

DECEMBER 6, 2010

Happenstance

life happens



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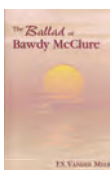
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Not Just Another Day is a series of daily reflections that celebrate the gift of life. Based on the author's Christian faith tradition the book uses Bible passages, prayers and readings to capture the common experience of living a life of faith in an ever-changing world.



In *Future Imperfect* conflicting forces control two individuals seeking stability and sanity amid escalating political and environmental chaos. Their lives are fraught with lies, treachery, and an altered environment.



In *The Ballad of Bawdy McClure* short hauler Jake Casey is confronted with the age old question: Who can you trust? From the opening scene in which he finds the body of his murdered friend to the end he is constantly questioning the motives of those closest to him.



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Happenstance
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Jan. 3, 2011 Issue • Call for Content

- Poetry and Essays
- Short Fiction or Memoirs about the New Year, resolutions kept or broken, or 'beginnings'
 - Artist Feature (Suggest a person you would like to see featured or submit an article)
 - Book and Entertainment Reviews

Happenstance, Life Happens

614 8th Street • PO Box 187 • Las Vegas, NM 87701

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Happenstance

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Photos

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Essays

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Opinions

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All comments will be appreciated and
considered. Happenstance is intended to appeal to a
wide range of readers. Material will be selected based
on general appeal to a wide readership, with a focus on
Las Vegas, NM, and the area.

Thank you for reading Happenstance.

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Happenstance

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Copy Editor: Sally Hanson

From the editor...

Thank you, Sally Hanson! Most people don't pay attention to mastheads, so you may not have seen the addition of Sally Hanson as copy editor. No, she and Gabe have not moved back to Las Vegas (darn!), but Sally has agreed to do copy editing for *Happenstance*. She's doing this gratis. At first I didn't want to take advantage of our friendship, but she said she wanted to do it, and I also saw (after the fact in previous issues) that the magazine was in desperate need of a great copy editor.

I'm not good at remembering when things happened in my life, but I met Sally when I had the *Hermit's Peak Gazette*, which would have been in 1998. I can't even remember why she came by the office, but I talked her into writing articles for the *Gazette* at a VERY nominal rate, and we've been fast friends ever since.

Sally notices when I write "whose" (possessive) when it should have been "who's" (as in "who is") and a gazillion other examples of careless writing. I'm great with words—commas, colons, semi-colons and periods, not so much. I've been known to create one sentence whose point would have been better served had I broken it up into three or four sentences. Sally's great at catching things like that and fearless in pointing out the error of my ways. I love it! Writers who think their work is so precious it can't be improved upon by good editing are living under a cloud of acid indifference that affects quality.

Sally will copy edit everything that comes in. I hope you will see fewer typos, grammatical boo-boos, and misplaced—or plain wrong—punctuation.

Thanks as well to the writers (past and present) who submit work. What a gift! Kim Delgado's personal essays are charming and heartwarming. Kathy Allen's delightful stories and recipes are a treat. Cindy Charlton's life story is inspiring. That she is willing to share that with *Happenstance* readers is an honor. Karen Topping's fitness articles are a refreshing look at a subject often distorted by expectations of perfection, rather than sensible and healthy living. Nancy Colalillo's voice is powerful and passionate. I always appreciate her input. In this issue you will be introduced to Steven Fivecats, whose honesty and style make you fall in love with poetry, a much-maligned and misunderstood medium of expression.

And of course there are articles written by me. The story about Lena Atencio is a reminder that when you follow your ideas you can create something new and interesting. Caroline Rackley is an amazing entrepreneur who is using her talents to bring theatre arts to children. Nancy Philo is a wonderful artist who is taking an entrepreneurial approach to mass marketing her art in innovative ways. What I know about geothermal energy could fill a library, but Jeff Salman and Jordan Grimm brought the mind-boggling concepts down to scale, enabling me to tell two very different stories about an exciting technology that will revolutionize how people think about heating and cooling their homes and businesses.

I hope you enjoy December's issue as much as I enjoyed putting it together. Merry Christmas and have a blessed and happy New Year.

—Sharon Vander Meer
Editor and Publisher

Digital to web; what is in the future for Happenstance

Technically challenged though I am I'm diving head first into recreating *Happenstance* as a web magazine, eliminating the need for you to download or print twenty or more pages to get the one thing you want. I will continue to do *Happenstance* as a magazine style PDF, but hope to have it available as a website magazine as well.

Why? The benefit is that you can pick and choose what you want to read, although I just KNOW you want to read everything, and selectively print articles you want to keep or share. Articles will be archived so you can retrieve them by title.

Since I'm unprepared to invest in a professional web designer I'm doing this through Intuit Websites, a resource for the web novice who doesn't know an html code from a social security number. Their customer service and tech help is phenomenal. I created my www.vandermeerbooks.com website through them, and while it is far from perfect, it serves the purpose for which it is intended.

Another feature of web publishing is the ability to add non-traditional content, like videos. I'm a long way from getting there, but the point is that being on the web expands the possibilities for *Happenstance*. As with any publication, readership is the name of the game.

Happenstance as a website magazine makes sense. Content is relevant, interesting and entertaining. Yes, I know *Happenstance* can't be all things to all people. Yes, I know there is a "target" audience I should be aiming for. But guess what? I'm sixty-six and *Happenstance* is my celebration of life. I'm going to enjoy it as much as I can for as long as I can. I hope you will come along and enjoy it with me.

Another choice I've made is NOT to sell advertising. The only ads will be for my books in print, and digital books I publish through *Happenstance*, such as Kathy Allen's cookbook, *Someone's in the Kitchen*, and my latest novel, *Tiger Lilly*. I do hope to make money on the website—through national rather than local advertising—which is why building readership and web hits is so critical.

▼ ▼ ▼
My hope was to get story ideas, new contributors, and input that would improve the publication. I got valuable technical and production ideas.
▲ ▲ ▲

Readers have asked me if they have to subscribe, and the answer is no. *Happenstance* is free. Sponsorships in any amount are welcome. With permission sponsors will be listed by name in a sponsorship section.

Making money isn't the reason I'm publishing *Happenstance*. I love to write and I love to share the work of other writers and creative people. *Happenstance* isn't *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair* or *Redbook*, but I firmly believe it offers a unique perspective on life, and is an additional opportunity for writers, photographers, and cartoonists to get their work published. Having income will allow me to pay contributors and editors so the content and quality of writing is top of the line.

I won't take all material that is submitted, but I'm pretty open to all kinds of submissions that are not erotica or offensive in terms of language or content, and yes, I get to decide what is offensive. I don't use press releases but welcome them as a springboard for original story ideas.

I want to thank my friends Sandy Poppers, Nancy Philo and Karyl Lyne for helping me envision a more accessible *Happenstance*. They joined me for what I hope will be the first of a series of monthly coffees dedicated to exploring ways to make the magazine better. Although the get-together was designed to improve *Happenstance*, it proved to be beneficial to everyone present. My hope was to get story ideas, new contributors, and input that would improve the publication. I got valuable technical and production ideas, and leads to help me expand distribution. The others got a few ideas they could apply to what they're doing. With that in mind, future coffees will be open networking opportunities for all who attend. I'm confident story ideas will emerge in the process.

The next gathering will be an Open House at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 16, in the *Happenstance* office at 614 8th Street. Refreshments in the spirit of Christmas will be provided. Please e-mail fsharon@msn.com if you plan to attend so there will be ample food.

—Sharon Vander Meer

A Christmas Memory: Sometimes You Just Have to Speak Up!

"I must have been very hungry or impatient that the grownups were still at the table enjoying their Christmas dinner, because I got away from Lupe and ran into the kitchen."

Growing up in the 1940s, I was taught that children were to be seen and not heard. According to my mother, I was known for breaking this rule and embarrassing her with my unsolicited remarks.

One Christmas Day at my grandma's house during dinner with a table full of grownups, I marched in and made a comment loud and clear. I personally don't think it was bad; I was merely making a statement about a very important observation. Before I tell you what I said, I need to set the background.

My grandparents, Hilario and Silvianita Delgado, had a two-story house off of Hot Springs Boulevard, between Delgado and Bernalillo streets. This property is now occupied by public housing. They had many relatives from the surrounding area and it seemed like they always had company staying over.

