

REFLECTIONS by Alte Nye Oxendine

What can you do on a dark, dreary day, when the world looks so gloomy that you want to fly away?

Can you hoop in a spaceship, like the astronauts brave? Orbit the earth, and land on the moon? Do some acrobatics, stop to whistle a tune? Go hunting for moon-rocks? And maybe even stay?

Then—what can you do on a dark, dreary day, when everything's so gloomy that you want to fly away?

You can fix a good breakfast—then a nourishing snack. Take time out for lunch, and then a short nap. Make sure you and your family are all getting your fill of vitamins, and proteins, and minerals to keep well.

What can you do on a dark, dreary day, when the world looks so gloomy that you want to fly away?

You can limber up with an exercise or two, or just clean up the floor, and make it look new. You can wash up the dishes—then take a moment to play with the TV contestants—or your own little brood.

Just a simple little game can really brighten up your mood. Then get back to work! Put the clutter away. Make up the beds. And maybe watch a Bluejay! What can you do on a dark, dreary day, when everything's so gloomy that you want to fly away?

You can quietly gather all the children around you. Open your Bible to Matthew 19 and, with a smile, say: "Jesus loves the daddies, and the mamas, and the children, whether they're at work, or whether they're at play."

Perhaps you can hold a big picture up, with Jesus telling all the children to stay, then laying His hands on their heads to bless them, before sending them rejoicing along their way.

You can help your own children sing "Jesus Loves Me", then remind them that He loves all children, everywhere. You can sing "Jesus Loves the Little Children, all the children of the world"—then draw your own little ones close around you, and offer a simple prayer. You can thank God for His Son, and ask His blessing on you. And on each precious child He has placed within your care. WHAT can you do on a dark, dreary day? With God as your Guide, and Christ at your side, YOU can go rejoicing along YOUR way. Happy to be living, even though the sky is gray.

Since the re-unification of the three original branches of the Methodist Church in 1939 (The Methodist Episcopal—northern branch, The Methodist Episcopal, South—southern branch, and the Methodist Protestant) a quadrennial churchwide "Assembly" of women representing their local churches, districts, or conference has been held in some city here in the United States each four

years. In May of 1954, Ethelynde Ballance and I attended the Assembly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where we, along with five other young women, were commissioned as deaconesses. (15 others were commissioned that year as foreign missionaries.)

I had attended Scarritt College for Christian Workers, in Nashville, TN, along with Ethelynde and three of the other girls. One night in 1953, even though I knew I was coming down with the flu (because of Ethelynde's dynamic personality and successful experience as a rural worker in Hyde County, NC) I postponed moving into the Scarritt infirmary just long enough to see Ethelynde's slides of her work. Only LATER did I learn that I would be coming to HER native state IN THE FALL of '53 as a fellow rural worker.)

This past March a memory came back to me: several love offerings given me in 1954 by the women of the NC Conference and the Milton Charge in Caswell County (where I was working at that time) to fulfill my dream for my mother to travel to the Milwaukee Assembly from Montana. So, along with my subscription renewal I sent a letter to the NC Christian Advocate to thank the women of this state one more time.

A couple of weeks later I came across the battered packet of materials given each delegate to that "Fourth Assembly". Finally I realized that it's EXACTLY 40 years since that special experience. Later I learned that a number of women from Robeson County (including representatives of several Indian churches) would be attending the Cincinnati Assembly this past week-end. At least one, Ms. Loretta Hunt, had a leadership role at that Assembly. One more example of the progress I've seen through the years, since coming to THIS AREA of NC!

DEALING WITH DEPRESSION
When I came to Pembroke in 1956, to work with five rural Indian churches, as well as "First Methodist" here in town, I immediately fell in Love with the Indian people in this area. However, although I don't talk about it a lot, it was VERY hard for me to go against the grain of state law, and tradition, to marry across racial lines three years later. I assumed then, and throughout my marriage, that (except for a handful of my closest friends and family members) the white world MUST have turned its back on me! Now I realize that I exaggerated the situation. Not all my former associates had written me off as a "deaconess dropout" the way I pictured it all those years. In fact, perhaps there were only a few of the older people who actually saw things that way.

But, long before Leon and I were married, I began slipping into a deeper and deeper depression, as I tried to find God's will in knowing whether to marry or not to marry. Finally, in August of 1959, the burden began to lift. I felt that God was giving us the "Green Light" to go ahead with wedding plans, two and a half years after Leon first asked me to be his wife. We were married about two weeks later, so we would have time for a short trip before Leon took over his duties at the "new" cafeteria.

Although I had wanted to give an open wedding invitation, we could not afford that kind of reception. So we did just the opposite, inviting only close family members, except for my attendant, Miss Betty Campbell, our two minister friends Harvey Lowry and Bob Mangum, and their wives. Neila Mangum played the piano. Myrtle Lowry was in charge of refreshments. My brother, Russ (the only Nye family representative) did double duty. After "giving me away", he stepped up beside Leon to serve as his "best man".

