

ARE YOU A SPONGER? DO YOU READ WHAT OTHERS WRITE BUT DO NOT WRITE ? THAT ISN'T FAIR! YOU OWE THE CHRONICLE FAMILY AN APOLOGY -- AND A LETTER. THEY WANT TO KNOW ABOUT YOU TOO. TAKES ONLY A FEW MINUTES FOR YOU TO TELL US HOW YOUR ARE AND WHAT THE WEATHER IS LIKE.

The Mondy Morning

CHRONICLE

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

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Wednesday, 8 March, 1995. Yesterday I mailed out the March 6 issue of the Chronicle. They had not been on their way more than a few hours when I got a call from Bessie Nimmo telling me that Jay (J.E.Mondy) had been in the hospital. He had had a real problem with his kidneys and his blood pressure dropped to 78/32 but the doctors had his kidneys functioning properly again and that it looked like he was on the mend. Good luck to you, Jay. Bessie had called with the news, hoping it would not be too late to get in yesterday's issue and it almost made it.

I have a letter from my sister-in-law, Ercil, and a FAX from my daughter, Judy, and by the end of this week maybe I'll have enough for another issue of the paper.

It is another monotonously beautiful day here at the foot of Mt. Wheeler. Three or four days ago we got about 6 inches of snow which lasted about a day for it rained about half an inch and melted most of our snow. Higher up in the mountains, the rain became snow and the mountains are covered. The sun is just rising and the temperature is 17 degrees. That sounds cold but there is no wind and the air is so dry that even with only my undershirt on, I fed the birds with no discomfort.

I checked my tomatoes yesterday, and sure enough, if nothing happens they are on the way to a bumper crop. There are at least two dozen now, ranging in size from golf ball to match head and lots of blossoms.

Several times in the past I have asked Ercil, Margaret's sister, to write something about the kind of work she and Lester (White) do. Their home is in Lubbock, TX but they spend more time away than at home. They, together with many more retirees, go from place to place building churches or making repairs, etc. Here is her letter.

FROM ERCIL

"...We are in Harlingen, Texas at the Valley Baptist Academy. We were scheduled to begin work here on the 22nd of January so we arrived on the 20th. Only the "boss" and four men showed up to start work on a structure housing 4 classrooms. This academy was founded to fill the need for better-trained Christian leaders in the vast field of Hispanic-American missions. The academy is capable of taking care of more than 200 students, but every year students have to be turned away because there "is no more room at the inn". There are two dormitories; one for men, one for women. The classes are overcrowded, hence the new classrooms.

Lester and I have worked here every year but 1994 since the late 1970's. We have very dear friends on the staff, and although we cannot speak Spanish, we have learned to communicate with them and we love the students. We have stayed as long as 4 months and this time we will probably be here until sometime in April. I usually work in the library, but "fill in" wherever I am needed.

The Rio Grande Valley is an interesting place. Right now the luscious ruby red grapefruit and sweet Texas oranges are being harvested and friends keep us supplied. Many vegetables are

also being harvested now. Mexico is just across the Rio Grande so the Hispanic influences are strong on both sides of the river.

The population here swells during the winter when Texans from the cold northern parts choose the valley as an escape from the cold. Our friends in Lubbock tease us about coming here where it is warm. Not always. Some days the temperature will be in the 80's, then dip down to the 40's. Today it is misting and cold. Tuesday I was coming across to the trailer and one of those "blue northers" (that's what Mother and Dad called them) struck. The sky was dark, dark, beautiful blue, but when it hit it almost knocked me down. I just got inside when the rain came and for about 15 minutes it poured. The cold is still here. The men cannot work outside on the new chapel they started last Monday. The classrooms are finished except for the brick. Our group does not have a bricklayer. There are 17 trailers of people here to help build the chapel.

Another reason I deferred writing was because we were going to Houston to attend our granddaughter's wedding and I wanted to report it. We left Harlingen by plane on Friday morning for sister Judy's home. Keith, father of the bride, met us at the plane. He, Luann and Fonda were staying with us at Judy's and they had arrived early.

That night we all attended the rehearsal dinner. The wedding was at 10:00 AM on Saturday, the 25th of February in the Episcopal Church. It was a beautiful old historical church. The interior was all wood with huge beams that went up forty feet, Lester estimated. He also estimated the many windows at two feet wide and very high. They were of stained glass and very beautiful. The church was built in 1906, I think. The altar area took up about a third of the church. The groom's parents had been married in that church and that is why it was chosen. Shannon was a lovely bride.