The reason for this was lack of transportation. Many people did not own vehicles so they had to arrange trips with neighbors. When people came into town to do their business it wasn't done in one day. It was customary to stay with relatives and contribute produce, firewood, meat or whatever else they could as a means of paying for their stay. This method of helping each other preserved everyone's self-esteem.

My parents and I had moved into town sometime in 1946 and rented a couple of rooms from Francisco and Reyneta Sandoval, who had a large house at the corner of Santa Fe



COURTESY PHOTO KIM DELGADO

Kim and her mom, 1947

and Church streets. I attended the first and second grades at North Public School, which was located in the same area. My grandparents' home was only a few blocks away.

My grandfather had passed away but my grandma had a daughter and her children living with her. Many of my cousins and I grew up together and of course Grandma's house was the center of our lives, especially during Christmas.

On the big day children each received a small paper bag full of hard candy, an apple or orange, plus nuts and peanuts and that was it! Whenever parents could afford it they may have included a toy, but I think they hesitated if it wasn't possible to include every child. I don't recall the adults exchanging gifts, aside from sharing homemade pastries, jellies and the like. I know the men folk shared their liquor and cigars outside because my grandma didn't allow drinking in the house.

My cousins and I played outside weather permitting, or inside in the *zaguan* (vestibule). My oldest cousin, Lupe, was in charge of keeping an eye on the rest of us and she took her responsibility seriously.

My grandmother's kitchen was large and she had a long table with many chairs and benches that could probably accommodate fifteen people. It was in this setting that I spoke up. I must have been very hungry or impatient that the grownups were still at the table enjoying their Christmas dinner, because I got away from Lupe and ran into the kitchen. When Lupe caught up to me and tried to take me back, I protested loudly.

"But Lupe, look, they're not going to leave us any cake!"

Obviously, my only concern was dessert, which represented justice and equality for all, wouldn't you agree?

I can't recall how my mother handled this particular incident; however, to this day Lupe reminds me that I was always the outspoken one in the bunch. She is too kind to say I was a loud mouth, but she does hint at the fact that I was a bit spoiled.

—Kim Delgado often writes for the *Optic* and also wrote for *La Herencia*. She may be reached at clancydelgado@q.com or 425-9677.

Christmas Magic

Article by
Cindy Charlton

A family project brings Christmas to life and gives to those in need



Christmas was always much anticipated and loved by my family. My parents made every moment of Christmas Day special. Dad and Mom, on very limited sleep, would wait in anticipation listening for the whispers and squeals of delight from their three little girls discovering the magic, which was meticulously laid underneath the tree by Santa. My sisters and I were never in bed later than five o'clock Christmas morning. My mother had been up just an hour earlier stuffing the bird, and putting it in the oven for Christmas dinner. It was promptly served at noon, as dictated by my paternal Grandfather. My dad, having assembled doll buggies and cradles for me, and gas stations and car tracks for my tomboy sister Lora, had most likely gone to bed right before my mother emerged.

Sleep never came early or easy on Christmas Eve. But as soon as there was a hint of the sunrise, we would urge our parents to get up from bed so we could get on with our day's activities. My mother would hop up to put on the much needed coffee, and my dad would linger in bed just long enough to hear the complaints and grumbles from his children. He knew the value of delicious anticipation. Presents could not be unwrapped before breakfast, and breakfast could not be eaten until the grandparents, my dad's parents, arrived.

Dad was always the breakfast chef on Christmas morning. He could whip up a batch of homemade pancakes like none other I've tasted since. On any other day of the year, they were anticipated with enthusiasm, and devoured as they came off the griddle, but not on Christmas morning. My sisters and I had already eaten the contents of our Christmas stockings. The apple, the orange, and the green and red ribbon shaped Christmas candies, combined with excitement, did not lend itself to an appetite.

We had to wait for Grandpa and Grandma to arrive, which took an eternity. In reality, it probably took less than a half hour. My dad singing Christmas carols in a key that was not yet discovered by the music community, while flipping

pancakes, brought much entertainment to us all. We would never admit it though, because grouching about how long we had to wait before tearing into our presents was all part of the game. My grandparents' arrival would bring the festivities to their heightened state, and the energy in our small three bedroom ranch style home was electric. By Christmas night, my poor mother looked like she had run a marathon, but my dad, ever the life of the party, was on the floor having a tea party with the new dolls, while simultaneously racing cars. It was glorious!

I have wanted to recreate that feeling of exalted joy and fun for my children, but I have come to realize the impossibility of this task. My parents were amazing people, and had the ability to make magic. I'm simply not that talented. As my family has matured the allure of the gift laden Christmas tree is something of the past. The magical Christmases of yesteryear are precious memories stored within my heart. Nonetheless, I keep trying to make Christmas special to all who reside within my home, my heart, and my community.

Last year, my kids and I decided to do something meaningful for the holidays. Instead of over spending on gifts for family and friends, we made a plan to stuff stockings for the homeless folks out on the street corners. Here in the Denver Metro area, there are many, many people in need. I asked my friends and family to donate gently used Christmas stockings, and personal use items, such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, lotion, lip balm and like items to go into those stockings. We added candy canes—what's a stocking without a candy cane—as the finishing touch. My intent was to make twenty-five stockings to hand out to the people on the streets.

Much to my amazement, our little project grew, and eighty-three stockings were stuffed to the brim. My house was bursting at the seams with Christmas music and Santa's Helpers stuffing those stockings. Adults and kids alike were joyous in their work, and most everyone couldn't wait to take their stockings to give. Watching this group of people come together to create a project of giving was more than I could have hoped for, but I had only seen the tip of that proverbial iceberg.

The very next day one of my friends called. She had just given out her first stocking, less than twenty-four hours after it was made.

— SEE CHRISTMAS ON PAGE 23—

Hot idea: A fashion statement constructed from recycled materials

“Fair trade provides the framework for empowering the disadvantaged of the world to make a fair living and provide for themselves and their families.”

—From the MYO Accessories label

Lena Atencio has all the ingredients of a successful entrepreneur: management skills, high intelligence, remarkable flexibility, and a clear understanding of business principles. Like many full-time moms she puts these skills to work as a homemaker, and is happy to do it. Before Genavese (now three months old) came along, she tried a little bit of everything.

“I worked in a post office, at a tree farm, operated an embroidery machine to personalize garments and other items, worked in a flora shop, drove trucks, and was a veterinarian’s assistant.”

Little of this experience is related to her degree in animal science from New Mexico State University, though it is somewhat related to her minors in horticulture and agricultural economics. An alumna of the county 4-H program, Lena is an independent thinker who enjoys trying new things.

Despite her obvious inclination toward entrepreneurship, her role as full-time mother remains her primary focus. “It’s the greatest job I’ve ever had,” Lena said.

While she intends to devote her energies to being Mom, she also has time to try new things. Through a series of circumstances she came upon an opportunity to make extra cash by working from home. Her newest endeavor, selling fair trade handbags, is fulfilling in many ways.

“It’s green because it uses materials that would otherwise be trashed and go into a landfill somewhere,” Lena said. “The best part is that it helps women stay home and raise their kids and still be able to make money.”



Lena Atencio models one of the candy wrappers purses in her line of fair trade accessories. Gårbåge Bags, the name of Lena’s business, is part of a growing green industry that helps low income families achieve independence.

Lena is confident her product has broad appeal based on people’s reactions to a fair trade bag she bought in Mexico.

“We were in Mexico for Christmas last year and I wanted to have a clutch type bag to carry my stuff in rather than a big purse. I found a candy wrapper bag in a shop and it turned out to be just what I wanted,” she said.

“After I got back I found that everywhere I went people wanted to know where I got my purse. People were literally stopping me in stores, in airports, everywhere. It has great eye appeal because it is so colorful.”

When she was traveling on the east coast she had similar experiences that further strengthened her confidence in the product.

“I have something I know people want,” Lena said. “Now I’m developing my market.”

Gårbåge Bags, the name of Lena’s business, includes various items created from recycled materials. In addition to the candy wrapper purses, she has a selection of pop-top bags, and totes made

from recycled tires.

From a distance the pop-top bag looks as though it is constructed of woven silver strips. On closer inspection the pop-tops are evident, but by no means unattractive. The bags are appropriate for various seasons and occasions, small and easy to carry.

“I’m not one to change purses all the time,” Lena said. “I’ve carried my candy wrapper purse regularly for nearly a year, and there is hardly any wear.”

