

CHRONICLE

IS PUBLISHED BY MONDY ON MONDAY FOR THE MONDYS
THEIR KIN, NEAR KIN, AND A FEW FRIENDS

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I have no idea when this issue of *The Chronicle* will be published. We are very busy packing but I get tired and one way of resting is to sit down at the computer and do a little work.

A few days ago I received a letter from a person unknown to me and when I opened it I found that it was from a man who served in the CCC. He had written a book called *Dusty Roads* and since it was about the CCC he hoped I might be interested in buying a copy. He had found my name in the NaCCCa, a magazine published by a group of old CCC men. The reason I am telling you about him is the following paragraph from his letter. "I have been a writer and house magazine editor for over 60 years. As far back as 1938 I wanted to write *Dusty Roads* and finally got around to writing it in 1991. It took more than 12 months of queries and 314 rejections before I found a publisher and it was finally published in June 1993. My son decided to submit my record of the greatest number of rejections to the Guinness Book of Records, and now I have a certificate from them for the greatest number of rejections before getting a book published." Shucks! I've never received a rejection -- I've never submitted anything. I don't believe I could stand 314 rejections; by that time I would have decided no one liked my writing but me. (I'll probably order the book.)

The main reason for starting this issue at this time is that I have some letters I want to get in the hopper during my rest periods. I am afraid they (the rest periods) will come less often for

the next few weeks.

FROM VICKI ROBERTS

[As many of you know, Vicki and her husband Monty live on a ranch in the corner where Oklahoma, Colorado, and New Mexico join. She is the daughter of Margaret's sister, Ercil and Lester White.]

"...Dear folks: Sorry it has taken be so long to get around to writing. This is the garden season and I have been up to my elbows in putting up garden and making jam. Every time I read the Chronicle I think, 'I need to write' but then for some reason I get busy and put it off. I enjoy the Chronicle so much, and Uncle Harrison I am beginning to feel like I know your relatives. Everyone is so great and write such interesting letters. Thanks, Uncle Harrison, and I even appreciate the fillers.

Monty Joe is back to the ranch routine; fixing windmills and all the other things. He has been running a Loader for the road crew that is paving 5 more miles of my mail route. He left at 5: AM each morning and returned at 7:20 PM with just enough time to eat and get to bed to sleep until 4:15 the next morning. It gave me a long day (and I needed it) for taking care of the yard, the garden, my job, the cattle, and all the other things that had to be done. He only worked 5 weeks, but it did provide additional cash. The little time we had to ourselves was quality time, if you know what I mean. Now we can sleep later but I don't get as much done, but I am enjoying it more.

Our garden took its own sweet time putting on, but now it is making up for lost time. We have corn, eggplant, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage,

yellow and green squash, tomatoes, green beans, blackeyed peas, peppers, beets, lettuce, okra, and onions. We plant enough for our family and then for all the other families around. Both Monty Joe and his father love the garden and keep it free of weeds. *[Hey, you all, I have seen Monty's garden; looks more like a truck farm.]* I love fresh vegs, but by the time September rolls around I am so tired of vegs that I can do without them until the first winter blast, and then I am so grateful for the vegs I have put away.

I am so excited about your move. I intend to be over for a visit as soon as you are settled in and will welcome a visit.

I am looking forward to reading Brecken's report of her trip. My grandson was on tour in Europe this summer and I know how wonderful those experiences can be. (Now how would I know that? I have never been out of the USA, but I can imagine anyway.)

Aunt Mugs you will be glad to know that "Beautiful" is doing well. In fact, he has earned his place in the family. The other day I started for a walk and he ran barking and jumping and simply would not let me walk. Then I discovered why, there was a snake in the path in front of me. After I got my heart to start beating again, I called Monty and he disposed of the snake. I will always be grateful to Beautiful for stopping me. He is here to stay and no arguments. *[Is it true, Vicki, that he is so homely he was nicknamed Beautiful to make him feel better?]*

We are without a preacher again. The one we moved here from Tennessee just up and resigned, and now is in Kansas. We must be hard on preachers. Anyway, it was a blow to us but he says the Lord wanted him to move on. We are small, but the church has been here for a hundred years and we know that God wants us to carry on. I was really sorry to hear about the burning of the Shiloh church. I can't imagine how that would feel.

Love you all. Give my love to everyone, but keep plenty for yourselves, Vicki.