I was married. But I was not SUDDENLY over my depression. Now I recommend pre-marital counseling FOR ALL couples, particularly when there is some special problem to resolve. In my case, I know that a person who has been going through depression can hardly ever be prepared (physically or emotionally) to be a good wife and mother. But the children came along, one after the other, and I really TRIED to cope, in spite of my constant fatigue and daily sense of failure.

A DARK, DREARY DAY
It was late winter, 1974. All the REST OF THE FAMILY had LEFT FOR school. As I walked to the back of the house, I heard myself yelling out loud, "WHAT can you DO on a dark, dreary day!"

With help from a couple of counselors along the way, I seemed to be gradually climbing out of the depression that had SURROUNDED me when I was married. But, all my life, gray, dismal days had been hard for me to handle. And, for what seemed like at least a month, the sun had not been able to peek through low-hanging dark clouds. Those words kept echoing in my mind: "What CAN you do on a dark, dreary day?"

Finally, I decided to try ANSWERING that question. I remember walking down to the old post office, searching for words to rhyme with "day" for a verse that might be helpful to someone ELSE, as well as to me. One word that came to me was "gay" (meaning happy), something I wished I could BE at that point in my life. Working on the "poem" day after day proved to be good therapy. Even though I had so OFTEN failed to put those ideas into practice when my own children were small, it occurred to me that who were "down in the dumps".

Several other mothers in the community had shown an interest in helping give support to women with few resources (as far as money and schooling are concerned). Mostly because I wanted plenty of copies to show to the other women for THEIR feedback, I asked the Carolina Indian Voice staff if they would print the poem.

Only AFTERWARD did it occur to me that one of the main words I had used (GAY) had come to have a totally different meaning in modern times. Since then, whenever, I've thought about including this poem in my column, I've found myself stuck as to what to do about that one little word, with two special meanings. (This is why I wrote that I, personally, wish that "gay" still had its original meaning. I think I'm LESS "homophobic" than most people I know. For instance, I appreciate the fact that at least one person chose me as a first listener to discuss the personal conflicts involved in this kind of lifestyle.) I DO care deeply about ALL people!

Now it's 20 years since the poem, "WHAT CAN YOU DO ON A DARK, DREARY DAY" first appeared in the Mother's Day edition of the Carolina Indian Voice, with initials in place of my name. Perhaps readers can suggest ways to change it and make it better in a LOT of different ways. In the meantime, if you fell as "down in the dumps" as I did when I started putting it together, I hope you'll find at least one idea to help you make the most of YOUR OWN personal situation. Let's each ask GOD to help us see our home and/or place of STUDY or WORK as an opportunity and a challenge to serve Him DAILY through our own families and all others who appear in our lives!



Pediatric Pointers

By JOSEPH T. BELL, MD

Many years ago, before the coming of Europeans, Native Americans of this area lived a healthy life, combining a varied diet with hard work and exercise. This varied diet, consisting of plenty of meats, fruits, and vegetables, helped keep diseases of nutrition, such as iron deficient anemia, to a minimum. Today, however, anemia is not so uncommon in our communities, especially in the early childhood years.

Anemia is a medical term that means the red blood count in the blood is low. The red blood count (called the hematocrit or hemoglobin) is affected by many things, including nutrition, infection, blood loss and inherited blood disorders (such as sickle cell anemia). In our Indian communities, where sickle cell anemia is rare, nutritional factors, such as iron deficiency, are the most common cause of anemia.

Iron supplements during infancy have helped decrease the incidence of anemia in the first 12 months of life. Baby milk formulas are iron fortified, as are baby cereals and baby foods. Iron deficient anemia in this age group is usually due to decreased iron intake. Some parents switch to cow's milk too early (before 12 months of age). Cow's milk has very little iron in it and may lead to infant anemia. Women who breastfeed past 6 months of age should get iron drops for their infant to take until they are weaned.

Iron deficient anemia during the toddler age is also due to nutritional

causes. Delayed weaning from the bottle and excess consumption of cow's milk decreases the daily iron intake. Certain foods decrease iron absorption, such as cheeses and excess cereal. Tea, a very common beverage in our Indian communities, also interferes with iron absorption. Iron absorption in the intestines is increased by juices containing vitamin C, and these can be substituted for some of the excess cow's milk or tea.

Why do we become concerned about anemia during the first years of life? Good question! Medical studies have shown that anemia in kids less than 2 years of age can cause delayed developmental disadvantages that persist into school years in some children. Correcting the anemia early may help prevent some of these developmental delays.