Product is green and gorgeous

The bags start at around \$15 with the top price for the larger bags in the \$40 to \$60 range.

“What I like about the product, aside from it being an attractive fashion statement, is that it helps women in disad-

vantaged areas contribute to their family income while working from home. In the process the country where the purses are made is educating people about recycling. It seemed like a win-win for me; I could earn money from home, support an industry that’s helping the environment, and be with my baby.”

When Lena purchased her candy wrapper purse in Mexico nearly a year ago, she thought it was a throwaway item she could use short term, and then get rid of. Instead it has led to a business she and husband Aaron feel is the right fit for their life style.

Fair trade products are available from countries around the world and include clothing, accessories and foods. Lena’s stock comes from Mexico where the artisans are from indigenous groups whose poverty has stifled opportunity. MYO Accessories—her inventory source—offers women employment, allows them to improve their quality of life, and provides a much-needed income. Fair trade means artisans are paid a fair price in advance for their products.

Lena’s inventory is imported and distributed by Global Crafts, a member of the Fair Trade Federation and IFAT (International Federation for Alternative Trade).

For more information about Garbàge Bags check out www.garbagehandbags.com, or contact Lena at 454-0572, or by e-mail at lana.atencio@yahoo.com. She also has the purses available for sale at Shear Heaven, 824 Mills, and Hair Innovation, 521 Douglas Ave.

—Story and photos by Sharon Vander Meer



These unique handbags are well-constructed and attractive accessories that use recycled materials including pop-top tabs from aluminum cans and candy wrappers.

Fair Trade Food Products Available Locally

Fair trade food products are becoming common across the country as more people elect to support initiatives that allow growers to benefit directly from their work. In Las Vegas, N.M., Karen Topping conducts “store” hours at the First United Presbyterian Church during fellowship on Sunday morning, following worship. Products available for purchase include Café Justo (Just Coffee), and fair trade tea, cocoa and chocolate bars. The products are sold at cost and may be ordered by calling Karen at 617-5315.

Equal Exchange, a fair trade co-op, started in 1986. Organizers set out to affect social change that would help farm-

ers and their families gain control over their economic future, educate consumers about trade issues affecting farmers, provide quality foods, and be controlled by people who did the actual work. According to its website, Equal Exchange is dedicated to honesty, respect, and the promise that all participants benefit mutually. By 1994 Equal Exchange was a worker-owned cooperative with twenty members, and a growing number of outside investors.

While early focus was on coffee, tea seemed to be a natural add on product. To that end Equal Exchange worked with small-scale tea farmers from India, Sri Lanka, and South Africa.

In 2001 a hot cocoa mix was introduced that was the result of collaboration between cocoa, sugar, and dairy cooperatives. A year after successfully launching the hot cocoa mix, Equal Exchange added baking cocoa powder. Three years later fair trade chocolate bars were introduced which meant using ingredients from around the world.

To learn more about Just Coffee/Café Justo and Equal Exchange visit their websites www.justcoffee.org and www.equalexchange.com.



Tips for Handling Holiday Eating

Here come the holidays... Those four little words are enough to make me apprehensive. Any of us who are “trying to be good” recognize that not only is money getting tighter, our pants are headed in the same direction.

Believe it or not, it is quite common for people to gain five to seven pounds during this time of year. And if you’re already trying to lose weight or lower your cholesterol, the thought of having taken two steps forward while looking at ten steps backward is not a happy one. I can just look at a holiday buffet or potluck and hear those fat cells puckering up. The temptation is so great you think your only choices are to throw in the towel and start over again in January, or just barricade yourself in your room with your veggies and whole grains until it’s all over. It would seem we’re locked in weight gain hell. Food is everywhere and most of it unhealthy and irresistible.

Don’t despair. This year can be different. Tips for handling holiday buffets start with one of the best: don’t skip meals, and yes, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Thinking “well I won’t eat breakfast because we have that holiday potluck at noon” or “I won’t eat anything all day so I’ll have plenty of room for that dinner at three o’clock, starting with appetizers” is only going to backfire. You’ll hit the table ready to devour everything in sight!

Another tip—even though it seems you’re only trying to fool yourself—is to use a small plate. You really will take less of each of those delightful treats if there’s only so much room on the plate.

Ok, you’ve got your small plate loaded up with goodies and you haven’t starved yourself all morning so you can eat slowly.

Eat.

Slowly.

Those words don’t seem to be in my vocabulary, but I promise I’ll try. Enjoy each mouthful. Savor the food, don’t just inhale it.

Another valuable tip, don’t waste calories on foods you can have any time. So I’ll just see you at the dessert table, okay? Oh, and be sure to watch out for those liquid calories. Beer, wine, eggnog, it all adds up. Right, coffee, tea and water sound so much better! But wait, I thought I was supposed to avoid things I can have anytime? Just kidding... I get it.



Karen Topping

Seriously though, the all-or-nothing mindset sets you up to fail. Depriving yourself or feeling guilty doesn’t work. Try following the tips outlined here and enjoy yourself.

It’s a festive time of year; gatherings and get-togethers all equal busy, and busy usually means that exercise is the first thing we give up. Magazine articles preaching “maintain your weight” start popping up, and certainly maintaining is better than gaining. Studies show you can maintain muscle by doing one to two strength-training sessions a week. Try to be physically active every day. Thirty minutes of physical activity on five plus days of the week can help keep your weight at a healthy level. Something is better than nothing; even ten minutes at a time is good.

In case those options simply do nothing for you, help is available in the form of several different gimmicks. According to Janice Taylor, renowned “Our Lady of Weight Loss,” you can take a freezing cold shower to boost your metabolism, thereby burning those extra calories. I don’t know about you but the small plate and water idea is sounding good right now.

Another avenue you can follow would be to go online and buy a pair of “freeze fat shorts.” They sell for somewhere in the vicinity of \$80 to \$100 and they look like bike shorts with a bunch of little pockets where you can tuck in little ice packs to freeze your fat away. They’re kind of pricey, and might get a little bulky and damp under your fancy clothes.

And finally... the FDA has given the green light for two new weight loss treatments: one that freezes fat cells and another that uses a low-energy laser to shrink them. So if you gain those few annoying extra pounds Zeltiq may be the answer. It uses a gel patch attached to a machine that freezes unwanted fat cells, causing them to self-destruct and get re-absorbed into the body over several months. But guess what folks? Doctors say it won’t replace diet and exercise, so for this holiday season go back to the basics: don’t skip meals; use a small plate; eat slowly and savor your food; avoid wasting calories on foods you can eat any time; watch out for liquid calories; get in a little exercise.

Happy Holidays, everyone! And if anyone DOES try those shorts, let me know how they work.

—Karen Topping has a BA in Health Promotion and Wellness and is a certified health and fitness instructor.

It's Okay to Have These Mice in the Kitchen

A treat for kids of all ages and fun to do

I have made Church Mice throughout the years. They're always fun to make and a hit with both children and adults. One of my kids from Sunday School refused to sample her mice and her mother finally threw them away—in April.

Gene Terry shared this idea with me. I have tried to give precise instructions here, but you will probably, with a little practice, come up with more efficient ways of making these little guys. I've used almond kisses, white chocolate as well as milk and dark for the dipping, and "hugs" kisses which are white with milk chocolate spirals. I prefer an all brown mouse.

The secret in making these little critters is to have everything ready before you start the procedure. With that in mind, decide how many mice you want to make at one time (25 will take 45 minutes or so.)

What you will need:

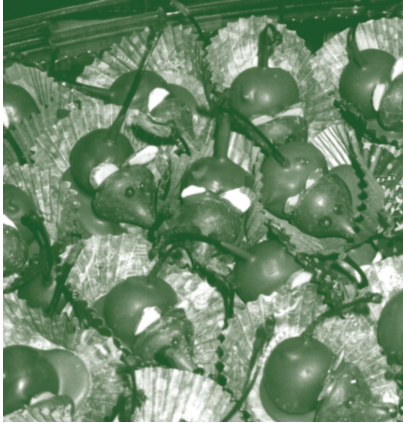
- Hershey's Kisses or Hugs
- Jar of maraschino cherries with stems
- Sliced almonds (for the ears)
- 1 tube each of red and green gel icing
- Chocolate dipping wafers or chocolate almond bark cubes

Unwrap the appropriate number of Hershey's Kisses or Hugs. Set aside.

Remove the same number of maraschino cherries (with stems) from jar and set aside in colander or strainer to DRAIN WELL.

