. Mostly, we just talked about how cold it got in Maine and how much snow we could expect.

It was a quiet, peaceful interlude in front of the fire — a Christmas Eve setting one would expect to find in a storybook — not in real life. "My sister would love this," I recall saying.

I'm sure the three of us must have dozed, for we were startled by the sound of bells, laughter and heavy boots pounding the front porch. Mr. Harvey sauntered over to the window to see what the commotion was about, and I followed him.

Out front were two horse-drawn sleighs — I had never seen anything like that before — and on the porch was a passel of people — young and old — who had come out from the village church to sing carols. It was a sight to behold!

With gas rationing on, and roads impassable, "a one-horse open sleigh" was perfect for the occasion. A Hollywood script writer couldn't have planned it better.

The singers were appropriately dressed for the rigid weather, and it was not an imposition on them to stand out in the cold and sing their hearts out. And that is what they did!

Starting with "O Come All Ye Faithful," they went through the book, singing all the familiar carols I had sung back home. Their rendition of "O Little Town Of Bethlehem" brought a lump to my throat as I wondered how folks in my hometown were celebrating Christmas Eve. And I remember yet the exuberance a couple of the men gave to "Glory To The New Born King" in singing "Hark, The Herald Angels Sing."

After awhile, Mrs. Harvey invited the carolers in to warm themselves before going on to the next house. There were no refreshments, so they just chattered away, and I thought they were a right jolly bunch, spreading sunshine on a snowy Christmas Eve.

Soon, as if on cue, a stillness came over the room, the firelight flickered and voices were hushed in "Silent Night, Holy Night," and we all sang, "All Is Calm, All Is Bright." I'm sure I've never heard it sung with more feeling and intensity.

Finally, the merriment came to an end, and the horses, if not the carolers, were ready to move on. Everyone shouted out, "Merry Christmas!" and off they went. The horses "knew the way to carry the sleigh, through the white and drifting snow." It would make a good story, I suppose, to say I went along with them, but I didn't.

Inside the house again, the logs in the fireplace cracked and sent sparks up the chimney, reminding me of sparklers we always lighted at Christmas time in Alabama. We talked about the evening's festivities, and Mrs. Harvey brought out the eggnog.

Mr. Harvey surprised me as he raised his glass and said, "God bless us everyone. Tomorrow will be Christmas."

And I thought, "And tomorrow, I will be back on ship, but this is one Christmas Eve I will never forget!"

Christmas special

What's Your Season?

One would think dapper, spiffy Rotarians like James Lacy, Pete Helton, Jack Wirt, Lee Webb, Keith Howard and Eddie Woodside would be "men for all seasons."

But not so, according to Carole Lovell, a Cookeville fashion consultant and color analyst who spoke to the Noon Rotary Club the other day on "what a well-dressed man needs to know."

Carole's specialty is coordinating colors with one's complexion and bearing to accentuate personality and character. "Putting your best foot forward," or "dressing for success" may be a way to describe her objectives, but the technique she uses is the fascinating part of her presentation.

It's a truism, of course, that "clothes make the man" (and a spin-off of that saying is "A good suit has made many a lawyer"). Well, Carole's expertise in this field enables her to demonstrate impressively how the "right" clothes can build confidence and self-esteem for the man and woman on their way up.

Carole said men and women may be classified as "seasons" when it comes to determining color combinations and appropriate apparel. I had heard my own daughters talking about this concept recently, but when they said "seasons," I thought they were talking about baseball or football. Now I know.

According to Carole, a man who is a winter "season" ought to wear a dark suit to highlight his dark features. A "spring" person looks better in light blue. "Summer" and "autumn" people likewise require certain color combinations to accent their special features.

The color of clothing we wear gives off certain signals, and it's important, she said, that our colors harmonize with the "season" we are if we are to be effective with our associates, especially those in the work place. If things don't match, we can be in trouble.

Carole made believers of us by using Rotary members to show how colors enhance or detract from one's appearance. I could never determine though which "season" was in for James, Jack, Eddie, Pete, Keith and Lee, but Joe Floyd, who was seated at my table, suggested some of us would have a losing "season," no matter what we wore.

There's a saying all of us have heard: "We get only one chance to make a first impression," and we all know that the FIRST impression had better be a good one. I thought about that as Carole made her presentation.

I used to talk to a lot of young people who were interviewing for their first job. Common sense would tell me if they didn't think it important enough to



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make a good FIRST impression, they likely would not make first class workers.

In recent years dress codes have become less strict, and both men and women are allowed to dress more casually. But if you expect to get a key to the executive suit someday, there are still standards of dress and behavior you must abide by, experts like Carole Lovell and others tell us.

For example, a recent survey by a research team revealed that women who wear business suits and little makeup are likely to receive better job offers and make more money than women who dress flashily and go heavy on the lipstick and eye-shadow. Women "who dress for success" are more likely to achieve it than those who do not.

Furthermore, the report stated, "If you have two women with equal qualifications applying for the same job, the one who appears more conservative will have the advantage."

A job placement bureau in Chicago had these suggestions for male job-seekers: Don't smoke; it automatically eliminates you from many jobs.

Never respond to a job offer with "I'll have to ask my wife," unless the job involves a long-distance move. It indicates indeciveness.

Get rid of the beard — but you can keep the mustache. Beards are often perceived as a sign of militancy or studiousness.

In another study, wardrobe and grooming problems ranked second to smoking as employee habits that irritated managers and supervisors the most.

Most of us need all the help we can get to build our self-esteem and give us confidence to perform our work well. Not only do we need to know what day it is, but also what "season" we're in.

A personnel manager, wishing to impress his assistant with his superior knowledge in hiring people, said to him: "The first girl I interviewed had a college degree but made only 85 on the test; the second one is just a high school graduate but she scored 95; the third girl made only 80 on the test, but she's had experience in this line of work. Which one would you hire?"

"I'd take the one in the pink sweater," the assistant immediately replied. She evidently was the right "season."

To Make Promises...

It must be a torturous ordeal to run for public office these days, and my hat's off to those brave souls willing to risk their lives, their sacred honor and their fortunes for the chance to serve their nation in the halls of Washington, or wherever.

I've been particularly enchanted by the candidates for Congress from the Sixth District this time around. All of them are handsome, hardworking and patriotic men (no women) in quest of the Holy Grail. I really don't know how honest and smart they are, but I suppose they measure up to the standards most of us espouse who will be voting for them, and they may even exceed some of us in this respect.

Each candidate wants to cut deficit spending and he wants to balance the budget. They all want a strong national defense (that costs a lot of money), adequate Social Security payments (still more money) and better health care (somebody has to pay).

Most likely they would all favor increased expenditures to complete power dams, price supports for farm crops and more aid to Appalachia. If there was a chance for a new federal building in each county in the district, the new congressman would go for it — 90 to nothing! Notwithstanding the fact that such a building might not be needed.



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All of these things he would do without raising taxes. And, oh yes, he would eliminate government waste, and he'd get everyone off welfare and food stamps who ought not to be there. That's where he'd get the money to do all these other things, I suppose.

Why does a candidate for public office make such outlandish promises and dream the impossible dream?

Because we make him do it, that's why.

Aside from honesty, integrity and hardwork, we probably expect more from our public officials than they can possibly deliver. There are so many interest groups (and that includes all of us) demanding their share of the pie that an ordinary mortal is hard put to respond intelligently and with any degree of substance to the burning issues that confront mankind today.

You see, we are a fickle lot, and we talk out of both sides of our mouths at the same time. Where we

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stand on a matter is determined usually by where we sit, and all of us favor economizing in some other state or congressional district — but let's get what we can for our own.

What's a poor congressman to do?

The best illustration I know of our fence-straddling and teeter-tottering is in the story passed on to me by the late W.G. Anderson who was executive secretary of the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce at the time. You may draw your own conclusions from it:

"A young man lived with his parents in a public housing development. He attended public schools, rode the free school bus and participated in the free lunch program. He served in the Army, and kept his national life insurance when he was discharged. He went to the state university and worked part time at the state capitol to stretch out his GI check.

"He married a public health nurse and bought a farm with an FHA loan. He got the Small Business Administration to help him get started in business.

