

It was a little bit frosty in Reilly Springs, this morning, with several reporting some ice in the water troughs and the temperatures around the 30-degree mark. Folks, it's almost the first of December, so it's time for a little bit of cold weather. However, like many of you, I don't like to have to go out and crank the car, to warm it up, before going to work.

Maybe a little bit of cold weather will make me get in the Christmas spirit. For some reason, it just doesn't seem much like Christmas and I can't seem to get real motivated to get prepared. With a number of happenings this weekend, and a touch of cold temperatures, hopefully that will do the trick.

I did write a story, this week, about the "Sears and Roebuck Christmas Wish Book," that served as our "Christmas Bible" back in the 1960's, and it seemed to strike a cord with a number in the community. How many of you can remember the angst of waiting for the book to come in the mail and then almost "wearing it out" to find all the things that you wanted for Christmas?

And, while we're thinking about family and the holidays, now is a great time to go to the Hopkins County Veteran's Memorial website and check to see that all of your uncles, cousins, grandparents, etc. are included in the data base. I went and noticed that about three of my uncles are not included on the list. So, I've got to get busy and contact some cousins, for them to be included on this memorial. You might find the very same results, so please go and check the data.

Sympathy is extended to the Susie Crabtree family on her passing this week. Of course, Susie was a member of the pioneer Oakley family from Reilly Springs. Services were held in Sulphur Springs, today, with burial in the Reilly Springs Cemetery.

On a brighter note, birthday greetings are extended to Mrs. Mildred Hinton, who has longtime association with our community. Mildred will be 100 years old this Friday, Dec. 2. Friends and family have planned a birthday party for Mildred at Sunny Springs Nursing Home, on Saturday night, at 7:00 p.m. They invited all of her friends to drop by and help her to celebrate this milestone in her life. Happy 100th birthday, Mildred.

Reports are numerous of great Thanksgiving celebrations all across the Reilly Springs Community. Vera Harrington traveled to Waxahachie to spend the holiday with her daughters, Mitzi and Mary, and granddaughters, Elizabeth, Caroline, and Charlotte. She reported an outstanding day with loads of good food.

My family spent Thanksgiving at the Jan and David Lawrence Lake Cabin on Lake Quitman and had a wonderful day of visiting and eating. Approximately 35 were in attendance and loads of great food. A large portion of the guys left following lunch and headed to the deer lease near Ballinger. Danny Lawrence was to meet Colton Price and pick him up near Stephenville and they joined the hunting party.

Kim Price is in Tyler this week as she presents several Dairy-Max presentations in that city. She reported that Colton was a little bit under the weather following his hunting excursion to North Central Texas.

Vera reported that she received an inch and one-half of rain, from the recent rains and that everyone keeps asking her about retirement, but she says she is busier than ever. "I don't know how I managed the milk cows if it was any busier than it's been the last few weeks," expressed Vera. "Of course, I've still got a number of heifers to tend and much of the chores are still the same as long as you've got cattle."

Sandi Wallace reported that Hunter and Stratton Salverino have been extremely busy hunting, as they had a break for Thanksgiving. They're hunting deer, hogs, and armadillos. So, if you need a tasty meal, you might look up the Salverino boys.

I visited with Blake and Kendra Fisher this week, and they reported having a wonderful Thanksgiving and being extremely busy processing deer. "We about reached our capacity over the Thanksgiving holiday," expressed Blake. "If our processing is any indicator, nearly everyone is getting a deer. We've made some great sausage and loads of other deer products, this season."

Meanwhile, several in this community are working on Christmas displays, throughout the community and extremely busy working on floats for the annual Lighted Christmas Parade. Folks are working at night to make certain that all of their lights are burning and that the fuses

all work. Hopefully, the rain will not move into Hopkins County before the parade is conducted on Saturday night.

However, we certainly won't mind postponing the parade if we get a good rain out of the deal.

I visited with Mrs. Ethel Winton, who was helping with the event and she reported a very nice Thanksgiving with the Fishers and invited everyone out to enjoy the Christmas in the Park events this upcoming weekend. The display will be up on Friday night for walking tours and the Saturday night event is planned to be a drive-thru affair for those unable to walk through the grounds.

Meanwhile, Friday night is a busy night in Sulphur Springs as the annual tree lighting on the square will begin at 5:30 p.m. and the snow tigers and snow slide will be back in Sulphur Springs to welcome the season. Make plans to eat at the Hopkins County Memorial Hospice Christmas Fiesta that will be hosted at the First United Methodist Church, on Friday, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Don't forget the annual Lights of Life Tree Lighting Ceremony and the arrival of Santa Claus on Thursday night, at Hopkins County Memorial Hospital.

And, to round-out the weekend, the Northeast Texas Choral Society will present their Christmas program on Saturday night at 7 and on Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m.

And, if that isn't enough activity, there are large basketball tournaments in both Miller Grove and Winnsboro that will be featuring your favorite local teams. And who said there wasn't anything going on in Hopkins County.

Well, as you dash from event to event, make certain that you text and vote for the Sulphur Springs Clorox Playground Grant at least once daily. We're ahead in the standings but China Springs is giving us a run for our money in the voting. We know we can do better than them, now don't we.

Jan Lawrence is back visiting in Hopkins County this week. She came back with a friend to attend Canton Trades Days on Thursday and will be picking up Hallie Lawrence to take back to Muleshoe to spend a few days while Danny and Shannon take a trip. And, while she is here, the family will be treating Joyce McDonald to a birthday celebration, as she observes her birthday on Friday, Dec. 2. I'm not telling how old she is, you'll have to ask her.

I heard from Rhandi Stribling Fails this week and she reported a large crowd at Debra and David's for Thanksgiving when about 35 family members gathered for Debra's cooking. Among the guests was Mandy Walker Berger, who traveled home to East Texas from California, to spend the holidays with the family.

Alexis and Brayden Stribling spent Thursday and Friday with David and Debra and they reported Black Friday Shopping at the Dollar General in Yantis. "We didn't have to fight a real big crowd, that way," expressed the Striblings.

Alexis, Brayden, Debra, and Rhandi put up the Christmas tree on Friday and helped Debra get the house cleaned up and decorated following the crowd. And, then several family members made it back on Friday night for a fun time of games and fun.

On Saturday morning, Rhandi and Debra joined Marcille and Gary Graham and their family at Burton's for breakfast.

As you can see, everyone is busy in Reilly Springs this week as they make plans for the holidays and all the upcoming hustle and bustle associated with this time of the year. Pause to reflect on the many many blessings that each of us are blessed with and make certain to say a prayer of thanksgiving.

Until next week, enjoy the season, pray for rain, and remember those who are unable to get out and make a visit to brighten their day. Remember our troops who defend our freedoms and make it all possible, asking for them an extra measure of safety and a return trip home. Pray for love in our hearts, harmony in our community and peace in our land. God bless Reilly Springs, Hopkins County and America. Happy holidays.