FROM MARY JEAN

[Margaret's birthday was the 17th and among the many letters and cards she received was one from her sister-in-law, Mary Jean, her oldest brother Leon's wife. There were several bits of news which I shall excerpt because they are interesting.]

"...I haven't waited too long to send you birthday greetings, I hope, Mugs. *[All of Margaret's family call her "Mugs".]* It is almost lunch time and our menu today is; Cole slaw chili-hotdog with cheese, potato salad, baked beans, and Mississippi fudge cake. Some of the menus don't appeal to all of us, but as someone said at last Wednesday's business meeting, "We are all gaining weight".

You have probably heard that CP and Helen *[Marg's brother and wife]* are moving here over the Labor Day holiday. They will be in Apartment 1717, right next door to the Dining Room. It will be nice to have them here. My neighbor in the Apt. on my right is from Los Angeles and is new here. She sits at my table in the dining room and is nearly blind, so I help her with her food.

Larry *[Mary Jean's son who worked for Knight-Ridder in Miami for many years; his last assignment was Vice Pres. in Charge of City Newspapers]* was nominated in March for the John S. Knight Gold Medal. He was nominated by the executive staff of the San Jose Mercury News and learned in June that he had won. The medal is awarded to the individual who best exemplifies the professional commitment of Knight-Ridder people. He will be presented with the medal on August 31 in Miami. (All of this makes his Mom very proud. He has worked very hard for this company for over 30 years.

I'm still enjoying the Chronicle. I always read it from cover to cover when it comes and I know Harrison gets so frustrated with all of us for not writing. I wouldn't blame him if he applied for "bankruptcy". I just never seem to get a "round tuit". Mugs, I want to congratulate you on your sense of humor, your nice husband really gives

you a hard time sometimes. Your oldest brother was not given a sense of humor and he never knew it, bless his heart, he couldn't even see the humor in the Aggie Jokes.

Love to all of you, Mary Jean.

FROM LOIS

[Lois, this is the third letter I have received from you in the past three weeks -- have you been looking at the little "round tuit" I put in the Chronicle? I wish everyone would. Thanks.]

"...I am setting here by the window, watching Cecil water soak the flowers and lawn. No rain yet, and little promise of any. There's a bit of thunder in the direction of Tallahassee; maybe they are getting a shower but aren't.

Jessie called me yesterday, Sunday, and we just got to say a few words when a streak of lightning shut her up quick. She didn't know about the lightning and thunder. So we did not get to finish our conversation. I didn't even find out why she called. Just to talk I suppose but I didn't have time to find out. She did get to say that she and Jerry were ok before we were cut off.

Tomorrow, Cecil and I are going to Tallahassee to pick up Connie's baby daughter who is going to spend a few days with her "Peep-paw and Peep-maw" before going back to school. She enjoys being at the Motel and going to K-Mart's. This week they are going to open a real big one they have just built about two blocks from us. I think they are trying to keep out Wal-Mart.

I am hoping to read a lot more letters in the Chronicle from all of you. Sometimes I just don't have anything interesting to say but I do love to read what others say.

Well I guess all of you feel that summer is so near over and our children are back in school so soon. Maybe it is not too soon for working mothers. I haven't even had a visit from Bill's grandchildren yet.

Do you remember when it was so much fun to go shopping for notebooks and new clothes when we were young? And though it did cost money, it was a lot cheaper than what it costs parents today.

I had a nice call from our sweet Cindy in California and she told all about their nice trip up to Canada and other states in their new fifth wheel and truck they had bought for their travels. They had a lot of fun and enjoyed the cool weather. She said they had had cool weather in California this year too.

Love to all, Lois

I have received the first part of Brecken's report. She FAXed it to me and I have just read it. It will have to be put in the Chronicle in segments. Brecken is happy that so many of you have asked for the report. I am printing it *verbatim* for I do not wish to do any editing on it -- that would ruin the effect. Actually, Brecken is very good in English and can express herself very well so I wouldn't edit it anyway. It will not be published as part of the Chronicle for some of you may want to save it separately.

I have not found out what it will cost to put out the Chronicle when I get to Taos -- printing costs vary all over the country. It may become too expensive for me to continue but I will continue until the end of the year regardless of the cost. I will let you know after I get there.

In last week's paper I gave you a wrong telephone number for us in Taos. That number has now been changed to Phone No. (505) 776 5571. The phone company in Taos would not just switch the number over.