On waxed paper or small cookie sheet arrange pairs of sliced almonds. These will be the ears. Usually I cut the full slices in half—or more—to make ears proportionate to the head (kiss). The red and green gel icing is located in the baking section of the supermarket—with the birthday candles.

In bottom pan of double boiler, bring water to boil. Remove from heat and place top pan over water. Add chocolate dipping wafers or chocolate almond bark cubes. Stir as chocolate melts. You may have to intermittently place pan containing water over heat throughout your mouse making to keep chocolate smooth and thin enough for dipping; 3 or 4 cubes will work for about 25 cherries (mouse body). I usu-



ally start by melting just two or three cubes and melt more as needed. NOTE: DO NOT LET WATER GET INTO CHOCOLATE. I dry off the maraschino cherries a little with paper towels or place them on several layers of paper towels after they have been allowed to drain. Don't press too hard or juice in cherry will be lost. Just get the liquid off the outside of cherry.

Place a large piece of waxed paper on working area. Now you're ready. This isn't difficult. I have made these with my

Sunday School class as well as with a young neighbor. You can too!

Grasp maraschino cherry by stem. Dip into melted chocolate. Make sure chocolate covers the entire cherry (not the stem). Let extra chocolate drip off bottom of cherry as you hold it by the stem. Place covered cherry onto waxed paper. The stem makes the mouse's tail so you choose which direction you want it to go. Press a candy kiss onto cherry to form the head. The tip of the kiss should be placed to form the nose. You may have to hold the kiss for a few seconds while the chocolate sets up a little. Carefully slide a pair of almond slices between the cherry and the kiss.

Let set while you continue to dip cherries and attach heads. Make eyes and nose by placing 2 drops of green gel icing on kiss as eyes and a drop of red gel on tip of kiss as the nose. I then place each mouse in its own little paper candy cup.

You're done!

This is a fun thing to do with a friend or your kids. You dip and let them add the candy kiss and the ears and eyes.

—This recipe is from *Someone's in the Kitchen*, a compilation of recipes from Kathy Allen. The cookbook is available from Happenstance as a digital file on CD or as a PDF e-mailed directly to you. The beauty of electronic cookbooks is that you can print out recipes as you need them and you don't have to find shelf space for book storage. For more information call 505 617-0839 or e-mail fsharon@msn.com.



Going Green: Alternative Energy in a Residential Setting

“I wanted to show the community this can be done. Being energy conscious, using other green technologies, conserving and harvesting water, these all make sense and can be done sensibly.”

—Jeff Salman, homeowner

Article by Sharon Vander Meer

Photo by Jeff Salman

According to www.geothermalgenius.org, a geothermal system uses the earth as a free-heat source. The heat from the ground is captured by a series of underground polyethylene pipes called a ground loop. “As a water/anti-freeze solution circulates through the pipes,” the site states, “heat is transferred to and from the home. (You can) kiss the (fuel) company goodbye.”

Kissing the fuel company goodbye was just one of the selling points for Jeff and Juli Salman when they elected to go with geothermal as a source for heating and cooling their new home, but it wasn't an easy decision to make. In Las Vegas geothermal options are untried. Theirs is one of only two residences in San Miguel County using this technology, both installed by Dahl Plumbing of Santa Fe.

“Using the earth's heat has been done for a long time in Europe and Canada. I wanted to be greener and had experience with solar,” Jeff said. “But the design of solar is more time consuming. I'd read about geothermal and researched it. It seemed like a good fit for our area.”

He said the beauty of the system is that it has the capability of tying into a solar powered generator, which means his home could be completely off the traditional power grid.

Despite the cost of installing the system, Jeff feels confident it was a wise decision. “There are federal tax credits and savings on energy costs overall,” he said. “Alternative energy tax credits can be applied to 30 percent of the system's cost. That was appealing to us, because this kind of system is more expensive. Fortunately there is no ceiling on what you can apply the tax credit to in terms of the cost of the system.”

While the Salmans haven't been in their home long enough to know for certain, data shows that earth source heat pumps result in a 30 percent drop in electrical costs, and they won't need propane at all. Between the tax credits and



During construction of the Salman home a well driller was at work sinking boreholes for the closed vertical loop system that provides energy to keep a year around comfortable temperature inside the residence.

energy savings, the nearly \$45,000 system will pay for itself within eight years.

According to Joanne Pena of Dahl Plumbing, the installation is a closed loop system, considered to be the most efficient for a home the size of the Salmans.

She said every project is different, and the company determines the type of system to install based somewhat on the type of soil in the well field. Other considerations are the size of the home or business and whether it will be a heating and cooling system or just a heating system.

“In Mr. Salman's case there were alluvium deposits beneath the surface,” she said. “Alluvium has some conductivity, but not the best as compared to granite and water, but it still can be used. We drilled 200 feet to obtain the 55-degree temperature needed to service the heat pump, which boosts

— SEE SALMAN ON PAGE 19 —

Going Green on a Grand Scale

NMHU is employing strategies to improve the environment and cut costs

*Article by Sharon Vander Meer
Image Courtesy of NMHU*

Jorden Grimm, Capital Projects and Operations Manager at New Mexico Highlands University, is understandably proud of the new student union center currently under construction. It is full of cutting edge technology that will benefit students, faculty, and the environment.

Gov. Bill Richardson has mandated that state facilities be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified, an ecology-oriented building certification program that concentrates on improving performance across five key areas of environmental and human health: energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality, materials selection, sustainable site development and water savings.

"The student union building will be LEED Silver," Jorden said, "maybe LEED Gold. The front has solarized and motorized sunshades that take advantage of the sun's energy throughout the day. Highlands is the first place this has been done in the U.S."

Jorden quickly goes through the summarized plans for the building, pointing out the different spaces and what each will be used for.

"We are making every effort to increase sustainability and reduce use of electricity. There are light sensors in rooms, low flow toilets, and LED lighting to offset energy costs. Earth source energy will heat and cool our whole building," he said.

Like the Jeff Salzman residence, Highlands' geo-exchange system will be a closed loop vertical installation, but on a much grander scale. The field will contain ninety-six four-inch boreholes, sunk four hundred feet deep and twenty feet apart. The field will be located under the Newman Center parking lot, which will later be paved over.

"That's the beauty of earth source heat, it can be put anywhere," Jorden said. "Under parking lots, under streets, anywhere you don't mind digging up if you have to do maintenance."



Architech's rendering of the exterior of the student center, currently under construction. Earth source heat will provide the energy to heat and cool the building.

Earth source heat, he clarified, is the more correct term for what many refer to as geothermal. "When people talk about geothermal they usually mean geo-exchange. Geothermal is when you tap into an underground water source; this is taking heat from the ground, not from water."

Jorden moves on to other earth-friendly initiatives the university is employing, including recycling and its 850,000-gallon water harvesting underground storage tank.

Yes, he says, it's about being environmentally responsible, but going green is also a cost saving strategy.

"Our biggest operations expense is utilities. When we did a cost/benefit analysis in the course of designing the building, a heat source pump made the most sense because of efficiency and reduced energy costs. Most systems take outside air and heat it and cool it. That's not efficient for what we want to do. It takes less energy to heat or cool from a starting point of sixty-five degrees (the ambient temperature of the earth year-round) rather than whatever the temperature is outside. If the outside temperature is below freezing the cost of energy to heat it to a comfortable temperature will be higher. The same is true in summer when chillers kick in to bring the above seventy-five degree temperatures outside to a comfortable level inside.

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Nancy Philo: Artist and Entrepreneur

Hyperbole Gallery & Design Embraces E-Commerce

Article by Sharon Vander Meer
Art photos used by permission of the artist

I've always been good at reinventing myself," said Nancy Philo in a recent interview about her newest venture. "I've had so many careers, I just feel this is probably a logical culmination. I'm putting my love of cooking and love of home décor together. I'm very *very* home based. It means a lot to me to surround myself with beauty and with things that have meaning for me. It's logical to use these abilities to enhance other people's environment."

Nancy, a business-savvy artist, is translating her original paintings and illustrations into a product line for use in the home. These affordable functional objects—tempered glass cutting boards, cork-backed coaster sets, calendars, and porcelain ornaments—have been added to her line of greeting cards.

She came to this new venture in a round about way. A friend of a friend had installed a tile mural of horses in her kitchen. When Nancy's friend admired it the homeowner said, "This is something Nancy should think about doing."

