



## Front Porch Music

By Ron Isbell  
Publisher

### Livestock, brain sandwiches and pie

A pickup truck was parked in front of Food Lion last week. Not unusual at all, but this one had stock racks on it. In the year 2010 that's pretty unusual.

It did, however, take me back to the mid 1950s in Rusty Springs, the town where I grew up, conjuring up some images, tastes and pretty strong smells buried deep in my memory.

Dad had a blue 1950 Chevrolet pickup that took us nearly everywhere we needed to go back then. It was a multiple-use vehicle long before SUVs and extended cab pickups took over heavier transportation duties for Americans.

Like many people around Rusty Springs we farmed a little, but "cash money" came from a job off the farm. In dad's case it was construction. When the winter days got too cold to pour concrete he turned his attention to our livestock, an enterprise that put food on our table and supplemented his paychecks. Our herd was small, ten to fifteen cows maybe, but it fed us and provided some income.

Thus, the pickup and a set of stock racks. And the SALE BARN! Boy what a place for a six-year-old!

Rusty Springs had had a small sale barn (for the uninitiated, that's a place where livestock is bought and sold by auction), but regular auctions weren't held there anymore by the time I was deemed old enough to go along with Dad and Grandpa.

Our destination was 15 miles up the road where they had not one, but two, auction barns. One held an auction every Tuesday; the other every Thursday. This presented somewhat of a dilemma for Dad and Grandpa. Dad preferred the "South" barn because they held a tool and miscellaneous auction before the livestock auction. He could always find a bargain there or at least have a good time trying. Grandpa, however, preferred the "North" barn. He loved the fish sandwiches in the restaurant there, but the real treat was the brain sandwiches they sometimes offered. Didn't have brains every week. Nope, I never tried one but Grandpa loved them.

For me it was my first step toward manhood. We slipped away from the "women and children" for the day. My brother John wasn't old enough to come along yet, so it was just the three of us and sometimes just Dad and me. There was even conspiracy involved. I was sworn to secrecy every trip when Grandpa would follow up his fish or brain sandwich with a three-inch thick piece of banana cream pie. Then again when we'd slip back to the restaurant for a second slice later in the afternoon. "Don't you be tellin' Grandpa we ate this pie, now," he'd say with a conspiratorial wink.

Dad couldn't hide the stuff he'd buy at the tool auctions, but Mom never seemed to mind. She knew he'd paid a whole lot less for it that it was worth. And, it was just as often a new set of knives or stainless steel bowls as it was hay hooks and shovels.

And, of course, none of that was why we came to the sale barn. Supposedly. And I was captivated by the whole process.

In addition to the "ring" where the action took place, there were dozens and dozens of small pens up and down four aisles that led to the ring. As farmers brought in their livestock to be sold it was unloaded and put in a pen with a lot number posted on the gate.

After parking the truck, our first "job" was to walk the aisles and look over the day's offering. Dad would make notes about which lots he'd be interested in bidding on.

Then we'd return to the ring and take our seats on the wooden bleachers that surrounded it. It was almost always cold, and the seats were always, always hard. There was an order to the auction that started with sheep, then moved to hogs before the first of the cattle ever appeared. That could make for a long, boring day for a six-year-old. Grandpa's trip for a second piece of pie always came at just the right time.

Revived, I'd be ready to pay attention when the first lot of calves Dad was interested in was trotted into the ring.

"Ten, ten, ten. Who'll start the bidding at ten?" the auctioneer would chant. "Alright, then, who'll give me five to go?" A head would nod or a finger raise and the ring man would yell, "Yes!" and the bidding had started. I'd get kind of excited when Dad would nod and for a brief moment those calves were ours.

It was hectic; the bidding was fast; then it was over. We bought or didn't buy and moved on to the next lot.

At the end of the day we'd load up the calves we'd bought in the back of that blue 1950 Chevrolet with homemade stock racks, crowd into the cab and head home chilled to the bone.

And one more admonition from Grandpa: "Remember. Not a word about that pie to your Grandma."

## RENDEZVOUS: for scouts this weekend at fairgrounds

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Music from live bands, appearances of local celebrities, rock-climbing walls, equestrian exhibits and SWAT team demonstrations will be held.

A pioneer "Mountain Man Village" and a Native American Village will be set up for the scouts to explore, along with a model railroad.

"Cub World" will feature car, space and boat derbies.

Boy Scouts will also be showing off their own pioneering projects of a merry-go-round, monkey bridges, catapults, and a signal tower they made with their own hands.

"There will be a lot of hands-on exhibits," King said.

The North Carolina State Highway Patrol plans to have a driving simulator set up in one of the patrol's trailers.

Myra's Catering, out of Valdese, will be serving meals in two large tents on the fairgrounds.