His child was born at the county hospital built with Hill-Burton funds. He bought a ranch with a GI loan and got emergency feed from the government.

"He put part of his land in the soil bank and the money helped him pay off his debts. His parents lived comfortably on their Social Security payments.

"He got electricity from the REA. The government helped him clear his land, the county agent showed him how to terrace it, and the government helped him build a pond and stock it with fish. The government guaranteed the sale of his farm products. The young man signed a petition seeking federal assistance in developing an industrial park to strengthen the economy of the area.

"Then one day he wrote his congressman:

"I wish to protest excessive government spending and high taxes. I believe in rugged individualism. I think people should stand on their own two feet without expecting government handouts. I am opposed to all socialistic trends, and I demand a return to the principles of our Constitution."

If you were a congressman, how would you respond to such a letter?

One of the men running for Congress in this district is going to need your help.

five institutions in the nation to be honored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities for programs of innovation and change in higher education.

Tennessee Tech was selected for a special commendation recognizing the university's program in Outcomes Assessment as a Basis for Faculty Development Programs. The award will be presented to TTU President Arliss Roaden tomorrow during the 24th annual meeting of AASCU in Washington.

The special commendation was earned in competition for the sixth annual G. Theodore Mitau Award for Innovation and Change in Higher Education. Wright State University of Dayton, Ohio, was selected for the award for its international student exchange program.

Selected along with Tennessee Tech to receive special commendations were the University of

Communities Program, State University College at Courtland, N.Y., for a program in "mobilizing a campus for excellence and student success"; and California State College at Stanislaus, for a regional learning network.

More than 60 nominations for this year's Mitau Award were received from institutions across the nation.

Tennessee Tech's program uses a variety of measures to identify strengths and weaknesses in instruction and curriculums. Such findings are reviewed by the university's Committee on Evaluation and Improvement of Instruction, which then recommends faculty development activities for the following year. The result is a continuing process of assessment and improvement.

A university-wide effort to improve student writing skills grew out of the program, for example, after various surveys and ex-

A nationally-known writing consultant conducted workshops on campus, and a committee was established to oversee further efforts to improve writing. Faculty members from all departments were recruited to work with the program, and an office for the Writing Across the Curriculum project was established.

Several activities were carried out in 1983-84 as part of the ongoing effort to evaluate and improve instruction. For the fourth year, a scientifically selected sample of TTU seniors took the ACT College Outcomes Measures Project exam, which measures the ability to put education to use in real-world situations.

Students in 40 different fields of study here also took specialized exams given on a statewide or nationwide basis, and a sample of recent graduates were surveyed to
(See TTU, p. 2, col. 3)

Political Ads — Yuck!

Thank goodness, the election is over. I don't think we could have stood much more it.

Surely there is a more humane way to choose our officials than to put them — and us! — through ordeals like the campaign just completed. Just one more "paid political announcement" and I think I would have reached the breaking point.

For posterity though, I have singled out a few of the political gems that caught my fancy, and I pass them on to **Herald-Citizen** readers without extra charge.

Because the Republicans had more money to spend than the Democrats, they naturally used more TV time. But I'd say both parties were about equal in the quality of the product they put out, and there's enough blame — and credit — to go around.

By far, the best of the lot, in my assessment of things, was the TV spot that featured **President Reagan's** whistle-stop tour of Ohio. It was the one that showed the old men playing checkers and folks milling around. The announcer says in a mellifluous voice something like this: "The other day the barber shop closed an hour early and the mill shut down at noon."

And then into the picture comes the President's train, high-balling through the little town. All of the people are down by the tracks to see the Great Man pass through. The announcer then intones: "They just want to say, 'Thank you, Mr. President.'" The train rushes on, and the people have been brushed by a moment of history. It was "mood music" all right, but it was effective advertising.

That little vignette took me back to a long ago afternoon when **President Franklin D. Roosevelt's** train came through our town in Alabama. He, like



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President Reagan in the TV spot, was on the tail-end of the observation car, and he waved to all the townsfolk who had gathered at the station to catch a glimpse of the mighty warrior.

That episode was a moment of excitement in some depression-weary lives, but we had had our encounter with history, fleeting though it was.

Joe Simpkins wins the award for the most objectionable political commercial, in my opinion, put out by an advertising agency. It was the one where he compared his values and life style to **Bart Gordon's**. You remember it: "I'm in the National Guard; he's not. I'm a veteran; he's not. I'm a family man; he's not."

By this approach, Joe sought to win the viewers to his side with the subliminal admission that "of course our values are like yours, Joe, and we're not about to vote for Bart whose values are totally different."

But this piety back-fired, I think, and it obviously did him more harm than good. The remarks sounded too self-righteous, and voters were turned off by this attitude. I was left with the thought that maybe we should have a war every few years so congressional

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Yellow-Light Runners

Dog-Day-Doldrums — This article is being written early in August because in a few days we'll be going out to Topeka, Kansas, to welcome a new grandbaby.

So, if I don't plan ahead, Charles Denning will have to fill this space with honest-to-goodness news, and that could be worse than the usual verbiage that appears in this spot each week. You know the kind of news that always makes the front page — great disasters, and so forth.

The sticky, sultry, stuffy weather that we have this time every year surely brings out the worst in us, and we say and do things that at other times would be left unsaid and undone.

Folks who write weekly columns for newspapers perhaps are more prone than others to be affected by dog-day syndromes, and that explains my critical commentary today on some driving habits and traffic patterns in Cookeville.

Also, knowing that I may not be in town when these remarks are published makes it less difficult to muster the courage to make these criticisms.

I've always thought the yellow light that comes on between the green and red (or is it between the red and green?) was a signal to begin stopping. But not so, according to my perception of how a vast number of motorists in Cookeville drive.

Instead of slowing down to a stop, the yellow light triggers the urge to drive like mad! The yellow light means "go as fast as you can" —



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nevermind that it's about to give intersecting cars the right-of-way, and you're likely to be caught out in the middle of "no man's land" without a prayer.

Two dangerous intersections that attract "yellow" road-runners are on North Willow at 7th and 12th Streets. If you are on 7th and thinking of crossing Willow, you'd better wait awhile after the light turns green so drivers who view the world through rose-colored glasses may pass on through.

The intersection at 12th and Willow poses a problem because the streets there are so wide and the traffic light at times is so erratic. You can start from a standing position and not get through the intersection before the light changes back to red. That's the truth! And that spells trouble if the approaching driver from the left or right thinks the caution light is his invitation to the Indianapolis 500!

I realize accidents can happen when you stop too suddenly, and there are times when it's safer to go

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on through than risk a collision from behind. But that's not usually the case, and Cookeville drivers need to think "STOP" instead of "GO" when the yellow light appears.

Another traffic situation that is fraught with danger is the stretch on North Willow from West 3rd to 7th St. It can be hazardous to a pedestrian's health to cross there at night, and if it's raining, he'd be wiser not to try it at all.

The problem stems from the fact that when motorists enter this short stretch — from West 3rd to West 7th — they have emerged from a well-lighted area — down at Broad and Willow and suddenly they encounter an area that's dark as night (to coin a phrase). With their car lights on dim, as they should be, it's very difficult to spot a person or object on those four blocks.

The installation of additional street lights would eliminate a potentially dangerous situation.

And finally, I wonder if a study has been made the traffic flow where eastbound traffic exits I-40

at Burgess Falls Road? Cars have to back up almost the entire distance of the exit ramp at times while they wait their chance to turn left onto Willow to come into Cookeville.

Increasing traffic on both the interstate and Burgess Falls Road will make that situation more acute, and something will have to be done to make it easier for motorists to turn onto Willow, the main artery to Tennessee Tech and the hospital area.

Upon completion of our stay in Topeka, after we've observed all the ceremonial trappings that accompany the birth of a grandbaby, we plan a westward trek that will take us to the Grand Canyon, the Painted Desert the Petrified Forest and all other places marked "free admission."

On the way back, we will dip down to El Paso and visit Verlice and Max, whose friendship predates World War II, cross over the bridge into Old Mexico, then pass through Texas cow-towns and oil-well country to Oklahoma City where we will visit the Cowboy Museum that's known far and wide for its collection of "old west" artifacts.

These plans, you understand, are contingent upon my not being arrested for some traffic violation along the way.