We will load out the big moving van next Thursday and leave Friday. Present plans call for Jim to drive the van, his friend Steve will follow him in our own little truck, and Margaret and I will go in our car. Since Margaret and I can drive much faster than the trucks, we will get there about 6 hours before they do on Saturday, so we

can get things ready for their arrival. The van must be dropped off in Santa Fe on Monday, so that means we must unload everything on Sunday, go to the Department of Vehicles and get the truck registered and continue on to Santa Fe to turn in the Van. So we have a busy week ahead of us. After turning in the van, Jim and Steve will come back to Los Angeles in the truck. We will be leaving behind several small truck loads of stuff which we will pick up later. Just can't take it all this trip. Jim will remain here for a while.

Today (20 Aug) is Brecken's 16th birthday and the most eventful day of her life -- she got her driver's license and can now drive without a responsible adult in the car. Margaret and I called her early this morning to sing "Happy Birthday" but she had already gone for her exam which was scheduled for 7:30 AM. (Here you have to have an appointment to take a driver's test.)

And now, for the first time since she bought her first car at age 18, Margaret cannot drive. Her driver's license expired on the 17th and she will get a new one in Taos. Of course that is one way of keeping her home -- broke and no driver's license. (Better than pregnant and barefoot)

So far all this packing and getting ready to move has not been too hard on either of us. Everytime I run out of boxes, I go to the store and buy another half dozen boxes.

We will go to the Jinks Family reunion on the weekend after we get to Taos, and when we leave there, we will go by Albuquerque to pick up Lisl Lange from Australia to spend a couple of weeks with us. She is a very forgiving person and won't mind our not having gotten properly moved in. I met Lisl in 1968, before I went to Australia to stay and before Marg came down. Three friends and I decided to go to Hermansburg, some 85 miles from Alice Springs in an old Volkswagen and about 5 miles away we had a flat. We had no tools, so we drove the rest of the way on the flat. Lisl's husband, Helmut, was in charge of the repair shed and opened it up and helped us. Later we met Lisl and I found her to

SPECIAL NOTE TO MY SIBLINGS
MARGARET AND I WOULD
LIKE FOR YOU TO GIVE
CONSIDERATION TO
THE POSSIBILITY OF
HAVING THANKSGIVING
DINNER WITH US IN TAOS.
PLEASE LET US KNOW IF THIS
WOULD BE CONVENIENT AND
IF IT WOULD INTERFERE
WITH PLANS YOU HAVE ALREADY
MADE.
BY THAT TIME WE SHOULD HAVE
THREE BEDROOMS READY
PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

be one of the most charming persons I ever met. When Margaret joined me in Alice Springs I made sure she met Lisl. They became fast friends and have remained so ever since. She has been to the US to visit us two or three times and we have been back to visit her in Australia. We were able to show Grand Canyon and some other places to her and Helmut on their visit several years ago and some other places to her on her visit a few years ago. She has always wanted to see Colorado so we will take her there on this visit and also show her some of the Indian ruins in New Mexico. We are looking forward to her visit.

Did you see where a man and woman were driving across country and the woman became sleepy so she went to sleep in the back seat. They stopped to fill up and while the man was filling the car, she got out and went to the ladies' room. But he did not know it so several miles down the road, a policeman pulled him over. He yelled at his wife in the back seat, he supposed,, but got no answer. All the policeman wanted was to present him with his wife he had gone off and left at the service station. There was no report what they said to each other once she was back in the car.

I'LL SEE YOU SOME TIME IN THE DISTANT FUTURE IF MY COMPUTER STILL WORKS AFTER I GET TO TAOS.

THE PEREGRINATIONS OF
BRECKENJAE ARMSTRONG

EPISODE ONE

HELSINKI OR BUST!

AN ACCOUNT OF MY TRIP FOR THE
CHRONICLE

Episode 1, To Helsinki

This summer I had the opportunity to go on a three week long trip to Finland, China, and Russia. This was an experience of a lifetime that I will never forget and should like to share with those who are interested. Though I have traveled extensively, China and Russia are by far the two most different and most interesting places that I have ever been to. Excuse the length of this account; this is more of a memory for me than a report for my wonderful Pop Pop's *Chronicle*.

My trip started out at the Burbank Airport, where the whole California clan (Grandmom, Grandma, Pop Pop, my mom and my dad) awaited my take-off. After a lot of hugs, kisses, and goodbyes, my group boarded the plane to San Francisco. My group consisted of six females, four students and two teachers. Of these people, one speaks fluent Russian and two attempt.