It was a practical idea that came at an opportune time in her life. Nancy followed up with a phone call to the company that created the tiles for the mural.

"These are two women in Arizona who work with artists," Nancy said. "After talking to them I found they had other product lines besides the tiles that might fit with what I wanted." All she had to do was send a digital image of her art and the company would put it on whatever surface suited her needs.

"I was okay with some of the ideas, ornaments and coasters, but at first I wasn't interested in the tempered glass cutting boards. I just didn't think they would hold up. But I have to tell you," Nancy laughs. "These women are wild. The one

I was talking to said, 'Wait just a minute, I'll show you.' She put down the phone and in a few seconds I heard this thud and then bounce, bounce, bounce. She came back on the line and said, 'I threw the biggest one against a solid adobe wall and it didn't break. I'll send you one and you can try it for yourself.'" Nancy was convinced. She now has the cutting boards in her product line.



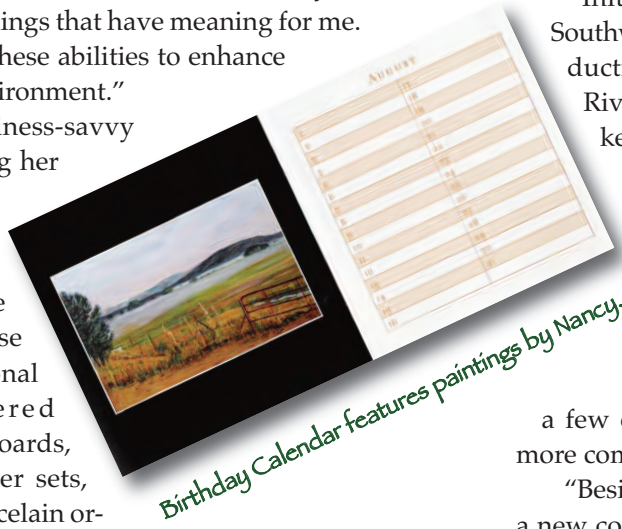
Nancy Philo

Initially she was sending her Southwest themed images for reproduction on the products—horses, local scenes, Pecos River scenes—until she started thinking about her market.

"I wanted to broaden this into a more widespread e-commerce business, so I started looking into my older work from the East Coast. Now I have items with New England images and California wine country scenes, as well as the Southwest line."

As with any new business, Nancy has met with a few challenges and expenses, among them becoming more computer and Internet savvy.

"Besides building an inventory of products, I invested in a new computer, upgraded my website, and added a shopping cart. This has all been more complicated than I thought



Birthdays Calendar features paintings by Nancy.



Las Vegas scenes like this painting of Estella's Cafe are favorite subjects for Nancy.

Watercolor and acrylic on canvas are this artist's media of choice, but she is expanding her marketplace and wants to be in fifty galleries by June 2011

when I started, but I'm getting there!"

Watercolor and acrylic on canvas are Nancy's media of choice. She is expanding her marketplace by getting her work into shops across the country, and already has parts of her product line at Tome on the Range in Las Vegas.

"My goal is to be in at least fifty galleries and stores by June of next year. That's a self-imposed goal. I've already signed on shops in the state and a few in New England. I'm working with a statewide greeting card rep who works on commission. It isn't best use of my time to drive all over the place when I have someone like Cherie Neumann who does this for a living.

"It's really important to have a good network. For overall quality and professionalism I've found people I can trust and work with, like Cherie, Paper Tiger in Santa Fe, and these won-

derful women in Arizona. I'm pleased to say that all my products are not only made in the USA, they're made in the Southwest."

Her business is largely wholesale, but she does do retail through her website, www.nancyphilo.com. One of her signature offerings is a colorful birthday registry that she said came out of necessity.

"I love sending cards, but I don't always remember birthdays. My grandmother had a birthday registry that I always consulted when I was home. I thought it was something people could really use."

The monthly calendar has Nancy's original painting on one page and a listing space for dates and names on the facing page. It's small enough to carry or attractive enough to leave on your desk. The calendar retails for \$14.95.

Nancy continues to add to her portfolio of artistic images, and she shares her skills by giving classes. A seven-week watercolor class is scheduled for January. In the future she's considering translating her designs to fabric, such as bedspreads, linens and other home decorating items, but for now she's happy doing what she's doing.

"It's wonderful to be thinking about my work in a broader sense. On the other hand, I don't just paint what I feel like; I think about whether it will sell."

Nancy's focus for now is optimization of her website so she can broaden her marketplace. "It doesn't do you any good to have a state of the art website if nobody can find it." She pauses. "So there's another investment."

Nancy doesn't think of her expenditures in terms of an outflow of money, she considers spending money an investment in the future of her company, and perhaps in the continuation of her art.

For information about Nancy's product line go to her website, www.nancyphilo.com, or call her at 505 231-5709

*"It doesn't do you
any good
to have a state of the
art website if
nobody can find it."*

*—Artist and entrepreneur
Nancy Philo*



The Hyperbole Gallery & Design product line includes, among other items, tempered glass cutting boards, drink coasters and porcelain ornaments.

The Art of Theatre With Kids: It's Never Too Early to Learn Self-expression



TeatroJoven/YoungTheatre participants act out a play on the stage at Tome on the Range Bookstore. The theatre company has been in existence for two years.

Those who know Caroline Rackley as a brilliant textile artist may be surprised to learn that her education is in theatre. A Las Vegas daughter of the mountains (her dad, John, was a rancher), she attended high school at Robertson, spent two years at Cottey College in Nevada, Mo., and finished her degree in theatre arts at San Francisco State in 1964.

Her passion for drama and working with children has brought about a youth theatre company in Las Vegas called *TeatroJoven/YoungTheatre*. She describes it as a small person's actor training and performance company.

"I worked in theatre for 25 years in California and New Mexico with a brief sojourn in New York. Most of my roles were character parts," Caroline said. "Acting is my first love. I really liked working on the technical side of show business where there was paid employment: production management, directing, technical work in lights and sound and, of course, teaching acting classes.

"I started working with children very early on during college when I was fortunate to have summer work at the Perry Mansfield Performing Arts School and Camp at Steamboat Springs, Colo." Started in 1913 by Charlotte Perry and Portia Mansfield, it is recognized as the oldest continuously operating performing arts school and camp in the nation.

Over a period of time in a number of different communities, Caroline realized she most enjoyed doing theatre with

"A child audience is the final and true test for any actor; you can't fake it with kids."

—Director and Founder
Caroline Rackley

children and that they responded to her. She has brought her years of experience to *TeatroJoven/YoungTheatre*.

"A child audience is the final and true test for any actor; you can't fake it with kids," she said. "As a tiny kid, I took inspiration from my brother Joe Hardy performing Shakespeare on the stage at Ilfeld Auditorium. He was stuck babysitting me, so off we went to rehearsal after rehearsal. I thought he was a god."

In 1980 Caroline decided to hone her teaching skills by attending the Waldorf Training Institute in Northridge, Calif. The institute introduced her to in-depth methods for enriched childhood learning that suited her theatre style. She came to recognize that children learn best with techniques that call forth feeling, and theatre is a medium that includes the whole range of artistic creativity, from storytelling, writing, design, music, dance, visual art, and self-expression in all forms.

Creativity is important to Caroline. She continues to weave exquisite tapestries and domestic textiles at her studio in Sapello, N.M. She learned to weave working at a loom her father acquired from Meta Schattsneider, the instructor at Highlands in the early 1950s who created a wonderful weaving program at the college.

"Meta and my folks were good friends; when she left here, we ended up with one of her looms."

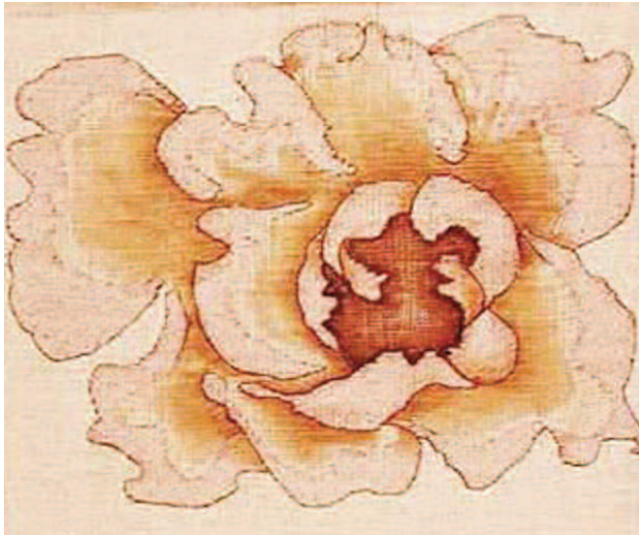
On a Christmas visit home in the middle sixties, she found her father weaving; he showed her how, and she hasn't stopped since.