The reception was in downtown Houston at the City Club and the traffic was horrendous. We followed the Bride and Groom's car, driven by Shannon's brother, Jeff. It was a wild ride. The reception was quite an affair, topped off by a waitress spilling an entire tray of orange juice and champagne all over Lester and me.

I called our beloved Mary Jean who was as perky as ever. Also talked to CP and Helen but neither of them were feeling very well. Judy had a racking cough, but being Judy and a great hostess, she had a lovely lunch ready. She had made Keith a banana pudding, his favorite, and had made a large container of brownies. Vicki, Margaret Ann, Kathy, and Kathy's daughter Stefani came. They had been stranded at the church because Kathy had lost the car keys, but they showed up in time to get to the sumptuous table before the food was taken away. (They found the keys in the grass.)

We left Houston at 2PM on Sunday, and Bud took Judy to the hospital. I called later and she had returned from the hospital. the doctors said she had bronchial pneumonia, and she was scheduled to return to the hospital the next day.

Love to all, Ercil.

LESTER, thanks for the donation.

DENA HOUSTON: Thanks for your letter and thanks so much for Nellie Goings' address. I have tried several times to get it but was never able to do so. Congratulations to your son, Jimmy on his job. He couldn't work for a better company than Wal-Mart.

I agree with you that springtime in the Ozarks is something to behold, redbud trees and dogwoods should be coming in soon.

* * * * *

Yesterday we received the following FAX from our daughter, Judy. I was going to send it exactly as I received it, but the FAX output does not repro very well so I am retyping it.

THE FAX

Dear Chronicle Family,

There is a wonderful advantage to having one's father publish a newspaper: An offspring can brag *ad nauseam* about the publisher's grandchild and no one will object because they are relatives too! (Plus, they are a captive audience.)

Well, we have another opportunity to brag about Brecken. Not only has she performed Bach in piano recitals, survived the wilds of Russia, China, and Turkey, pulled down straight A's in a world class independent high school, and will soon star in her high school's production of *Oklahoma*, but now she has distinguished the whole family by winning the Morehead Award. Allow me to explain.

John Motley Morehead III graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1891. In addition to becoming an engineer, inventor, author, scientist, and ambassador to Sweden, he made millions of dollars when he founded the Union Carbide Corporation.

In 1941 he left his money to the Morehead Foundation. Mr. Morehead's goal was to "draw to the University the most promising young people from across North Carolina and the nation". He greatly admired the Rhodes Trust at Oxford University and was inspired to emulate it on an undergraduate level.

Today, Morehead scholars are chosen on the following criteria: "moral force of character", leadership qualities, extracurricular achievement, scholastic ability, and physical vigor. The Morehead Awards were the first non-athletic merit scholarships to be granted in the United States.

Last week, Brecken was invited to Chapel Hill for four days of interviews, entertainment, and (yes) fraternity parties, all expenses paid. She competed for one of 50 scholarships with 120 finalists from all over the United States, Great Britain, and Canada. One cannot apply for the award; the student must be nominated by a high school which has been invited by the Morehead Foundation to nominate a student. Only three high schools in California may make nomina-

tions and the Foundation begins with more than a thousand nominees. Brecken flew home after a wonderful weekend and felt good about her interviews. (She loves to talk.) Only two days later, we learned that she had been selected to be a Morehead Scholar.

If she accepts the award, Brecken will receive four years of out of state tuition at UNC-Chapel Hill, room and board, travel, books, fees, even spending money and laundry expenses! The scholarship also provides for four summers of internships in the following fields: the first summer is an Outward Bound program of physical activity in hiking, canoeing, or sailing. The second summer, the Foundation funds a summer job related to community service. The third summer is spent working for a national corporation, and the summer before the senior year in college, the student is allowed to design a program anywhere in the world in order to promote the scholar's involvement in their major field of study. All expenses are paid by the Morehead Foundation during each summer's activity.

Now, why might Brecken not accept the award? Well, until she was nominated for the Morehead, she had her heart set on going to one of several Ivy League universities -- Yale, Williams, or Dartmouth. These prestigious schools still intrigue her. Until she learns where she has been accepted, we won't be able to predict her response.

For her parents, it is difficult not to see the dollar signs. College is a major investment for every family, yet we have saved diligently so that Brecken could attend the college of her choice. She has worked very hard her whole life to get into a major university and we want the final decision to be hers. We will report to the Chronicle family when she makes her choice..