An American Red Cross blood mobile will be set up, collecting donations.

The Cleveland Community College's Fire Rescue Trainers will host a special program for selected scouts who will learn rappelling, extrication and GPS rescue techniques and how to fight fires.

Some scouts will also be taking part in swift water rescue training at the Y.

Late afternoon on Saturday, the scouts will exit the fairgrounds and march across the street to the amphitheatre at Cleveland Community College for a live stage show with special host Jennifer Marion, of Marion Chevrolet. The show will be followed by a fireworks display.

King estimates that the last time Cleveland County



Local scouts participate in a fun teamwork exercise, each pulling a rope to move a triangular platform which carries another boy in the Scout Show held in May.

### Red Cross blood drive Saturday

The American Red Cross will be hosting a blood drive at the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts celebration at this weekend's Rendezvous on the Cleveland County fairgrounds.

Blood donations will be collected from 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 23.

Participants who donate blood will be entered to win a pair of Delta Air Lines tickets. All donors will receive an American Red Cross Stadium cushion. All donors must present a photo ID or an American Red Cross blood donor card at registration.

hosted the Rendezvous, about seven years ago, nearly 15,000 people at-

### Motorcycle Spirit Run benefit Nov. 6

Earthen Vessel's Motorcycle Ministry will hold its second annual Spirit Run Nov. 6 to benefit the Merry Christmas Kings Mountain Toy Distribution.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. at Family Worship Center, 118 Shelby Rd., with first bike out at 11 a.m. Registration fee is \$15 (single) and \$25 (double) and includes lunch at the church. Those attending are asked to take an unwrapped toy.

Call Doug Allen, 704-750-4430, or Rocky Smith, 704-813-1098, for more information.

tended. The council looks forward to another big crowd this year.

"This event is second largest to the National Jamboree (for Scouts) in the Southeast," King said.

The council started planning the event about two years ago.

The Boy Scouts will be building their own city of sorts for Rendezvous 2010. This city of learning, exploration and bonding with "brotherly love" will be fortified by local law enforcement, rescue and fire agencies.

The Cleveland County Sheriff's Department will be providing security at the event. The Cleveland Volunteer Fire Department will man the fire station on the fairgrounds.

The Kings Mountain

Rescue Squad will provide ambulance services and medical attention along with other volunteers. The Shelby Police Department will handle traffic concerns.

"The main goal is for kids to have a real once in a lifetime experience," King said.

Rendezvous 2010 is hosted by the Piedmont Council of the Boy Scouts of America program. The council oversees scouts in 11 counties, including Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln, Rutherford, Polk, McDowell, Caldwell, Iredell, Catawba, Alexander and Burke.

The Rendezvous is open to all who wish to attend. A fee will be charged at the gates.

More than 100 volunteers will be helping out with the Rendezvous this year.

## Tree Dedication Ceremony

in memory and honor of those afflicted with cancer

Saturday  
October 23rd  
3-5pm

Kings Mountain  
Walking Track  
(next to YMCA)

Senior Project -  
Erica Hicks



## 7th annual Pink Ribbon Tea

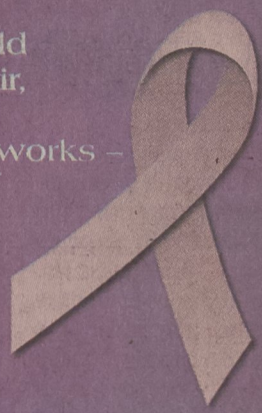
Sponsored by Cleveland County HealthCare System

Saturday,  
October 23  
10:00 to Noon

T.R. Harris Conference Center  
Cleveland Regional Medical Center

Nelson Jenkins, MD  
Plastic Surgeon  
will be the guest speaker.

An interactive display from Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina will feature the The Button Chair, created in 1998 as a tribute to all women - as well as their families, friends and support networks - who have battled breast cancer in North Carolina. The chair is covered with buttons representing a unique story of courage and strength, each having belonged to a breast cancer survivor or someone who lost their battle with the disease.



To create Cleveland County's own button chair, we are asking all participants to bring a button to the Pink Tea.

Please register by calling 980-487-3724. Seating is limited.

### Join us at the Gateway Trails

as we Celebrate its 1st Anniversary

with a Barbecue Fundraiser

Saturday, November 6, 2010  
10am - 3pm

Volunteer of the Year Award • Scout Nature Trail • Girl Scout Crafts  
Face Painting • Revolutionary Re-enactment • Music  
Golf Cart Rides on the Trail & More

Barbecue tickets: \$8/adults • \$5/children

Tickets available at: Kings Mountain Chamber Office, Alliance Bank, J Oliver's, Dellinger's Jewel Shop, First National Bank



807 S. Battleground Ave.  
Kings Mountain

Call 704.739.4755  
for more information