"I sat down and made a whole poncho during that Christmas vacation. Although I was in theatre I found I liked weaving. It



Caroline Rackley

Children learn best with techniques that call forth feeling



Peony is one of Caroline's weavings. To view more of her work go to www.imagenm.com

grounded and kept me in touch with handcrafts which were such a big part of our remote ranch life."

Caroline shows her work at Ghost Ranch from April to November and participates in weaving guild shows from time to time. One of her pieces "Mesa Helix," a motorized textile sculpture, can be seen in the student center at Luna Community College. Several homes and churches in Vegas and around the state have her tapestries in their collections. Her work is on the website www.imagenm.com.

Like her art, which is distinctive in style and design, Caroline has developed a unique way of doing drama with children.

"I've created a technique called Dramareaders. It involves some children narrating the script while the others act out what is being read; then they all change about and get to try out all the different roles. It's a terrific incentive for reading, and they get lots of practice at it. Part of every rehearsal is given to drawing, and we play a lot of challenging, interactive games," she said.

TeatroJoven has been in existence for two years and is calling for volunteers so it can grow. Caroline, who acts as artistic director, director, recruiter, playwright, and fund raiser for the company, said it is an ongoing balancing act between recruiting students, giving instruction, rehearsing, writing and producing the plays. "Raising funds to keep it going is a big job in itself," she said.

"Francine Lujan, mother to one of our actors, has

helped mightily, and we need more parents and community members to join us for a bigger and better drama program."

Caroline said many generous people have contributed to the Performance Fund which is administered by the Las Vegas Arts Council. This fall the *TeatroJoven* raffled a beautiful tapestry room-divider screen to raise money. She credits First Presbyterian Church and Community 1st Bank for their continuing support, and Tome on the Range Bookstore for providing performance space.

The spring 2011 season will focus on plays with the theme *Children in New Mexico History*. These will be original works by Caroline taken from regional autobiographies from the previous century or earlier. The works performed so far are Caroline's own scripts adapted from Rudyard Kipling, Mark Twain, Aesop's Fables, Native American and other indigenous lore.

She grins and her eyes twinkle like those of the children she teaches.

"I call what I do expressive language arts. Expressing ourselves well is what makes our lives bloom the way we want them to. It is never too early for children to learn self-expression and self-confidence."

Teaching young children the skills of memorization and enunciation not only prepares them for roles in plays, it gives them confidence and a sense of purpose. Working between two to three hours, two days a week over a six to eight-week period, the children learn about the art of acting and about working together to accomplish goals.

"Rehearsals are a lively combination of art, games, and acting," Caroline said.

She is now is working to have sufficient funding to run the program and give scholarships to as many children as possible. Caroline would also like to have volunteers who are willing to learn her technique so she can expand the program to accommodate more children. She wants to expand the program to other communities, but in the meantime *TeatroJoven* is growing in Las Vegas.

"We now have a project going on at Carnegie Library, and our up-coming *Children in New Mexico History* series will enjoy performances in the Old Town Mission building on Chavez Street which has been under renovation.

— SEE RACKLEY ON PAGE 23 —

REFLECTIONS IN POETRY

In the introduction to Steven Fivecats book of poetry, *Buffaloes, Beads and Indians*, it was pointed out that in 1960s and '70s, poetry flourished like the buffalo once did. In recent years is has all but vanished from popularity with the American public. "Yet today there are still small herds of buffaloes throughout the nation, and like the buffalo," the book's introduction states, "poets and poetry survive through small presses and poetry societies."

Steven's work has spiritual overtones and reflects a person who sees beyond this moment and into the next. Here are three distinctly different but equally thoughtful poems by author and poet Steven Fivecats.

Key of Tomorrow

tomorrow holds nothing in itself;
today can be all the reason that
one has within ones self,
yesterday has been with
grace and pain, and
tomorrow you shall
be as one before the trials
of man, for the soul holds
the key of tomorrow and
the life forever more;
by my time i make it
hold, for some say that
it never really exists.

my sun shines on the world
of my soul, lift up the
trumpets of the returning
king; for i am coming
home, to stay where
i truly belong,
for tomorrow is just
a shadow across the
past, and a hazy sun
to the people of today

Heart of the Children

Children... Innocence and love...
Their eyes speak of hope, yearning
and a simple truth...
They are the hope of the aged,
the future of those who walk now....
The Children are a legacy for a new tomorrow...
A hope of things yet to be....
Let us become like children....
With an unexpected hope
that all things work out....
For the best to those who believe....
Let us remember our younger days....
And walk in our tomorrows with the
Hope of a child....

Words in the Sand

words i have written in the sand,
to only be remembered for a moment:
the sand is my
paper, a shell
my pen...
love your neighbor
as yourself...
the tide...
for all are lost when the
tide rolls in, lost
forever to
anyone who passes by

Salman

Continued from Page 12—

the temperature required for distribution of heating, cooling, and domestic hot water.”

The seven bore holes in the Salman’s closed loop system provide heated air to two heat pumps that serve two different areas of the home. The UBEND (polyethylene) pipe carries a solution of ethanol and water through the system in a continuous loop, warming as it goes through the earth. When the air hits the heat pumps it is already at 55 to 65 degrees, which means the system only has to heat it to the desired level of heat inside the home.

In a conventional system, instead of heating air from 55 degrees to 72 degrees, the system might be heating air from 32 degrees to 72 degrees, which has a big impact on the cost of fuel to drive the system.

“There are a lot of things to like about geothermal energy. With solar you only get the benefit of heat in daylight hours. That technology is changing as we move from fossil fuels to renewable energy,” Jeff said, “but earth source heat is reliable now. Below the surface the earth’s temperature is a constant year around.

“Aside from leaving a smaller carbon footprint, the system is safe. Because there are few moving parts and combustible fuel is not required, there is nothing to explode or burn. It is a low-pressure system and the solution is not toxic. The system is low maintenance because there aren’t many parts, the piping lasts for a hundred years, and we get nearly instant hot water.”

For Jeff the challenges came from being among the first to install geothermal. “I was just glad that the first day we

turned on the system it worked. It’s hard to be a pioneer. You second-guess yourself, but the benefits are there. The fact you can add solar and be independent of major energy suppliers is huge. I wanted to build a net-zero house; this is a first step in that direction.

“I also wanted to show the community this can be done. Being energy conscious, using other green technologies, conserving and harvesting water, these all make sense and can be done sensibly. We wanted a traditional home but we also wanted to make it as green as possible.”

Jeff said he enjoyed working with the people who installed his system, partly because he learned that while there aren’t a lot of systems locally, local contractors have sub-contracted with Dahl on installations in Taos and Santa Fe counties.

“It was interesting to find out that there are plumbers and well drillers in our town who are already working on this technology. Gordon from Hays Plumbing and Jack Roper out of Mora are on Dahl’s referral list.

“It kind of scared me that there wasn’t much geothermal being done, and I wasn’t sure it was going to work. The cost was something I had to think about and the installation does take time, but once I went to the seminar given by the people from Dahl, I was convinced I had to do this, and I’m glad I did.”

For information about ground source heat systems (geothermal), go online to www.energysavers.gov, or contact Joanne Pena at Dahl Plumbing, 505 471-1811. The company periodically gives free seminars detailing the benefits of geothermal and other alternative energy technologies.

NMHU

Continued from page 13—

“At Highlands we’re being encouraged by our students, future students and our administration to be green. It’s an amazing time to work here because everything we do has to follow the green initiative. That means when we bring something like this,” he gestures to the roll of plans on his desk, “to the table, people are more open to it.”

Trane, the manufacturer of the boilers and other equipment used to transfer the heat from the ground to the building, designed the system specific to the needs of the university.

It is the first of its kind in the state,

and is one more example of the university being a leader in green initiatives in the country.

“The student union building is our flagship building. Every modern technology we can get will be in this building. We’re striving to be among the one hundred most green campuses in the country,” Jorden said.