Tomato Lover

Tomato "Stew" My wife casually asked the other day about my plans to take down the stakes and white sashes that have held up the tomato vines all summer and enabled us to enjoy a good crop of this delicious fruit in spite of the dry weather.

She says the stakes and rags present an unsightly scene from the road, and she thinks this offends our neighbors — the **Picketts, Vickers and Snelgroves** — as well as other passers-by. The tomato patch should be cleared forthwith, she declared, even though the vines are still producing and need all the help they can get to remain strong and sturdy.

I mention this episode simply to point out that our priorities usually are determined by the things we enjoy.

Gerry, you see, really doesn't like tomatoes, so keeping them "coming on" isn't high on her priority list, but having a clean yard is. On the other hand, I love tomatoes, so the garden's appearance doesn't shake me up very much, and I doubt also that the neighbors are disturbed by its shaggy looks.

I'm convinced that most of us, most of the time, take our stand on issues according to our personal likes and dislikes, and not because of strong moral convictions or dedication to some great cause. If I smoked, for example, I'm sure I would have more sympathy for the plight of the tobacco farmer.

Since my appreciation for the taste of a home-grown tomato exceeds my concern for how things look from the street, I favor leaving the garden alone and letting the neighbors think what they will. But since Gerry thinks it looks "tacky," I'm sure I'll be cleaning it up any day now, taking down the stakes and ties and putting them away for the winter.

But when spring comes 'round again, as it has a way of doing, I'm sure we'll forget the ugliness of dried tomato vines. The urge to stir the soil once



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more will have priority for both of us, and setting out tomato plants again will seem the proper thing to do.

Edwinna Brown Scholarship For 34 years Edwinna Brown was executive secretary of the Putnam County chapter of the American Red Cross. She died in January of last year.

A scholarship fund was established by her friends in her memory, and Tuesday the first award will be made in ceremonies at Tennessee Tech.

Miss Sandra Bowman of Gamesboro, a senior in the school of nursing, will be the recipient of the \$250 scholarship award, and it will be presented by **Bruce Plummer**, a member of the Red Cross Board.

The award will go each year to a deserving Tennessee Tech student in the School of Nursing who demonstrates the high ideals of service exemplified by Miss Brown and who is dedicated to relieving the sufferings of humanity through a career in nursing.

Seeds of Doubt — The other day I walked into **Bob Poteet's** hardware store to buy grass seed. Just out of curiosity, I asked him if he knew how many seeds were in a pound. You can't believe how fast the figured rolled off the end of his tongue. Just like that, he told me — 2,169,432. He didn't bat an eye.

I have no reason to doubt Bob's calculation. He
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sells a lot of grass seed, so he ought to know how many it takes to make a pound. But more important, I like his sales pitch that keeps customers coming back for more: "If the seeds don't come up, just bring them back and I'll refund your money," he says, with a face as straight as a pine sapling. I like that kind of honesty.

Library Dedication — "A right good crowd" (as we used to say about church attendance) was on hand last Sunday afternoon at the library for the unveiling of the portrait of **Richard Fielding Cooke** and the dedication of the children's section of the library.

I think it says something about Cookeville and the value system of the people here when such a large number of citizens will devote their time on

a beautiful Sunday afternoon to participate in a program such as was presented at the Putnam County Library last Sunday. It was heartwarming, indeed, to see that kind of interest displayed by so many.

Willis Huddleston spoke for the descendants of **Richard Fielding Cooke**, and he gave an interesting account of the family tree. He didn't leave out a single branch. Among those present who could trace their roots back to Cookeville's founder were **Clyde Hyder, Mrs. Vallie Hunter, Billy Buck, Wanda Jared and Mrs. Hooper Burgess**.

Also spotted in the assembly of dignitaries were **Mr. and Mrs. John Hendrix, Mrs. Fred (Margaret) Terry, Mrs. Leon Delozier, Margaret and Billy Carlen, Mrs. Kenneth (Jo) Haile, Mrs. Noble Cody, Mrs. Maggie Terry and Ted Hasleton**.

Thought For The Day — From **Rufus Stacy**: "If God had meant for us to get up to see the sunrise, He would have scheduled it later in the day."

We're 'Loose' With Words

A TBI agent, recently investigating the murder of a Cannon County man who was shot 15 times, was quoted as saying, "Someone wanted him terminated."

That's an understatement if I ever heard one. Shot 15 times and they just wanted him "terminated"? They wanted him dead, and I don't know why the officer couldn't just as well have said that.

Wanting him "terminated" comes close to "doublespeak." "Doublespeak," you know, is the use of high-sounding words and phrases in place of simple, ordinary language that would be closer to the truth and that more of us could understand.

Each year the National Council of English Teachers gives awards for the most outlandish examples of "doublespeak" they've seen and heard. Here are some recent winners:

—The Pentagon, for referring to combat as "violence processing."

—The National Transportation Board for calling an airplane crash a "controlled flight into terrain."

—The White House for calling the Grenada invasion a "pre-dawn vertical insertion."

—A Chicago discount store for advertising a "hydro-blast force cup" — a toilet plunger.

—President Reagan for naming the MX missile the "peacemaker" or "peacekeeper."

—A large oil company for calling planned layoffs "eliminating redundancies in the human resources area."

At times, all of us get carried away and use puffed



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up words and expressions we wish later we hadn't used. (Gen. Haig's "I'm in control here" comes to mind.) It's an occupational hazard though for writers, speakers and politicians, but their fracturing of the language often stems from ignorance, laziness and bad habits, just as we lesser mortals are afflicted by the same sins.

For example, writers who keep us abreast of football happenings invariably use the word "laughing" when they're quoting the coach. It's hard for a coach to say something without "laughing" — "We lost by four touchdowns, but our kids made an interesting game of it," the coach said, "laughing." How could he laugh at a time like that?

At other times, coaches only smile or chuckle. "The fullback had brain surgery three weeks ago, but he'll play Saturday," Coach Hardknocks said, "with a chuckle."

No one laughed during the Watergate hearings,

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but at that point in time was born an expression that's flourished like the green bay tree — carved into our treasury of words as surely as the faces are carved on Mt. Rushmore. "At that point in time" is the abominable phrase, and no speaker worth his salt can talk more than five minutes without using it at least twice.

What I would like to know is, "At what point in time" the speaker will shut up and sit down!

Other expressions equally as vexatious are "past experience" and "past history." How can experience and history be anything but "past"?

Some other redundant "superfluities" we take pleasure in using are "true facts," "new revelations," "very unique," "future plans" and "hot-water heater."

People say they feel "badly" when they're referring to their health. I don't hear them say they feel "goodly." What they mean, of course, is they're ailing, and not that their sense of touch is impaired. So they should say they feel "bad."

Some words ought to get time-and-a-half for the excessive amount of time they put in. Have you ever known of a lawyer who didn't leave a "lucrative" law practice back home when he became a federal judge? Have you ever heard of an air base that wasn't "sprawling"? Or a "misconception" that wasn't "popular"? Or an express train (when there were such things) that wasn't a "crack passenger train"?

Our language, though, is enriched and made

more lively by the murdered metaphor, the malapropism and the unhinged cliché, so we shouldn't knock them.

President Coolidge wrote in his daily column after he left the White House such words of wisdom as: "The future may be better or worse." "The final solution for unemployment is work."

Mayor Jane Byrne of Chicago said she hoped a certain investigation would prove "fruitworthy." She undoubtedly meant "fruitful."

The lady in court testified she saw the motorist "driving on the elbow of the road."

Some other examples:

—The executive talking about the good old days "when he was still green behind the ears."

—Another who warned against over-enthusiasm by urging his subordinates, "Don't bend overboard."

—And the woman who said, "I wouldn't trust him with a 10-foot pole."

When Donald T. Regan was at Treasury, before he became adviser to the President, he enlightened us with this astute observation: "Inflation is purely a monetary matter." To which President Reagan could only reply:

"Language keeps getting in the way of explaining what we're doing."

Dr. Louis Johnson Jr., former Dean of Business at Tennessee Tech, speaks in a language all of us can understand and there's no put-on about what he has to say. His definition of the word "tolerable," a good old-fashioned down-home expression, is "well enough to eat all you want but not not well enough to work for it."