When we reached San Francisco, though we had a three hour lay-over period, we decided to check into our next flight. It was a good thing that we did because it turned out that our flight from San Francisco to Helsinki had been canceled. Without even telling us what she was doing, (in fact, at this point none of us knew that the flight had been cancelled) our Russian teacher, Mrs. Dillon disappeared. Several minutes later she reappeared and asked, "How would you feel about going to Germany, girls?". Seconds later

the six of us were sprinting through the airport to catch a flight to Frankfurt, Germany. I guess the idea was that if we could get ourselves to Europe, we could get ourselves to Helsinki. We caught the last six seats on the plane only moments before take-off. This whole event confirmed a suspicion that has been running around the school for several years that Mrs. Dillon is a CIA Agent. She has these weird absences then comes back saying that she "had things to do". Seriously, though, Mrs. Dillon is an incredible woman. Her looks command attention; she is tall and dignified, looking a though she should be nothing less than a member of the royal family. People jump when this woman snaps her fingers.

Ten hours later we found ourselves in Germany where we stayed for two hours until we boarded a flight to Helsinki. (By-the-way, the airline that cancelled our flight was Finair. These were not the last problems we had with them, but I'll tell you about them later.) On the flight to Helsinki, we sat next to a woman who was carrying a turtle on her lap. This was the turtle's fifteenth trip from their home in Germany to Finland. This eccentric woman did not want to leave her pet behind with a turtle-sitter. This was only one of the many weird and interesting people that we met on this trip. Once in Helsinki, we finally got to bed.

I found that Helsinki was quite a beautiful city. It was very clean and the people were very friendly. It was easy to see the government control of the city and the socialist system at work by the green, open parks pervading the city and the wonderful public transportation system. Having grown up with Los Angeles right down

the hill, I greatly appreciated the beauty of the parks and clean air.

The next morning the six of us enjoyed a two hour breakfast and then walked down to the harbor. We went on a boat ride around the millions of tiny islands of Finland and then walked around the famous open market. The market is situated on a square that is right on the edge of the open harbor. Around the market to the other sides are various government buildings, fountains, an orthodox cathedral, all equally beautiful. This market was incredible with everything from arts and crafts to flowers and vegetables. I have never seen larger or more beautiful produce. Rows and rows of tomatoes, carrots, cherries, and everything else you could imagine were piled up beautifully. I have never seen more beautiful flowers for a more reasonable price (though it was the only reasonably priced thing in the whole country). Fish was being sold off of the bows of the boats which were backed up to the sidewalk that dropped right off into the harbor.

An amazing thing happened every afternoon around one or two o'clock. Suddenly all of the stalls would disappear, the street sweeper would clean the square, and as suddenly as they left, the stalls would reappear. What made this so funny is that it happens so fast. I saw the stalls dismantled and the square cleaned. Then I merely crossed the street and the whole market was up again and looking as though nothing had been disturbed. It shocked me and I felt as if I had gone through a time warp; that the time it would take to completely rebuild a stand and arrange the produce had disappeared while I was crossing the street.

The crafts in the market were equally as interesting. There was an orangish/brownish body suit that was either knitted or crocheted out of a fuzzy yarn that all of us girls were going to buy for Mrs. Dillon. Then we decided to have one custom made for her husband so that they could be a pair. There were a couple of women who were attempting to be street musicians; one played the violin and the other a guitar, and both

sang horribly. Everything added up to a wonderful, though a little bizarre, atmosphere.

We were all quite hungry so we started wandering. After passing by all sorts of restaurants, trying to find some good, wholesome, Finnish food, we finally gave up and went to the Happy Days Restaurant. It is funny how other countries try to imitate the American way. This restaurant was decorated with all sorts of early rock and roll paraphernalia and blasted fifties music. One huge difference, however, is the food. Though average in taste, was outrageously expensive, and the waitress wouldn't bring us our check so we could leave. After sitting there for three hours, we finally decided to be obnoxious Americans and demand the check.