[Congrats, Brecken. Being nominated by your class as the most deserving nominee was quite an honor, but to be selected as a Morehead Scholar is a real challenge and should assure your entrance to any university for graduate work. Love, PopPop]

I received a note from Judy telling me that maybe I should edit her FAX for it sounded too much like bragging. Well I decided not to edit it. After all, Brecken is my granddaughter and I am proud of her too. Her education has cost John and Judy a small fortune sending her to very strict and demanding private schools, but it is paying off. The Morehead is the ultimate under-graduate award in the United States and should she take it, it would assure her of entrance to any college she wished to attend for graduate school

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I don't know whether we can say it is spring or not, but everything around here is greening up. Our lawn is green and the hollyhocks are putting out leaves. This afternoon Marg came in and said, "Alright, come get him. He belongs to you so you will get him out of my way." I went with her, and there in the door way to the Quarters was one of the little snakes we encourage to stay around here to keep the mice away. I picked him up, and paddled his back side and explained how the *mater-familias* of this abode is afraid of snakes, and deposited him in a better place. Sure seems early for them to be stirring. Our last big snow came last year on the 29th of May.

Today we made the "enchanted circle" tour around Mount Wheeler. The trip is about 100 miles long and is indeed, enchanting. About two-thirds of the way around is an excellent restaurant where we always eat. Today we had a delicious cat-fish lunch, and there was so much of it we ate only an abbreviated dinner.

Margaret has been listening to a PBS station that is doing their promotion thing and for an hour they have been playing the Glen Miller music that was so popular when I was a DJ-Eng at KGHI in 40-42. Then one of the tunes was Sunrise Serenade which was the WVEZ theme song when I was Chief Engineer there in New Orleans for eleven years. Brought back many memories.

As I have mentioned before, I have been very busy digging up the chapters of *I Remember Lorine* which I guess could be called my

memoirs. They are scattered throughout my disks. I just recorded them when I was in the mood so they were like scraps that I had to put in some order.

TO NELLIE GOINGS : Do you remember me? Well I think we met only once and that was at Christmas in 1945, almost 50 years ago. In going through some old notes I kept in a diary for that year, I recorded that Mom, Dad, Dewel, Alma and I had dinner at your house. To be honest, I don't remember what you looked like, and I'm sure you don't remember me. I am putting you on the mailing list for the Chronicle and I hope you like it. Ever since I have been publishing it I have tried to get your address and now, thanks to Dena Houston, I have finally received it. Nelli, please let me know if you want to continue to receive it. Also, if you are interested in knowing about Paul's ancestry.

* * * * *

Margaret is a recycling nut -- as a matter of fact, I sometimes wonder if she has plans for recycling me. Our garage is full of 40-gallon plastic bags filled with all kinds of trash; tin cans in one, aluminum cans in another, plastic milk containers in another, etc., etc. And then there are the newspapers. We get two or three a day plus all the weekly and monthly stuff and all the catalogs and other junk. And she has statistics to back up her beliefs. For example, one ton of paper made from recycled paper saves 17 trees, 4,100 kilowatt-hours of electricity, 7000 gallons of water, and 3 cubic yards of landfill space. And of course plastics are made from oil so think how many gallons of oil could be saved if all the plastic containers could be salvaged.

I hope you find the attached story, *The Making of a Woman* interesting. I wouldn't want to describe the "making of a man", it is too gruesome, but there are other pretices that I may describe in the future. I would certainly like your comments.

Floods in California are awful. This means heavy growth of plant life, then more fires, then less protection, then more floods. El Nino is stillalive and doing its dirty work. Love, hcm.

THE MAKING OF A WOMAN

Prologue

This is a small excerpt from Chapter 13 of my Australian novel, *TJI*. The chapter is called, "Death, Burial, and Resurrection" and describes the preparation of a young girl after the first flow of blood at onset of menses. To the aboriginal inhabitants of Australia, this meant they were no longer girls but women.

But like all "Rites of Passage" among most peoples of the earth, there was a ceremony. It is the ceremony I want you to know about. It was on the day before the ceremony, that the flow of blood began and Yilpi's mother moved her outside the camp because no woman was allowed to remain in camp when her time had come. The mother had spent many days instructing her daughter in the many things she would need to know as a woman. Yilpi was about 13 years old though no record was kept and measurement of time did not include years. All day the mother had talked to the girl and at sundown she went to the camp to prepare food for her husband and to bring back food for her daughter.

Now I continue with the story from Chapter 13.

