

The Perquimans Weekly

Court House Square
HERTFORD, N.C. 27944
Entered as second class
matter November 15, 1934
at Post Office in Hertford,
N.C.

PHONE-426-7109



SUBSCRIPTION RATES ONE YEAR

\$3.64 in Perquimans County
\$4.68 elsewhere

Published by Dear Publication
& Radio, Inc.

On Christmas Day

This Christmas Season, 1972, the mystery and magic of Christmas night are very real as hundreds of millions of people in small countries and great nations across the breadth of the world join hands in the eternal wish of peace on earth and goodwill toward men.

In this day of instant communications, flashing in words and pictures the sometimes confusing kaleidoscope of world events, it seems appropriate to give thanks for one gift that has preserved the humanity and the hard-won, accumulated knowledge of men through thousands of years—the gift of the written word. In countless languages, the written word has spanned the whole surface of the Earth making knowledge of God and the teachings of Christ life-long, everyday companions of men and women everywhere. Through the written word all men know the story of Christmas. These words endure to be read and reread again and again. How else could the story of Tiny Tim and the name of Charles Dickens have become synonymous with the Spirit of Christmas?

Countless millions of children have listened in breathless wonder as their parents read the fantasy-conjuring words of "The Night Before Christmas"—the reindeer, the fur-trimmed red suit and the jolly cry of, "Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!" These words, written in 1823 by an American minister and poet, Clement C. Moore, are here today as part of the living legend of Christmas. So, let's give thanks for the written word. Its power has preserved the Spirit of Christmas, and its wisdom may yet save mankind from his own folly.

Veterans' Administration

The Veterans Administration and Bankers Life Nebraska, a mutual insurance company, have signed a contract for group mortgage protection life insurance for severely disabled veterans who qualify for special VA grants to adapt their housing to their handicaps, H.W. Johnson, Director of the Winston-Salem VA Regional Office, announced today.

The insurance program was started under legislation that became effective in August 1971 and has been handled under a binder arrangement with the company while contract details were being worked out, Johnson pointed out. Face value of insurance now in force totals more than \$70 million.

Signing the contract in Washington November 21, were Administrator of Veterans Affairs Donald E. Johnson and George B. Cook, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the company, which has its home offices in Lincoln.

Johnson said that the program provides for paying off mortgages of up to \$30,000 on death of veterans who have built or adapted homes to accommodate wheelchairs or to adjust otherwise for disabilities that resulted from military service.

VA grants up to \$17,500 for this special housing.

Johnson said that nearly 5,000 veterans now have the mortgage insurance and that 160 claims were paid during the first fifteen months of the program. The average claim was for about \$14,500.

The veteran pays a premium equal to what he would pay for insurance of the same amount if he were able bodied, and VA pays the balance. This is resulting in VA paying about 85 percent of the cost of the insurance.

Johnson said that VA expects some 500 to 750 veterans to become eligible for the insurance each year as they buy homes of their own. Rehabilitation training is often necessary before this step can be taken, Johnson said.

CROSSROADS OF AGING

By JACQUELINE RICKS

This week's column is a continuation of the year in report on the program on Aging in Region R.

A consistent effort has been made to increase the number of Senior Citizen Clubs in the region. When the program began there were approximately 20 clubs. There are now 28, several were reactivated, and 5 groups are now in the process of organizing new clubs. These clubs include about 700 members. The staff has also worked directly with the District Senior Citizen Organization and with the Economic Improvement Council's Program on aging. A majority of the Senior Citizen Clubs were originally started by EIC.

The need is great for additional In-Home Services to enable the elderly to remain in their own homes as long as they choose. Expansion of these services has been encouraged. Homemakers are provided by Social Service in 3 of the 10 counties. They are Pasquotank, Dare and Washington. Home Health Services are provided by 5 of the county health departments. Working with the Comprehensive Health Planner, efforts are being made to assist 2 counties in obtaining "seed money" from the Governor's Council on Aging to initiate Home Health Services. They are Washington and Gates Counties.

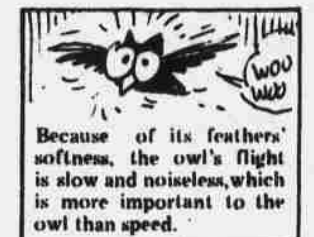
In addition to In-Home Services efforts have been made to provide additional nursing and boarding homes. A survey by the staff in April revealed no vacancies at the two nursing facilities and only 3 openings in the 27 boarding homes. It is now necessary to place a number of patients outside the region.

A medical facility is being supported by the aging programs on the coast to be located in Dare County on donated land. It would serve both nursing and boarding patients, as well as providing for emergency treatment. Individuals are being encouraged to operate boarding homes in several counties. A loan is being sought for an individual to erect a boarding home in Chowan County, which has no boarding home.

A Volunteer Sitter Program was initiated at Chowan Hospital to provide sitters at no

charge to the ill elderly with no family of funds for an attendant. Five persons completed a 3 hour course on vital life signs and are now on call for this purpose. Increased visitation and activities for patients have been encouraged at all hospitals, nursing and boarding homes.

