



Happy Holidays

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A family was 'going down the tube' until Kings Mountain people showed...

Christmas love



Brandon, Minniea and Shyla McClain will have a good Christmas thanks to the generosity of others

By GARY STEWART
Editor of the Herald

The small Christmas tree in their cramped living room stands bare except for a few ornaments from years past.

Underneath it are no presents, and Christmas is just a few days away.

But Minniea McClain has a tremendous faith in God, and she is depending on Him to provide her family's needs.

And, God, working through some good people in the Kings Mountain area, is doing just that.

For the past several months things haven't looked good for McClain and the two grandchildren who have lived with her since their parents died.

Last year, she lost her job at a local hotel, and in March she lost what little unemployment and Social Services benefits the family received. Basically, the family has lived on food stamps.

To further magnify their problems, McClain's 1984 Celebrity had numerous mechanical problems which she didn't have money to address, and that made it impossible to look for employment.

The old furnace in their home on Curry Road hadn't worked in two years, and there was no money to repair it. The water pump in their well malfunctioned and they had to carry water from neighbors' homes. Had it not been for anonymous donors on numerous occasions, their power would have been disconnected months ago.

With Christmas approaching, Ms. McClain prayed to God for a Messenger. That came in the person of several area persons who learned the

McClain's story when Sherrill Toney, Principal of West School, overheard the youngest grandchild telling someone that they had to carry water.

Toney related the story to Kings Mountain District Schools Social Worker Hallie Conner, and upon her investigation of the matter all the other problems came to light.

As the word spread around town, individuals and businesses came forward to help.

A church provided a kerosene heater, and a local heating and air conditioning business repaired her duct work and is in the process of installing a rebuilt furnace.

A department store is outfitting the family with new Christmas clothes, and a drug store is providing toys for the children.

A master mechanic from another local business is getting the car in excellent running order. Soon after Christmas, Ms. McClain will be able to seek another job and be able to get her family back on its feet.

Ms. McClain said she always had faith in God, and the acts of kindness by local people - many of whom are anonymous to the family, has renewed her faith in people.

"I really am grateful for everyone who has gone out of their way to help me with these children," she said. "If it was just me it wouldn't be so difficult. We were going down the tubes. But this makes you really know what Thanksgiving and Christmas is all about."

McClain said she has long agreed with the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi - that we should all be instruments of God's peace.

"This just renews my faith...to see that people

are willing to put themselves out for you," she said. "They could have been doing for themselves or for their families, but they stopped to reach out to us in our time of need."

"All of this kind of made me think of the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi and how he wanted to be an instrument of the Lord. The Lord works in mysterious ways. He uses other people. I feel like people who love the Lord and have been blessed by Him seek other people to help. He was working through them to help us. I want to be one of the people that He will use to help other people."

With things looking up now, and the car almost ready to run, that's a possibility.

"Now that we've gotten water and heat, and the car is almost back on the road, I feel like we'll be able to take up all these loose ends and get back on the road," McClain says. "The car is the main thing. I had already done orientation for a job at Holy Angels. All I needed was transportation."

Because of the generosity of yet another anonymous donor who is providing their meal, the McClains plan an "old-fashioned" family Christmas.

You can be sure when the blessing is said, there will be special requests for all of the generous people who came to their aid.

"We just want to thank everybody who has helped us in these trying times," McClain said.

"We are truly grateful. If I can ever be of any kind of service to anyone I would truly love to offer myself."

Party Lines

From KM to Washington, DC opinion on President Clinton depends on party affiliation

By Alan Hodge

The topic of conversation from Capitol Hill in Washington to every barber shop, diner, beauty shop and service station in the land has got to be President Clinton and his troubles. Last week, for just the second time in our nation's 200 year history, a sitting President has faced removal from office by impeachment.

This is one issue where there doesn't seem to be a whole lot of middle ground. Most folks are either strongly for or against Clinton. In a statement before the House of Representatives on December 17, Sue Myrick had this to say.

"Just before the November 3rd election, my five-year-old grandson Jake, asked his mother if a new President was being elected. Upon being told, 'we already have a President'-- Jake replied, 'No we don't, he lied.' Such principle from the 'mouths of babes.' As sad a time as this is for our nation, this action is necessary so that all of us continue to uphold and teach basic truths-- basic right and wrong in our houses-- most assuredly in this House. Yes, 'to err is human,' but rather than lie, deny, and vilify, we must confess, repent, and repair. The children are watching."

A sampling of people around Cleveland County and Kings Mountain revealed these thoughts on the subject of sending President Clinton packing.

Kings Mountain insurance executive Bob Maner felt strongly concerning Clinton's guilt.

"I sincerely hope they find him guilty and remove him from office," Maner said. "I'm concerned the Senate won't have the courage to do what the House of Representatives did and were duty bound to do. There is plenty of basis to remove him. If you or I did what Clinton has done, we would go to jail."

Retired educator Dean Westmoreland of Grover was sympathetic to Clinton's plight.

"I think the President's personal behavior was reprehensible, but his public policy is exemplary. What we're seeing is a case of creeping, political coup de etat. I think that the Republicans went into an impeachment mode and couldn't get out of it."

Westmoreland also had this to say about the direction the country was taking.

"A lot of this has been started by two of the most dangerous men in America- Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. The last time we mixed religion and politics we had burnings at the stake. We are straying away from separation of Church and State. The Republicans have gotten us into a situation where everyone will have to take a litmus test of fidelity before they can hold office. On top of it all, it's an outrage to hold impeachment hearings right in the middle of a military campaign against a foreign dictator."

Kings Mountain mayor Scott Neisler had a clear idea about the proceedings in Washington.

"This is not so much a sex thing as it is about someone lying under oath," Neisler said. "I'm proud that the House of Representatives did what was right rather than bowing under to public opinion. They should go on now and finish the process."

No matter how people feel about what is transpiring in our nation's Capital, one thing is for sure- the history books will have plenty to work with for a long time to come.

In war and peace, Guard's ready

By Alan Hodge

With bombs raining down on Iraq last week, many relatives of servicemen were wondering if another Desert Storm was in the making. Though aircraft and missiles took care of business this time, the ever-present worry is always there if extra ground troops will be called up.

Ready to do their part on the local and international scene, members of Co. B, 505th

Engineering Battalion at Kings Mountain National Guard Armory are able no matter what the duty. With 132 soldiers and 70 pieces of heavy equipment at its disposal, Co. B handles construction, humanitarian, and maintenance jobs in places as close as Kings Mountain, or as far away as Central America.

Housed in the Armory building that dates back to 1948, Co. B of the 505th is headed by Readiness NCO Sargent 1st

Class Paul Terry.

"Our role encompasses everything from building playground equipment to helping in disaster situations like Hurricane Hugo or the hurricane in Honduras," Sgt. Terry said. "We are an engineering battalion that acts like a civilian construction crew."

Among the trucks and other vehicles that Co. B operates are 2 1/2 ton cargo and transport trucks, 5 ton trucks, a crane,

wreckers, water tankers, bull dozers, and road scrapers.

If Co. B and the rest of the 505th should have to go to war, they're prepared for that too.

"In a combat situation we would build roads, maintain camps, dig trenches, and build aircraft runways," said Sgt. Terry. "We also engage in minesweeping operations."

Though it would take several

See Guard, 7A



ON GUARD- Kings Mountain National Guard Army sergeants Paul Terry (left) and Ralph Davis tend to some of the transport and construction equipment they use in their duties.

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