On the night of the ceremony, all things were as normal until shortly past sundown. The evening meals had been prepared by each man's wife, the children had gathered around the old storyteller of the tribe who told long and interesting stories about the Dreamtime when great animals lived on the great land about them, how the hills were formed by a giant kangaroo who stretched his hind legs while he slept and in so doing made a deep scratch in the earth; how the great stone ridge west of them toward the setting sun was once the backbone of a giant goanna; and how the rivers were made by the giant rainbow snake that had once crawled over the land but

was now a spirit that visited the land when it rained to show that he hadn't forgotten the people.

It was while the children were being entertained, and while the old men sat around the fire chewing their *mingkulpa* a short distance from the camp that there came a low moaning wail from the direction of Yilpi's *wiltja*. It was the wail of the mother, for when she had gone to take the girl her food, she was not there. As she went toward the camp, other women came to meet her and were told the sad news that her daughter was missing. Each ran to her own wurley and from the back of it she brought out a stick the end of which had been frayed by beating it with rocks. She held this end in the fire until it was flaming, then together the women began their search for the missing girl. If any of the children saw the activity of the women, they did not indicate it. The men did not so much as change the tempo of their speech. In camp nothing was known of the missing girl -- only the women knew.

Soon a dozen torches were held high above the shrubs and grasses as each woman ran hither and yon looking for the girl. Every bush was looked under and every stone large enough to hide a body was looked behind and every depression in which a person could hide was investigated and there was no sign of the girl. As the searchers went farther and farther from the camp, the wails of the mother became louder and louder. As time passed, one after another of the women joined the mother in her wailing but still there was no sign of the missing child.

Gradually they converged on an open area and there they saw her. Crumpled and limp she lay before them. The wailing stopped and the mother knelt beside her daughter and after a long time when only the distant birds broke the night's si-

THE MAKING OF A WOMAN

lence, she arose and said, "My child is dead."

Then the wailing began again, first as a low moan but getting louder and louder until the mother stamped her feet and held her torch high above her head. There was total silence.

"Bury her," she commanded and each woman set about the task of breaking small branches from the trees and laying them tenderly on the girl's body, naked except for the pad-holder. Then the women stuck their torches, which were now only glowing coals, into the soft ground around the girl's body and sat down to wait. There was no more wailing; only an occasional moan from the mother. From time to time she arose and went to the pile of branches and knelt beside it, then went back to her place in the circle and only the night wind could be heard.

Suddenly there was a rustling of leaves in the brush heap and all the women sprang to their feet and moved backward from it. The mother alone stood near and when the others asked what she saw, she replied that she had seen the spirit of a child rise above the heap and fly away. A low moan that grew into a wail came from the women, then silence.

Then the brushwood moved again, this time violently, and all the women rushed forward to see Yilpi standing before them completely naked, the pad-holder no longer in place. She was led from the brush-heap by her mother and introduced to each woman in turn as the mother said, "A new woman had been born tonight and this is the one." Each woman looked her over, touched her forehead, her chin and her navel to assure themselves that she was real -- not a ghost; then they danced the birth dance and lighted two fires of dried spinefex grass. Between the two fires Yilpi sat and as each woman gave her some small gift she touched the woman's feet with her two hands and said, "May the spirits of children settle with you this night". One of the gifts

was a dilly-bag, skillfully woven of reeds and grasses but still unpainted. She would paint it as she sat by the fireside with her husband. One gave her a necklace made of a string of human hair from which hung other short strings of the same with a bell-shaped seed of a gum tree attached to it. One gave her a yam stick, newly carved and freshly covered with oil from emu fat and needing only to have her burn her mark in squigly lines around each end.

When morning came, Yilpi went into the bush with the rest of the women to dig yams, collect grubs, harvest seeds, capture snakes and lizards, gather pieces of wood for the fire, and do the many other chores that women must do; thus Yilpi became a woman.

* * * * *

Did you find this interesting? I have learned many things about the Aborigines, and I would like to pass them on to you if you want me to do so. Write me and tell me and I will dig them out for fillers, when you don't write.

One of the Rangers there told me a funny tale. There is a place called "Honeymoon Gap" a few miles out of Alice Springs. It is really a gap, it looks like the mountain on either simply broke apart and now a stream flows through to place. A man was standing near the pool formed by the gap and talking to one of the Aborigine men. He asked how high the water got on the walls when they had a flood. They discussed the height as indicated by marks on the walls. Then the man asked what was the highest it had ever got and the Aborigine said that one time it got all the way to the top of the hill, completely over the top. These hills on either side are about 200 feet high and the man was astounded. He asked if any of the Aborigine's tribe had witnessed it. "No", came the answer. "Well where did you learn about it?" the white man asked. "From the missionary," the native replied. Of course "Noah's flood" didn't affect Australia, but if the missionary said so, the Aborigine thought it must be true.