After we left the restaurant, the rest of the group decided they were tired and decided to go back to the hotel for the rest of the evening. My roommate, Meredith Quinn, and I decided to go out for dinner (after having spent five hours at the table already, two for breakfast and three for lunch). We had no idea where to go or how to get there, so we just decided to "go with the flow". (By-the-way, Helsinki is an extremely safe city. even better than that, Helsinki has its "white nights" at this time of year which means that it doesn't get dark until about 12:30 am and only stays dark for about half an hour. This provides a safer atmosphere in the city.) After walking down the main street of Helsinki for a while, we decided we would try out the subway. We hopped on the subway, without really knowing where we were going. Meredith had a tour guide with her so we looked in it for the addresses of some good restaurants. Names in Finnish are so long that I tended to look at only the first four or five letters, which usually formed a somewhat recognizable word or at least that I could pronounce in English. We found Franz..... Street on the map and figured out that we had to get off the subway at Sarnas. So hopped on the train and held our breath for fear that we had gone in the wrong direction. Luckily we went the right way. After walking down Sarnas street and turning on Flem and again on Franz neither of us could see any restaurants though the guide

cited about seven. We got out the guide and discovered that it wasn't Franz.... Street but Fred.... street we wanted. All of those "F" names just blend together after a while. We were in a residential neighborhood and nowhere near anything but some rowdy looking bars here and there. We decided to wander again so we walked across the park, down a hill, beside a huge, brick factory, and finally to a decent looking restaurant. This place had a bar on the top but down a winding staircase was a wonderful, dark little restaurant. The food was incredible, and surprisingly enough, it was cheap. Late that night we emerged, full and happy, from the basement to find our way home. There was a tram stop across from the restaurant so we attempted to figure out a route home. Luckily there was a very nice man who told us how to get back to the hotel. We stayed up very late that night, late enough to see the sun set and then rise again out of our hotel window.

Our group stayed at the Hotel Inter-Continental, which was a beautiful place in the heart of the city, right across from the bay. Every day there was a group of about fifty people doing some kind of yoga in the park across from the hotel.

The next morning we woke up and started our second full day of the trip. We visited churches all day long. First was the stone church. This church is a new wave, modern church that did not appeal to me. It was sunken into the ground, with walls of stone and a glass ceiling. This church was lacking in awe and God. I did find our, however, the diversity of our group. Among the four girls, there was a Mormon, a Christian Scientist, a hater of all religion, and myself. This diversity provided the opportunity for some very good religious debate in some very interesting churches. We then visited the Lutheran church. Its only claim to fame was that it had a delicatessen in the crypt. It was such a disturbing thought to eat over dead people that Meredith and I each got a muffin so that we could say that we had done it. The Russian Orthodox Cathedral came next. This was the most interesting, especially since we were on our way to Russia.

It was very interesting to compare Orthodox churches in Russia with those in Helsinki. The ones in Helsinki were probably more accurate because they did not undergo the destruction that Stalin inflicted upon religion in Russia. While the churches in Russia all had to be restored to their original form after Stalin had blown them up or painted over all of the sacred icons, the one in Helsinki hadn't been disturbed. On the walls of the church, Old Russian was written. This meant that our teacher, who was fluent in the [*modern Russian, see my note below*] language by the time she was in high school, could not read it.

Once again we were all hungry. We found our way back across the open market and to a beautiful little garden house/cafe in the middle of expansive park. For that meal I tried reindeer and fresh salmon from the bay that lurked outside our window. We found our way back to the hotel to get our luggage and catch the bus to the airport.

Helsinki was a very nice spot to spend all of our lay-over time. It is in no way a tourist mecca but it does have its beauty. If one was to spend large amounts of vacation time in Finland, it would probably be interesting to explore the Laplands rather than spending all that much time in Helsinki. Helsinki is a very beautiful and clean city with nice looking, friendly people, but there is not much to do there as a tourist. It was definitely a beautiful place though.

[Editor's note: Brecken is a good speller and if there are any misspelled words above, charge them to me. My typing is not as good as her spelling. The only corrective addition I have made to her account has been the title and the explanatory note in the third paragraph above. Since I will have to publish her report in segments, I have decided to name each segment. (My computer demands it.) As to the reference to Old Russian and present day Russian I thought that some of you might not know that one of the things that came out of the Russian

revolution was a change in the language and the alphabet. An office mate I once had had learned to read Old Russian in his youth but said it was one of the most difficult languages to read. After the revolution a new alphabet was mandated and along with it a new language. He told me that by the time a child was 5 years old, he could read the most complicated sentences, and though he might not understand them, he would be able to pronounce every word correctly. Of course I have only his word for this, but I feel it is probably true. I will publish Brecken's report as I get it. The first segment speaks well for the observations of a soon-to-be 16 year old girl.