

Nuggets of Fun and Nostalgia for Treasure Valley Golden-Agers

The Wandering Christmas Camel

by Janet Eyestone Buck

Our family has always enjoyed a Christmas tradition of setting out a ceramic nativity scene--complete with wise men, camels, shepherds, sheep, and of course, Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus. Each season the nativity scene was the same.

One year when my children were young, I carefully unwrapped each piece and set up an artistic display representing the first Christmas.

The children gathered around to watch. We talked about the birth of Jesus and the visit of the shepherds and Magi. I then cautioned the children, as always, not to touch the pieces, explaining that they were fragile and easily broken.

This year, however, the temptation was too great for my two-year old daughter, Elizabeth. The day we set up the nativity scene, I noticed several times, with some irritation, that a camel had wandered from its appointed place or sometimes a sheep had strayed from the watchful care of the shepherd.

Each time, I returned the piece to its rightful place, and then tracked down the culprit and admonished her to leave things alone.

The next morning, Elizabeth awoke and went downstairs before I did. When I walked into the living room I noticed right

(Continued on page 2)



Christmas

*Every time a hand reaches out
To help another....that is Christmas
Every time someone puts anger aside
And strives for understanding
That is Christmas*

*Every time people forget their
differences
And realize their love for each other
That is Christmas*

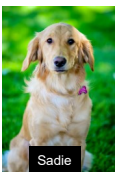
*May this Christmas bring us
Closer to the spirit of human
understanding
Closer to the blessing of peace!*



There's More to Christmas

*There's More to Christmas...
There's more, much more to Christmas
Than candle-light and cheer;
It's the spirit of sweet friendship
That brightens all the year;
It's thoughtfulness and kindness,
It's hope reborn again,
For peace, for understanding
And for goodwill to men!*

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Facebook Friends

I am trying to make friend outside of Facebook while applying the same techniques.

Every day I walk down the street and tell passersby what I ate for lunch, how I feel at the moment, what I did yesterday, and what I will do later and with whom.

I show them pictures of my family, my dog, and of me gardening, working on my car, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having lunch and doing what everyone else does every day.



I also listen in on their

conversations with others and give them a “thumbs up” and tell them I like what they said.

And it works just like Facebook! I already have four people following me: two police officers, a private investigator and a psychiatrist.

The Wandering Christmas Camel *(Continued from page 1)*

away that the manger scene had been disturbed again. All the pieces were clumped together in a mass, as tightly as they could be fitted together.

Impatiently, I stepped forward to put things right; but I stopped short as I realized that some thought had gone into this new arrangement. All twenty-three figures were grouped in a circle, facing inward, pushed together as if to get the best view possible of the figure resting in the center of them all—the Baby Jesus.



The spirit touched my soul as I pondered the insight of a two-year old. Certainly, Christ should be the center of our holiday celebrations. If we all could draw in around our Savior—not only during the Christmas season but during each day—what a better perspective we would have. The love He offers to each of us would be easily shared with others who have not ventured so close.

I left the nativity arranged according to Elizabeth’s design that year. It served as a poignant reminder during the rest of the season of what Christmas is all about.

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Sharing Your Seed

There was a farmer who grew excellent quality corn. Every year he won the award for the best grown corn in the county.



One year a big-city newspaper reporter interviewed him. In the course of the interview he learned something very interesting about

how he grew it. The reporter discovered that the farmer shared his award-winning seed corn with his neighbors.

“How can you afford to share your best seed corn with your neighbors when they are entering their corn in competition with yours each year?” the reporter asked.

“Well, young man,” said the farmer, “don’t you know? The wind picks up pollen from the ripening corn and swirls it from field to field. If my neighbors grow inferior corn, cross-pollination will steadily degrade the quality of my corn. If I am to grow good corn, I must help my neighbors grow good corn.”

So is with our lives... those who want to live meaningfully and well must help enrich the lives of others, for the value of a life is measured by the lives it touches. And those who choose to be happy must help others find happiness, for the welfare of each is bound up with the welfare of all...

- Author Unknown (Proverbs 11:24-25)

Early Christmas Shopping

It was just before Christmas and the judge was in a happy mood. He asked the prisoner before his bench, “What are you charged with?”

The prisoner replied, “Doing my Christmas shopping too early.”

“That’s no crime,” said the judge. “Just how early were you doing this shopping?”

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The Cat's In the Cradle

My child arrived just the other day,
He came to the world in the usual way.
But there were planes to catch and bills to pay,
He learned to walk while I was away;
And he was talkin' 'fore I knew it,
And as he grew he'd say, "I'm gonna be like you, Dad,
You know I'm gonna be like you."

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man in the moon.
"When ya comin' home, Dad?"
"I don't know when,
But we'll get together then,
You know we'll have a good time then."

My son turned ten just the other day,
He said, "Thanks for the ball, Dad, come on let's play.
Can you teach me to throw?"
I said, "Not today, I got a lot to do."
He said, "That's okay." And he walked away,
but his smile never dimmed,
It said. "I'm gonna be like him, yeah,
You know I'm gonna be like him."