To help increase planned activities for the elderly the aging program, jointly with Social Services and Albemarle Mental Health, in October held a meeting in Edenton for nursing and boarding home operators to stimulate greater awareness of patient needs. This is an area that needs extensive follow-up.



Men & Women

The Supreme Court recently agreed to hear a case likely to determine whether newspapers can run separate job ads for men and women.

Only in the United States, where the pendulum has swung so far toward the ridiculous binge to make everyone and everything equal (as distinguished from guaranteeing everyone equal opportunity) could such a case even reach the highest court.

Obviously employers have a right to decide if they want a man only as a bouncer or a woman only as a receptionist, etc. The sexes are different and despite all the theories and politicians one sex often adapts better to certain jobs than the other.

Barring separate newspaper job ads for men or women will not change this fact of life, nor is it likely to change today's hiring preferences.

Someone is going to have to invent a parking meter that will take credit cards.
—Star, Minneapolis.



Christmas Greetings

To you and your family... may this be your happiest Christmas ever.

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Best Wishes for Christmas

As we celebrate this joyous occasion of the birth of the Christ Child, let us remember especially the hope that was born anew and the love that filled the world on that first Christmas. May their light shine today, so that peace and understanding will prevail among men.

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visiting foreigners

That's what the Wise men were—foreigners! They came from distant countries. They were not Christ's own countrymen.

And yet they knelt before the manger. They offered precious gifts—gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The world had found its Center—a Life and a Love to bring men together.

The visit of the Wise men is the first step in the universal mission of the Church—to bring the whole of humanity into the Kingdom.

But man has been a long time accepting the lesson of the Wise men. We are still suspicious of strangers, of foreigners, of our new neighbors.

Before our day, the peoples of the earth lived in many mansions. Now we are all under one roof—drawn together by modern communication and travel.

With the transformation of today's world the decision over the Wise men can no longer be postponed. All of us, human beings from every corner of the globe, must realize our need for one another, our need for love and understanding. Together we must kneel down before the manger.

Scriptures selected by the American Bible Society

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THE PROMISED MESSIAH
International Sunday School Lesson for December 24, 1972.
LESSON TEXT: Jeremiah 23:5-4; 33:14-16; Matthew 2:1-12.

Today, on the eve of one of the most far-reaching advent of all times in the history of mankind—the birth of Christ, Savior of the world—there is a lightening of the spirit of man which is peculiar to this time of the year alone. It holds a magic all its own, for it is a time of celebration and the outpouring of love towards one's fellow men.

This feeling is worldwide, for the whole world knows what is truly celebrated at Christmas-time. Christ's birth held the promise of a new era—of a new hope for mankind; of the promise of life everlasting, bought for repentant sinners at the cost of the precious blood of the only Son of God.

The birth of a precious new life is always a cause of joy, and of wonder, and of promise. But this babe, born in the most humble of circumstances, brought more joy and more hope into more lives than any other baby born of man and woman. His advent had been heralded through many centuries prior to His birth, and had been most anxiously awaited.

This Christmas Lesson links the prophecy and the fulfillment. Christ was God's studied answer to perplexed humanity, and humanity has never ceased to have cause to be grateful.

Nevertheless, despite the much heralded advent of the promised Messiah, Jerusalem was not ready to receive Him when He came. Perhaps we can glean an important lesson from this sad state of affairs as we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth once again; we should certainly be anxious to put our own houses in order, and keep them so!

Over the years voices have been raised asserting that times have changed from the days to which the Bible relates. This is hardly true. Times have changed in many ways from Biblical days...but the Bible and all the wisdom and counsel it contains is never-changing, and...further-more...all-encompassing as far as anything which can befall mankind is concerned.

Today, as we look around us, we can fully convince ourselves that we are more ready to accept the Messiah than was Jerusalem all those centuries ago? An honest answer to this question should give us pause for thought!

Christmas has a very special meaning for all peoples of the world. Alas, too often this meaning is relegated to second place in our lives throughout the year, coming alive only for the short span of a few days, to be invariably lost once the calendar has moved on to still another year! And how much we are thereby missing! For Christ can give purpose and direction, and control to our lives if we will but admit Him to our consciousness! God's promised Messiah alone can feed the hungry yearning for security, for salvation, that is inherent in mankind, whether it is willingly acknowledged or not!

Through Jesus Christ we are privileged to know God. Through Jesus Christ, the Son, the Father is brought closer to us. Through Jesus Christ God's concern for His people—no matter what their status—is made manifest!

God expressed Himself uniquely in Jesus of Nazareth. Small wonder, then, that Christ's birth holds such potent, such joy, for mankind everywhere!

Christmas is a time for spiritual renewal, a vigorous response in faith; a time for love and rejoicing; a time for honoring One who is most richly deserving of honor! Therefore let us not obscure the true meaning of Christmas with tinsel and commercialism run wild. Let us, rather, outpour all the love that is in our hearts for one another, in deeds and thought. God shared Himself with the world, in the advent of Christ. Accepting Christ, we are constrained to share ourselves with God, the originator of our salvation.

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