Will the entire university be heated and cooled by ground source energy at some point in the future? Perhaps.

“The well field is large and can be added onto if necessary. The potential to add on other buildings is there.”

Jorden is a visionary when it comes to applying alternative energy strate-

gies to cut costs and be more environmentally responsible. “Sure it costs more up front, but the payoff is worth it in the long run.”

For a small school Highlands has managed to be at the forefront with its bold initiatives.

“People ask how such a small school can afford to do this,” Jorden said. “My question is, ‘How can we NOT take green initiatives?’ By not doing these things, by not making these choices we cost ourselves in the long run, and not just us. We’re an institution of higher education. We have a responsibility to lead the way.”

THE READING ROOM

Chapter 4 On the Job

Lilly wasn't late but close. She'd had to make herself settle down and drive carefully. As angry as she'd been when she left home she could easily have mowed down anyone who crossed her path. She was sorry Luke had witnessed her automotive temper tantrum. Well, not just Luke, of course, she wouldn't have wanted anyone to see her behave in such a manner. She still represented Harve in this town and didn't want people to think the preacher's widow was a crazy person.

She pulled into the employee parking area, all the way across the lot from the store. Snow or sleet, rain or shine, empty parking lot or full, it bordered on sacrilege to park in a designated "customer parking" space, which included everything remotely close to ShopMart's front door.

By the time she reached the employee canteen—a generous term for a room containing four rickety knock-together tables surrounded by scabby plastic chairs, an apartment-sized refrigerator, and a broken microwave—she was right on the minute for clocking in. Granted, she was huffing like an overheated buffalo, but the imprint on her card said 0900 just like it was supposed to.

"Hey, Mrs. Reverent Lilly, you look frazzled."

Lilly pulled in a wuffling breath and put on her best smile. In this case it was sincere. Marco Sanchez, the mentally challenged janitor for the store, regarded her with his customary happy grin. Frazzled was the newest word in his vocabulary and he used it as often as possible.

"Hey, Marco, I've had quite the morning. So I look frazzled do I?" She stepped in front of a cloudy mirror someone had stuck to the ladies' room door. He was right she did look frazzled. At some point she must have run her hand through her hair, pulling the tidy bun loose. Her tennis shoes squeaked on the cheap linoleum floor as she headed to her locker. She put her purse away and poked ineffectually at her hair.

"How are you doing today, Marco? Got big plans?"

"I got plans, Mrs. Reverent Lilly, I got plans."

It was the same conversation they had every day Lilly worked. She felt inadequate to the task but wanted to somehow let Marco know she thought he was a real person with real plans. Everyone else either ignored him or played jokes on him, all—they said—in the name of good fun.

"You take care now," she said as she left him to his work.

ShopMart was a big box store knock-off, with lower

prices and cheaper goods. When Michael had heard that description of her workplace he'd scoffed, "What, instead of having real cheap merchandise they just have pictures of cheap merchandise?" Michael the successful car dealer—Irish Auto Sales, Your Lucky Deal on the Best Cars in Town—was quite put out that his stepmother was working in a ShopMart. It was fortunate he lived in the city otherwise he'd be bugging her about it all the time.

"I need the money," she'd told him reasonably, "and with my limited skills and at my age, ShopMart is the only place that will hire me."

"But you have Dad's insurance, and his social security. If you need more, I'll give it to you!"

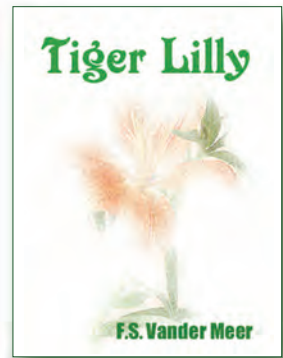
Not if she could help it. How little he knew, and she wasn't about to tell him. Instead she said it was a social outlet; she got to see all her friends. Baloney. Most of the people she knew wouldn't set foot inside ShopMart. In fact they were more likely to be outside picketing the place because the company paid lousy wages, shuffled through quite a line up of undocumented workers, and sold products reportedly made by the hands of what amounted to slave laborers for pennies a day. The people at church were horrified that she would consent to work in such a place. Like her stepson, they didn't have a clue. She needed to work and this was the only place that would hire her.

"There you are! You're late." The speaker was a reedy, seedy looking man with black-rimmed glasses too big for his face. He wore his thin hair in a comb-over that everyone in the store made fun of. There must have been a time in his life when he was somewhat appealing. He had a plump, pretty wife and seven, count 'em, seven, attractive children. With relationships you just plain never knew. Look at her and Harve? Many a person had wondered what he saw in her.

"Mr. Givens, I am not late, I'm on time. The reason you think I'm late is that I'm always early but you don't let me clock in until my shift starts, yet you make me work anyway." Of course she didn't say that, what she said was, "I clocked in right on the minute. What can I do for you?"

He squinted at her from behind the wall of lenses perched on his nose. "Aisle 15 is a mess. Get over there and get it straightened out."

"I will be happy to do that, Mr. Givens, but here is a copy of my schedule. Please initial that you reassigned me



— CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 —

so Mr. Gomez understands why I'm not in his department as indicated on the schedule."

Givens blew out an exasperated breath as though the schedule was a consequence of her stupidity. "Never mind, and don't think for a minute I won't check your time card!" He jogged away. Givens jogged everywhere. Maybe that's why he was so skinny.

Arturo Gomez nodded to her politely when he came upon her later in the morning, restocking in the automotive department. "You're lifting heavy boxes again, Lilly. I have told you to call me when you need help."

She stood on the rolling platform balancing an unwieldy box that held steering wheel covers.

"I'm fine," came her muffled reply. She squeezed the box onto the shelf between two others, dusted off her hands and came down the ladder pushing up her glasses as she did so.

"Have you had your break?"

"Oh, you know me, Mr. Gomez, I don't like to take breaks, especially today. I need to get home as soon as possible."

If she didn't take her fifteen-minute break and didn't take lunch, and if the store wasn't busy when it was nearly time for her to leave, she could clock out before her shift ended. She did everything possible to keep from thinking about what must be happening to her poor house. At least Annie hadn't called so apparently no disaster had occurred. She hoped.

"I understand. Thank you for doing such an excellent job of restocking the shelves."

Mr. Gomez always said thank you. Mr. Givens and some of the other department supervisors generally found a reason to criticize as if by doing so they were flexing their managerial muscles. Lilly much preferred working with Mr. Gomez.

"Is everything all right?" he asked.

"What?"

"You seem not yourself today."

She wasn't quite sure why she did it (sharing confidences with co-workers had never been her thing), but she said, "My niece and her children have come to stay with me. This is their first day here."

"Ah! Family! There is nothing like family."

Lilly's nose twitched. Nope, nothing at all.

"Well, I best get back to work. I won't have this all out before another shipment comes in." They both laughed politely. It was a done-to-death, and not at all funny joke at ShopMart; the never-ending cycle of merchandise.

As it turned out Billy Givens made sure she didn't get out early. He insisted she help house wares finish putting out a box of fall décor items. She'd thought she was long past letting him get on her nerves. Today his

rude bossiness tried her patience more than usual. By the time she was out the door and on her way home she was steaming.

She thought of all the things she could—maybe should—have said, but they all boiled down to the childish, "You're not the boss of me!" she'd heard kindergartners say in Sunday school. But of course, he was the boss of her while she was at ShopMart.

Chapter 5 Where Am I?

Annie moved with sluggish precision. She had put Caleb to work cleaning the garage. He'd been the one who insisted the stupid dog had to come with them.

"What'll happen to him, Mom? If we don't take him he'll go to the pound and you know what they do."

Marie, always alert to an opportunity for drama had come in at that moment.

"Not take Krank? But Mo-om, if we don't take him he might die!"

"He'll die, all right," Caleb had said, taking advantage of this unexpected support. "They'll kill him dead at the pound."

Marie's eyes got big and she'd wailed. "Dead? Mom we gotta take him, we gotta!"

Alex, who had been sleeping, awoke to all the commotion and entered the fray with hiccuping sobs in defense of he knew not what, just that his brother and sister were upset, which for Alex was quite enough.

She'd given in of course. For one thing the dog was a good companion for the children. There were times when she had to be at work and there was no one to watch after them. Krank wouldn't hurt a fly but the gal-lumping animal would scare the pants off a person just by the size and look of him.