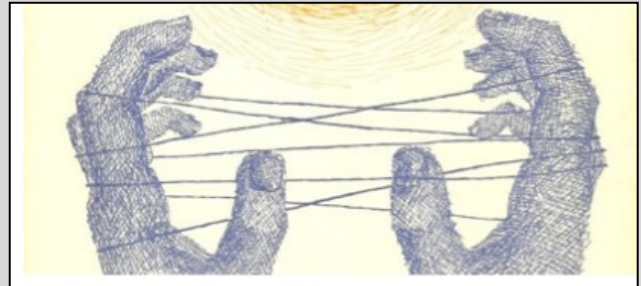
Well, he came from college just the other day,
So much like a man, I just had to say,
"Son, I'm proud of you, can you sit for awhile?"
He shook his head and he said with a smile.
"What I'd really like Dad, is to borrow the car keys.
See you later, can I have them please?"

I've long since retired, my sons moved away.
I called him up just the other day.
I said, "I'd like to see you if you don't mind."
He said, "I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time.
You see, my new jobs a hassle, the kids have the flu,
But it's sure nice talkin' to you, Dad,
It's been sure nice talkin' to you."

And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me,
He'd grown up just like me,
My boy was just like me.

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon,
Little boy blue and the man in the moon.
"When you comin' home, Son?"
"I don't know when, But we'll get together then, Dad,
We're gonna have a good time then."

Song written by Harry and Sandy Chapin



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Her Christmas was in the mail

During December, Ned's job at the post office was to process all the mail sent to Santa. One day a letter came in addressed in shaky handwriting to Santa, with a barely legible return address. He opened the letter and read the following:

*"Dear Santa,
I know I quit believing in you years ago, but you are my last hope. I am an 83 year-old widow, living on a very small pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had \$100 in it, which was all the money I had until my next pension check. Next week is Christmas, and I had invited two of my widow friends over for dinner. Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with. I have no family to turn to, and I'm desperate. Can you please help me?"*

Sincerely, Ethel

The postal worker was touched. Ned showed the letter to all the other workers. Each one dug into his or her wallet and came up with a few dollars. By the time he made the rounds, he had collected \$96, which they put into an envelope and sent to the woman, with a note from Santa.

The rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of Ethel and the dinner she would be able to share with her friends.

Christmas came and went. A few days later, another letter came from the same old lady to Santa. All the workers gathered around while the letter was opened. It read ...

*"Dear Santa,
How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your gift of love, I was able to fix a glorious dinner for my friends. We had a very nice day and I told my friends of your wonderful gift.*

By the way, there was \$4 missing. I think it must have been those bums down at the Post Office."

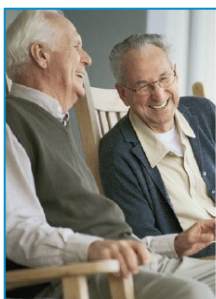


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Milestones



Bill & Connie Russell
Dec 20, 1948—71 years
Nampa Bethel Nazarene



Gene & Helen Wade
Dec 16, 1951—68 years
Nampa Senior Center



Dean & Linda Pratt
Dec 18, 1964—55 years
Caldwell Senior Center

Late Christmas Gift

Fred and John were fortunate enough to have season tickets to watch the Chicago Bears.



But they could not help noticing that there was always a spare seat next to them. They had a friend who would love to buy a season ticket, especially if all three could have seats together.

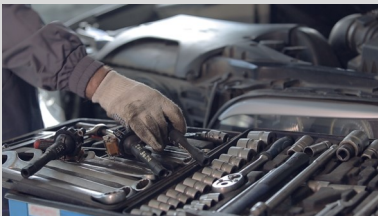
One half-time Fred went to the ticket office and asked if they could buy the season ticket next to them. The official said that unfortunately the ticket had been sold. Nevertheless, every week the seat was still empty.

Then on the Sunday after Christmas, at the last home game of the season, much to Freddie and Eddie's amazement the seat was taken for the first time that season.

John could not resist asking the newcomer, "Where have you been all season? You missed the first seven games!"

"Don't ask," he said. "My wife bought the season ticket back last summer, but she kept it for a surprise Christmas present."

Not for the Faint of Heart



A mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the engine of a BMW when the owner walked in, a highly sought-after heart surgeon.

The mechanic stood up, turned to the surgeon, and

said, "Hey, Doc, can I ask you a question?"

"Of course," responded the physician.

The mechanic wiped his hands on a rag and asked, "So, Doc, look at this engine. I open it up, take out the valves, fix 'em, put 'em back in, and when I finish, it works just like new. So how come I get such a small salary and you get the really big bucks, when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The surgeon paused, smiled and leaned over, and whispered to the mechanic, "Have you every tried doing it with the engine running?"



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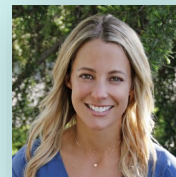
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Foiled by the Word

An elderly woman had just returned home from an evening church service when she was startled by an intruder. She had caught him in the act of robbing her home and stealing her valuables.