That's me — I'm just feeling "tolerable" these days.

the kind of stuff for me

You're Aging When.....

SIGN OF THE TIMES — As I shopped in a local supermarket the other day, I asked the pretty girl who was restocking the shelves with all the soft drinks if they still sold many of the small crinkly shaped bottles of Coke -- you know, the kind we used to buy for a nickel when the only other choices were Orange Crush and Nehi grape.

She noticed the two cartons of small Coke in my basket, and, with the innocence of my 5-year-old granddaughter, replied, "Only to people of your age." Then she added, "People my age buy the larger size."

I suppose this incident really has no significance. She was simply stating a fact, and I guess there's no way she could have answered my question more explicitly.

But since "only people my age" are buying the small size Coke, I predict a dwindling market for the 6 1/2-ounce bottled Coke, and I plan to lay in a supply for I'm sure it will soon become a collector's item.

—Several weeks ago we were in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and we toured the historic "Old Town" section of the city, a restored area made to resemble a western town of a hundred years ago when cowboys still roamed the range and whooped it up on Saturday night.

In one of the shops where we stopped, the saleslady, who turned out to be the proprietor, seemed uncommonly friendly and was very responsive to our questions about the history of the area and the goods she had for sale. We couldn't leave there, she



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said, without tasting some fresh dates she had on hand.

I soon get suspicious of strangers who act too friendly, and as we started to leave, I noticed a curio on the wall entitled, "How to Know You're Growing Older." That sort of struck my fancy, and as I read it I knew it would give me material for a Sunday column.

Right off, I could think of several friends in Cookeville! "How much is that?" I asked.

Before the lady answered, she wanted to know where we were from. When we said, "Cookeville, Tennessee," she smiled and her face lit up like a Las Vegas casino. "I used to live in Johnson City," she beamed proudly and long.

"What a coincidence," we beamed just as proudly. "So did we!"

In rapid fire succession, like Matt Dillon's six-shooter on Gunsmoke, questions were fired from both sides. "Where did you live?" "When were you there?"

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Where did you work? Who were your people? How did you get out here?

We learned we both lived in Johnson City at the same time — from 1952 to 1957. Her name was Ruth and she had been a nurse at the VA hospital there. After joining the Navy, she married a man from Arizona and never did go back to East Tennessee.

Later, she and her husband decided to move to New Mexico and set up shop in historic "Old Town" of Albuquerque and sell knick-knacks and bric-a-brac to Tennessee tourists. She enjoys her work.

I suppose it would make a good story to say we both knew each other in Johnson City; or went to the same church; or had a mutual acquaintance. But it was not to be. We couldn't strike up kinship in any form or fashion. In fact, I couldn't detect even a smidgen of desire on her part to return to the place where she grew up.

After a lot of chit-chat with Ruth, she would not let me pay her for the memento that told me if I was growing older. As a favor to a fellow Tennessean, she said, it was a gift to me at no cost.

As a favor to some friends in Cookeville, I list (without charge) a few of the signals that mark the aging process — signals they've always wanted to know about but were afraid to ask (courtesy of Ruth from Albuquerque):

You know you're growing older when:

Your little black book contains only names ending in M.D.

Your children begin to look middle-aged.

You're still chasing women but can't remember why.

You look forward to a dull evening.

Your favorite part of the newspaper is "25 Years Ago Today."

Your knees buckle but your belt won't.

Dialing long distance wears you out.

You just can't stand people who are intolerant.

The little gray-haired lady who help across the street is your wife.

You get exercise acting as pallbearer for your friends who exercise.

You sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there.

You know all the answers but nobody asks you the questions.

Your pacemaker makes the garage door go up when a pretty girl goes by.

And, finally, you know you're growing older when your thoughts go from passion to pension!

One of these days I may write to Ruth and tell her to add another clue to her list of signals that tell if you're growing older. You know you belong to that "other generation" and that time is passing with the speed of a fast express train if you still prefer the small bottle of Coke to the larger size.

The girl at Kroger's told me so!

The Real Thing

SAY IT AIN'T SO— Shades of "Shoeless Joe" Jackson and the Black Sox scandals!

"Say it ain't so, Joe," pleaded the little boy to his baseball hero in 1920.

Say it ain't so, Coca-Cola. Say you haven't changed the taste of Coke, the most delightful, refreshing taste in all the world. Tell us you haven't done it!

As far back as any of us can remember, Coke has been "it," and nothing could rival that little crinkly, hour-glass shaped bottle that contained 6½ ounces of pure refreshment. In war time and in peace — at home and abroad — the taste was the same, and wherever you went, you knew you were tasting the "real thing" when you drank a Coca-Cola.

But now they're changing it. Are there no absolutes left? Is nothing sacred anymore? If you can't trust Coke, who can you trust? Death and taxes are the only sure things left in the world, now that Coke has gone the way of all flesh and succumbed to Madison Avenue's embrace. Say it ain't so!

Long before there was a Pepsi generation, folks quenched their thirsts on a hot summer day by drinking a Coke or a "dope," as we might have called it then, that had been chilled by honest-to-goodness ice in a large metal "cold drink box." It satisfied the thirst and the pocketbook — and lifted a fellow's spirit about as high as a fellow's spirit ought to go.

No sanitized, homogenized, computertized vending machines then. There was only one taste, one size and one price — a whole nickle!

In the "pre-Pepsi period," the height of sheer



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pleasure was to stop off at the local soda fountain with your best girl on a summer afternoon. The place would be cooled with overhead revolving fans and you could get a glass of ice water free.

There was an extra special flair to drinking a "fountain coke," and you knew you "were uptown" when the druggist (yes, the druggist mixed drinks as well as prescriptions) squirted Coke juice into a cold glass filled with slivers of ice and carbonated water. It never did taste as good as the bottled drink, but you knew you'd had the "real thing," and the total experience was one of life's happiest moments.

But in changing its taste, Coca-Cola, has gone the way of passenger trains, penny candy and soda-fountain afternoons. Say it ain't so!!

NOT-SO-TRIVIAL PURSUIT— "Whatever happened to appendicitis?" asked O.T. Estes the other night as he and I chatted away, waiting for Dr. Horace Raper's retirement - from - Tennessee - Tech

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- party to get underway.

You would think we could come up with a more cheerful topic to talk about at such a time as that, but O.T. and I do the best we can.

His question, though, as we like to say, was "thought-provoking." Neither of us could recall the last time we'd heard of someone going to the hospital strictly for an appendectomy, and we both could remember when appendicitis, we thought, was rather common.

Had a vaccine been discovered to immunize against this once dreaded ailment, and we simply had't heard about it? Surely not. Before sitting down to hear words of praise heaped upon Dr. Raper for his many accomplishments at Tech, Wesley Foundation and the community, I promised O.T. I would look into this matter of appendicitis and get back with him.

So I did some checking around. I learned that 81 appendectomies were performed at Cookeville General Hospital in 1984, an average of nearly seven a month. The average stay in the hospital was 4.3 days, a far cry from the old days when a patient could expect up to two weeks of hospitalization and more weeks of

recuperation at home.

Appendicitis can still be a serious problem if not treated timely, I was told, and it hasn't gone away completely.

— Now O.T., you can rest easy. Unless you have a pain in your side.

REACHING OUT — Bob Robinson, Public affairs Officer for GTE, is a member of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, and he recently represented Tennessee at the President's employment seminar in Washington, D.C.

Some 5000 persons attended the national meeting, and Bob presided at one of the sessions. Teddy Kennedy Jr., who lost a leg to cancer, was one of the participants in the discussion groups.

Bob said they discussed problems of the disabled and how their employment opportunities can be improved.

"We looked ahead to the year 2000," he said, "and talked about the kinds of jobs that will be available then and how terminals, computers and robots will affect the job market for the handicapped."

WORDS, WORDS, WORDS— English has seven nouns which form the plural by changing the vowel sound. Here are six: Man, men. Woman, women. Tooth, teeth. Goose, geese. Mouse, mice. Louse, lice. What's the seventh?

'A Pretty Good Place'

When I found out nearly 20 years ago that we were to move to Cookeville, we subscribed to the **Herald-Citizen** a few weeks before we moved to get a feel for the town and to learn what was going on. Back then, the **H-C** was a twice-a-week paper, not nearly as streamlined and modern in its appearance as it is today.