Annie was putting things away in the drawers of the dresser Mrs. Irish had told her she and Marie could share. She looked up and caught her reflection. She wanted to look away but couldn't tear her eyes from the image confronting her. God, when had she gotten so old looking? Was it that she was tired? With a little rest and a lot less stress would that beaten, bedraggled look go away?

She ran long slender fingers through her mass of chestnut hair. Like the rest of her it looked dull and lifeless. She picked up a tube of lipstick and toyed with the idea of adding color by painting her lips, but set the tube back down. It would take a lot more than lipstick to improve the way she looked. There wasn't much of anything that would make her feel better.

— CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 —

Had she made the right decision? Coming to her aunt, a woman whom she hadn't seen in years was a risk, but she had run out of options. She couldn't stay living in the city. The unsettling feeling she was being followed or watched grew to the point she couldn't walk five steps without looking over her shoulder. It had started not long after Marie was born and grown more persistent and oppressive over the years.

She'd thought she'd escaped when she moved to San Diego but instead she'd walked into a different kind of hell. Oh, she had brought it on herself, no doubt. Elvin Caparelli, her boss at the fine dining restaurant where she worked, had come on to her countless times, but she had always put him off with a joke. When he caught her alone one night after closing he'd cornered her and laughed off her protests. "You've been coming on to me since you started working here, now it's time to get down to business." He was drunk, he was bigger, he was stronger, and really he was right, after all. When they first met she was attracted to him, until she found out he was married.

When he was done with her he'd walked away without a word, buckling his belt and humming *You Are My Sunshine*. Even now hearing that tune made her sick to her stomach for days afterward.

After the rape she'd sat huddled in the room where it happened shaking uncontrollably. She should have left that night, picked up her kids and took off, but she made good money at the restaurant. As the sole support for Caleb and Marie she couldn't afford to walk away. She thought about reporting him, but that would lead to a nightmare her kids would get caught up in. She'd never thought of Caparelli's flirting as sexual harassment. To make such a charge after the fact would lead to a he said/she said free-for-all she didn't want to deal with. She hadn't encouraged his attention but wasn't sure how her actions would be seen by others.

Still angry, traumatized and sick with shame she went to work the following day not knowing what to expect, but it was like nothing had happened. The man ignored her, as if she didn't exist, and then reports of poor performance began to show up. She was called in by the restaurant owner and questioned about incidents that never occurred or were blown out of proportion. Popular among customers and the rest of the staff she was able to ride it out. About the time everything settled down (probably because Caparelli had set his eyes on one of the newest waitresses), she realized her missed periods were more than the unpredictable nature of her menstrual cycles. Had it not been for Caleb and Marie, and the baby growing inside her, she might have driven her car off a cliff and ended her crappy third-rate soap opera existence.

Annie closed her eyes and held back the sobs that desperately tried to escape, the way they had the night before

when she'd found Marie in Mrs. Irish's bedroom. There was something about the woman that comforted her giving her permission to cry. Was it because she was her mother's sister? They looked nothing alike. Mrs. Irish was a sweet looking woman, comfortable in her plumpness and at peace with herself. Still she didn't want that to happen again. The woman would think she was a wreck.

"Momma?" Alex tugged at her jeans.

She bent slightly and picked him up. He was getting too big to hold in this manner, but sometimes the comfort of holding one of her children was all it took to center her. She made herself smile and was rewarded with a real one from her son.

"Can I have a soda pop?"

"No, you little charmer, we're going to a laundry place and then to get your brother and sister registered at school. I don't want you hyped up on sugar."

He wiggled to signal he wanted down. It didn't take much bending for his feet to touch the floor. When had he gotten so tall? What was happening to the days? She couldn't recall a time when she didn't have children and wasn't moving from one place to another, running from that feeling of being hunted, by what or whom she didn't know, but the fear was real and as present as her own heartbeat. She didn't have to worry about being followed here. She had never told anyone about the aunt who lived in New Mexico.

One promise she'd made to herself and intended to keep was to never again get involved with a man, any man, any time, anywhere. She bit her lip, tamping down regret and shame.

Annie looked around the room she was sharing with Marie. It was decorated in a feminine style with pastel curtains, a restrained floral print wallpaper and white furniture. The floor was hardwood covered by a large area rug in burgundy and blue. It added warmth to an otherwise neutral décor. She wondered about the cousin who had grown up in this room, living in a house where she doubted screaming was an everyday occurrence or drunken arguments the norm. Harve Irish—Harvard Colin Irish, such a formal name for such a down-to-earth guy—had always stood out in her memory as the epitome of what a man should be. Maybe because her mother would launch that accusation like a missile at her father when he would come home drunk or late or after losing one more job. "You could take a lesson from Lil's husband," she would yell, or taunt, or softly say, depending on the circumstances, "Now there's a man for you!" And the battle would be on.

Not that he didn't have it coming, her father had been a brute; again, her mother's words. She tore her mind

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away from going down *that* road. She did not, would not, revisit the day of the accident.

In an effort to feel better she snapped up the lipstick and applied it with a less than steady hand. She then twisted her hair into a roll and secured it with pins. One thing she didn't have to worry about was trying to impress some man.

For all her self-criticism the woman who called herself Annie Styverson was lovely. She was slender, of medium height and had the kind of body clothing looked good on, no matter what the style. Her usual attire leaned toward jeans and T-shirts, but rather than looking unkempt, she looked casually chic. Tendrils of hair escaped the upsweep and danced around her face in charming wisps. She had the look of the Hadleys, which she rather resented. Why couldn't she look like her beautiful mother?

She made a face at herself in the mirror and prepared to

take on the rather mundane task of doing laundry. For the first time in months she felt as though she could breathe.

Next month:

Chapter 6, Keep the Home Fires Burning
Chapter 7, Making Friends

Tiger Lilly, by F.S. Vander Meer, is available on CD as a digital file.

To read the previous chapters go to www.vandermeerbooks.com

The story begins in the September 2010 issue

Christmas

Continued from page 7—

"I wish you could have been there to see this guy's face!" she said. She recounted the story of opening her car window and handing one of the stockings to a man she had seen numerous times on the street. He looked at her with eyes opened wide, and a smile spreading across his face.

"Is this all for me?"

As she drove away, she looked in her rearview mirror and watched as he took the contents, one by one, out of the stocking. She then relayed how she had to stop her car to wipe away the tears. "It was amazing!"

The stories began to filter in fast and furiously. All were told with the depth of knowing the meaning of giving. As I listened to each person's story, I realized the Christmas magic created by my parents was not in the giving of the gift itself; it was much greater than the gift. It was in the giving of their love.

My children, my friends, their friends, and family members will gather once again this year to stuff stockings for the homeless. A local school has volunteered its gym for the event, as my home is far too small to host all of Santa's Helpers. We will all gather in the gym, and sing Christmas carols as we stuff stockings. We will eat good food, and know how fortunate we are to be warm, full, and helping others. One by one our stockings will be given out to those far less fortunate than we. I will wait by my phone ready to drink in all that is told to me by the helpers. My Christmas, this year, will be filled with magic!

—Cindy Charlton, an inspirational and motivational speaker, lives in Denver, Colo., with her two active teenage sons. She is a published columnist for inMotion magazine, has just finished writing her first children's book, and is working on her memoirs.

Rackley

Continued from page 17 —

"My goal is to train people to do what I do," Caroline said. "It is a way to bring the arts to children at a young age, and instill in them a love of learning through theatre and art. These subjects are being cut from school budgets; we in the community owe it to the kids to fill that gap."

Caroline is confident the program's value is its best selling point.

"It is a safe place for children after school to learn, play, and grow at their own pace. It is a good alternative to sports programs; our non-competitive games are very active and the children get a real workout," she said.

Children seven to ten years old are welcomed to participate; group size is limited to between ten and twelve individuals. Tuition runs \$10 per week for two hours twice a week after school. "It takes 6 to 8 weeks to get a play ready," Caroline said. The winter session will run around \$80 per student. "Volunteer help is very welcome. Such help can reduce a child's tuition. Payment plans and scholarships are also available."

To volunteer or for more information about *TeatroJoven/Youngtheatre*, call 425-6092 or 505-217-6169; or e-mail, designuldt@newmexico.com.

Tax deductible contributions may be sent to YoungTheatre-LVAC, c/o Goodwin, Inc., 1320 6th Street, Las Vegas, N.M. 87701.



Hope Lives