She yelled at him, "Stop! Acts 2:38!" (Her favorite scripture, which reads "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven.")

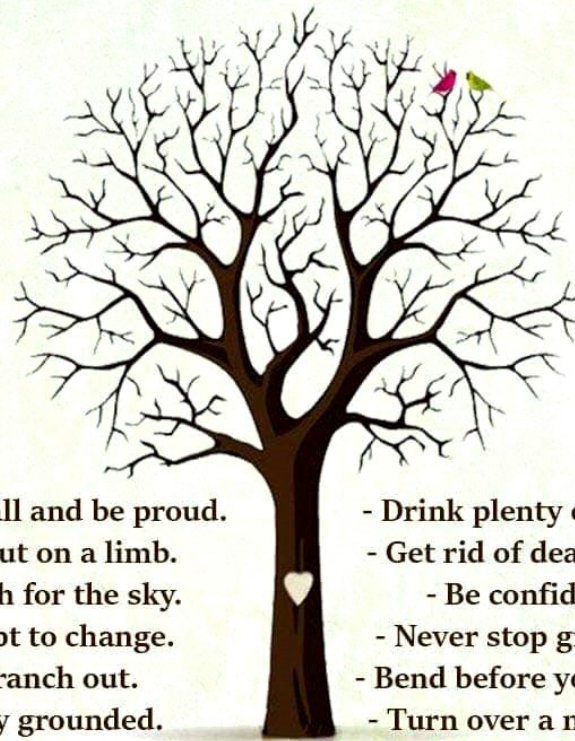
Inexplicably, the burglar stopped in his tracks.

The woman calmly called the police, who quickly came, found the man and arrested him.

As the officer handcuffed the man, he asked the burglar, "Why did you just stand there? All the lady did was quote a scripture at you."

"Scripture?" replied the burglar. "I thought she said she had an axe and two '38s!"

Advice From A Tree



- Stand tall and be proud.
- Go out on a limb.
- Reach for the sky.
- Adapt to change.
- Branch out.
- Stay grounded.
- Remember your roots.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Get rid of dead wood.
- Be confident.
- Never stop growing.
- Bend before you break.
- Turn over a new leaf.
- Enjoy the view.

*"Christmas is not a time nor a season,
but a state of mind. To cherish peace
and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy,
is to have the real spirit of Christmas."*

- Calvin Coolidge

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Winter is the season in which people try to keep the house as warm as it was in the summer, when they complained about the heat.

Beauty



"How many years of beauty do I have left?" she asks me.

How many more do you want?

Here. Here is 34. Here is 50.

When you are 80 years old and your beauty rises in ways your cells cannot even imagine now and your wild bones grow luminous and ripe, having carried the weight of a passionate life.

When your hair is aflame with winter and you have decades of learning and leaving and loving sewn into the corners of your eyes and your children come home to find their own history in your face.

When you know what it feels like to fail ferociously and have gained the capacity to rise and rise and rise again.

When you can make your tea on a quiet and ridiculously lonely afternoon and still have a song in your heart, like owl wings beating beneath the cotton of your sweater.

Because your beauty began there beneath the sweater and the skin, remember?

This is when I will take you into my arms and coo,

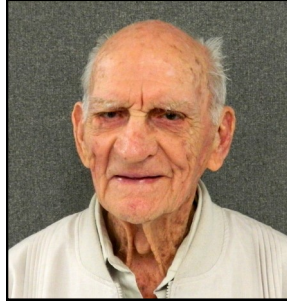
"You brave and glorious thing,
you've come so far.

I see you.

Your beauty is breathtaking."

~ Jeannette Encinias

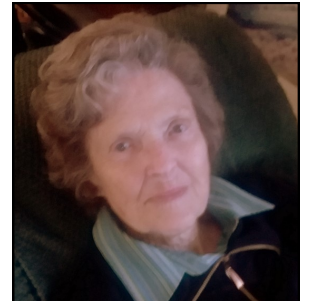
Milestones



Wilbur "Jonesy" Jones
Dec 20, 1922—97 years
Nampa Senior Center



Lester Schafer
Dec 5, 1923—96 years
Caldwell Senior Center



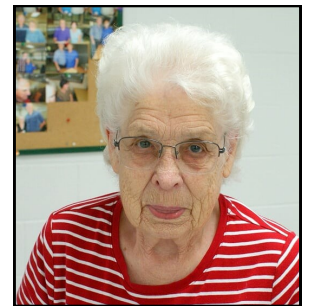
Barbara Atteberry
Dec 1, 1925—94 years
Caldwell Autumn Wind



Ehno Tiddens
Dec 19, 1926—93 years
Caldwell Autumn Wind



Betty Lubcke
Dec 21, 1925—94 years
Nampa Park Place



Lucy Henzler
Dec 20, 1927—92 years
Nampa Senior Center



Steven Monson
Dec 24, 1927—92 years
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Judy Durbin
Dec 8, 1944—75 years
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