Upon receiving the paper one day in Gadsden, Alabama, where we lived, we were startled to read in box-car letters across the top of the front page, "Town To Get New Street Lights." My children thought that was a pretty corny headline, and they wondered if other exciting things like that went on here. "What kind of town are we moving to?" they asked.

Well, I wasn't sure. We drove up here on a beautiful autumn day to house-hunt and look the place over. At that time — 1964 — only a small section of I-40 was open. There were two restaurants, I think, in town, and the development of South Jefferson was several years away. This did not look like the place where we wanted to spend the rest of our lives, and we did not expect to.

A few months later, while driving down Dixie Avenue one Sunday morning and drinking in the beauty of a Christmas card scene after an overnight snowfall, my children remarked: "Daddy, you can move on, but we're staying here in Cookeville."

Now, as I look back, 20 years older and maybe a little wiser, I've decided that if getting new street lights is the hottest news story the local paper can run, then this must be a pretty good place to live and it is where I want to stay.



'Round-the-town

With
Bishop Holliman

5/6/84

So let's not fret if the top story happens to be about the search for a suitable landfill or a quarry where we can grovel for gravel. If those are the stories that rate the big headlines, we're not in bad shape at all.

As long as we keep our problems in proper perspective, as long as we can debate issues openly and honestly and can respect those whose views differ from our own, in all likelihood we'll come out ahead.

And as long as we keep a sense of humor and can laugh at ourselves.

In this city we have many who can deal with the issues at hand, but there is one who meets them head-on in a special way. He writes on serious topics but in a frivolous vein. It's a hobby — and a gift he has. Just give him a subject and he can compose a five line verse — limericks, he calls them — that carry the impact of a Herblock cartoon. Here's a sample of his treatment of two news items that stare at us almost daily from the front page:

For our gravel, we simply must blast
(See **ROUND**, p. 3, col. 4)

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And continue our garbage to cast.
Our needs? Plain to see,
But NOT next to me.
Does the bickering leave you aghast?

Our roads need repair without question;
'Could you spare us a landfill suggestion?
Our time's running out,
So who has the clout?
—And solutions without indigestion?

Well, what can you say? With a sensitivity like that and the ability to focus on issues so dramatically, I rest easy, knowing that Cookeville's best minds are at work resolving the complicated problems that beset us on every hand!

More Headlines — Sheriff Jerry Abston told the County Coordinating Council last week that come January 1, 1985, the County must have separate facilities to house juveniles who run afoul of the law. After that time they can not be kept in the county jail, he said. This is going to require action by the county officials, and "time is running out."

"We're lucky," the sheriff said, "we've not been hauled into court before now over the jail facilities the county has."

Today the pressure is on to put all lawbreakers behind bars, and this requires an outlay of money that tests our dedication to the call for law and order. How much are we willing to be taxed to build prisons, hire policemen and provide other support equipment in the war against crime?

In every poll you see, concern over crime is the number one issue — usually ahead of inflation, medical costs and, I guess, ahead of nuclear war.

Well, according to Sheriff Abston, we have to become even more serious as we take up our battle against this enemy, particularly as that concern relates to the county jail situation and the amount of money we're willing to spend to provide adequate law enforcement. He urges us to let our county officials know how we feel about this matter.

More On Street Lights — This doesn't call for a headline (maybe a limerick?), but lights need to be added along Willow Avenue from 3rd Street West (at Willow Avenue Church of Christ) to 7th St. That's a dangerous stretch on a dark, rainy night because a driver can't see far enough ahead after emerging from the well-lighted area up to that point. Maybe Chick Holland's department can do something about that?

Some Texas Jokes

In Dallas, Texas, so the story goes, it's so hot in August the devil leaves the city and goes down to hell where it's cooler.

I can believe it. We spent the last two weeks in Dallas, during the worst heat wave in years. Last Sunday night at 8 o'clock, the temperature was 103.

But the heat doesn't keep Dallas from moving, outward and upward. About 8,000 new people move into the city each month and unemployment is less than 4 percent. Everywhere you turn, a new skyscraper, shopping center or new residential area is under construction. In last Sunday's paper there were 58 full pages of job offerings, and in the last 12 months, 80,000 new jobs came open.

Texas boasts 38 of the 100 largest churches in the U.S. and nine of them are in Dallas. The city is known as the "Buckle of the Bible Belt," and its fundamental religion, flavored with a heavy sprinkling of patriotic fervor, is as hot as the weather.

But the real religion in Texas and Dallas is not the "old time religion" we sing of in Tennessee. No, out there, the "real" religion is football and politics. Especially politics.

Matching the heat wave in intensity this past week was the enthusiasm of the thousands of delegates to the Republican convention. Believe me, Dallas put on a show, and the GOP could not have found a more



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hospitable place to showcase their wares than this metropolis. Everything about Dallas looks Republican — its wealth, its opulence and affluence. It was definitely the place for them to be.

For days the whole area was drenched with political news and stories about visiting dignitaries and all the whoop-la planned for them. The mood of the city was such that even the hardest sinner, if he wasn't careful, might take the pledge and be persuaded to join this holy crusade that's marching, not to Zion, but to Washington, DC.

But out of this Republican love-feast (the Democratic convention was more of a revival meeting) came some tall Texas tales that were being told between drinks at some of the parties:

A traveling salesman shows up at a West Texas bar one night and, after a few drinks, shouts, "That

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Reagan is about as smart as a cow."

A huge cowboy walks over and says, "Stranger, them's fightin' words around here."

"I'm sorry," says the salesman, "I didn't know this was Reagan country."

"It ain't," says the cowboy. "It's cattle country."

And another: Mondale, on a swing through Texas, gets an urgent call from his manager. "Listen," says the manager, "you've got to come to Houston right away. The Republicans are telling lies about you all over the city."

"I can't," Mondale replies. "I've got to go to Dallas."

"But, why?" asks the manager.

"Because," Mondale sighs, "Dallas is even more important. They're telling the truth about me up there."

That's what makes politics so much fun. The old dusty jokes are pulled out every four years, given a reread, and are then good for 10,000 more miles. Another one they were telling has been around a 100 years or more:

Two men were eating supper one Sunday night. One said, "Did you hear that old John Smith has joined the Democratic party?"

"What? I don't believe it," exclaimed the other. "I just saw him in church this morning."

A good politician has to have a sense of humor and be able to turn out one-liners. Carter didn't seem to be able to do this. Reagan can. Example: With a bullet wound in his chest after the assassination attempt in 1981, he looked at the doctors and quipped: "I hope you're all Republicans."

Another Reaganism: "I had an uncle in Chicago who was a Democrat. He received a silver cup from

the party for voting in 14 straight elections. He'd been dead for 12 of them."

Sometimes political jokes backfire. When Republican Teddy Roosevelt was speaking one time, he was interrupted by a man who yelled, "I'm a Democrat." Roosevelt asked why.

"Because my father was a Democrat and my grandfather was a Democrat," the heckler replied.

"Well, sir," Roosevelt said, "let's say your father was a jackass and your grandfather was a jackass. Then what would that make you?"

"A Republican," the man shouted.

One that's even older than Reagan's first movie is about the politician who'd made a speech in this town for the first time. He was feeling his oats for the good job he'd done when a man walked up and said, "Listen, I've heard a lot of speeches, but that's the sorriest I've ever heard."

Well, the speaker was a bit put down, but a party member beside him spoke up in his defense: "Don't pay that person the slightest bit of attention. He's the village idiot and all he does is repeat everything he hears."

Other examples of Texas political humor emanating from the holy city during the gathering of the faithful:

President Reagan, a simple man, was born in a 15-room log cabin . . . He used to read by the light of the fire until his mother came in and said, "Ronnie, why don't you go to your room and use the electric light like the other kids?" . . . Nixon's library will consist mostly of cassette tapes . . .

The political joke, if used timely and discreetly, can provide insight for the voter, helping him or her to vote more wisely. To prove this premise is true, a budding politician asked the old Texan, "What is the difference between a Democrat and a Republican?"

The Texan answered, "A Democrat believes in the exploitation of man by man. A Republican believes in the other way around."

