## CITIZEN

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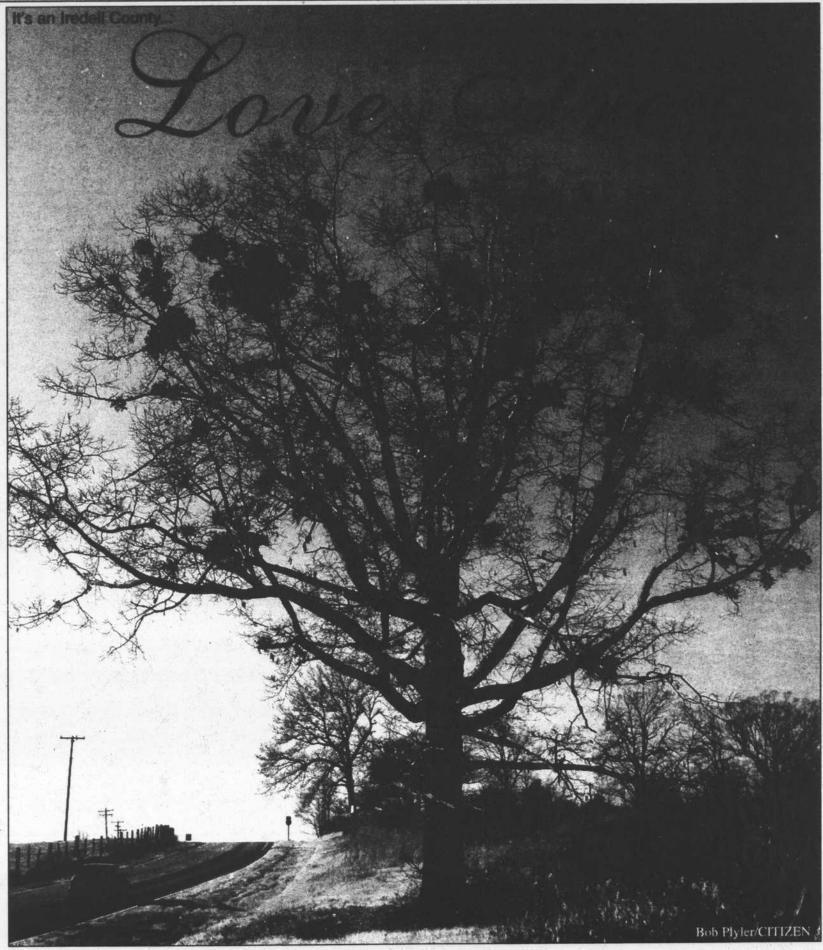


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THE ENGLISH STARTED IT ALL back in the 18th century. During Christmastime they took to hanging sprigs of decorated mistletoe all around so unsuspecting girls standing under a sprig had to agree to a slobbering kiss from every young man nearby. Her refusal would mean several more months of spinsterhood, as the story goes.

In Iredell County, years ago, a shotgun was used to knock down enough of the love plant to get through Christmas time. This tree, located west of Statesville, has enough of the magic plant clusters to give every gal in Iredell County the thrill of her life, a big, wet holiday smooch, with plenty of the plant left over – for all the kiss-starved women in surrounding counties.