Most infants on the WIC program get tested for anemia during the first year of life. If your child is not on WIC and has not had a check for anemia, you may want to consult your doctor. For those patients with significant anemia that may be able to be corrected with simple diet changes, iron drops may be prescribed by a physician. These patients usually have to be retested to make sure the anemia is being corrected.

So that's about all on anemia. Make sure our children get the iron in their diet to help prevent this disorder.

Hope to see you at the Lumbee Spring Pow Wow this weekend. Take care and we'll talk again next week!



Pow Wow to Be Held

The Seventh Annual Native American Pow Wow will be held on Saturday and Sunday, May 21 and 22 on the Richmond Community College Campus in Hamlet, NC. Opening ceremonies will begin at noon each day with closing at 9 p.m. on Saturday and 5 p.m. on Sunday. Featured will be Native American dancing, storytelling and survival skills demonstrations. Plenty of food along with authentic Native American silver jewelry, pottery and other wares.

For more information please call (910) 582-7071 or (910) 582-7184.

Family event—bring a blanket or chair for the day. Free and open to the public.

Rape Crisis Center to Open New Group

The Rape Crisis Center of Robeson County is opening a new survivors' group for victims of rape, sexual assault, or childhood sexual abuse on May 26, 1994. There is no charge for the group, however, participants will need to have an intake interview prior to participating. Please call the center at 739-6278 for complete details. (All inquiries will be handled in strictest confidence.)

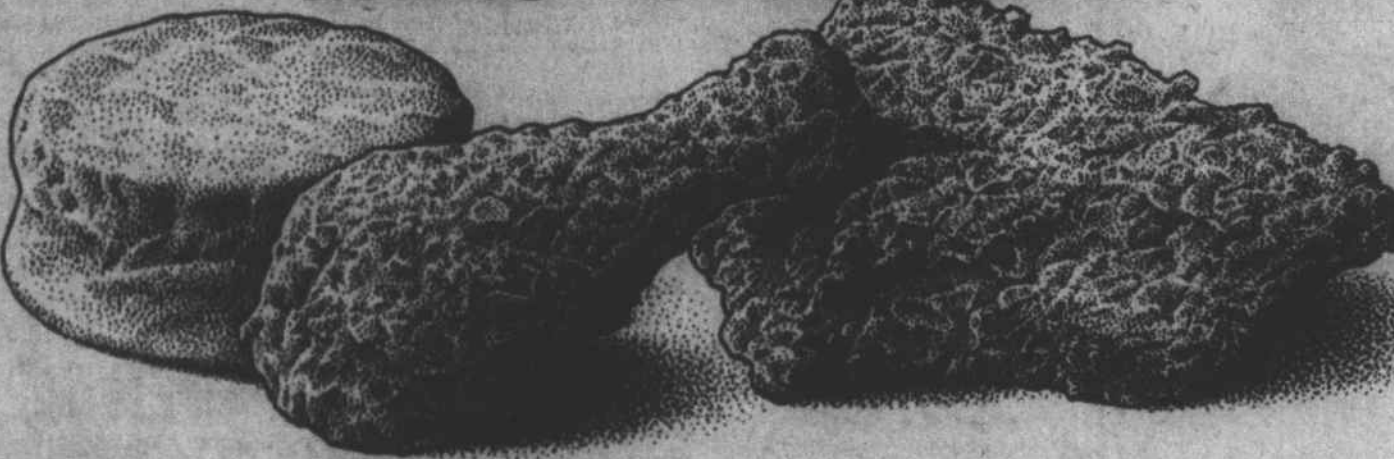
Struck? Hurt? Call 1-800-225-1000 for justice



TEENAGE PREGNANCY PREVENTION

Recognizing that teenage pregnancy significantly affects the future, economic and educational health of teenagers and cost our state more than \$458 million in 1991, Governor Hunt has proclaimed the month of May as "Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Month" in North Carolina. The Governor pointed out that the state is committed to involving churches, businesses, media, parents, agencies, educational institutions, policy makers and health providers in helping to prevent teenage pregnancy. He also pointed out in His proclamation that the purpose of the North Carolina Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy is to advocate and support programs and strategies that prevent adolescent pregnancy and decrease the problems associated with adolescent pregnancy in North Carolina.

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Hardee's

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CITIZENS OF ROBESON COUNTY



Thank you for your vote and support on May 3rd which gave us 8,352 votes. I would like to ask the supporters of Mr. Sampson, Mr. Flynn and Mr. Brown, who voted for change like our supporters did, to join us on May 31st and let's, together, vote for a positive and progressive direction for our County and all its citizens. I am asking for, and need, your vote and support on May 31st.

Thank you,
Glenn Maynor

PAID FOR BY GLENN MAYNOR

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WED SAT

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LUNCH BUFFET 11 a.m.-4 p.m. \$4.99
DINNER BUFFET 4 p.m.-9 p.m. \$7.99

SUNDAY

DINNER BUFFET All Day 11 a.m.-9 p.m.