Yes, it was hot in Dallas!

Social Security At 50

It was a banner year for headlines. The WPA began. Huey Long was assassinated on a sultry Sunday evening in Baton Rouge. Babe Ruth hit his last home run, and night baseball came on the scene. Will Rogers and Wiley Post were killed in a plane crash in Alaska.

The year was 1935!

The man in the White House was Franklin D. Roosevelt. On August 14 of that year, he signed into law the Social Security Act — the law that would change dramatically the methods of dealing with economic adversities, and no American family would be immune to its impact. Next Wednesday we observe the 50th anniversary of the enactment of that law.

For one old enough to remember those far-off days — days of desperation for millions still out of work after five years of the Great Depression — Social Security is more meaningful with each passing day. One with such a memory has already availed himself of the benefits of that law, or he is rapidly approaching the time when he will.

The Great Depression cast a long shadow, and those who were around then would be marked forever by it. If you were “programmed” in the early '30's, your value systems, your way of looking at things and your priorities would be conditioned the rest of your life by those years of despair.

It was in such a time that the Social Security system was born. A radical system, one might say



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now, looking back 50 years. The idea of withholding money from a worker's meager pay and keeping it until he became 65 and making his employer also contribute was pretty heady stuff for government to be doing in those days.

But those were not normal times, and Social Security was one of the New Deal measures instituted by the President and Congress to deal with the crisis, and, as a future president would say, “to get the country moving again.”

While the law was passed in 1935, workers did not begin paying into the system until 1937. But everyone who worked or hoped to get a job began signing up in 1936 for that special number that would be theirs for the rest of their lives. By the end of 1936, 22 million cards had been issued. Monthly payments, first scheduled to begin in 1942, were pushed ahead to January 1940, and from then on 65 became a magic

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number.

In the years just before the passage of the Social Security Act, one-fourth of all Americans lived on a farm. Only one-half of our school population finished high school. Prior to the stock market crash in 1929 and the advent of the depression, government had little to do with how we lived our lives. Congress did not even meet during the summer months, and the President was through with his duties by noon each day. The US ranked 16th in the size of its army, even below Rumania.

The troubled Thirties were described as “a bleak and wretched time, perhaps the lowest moment the country has ever known.” Over 14 million men (very few women worked outside the home) were unemployed. Miracle drugs had not been discovered, but you could get a doctor to come to your home for two dollars.

It took a week to cross the country by train, longer if you were one of the hobos who hopped the freights. In 1935, radio was approaching its golden age, and every one was familiar with these catchwords: “I've regusted” (Amos n' Andy); “Heigh ho, everybody” (Rudy Vallee) and “Jello again” (Jack Benny).

A weekly visit to the local movie house (and not many could even afford that luxury) was about the most entertainment one could hope for. For 25 cents one could hear a double entendre from Mae West, “I used to be Snow White but I drifted.”

A man who was 65 then could expect to live 12 years

longer and a woman could hope for 15 more years. (Now it's up to about 14 and 18 years, respectively.)

Accounts of that period say “That to provide \$25 a month for those remaining years, a man must save \$3,300 and a woman \$3,600.” That was still “the impossible dream” for most people.

In the peak year of 1929, the average income of all salaried employees was about \$1,500, and by 1932, for those who still worked, it had dropped to \$1,200. Forty-four percent of all non-farm workers made less than \$1,000 a year.

But times have changed, and scientific progress and discovery defy our imaginations. It's difficult for those who were not around in 1935 to relate to that awful time in our history.

Today, the basic financial needs of the American family, however, may be just as acute as they were in 1935. One cannot survive well or long without cash income in today's world, and increased life expectancy and higher living standards make it imperative that resources be available when income is cut off because of retirement, death or disability of the family breadwinner.

Next Wednesday, Roy Byrd and his staff will have an “open house” down at the Social Security office in observance of that agency's 50th birthday. All of us are invited to drop by, say “hello” and see how well they're administering a very complex but vitally important program that affects all of us.

1935 may not be the most momentous year in American history, but it will be remembered as the year the country embarked on a course of social action that radically changed our way of dealing with social and economic problems affecting the aged, the unemployed and the disabled.

Where Are The Cops?



'Round-the-town

With
Bishop Holliman

When you take a long automobile trip on an interstate, whatever you do, don't let your eyes get fixed on the mileage markers that stand like soldiers guarding a presidential motorcade. It will drive you to distraction!

These markers may serve a purpose — I don't know — but I do know that once I get hooked on them, I won't miss a one for 500 hundred miles. As I approach one, I turn my head, close my eyes, change the radio dial — do every fool thing I can to break the spell — but alas, it's to no avail. I'll pick up the next one just a mile farther down the road.

My addiction to counting road markers makes for mighty slow going on extended journeys to places like Dallas and Topeka, Kansas. Especially when the big trucks and other vacation-bound motorists whiz by, bent on getting to their destinations as if there were no tomorrow.

Somewhere in this favored land someone may be observing the 55 mile an hour speed limit, but not where I've been lately. Nor have I seen much evidence of enforcement except around here in Tennessee.

In January we drove down to Orlando to take in Epcot with two grandchildren. Believe me, none of the travelers headed for the sunshine state had heard of the 55 mile speed law. They zipped by us as if a glacial gust were right on their heels, speeding them on their way to Florida's sunny beaches. We didn't see a single driver pulled over for speeding.

On the way back, we criss-crossed the backwoods

of Georgia to Vidalia — the town where the onions grow — to visit Ruth and Jay McDonald who used to live in Cookeville. (By the way, they are doing well in retirement there. Jay worked for General Adjustment Bureau and Ruth for the Social Security office here.)

You can't go much faster than the law allows on those secondary blacktop roads, and I knew I didn't won't to tangle with a Georgia sheriff, so I kept a light foot on the pedal.

In March we drove across the Nevada desert from Las Vegas to Hoover Dam and, I confess, my mind was not on highway markers nor highway patrolmen. Nor was it on the gambling tables back at Vegas. No, the flat, desert land, with snowcapped mountains in the distance, held us spellbound as we clipped off the miles in this strange and distant land.

Everyone was in a hurry to get to this magnificent man-made structure — Hoover Dam — or to Vegas where the action was. So, as far as we could tell, the 55 mile an hour speed limit did not deter folks from

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their appointed rounds.

Early in the summer we drove out — or up — to St. Louis to pick up Erin and Jonathan to bring them to Cookeville for their annual two weeks stay with us and their other grandparents, James and Elizabeth Murphy.

If it is scenery that entralls you, I have some advice for you: Don't go past Paducah. From the Ohio River to the Mississippi, through Illinois, there is nothing, absolutely nothing. I say that, knowing that beauty is in the eye of the beholder and all that, but even when I try to be philosophical about such matters, I can't say anything good about the Illinois countryside.

The perils and joys of being grandparents take you to strange and wondrous places. The second Saturday in June was occasion for our annual pilgrimage to Atlanta to see the Braves play the Dodgers. This was a great outing for Grace and Chris and Bryan and Allison — and their grandparents!

It was also a great day for everybody from Ohio and Indiana for they were all on I-75 from Chattanooga to Atlanta, on their way, I suppose, to Daytona and Disney World. It was bumper to

bumper, as the saying goes, and I don't believe there was room on the highway for cars with flashing blue lights, as we did not see any, and apparently drivers took advantage of their absence. All cruise-controls must have been set on 75.

It won't matter when you go to Atlanta, they'll be working on the interstates. You may be sure of that. There's no way you can get through, around, under or over the city without encountering a roadblock.

In spite of Atlanta's modernization efforts and highway expansion programs, they still lack for broad thoroughfares that will move the traffic at a satisfactory pace. It was chaos in mid-afternoon when the Florida-bound motorists collided with the baseball traffic at the stadium.

In contrast, from Chattanooga to Birmingham traffic is so light on I-59 you have time to count the mileage markers, and you almost welcome the sight of a patrol car.

Alabama has the most attractive welcome center we've seen anywhere, and its personnel are courteous and helpful. It's a good place to stop when you're headed south to Birmingham and points beyond.

My experience on the highways will not support the conclusion that most motorists are obeying the 55 mile an hour speed limit. But then, how would I know that? I'm too busy counting the mileage posts to know what the other drivers are doing!

Sports 'Color' Absurd

I'm always relieved when the baseball season ends and the World Series is out of the way. Not that I don't enjoy the game — I do, more than any other sport — but I worry that cold weather will set in before the games are completed.

Baseball was meant to be played in warm weather and not during a snow storm. The whole spectacle may still be going on through October this year, and that's too late. By then, winter will have arrived over most of the country, and that's no time to be playing baseball.

But athletics is out of kilter everywhere these days. Maybe Frank Layne (H-C sports editor) can provide an explanation for this departure from the sacred customs that once prevailed. I suspect, though, it's spelled g-r-e-e-d.

Baseball begins before the snows of winter have melted and lasts until they start again. Football is played the year 'round. Basketball overlaps everything — baseball, football, tennis, golf, badminton and croquet. Like Tennyson's "Brook," it goes on forever.

One used to be able to tell what season it was by the sport that was being played. But that's no longer the case. For those who are not too sharp, a calendar is about as important at a game as a score card.

This obsession with athletics and the popularity of TV telecasts has introduced a new and wondrous character to the American scene — the announcer who provides "color" during the telecast



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of the games. The "color man," he's called.

And what a nuisance he is. Most of the time he simply restates what the play-by-play announcer has already told us and what we've already seen. Not only do we get instant replay (over and over), but we get a rehash of everything that's been said and another replay of why it was said.

Since two announcers are in the broadcast booth, they feel they have to come up with profound statements to enlighten and entertain us. It would be costly for the sponsor, I suppose, if there was ever a moment of silence; so, constant chatter has to go on, producing such profundities as, "He's a pitcher who likes to throw strikes," and, "He's a batter who likes to hit."

Baseball is a game that thrives on facts and figures, and this makes for a field day for the "color man." He can tell you more than you ever wanted to know about every aspect of the game.

Like the number of "pick-off" throws Phil

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Niekro has made to first base in over 500 games.

Or the number of practice swings Pete Rose has taken in the "on-deck" circle before stepping up to the plate. Or why it takes a runner longer to go from second to third (there's a "short stop" in between) than from first to second.

Football, on the other hand, is a game that builds character. At least, that's what the coaches say. The "color man" also believes this, and he gets carried away with his admiration and description of the exploits of the players who love to die for their Alma Mater.

One competent observer of the embellished language has noted that during a Saturday afternoon telecast you're likely to hear the announcer make such ludicrous statements as:

"The tackle has been playing with a separated shoulder all season, but he's given 100 percent in every game. Whatta guy!

"The left end is still plagued with a pulled hamstring muscle, but you just can't keep him off the field. He's my kind of player!

~~t of the hospital last~~

~~week from knee surgery, but he's out there playing, giving 120 percent. He's a super star if ever there was one!~~

~~"The quarterback's throwing hand is broken and that's why he's had 10 interceptions. He just can't throw as well with his left, since it's bandaged too. But he'll stay in there and play, My, what courage!~~

~~"The wide receiver has a broken ankle and is running with a cast on his foot, but he's not going to quit. Whatta man! He's not giving just a 100 percent — it's more like 130!~~

~~"The fullback had brain surgery three weeks ago, but he's already back on the field, putting out 150 percent. He'll play as long as he's alive. That's what I call character, folks!"~~

~~Oh, for the good old days when we had only Dizzy Dean to charm us with his eloquent speech. He was all the color and character we needed.~~

~~When Ol' Diz said, "He 'slud' into third base," and "He's standing up there 'confidentially' at the plate," we all knew what he meant. Only the English teachers were offended by his colorful remarks.~~

~~Please, baseball, be gone, so we can get on with winter and the holidays. Besides, it will soon be time to start spring training!~~

Quest For 'Higher Ground'

Dr. Leo McGee's humorous account in last Sunday's H-C of his Michael Jackson experience and its tie-in with improved race relations was a clever way to accent Black History Month.

The McGees, Leo and Gloria and their two daughters, have contributed significantly to Cookeville in the few years they've been here, and we can be thankful for the winds of change that have shaped attitudes and customs, enabling them to realize their potential and allowing the rest of us to be beneficiaries of their talents and goodwill.

There are peaks and valleys in man's long struggle to reach a higher level of understanding and accommodation in human relations. But occasionally, even in a short sweep of time, we can see evidence of upward movement, and the progress we've made, incomplete though it is, suggests that in our quest for Higher Ground (We Methodists like to sing about that!) we are capable of far more than we once thought.

I remember, when growing up in Alabama, we once a year observed "Race-Relations" Sunday in our church. That observance consisted of taking up a small collection to give to a Negro college somewhere. It was inconceivable to us at that time and place — a white Protestant church in the Deep South — that "race-relations" could ever mean more than that.



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In Alabama at that time, it was safe and acceptable for whites to speak well of Dr. George Washington Carver because he'd extracted oil from the lowly peanut and done other wondrous things at Tuskegee Institute. He and Booker T. Washington were the only blacks we knew about other than those who worked in our homes and plowed the garden each spring.

We were never told that about 5,000 blacks served in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. Or that the first successful open-heart surgery was performed by a black man, Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, in Chicago in 1893.

And we did not know then that, in 1903, the first American woman to become a bank president was a black — Mrs. Maggie Lena Walker. Nor did we know that blood plasma was discovered and first

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utilized by Dr. Charles Drew, a black, in 1940. And no one told us that a black man, Granville T. Woods, patented more than 50 inventions, including the third-rail system now used in subways and an automatic air brake.

Now, having said all that, I'm still not sure I want to get embroiled in a Michael Jackson concert as Leo — and my own children — did. Each of us will have to work in his own way to bring about better relations among races. Leo, if you can get Michael to dance and sing in the Lawrence Welk style, I think we can do business!

COOKEVILLE CAPERS — Sam Bacon, 915 Allen Avenue, has "marched" all over Cookeville for the "Mothers' March of Dimes," and he's received contributions from 98 percent of the homes he's "marched" up to.

According to Jere Wall, chairperson of the Mothers' March, "Through the rain, sleet and snow, Sam made his appointed rounds and collected \$1,100 for this worthy cause."

But walking is "old-hat" to Sam, who says he's "79 and holding." He got a lot of practice stepping about during his 36 years of service with the Department of Agriculture as a soil inspector. He estimates he covered about five million acres of land while in that job. Just to keep in shape, a few years ago he walked from Lebanon to Monterey in 23 hours.

"I like to walk and I like to help people," Sam said. As long as a fellow has that attitude, I'd say

he's still got a lot of miles — or steps — left in him.

GOOD SCOUTS — Scout Executive Eddie Woodside reports that the Upper Cumberland District had a 14 percent increase in Boy Scout membership and activity this past year, making it one of the five top districts in the Southeast. The Boy Scout movement in the US is 75 years old this year.

Bruce Plummer Jr., who grew up in Cookeville and now lives in Murfreesboro, recently was awarded the "Silver Beaver," Scouting's highest award at the council level, for his Scout work. Bruce is married to the former Margaret Stockstill, and they have two daughters, Julie and Jenny.

Both the Boy Scout and Girl Scout programs are funded by the United Way, the agency that raises money for a dozen or so charitable, non-profit organizations in Cookeville. This past year Tom Miller was United Way's drive chairman, and he says a record amount of money was raised to keep the "people-helping" programs going.

LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW — Well, on a recent day when it was doing just that, over 1,000 books were checked out of the Putnam County Library, according to Geeta Pratt, librarian. That tells you something about the weather, but also it says something about the extent our library is used and what a valuable service it renders.

And while it was snowing here, Ralph and Willie Mae Boles, who used to live in Cookeville, were lolling around their pool in Fort Myers, Florida, where they now live. A note from them says they are doing well, and they say "hello" to all their Cookeville friends. Ralph was head of the math department at Tennessee Tech and Willie Mae taught at Capshaw Elementary School.

Super Bowl 'Super'?

For a long time now I've suspected that God loves athletics and looks with special favor upon athletes — especially football players.

Witness the many appearances of the clergy giving invocations at football games, asking divine guidance for the home team, and the number of athletes testifying on TV about the power of God in their lives. "He's the most important thing in my life," they say — just after they've signed a multi-million dollar contract.

But the Alberta Clipper that blew in from the far north last week and tackled the nation in its midsection was a bit much, and somebody should have thrown a flag. Whether this was the Almighty's way of keeping us all home on Sunday so we'd have to watch the Super Bowl, I don't know. But I suspect it was.

Surely the Super Bowl is the most overblown, hyperbolic event ever conceived in the mind of mortal man. More than World War Two and the Great Depression combined.

I find myself each year deliberately searching for something else to do, or another program to watch,



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just so I can prove the experts wrong in their estimate of the number of viewers the annual extravaganza will draw.

Even so, last Sunday we were all boxed in by the deepfreeze, and I took that to be a warning I'd better join this holy crusade of football fanatics on their march down the field or I would be left out in the cold sure enough. So I watched the game for awhile.

Later, I heard one of the commentators say the game was uneventful and did not measure up to the high expectations predicted for it. "Just like all the other Super Bowls," he said. I know President

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Reagan, who had to get into the act, and Jerry Falwell were disappointed.

But the blast of Arctic air was something else, and I have no doubt Cookeville will remember the record 22-below longer than we will the 1985 Super Bowl.

According to the weatherman and others who keep up with this sort of thing, only two other times has the mercury approached this low mark. That was in 1963 and 1940.

1940! I wonder if there are folks still here who remember that winter? All of Dixie was snowed in for two weeks. It was 15-below in Nashville, and probably colder than that in Cookeville. Zero temperatures were common throughout the South.

In Birmingham, where I lived, the snow began the night of January 21 and by the time it had stopped the next afternoon, 14 inches of the white stuff had paralyzed the city. Schools closed, street cars quit running, pipes froze and we burned everything but the furniture. It dropped to 10-below zero.

Remember, this was before central heat was a way of life, and all we had was a small firepice in the "front" room and a water heater in the kitchen. We had to draw water every night, and it's a wonder we didn't burn the house down trying to thaw pipes.

For nearly 14 days, the glacial gusts kept the temperature near the zero mark. More snow fell; more water pipes burst, and coal piles dwindled. Believe me, it was a mess. My daddy blamed Roosevelt for the frigid blitz.

LIFE magazine carried a picture of "The Tennessean," the Southern's crack passenger train, pulling into Washington, D.C.'s terminal station, covered and clogged with ice and snow it had picked up on its run from Memphis. It was that kind of winter.

But for several days, kids enjoyed a rare treat in that part of the world — sledding. Each night we would gather at the top of the hill with our homemade sleds, build a fire out of old automobile tires to keep warm by, and take off down a two-block long hill. It was an adventurous thing to do for folks unaccustomed to frolicking in the snow that way.

All was going well until my brother, with four of us aboard, rammed the sled into a car parked at the bottom of the hill. Since he was at the front (and supposedly guiding it), he bore the brunt of the collision, and it knocked him out cold and cracked his head open.

We finally got a car started and rushed him to Dr. Odom's house — this was before the days of Blue Cross and emergency room visits. The good doctor looked him over and patched him up. He didn't make any X-rays, and didn't say, "Come back in two weeks" — and, I'm sure, didn't charge more than a dollar.

The smash-up, though, brought an end to our fun, and I guess we went back to listening to "Fibber McGee and Molly" on the radio. What else would we have done? There was no TV and no Super Bowl.

In time, the snow and ice went away and life went on as it had before. The weather began to warm up, as did the skirmish going on in Europe — a skirmish that eventually would touch the lives of all those young people who were on that cold hill that night in 1940.

But until this day, we who were there still talk about how cold it got in 1940. And 40 years down the road, folks who are young now will recall the Big Chill that hit Cookeville in 1985, and they'll talk about what they were doing then.

UNSUNG HEROES — A salute to the newspaper carriers who got out early last Sunday to deliver our morning papers! Kevin Maynard is my H-C carrier, and he had our paper there right on time. I don't know how he did it. I think all of the carriers deserve a raise!

you see, I was a Republican!

My Republican Days

As the Republican convention gets underway, I am reminded of how much my daddy, if he were still alive, would enjoy Ronald Reagan's speeches. He would like them because the President invokes the name of the Almighty so frequently, and my daddy would go for that in a big way.

I can remember how provoked my parents would get at President Roosevelt when he would make his fireside chats. "He never mentioned the Lord's name a single time," my daddy would say in righteous indignation. "No wonder times are like they are."

But my daddy would not have voted for FDR no matter whose name he invoked. My daddy, you see, was a Republican. Now, a Republican in Alabama in the 1930's was a rare commodity. Roosevelt was king, and to admit that you were not for him — that you were a Republican — was like admitting today you are a friend of the Ayatollah. You didn't do it unless you had to.

But my folks had come out of northwest Alabama where there had been a small enclave of Republicans, and their loyalty to the GOP had carried over into the 1930's and to Birmingham. While some "summer soldiers" had bolted the Democratic party in 1928 and 1932 (prohibition was the issue that year), they were not true blue followers of the GOP as my folks were.

But here it was 1936, and to vote the Republican ticket now, after FDR's New Deal had begun to put men back to work — you had to be crazy!

My father, though, was true to his convictions, and he continued to support the Republicans and their op-



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position to Roosevelt's programs. Nevermind that TVA was beginning to light up the South, that Social Security would provide him a retirement income, or that his meager savings were insured against bank failure. He was still a Republican.

The Party continued to put up a slate of candidates for state and national office each election year, knowing fullwell they could never win. But someday — just maybe — they could get that MAN out of the White House, and then the party faithful would fall heir to the choice political jobs; so, being a Republican might not be a total loss after all. It was expected to have its rewards.

In 1938, my daddy was chosen in the "smoke-filled" room to run for the state legislature. I remember boasting to my friends that "my daddy is running for public office" — then I would drop the other shoe — "on the Republican ticket," and there would go that relationship.

But 1938 was not a good year for Alabama Republicans. And not much better for the
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Democrats. Eleanor Roosevelt spoke in Birmingham, and the most provocative question she could get from her audience was, "What do you think of the Alabama football team?" She had wanted to speak to a mixed group, but police commissioner "Bull" Conner, who would later gain notoriety with his police dogs, vowed he would not have "niggers and whites segregating together."

So we all looked forward to 1940 when we knew the country would have had enough of the New Deal and FDR would not be able to run again. "It will be our time then," I recall my daddy telling me one night as we went to a meeting of the faithful few. "With your education, you'll get a good job in Washington."

But World War II was about to burst on the scene. Roosevelt was elected for a third term, and the years went by. When I came marching home again, Roosevelt was gone and Truman was in the White House.

In 1946, the Grand Old Party, still trying to make a showing, put up a slate of young veterans to run for the state legislature, and I was one of those selected. I wouldn't tell anyone I was running for fear of losing my job. Folks in Alabama still laughed at you if you told them you were a Republican, and they would ask if there had always been insanity in the family.

But I was only paying my dues for what surely would be my reward in 1948, when there would be no way the Republicans could lose. On election day that

year, I was solicited for a donation to the cause. "We don't need the money," the party official told me, "but it will look good on the record when we start filling jobs." It wasn't clear whether I would be Secretary of State or in charge of the clean-up detail at the Washington Monument.

Nevertheless, to the victor belongs the spoils, I told myself, as I went home to await the announcement by H.V. Kaltenborn, radio's Walter Cronkite, that Dewey had won. I would soon start packing. But I waited — and I waited and I waited. The victory announcement never came.

You know the rest. Even in Alabama, the Democrats became disenchanted with Truman, and with "I Like Ike" sweeping the country, it became more respectable to be a Republican. By 1952, many of the old guard, having been devastated by the 1948 debacle, had given up, and a new group was forming to take control of the party.

For me, the bloom had faded from the rose, and it was no longer a challenge to be a Republican, as increasing numbers were switching to the GOP. By the time Ike was elected, my daddy had retired, and I had changed careers, moved to another state and had given up politics as a way of life.

Neither of us ever got to Washington except as tourists, and we never received any reward for wandering through the political wilderness of Alabama for what seemed like a lifetime.

But when President Reagan enthalls the convention-goers and the country with his oratory this week and calls upon God to bless his efforts, I'm sure my daddy will be listening.