



I Remember Cold Mornings

by Carroll Hackbart

In January 2024, we had several days of subzero weather. It reminded me of growing up in South Dakota and the brutal winters we used to endure. Back then, our homes and one-room country schoolhouses weren't insulated. Each fall, we'd swap out our screens for heavy wooden storm doors and windows to prepare for the bitter cold. I remember carrying storm windows and screens up the extension ladder to our second-floor windows—climbing without holding on because I only had two hands. It was a tricky job in the fall and again in the spring when we switched everything back to let in the cool evening breezes of summer.

We heated our homes with coal, using cookstoves and furnaces. I always loved the parlor furnace with its small isinglass windows that wrapped around it, it felt like having a glowing campfire right in the middle of the room. But those coal fires didn't last through

the night. By morning, the house would be freezing. I still remember mornings when the big tea kettle sitting on the back of the stove had a thin layer of ice inside. Jack Frost would leave intricate patterns on the inside of our kitchen windows, as if he'd been busy decorating overnight.

Dad kept a box of kindling and corn cobs near the cookstove to get the morning fire started. First, he'd shake the firebox grates to remove ashes, then open the damper to the stovepipe, the one just below the stove top at the back of the stove—and adjust the vents on the side of the firebox. He'd lay down a bed of corn cobs and kindling, then dip a cob into a can of kerosene, light it with a wooden "farmer's match" from the box on the wall, and set the fire going.

Dad would bank the furnace fire each night, covering the burning coal with ashes, and closing the vents to

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keep the coals alive until morning. It didn't put out much heat, but those glowing embers made it easier to restart the fire at dawn. He'd shake the grates again, let the ashes fall into the ash pit, and bring the fire roaring back to life. We stayed warm between flannel sheets, under layers of blankets in a feather bed. It didn't take us long to get dressed in the morning!

While Dad headed out for morning milking, Mom managed the kitchen stove. When the fire was burning strong and the chimney was drawing well, she'd close the damper just below the back of the stovetop. That way, the smoke and heat were drawn across the oven top and below the stove top then down between the oven and the water reservoir on the right before exiting under the oven at the back of the stove to the stovepipe. That process warmed the entire stove. Mom baked bread, cookies, and cakes by adjusting dampers and adding coal to regulate the oven temperature—no thermostat, just skill and experience.

In the winter, we spent most of our time in the kitchen. It was the warmest and coziest room in the house. Visitors would often gather around the kitchen table. My father was born in January 1903, weighing just three pounds. Grandma said she made him a bed in a shoebox and placed it on the open oven door to keep him warm. He lived to be 99 years old.

After World War II, things started to change. Around 1945, fuel oil, propane, and natural gas

began replacing coal, allowing furnaces to run through the night. Houses were being built with insulation, and homeowners even tried blowing insulation into older homes. I'm not sure how well that worked, but it was an improvement.

In the 1930s, aluminum combination storm windows were invented. These had sliding panels, making it easier to switch between glass and screens without swapping the entire window. By the 1970s and 80s, Thermopane (double-pane) windows became common, eliminating the need for storm windows altogether.

Today, a thermostat on the wall lets us control the temperature of our homes without a second thought, if we can afford the equipment that makes it all work.

That cold snap in January 2024 also killed our car battery. It was eight years old, so it wasn't too surprising. It reminded me of cars from my childhood. The first one I remember was a Model A Ford. Back then, cars didn't have heaters or defrosters. The hot water heater systems that circulated engine heat into the cabin didn't come along until after World War II.

Moisture from our breath would freeze on the inside of the windshield. I remember my dad scraping a little peephole in the frost with one hand while driving with the other. Eventually, we added a small fan with a rubber blade mounted on the steering column to blow air on the windshield. That worked well. Model A did have an exhaust manifold

heater shroud that funneled air from the radiator fan around the hot manifold and into the cabin. It might've helped keep Mom's legs warm, but not much else. Ladies didn't wear pants back then, so staying warm was a challenge. I don't think my mother ever owned a pair of ladies pants; she did have a pair of overalls that she would wear to help with farm work.

We bundled up in long johns, flannel shirts, heavy coats, gloves, mittens, overshoes, and tucked ourselves under layers of blankets. I remember riding to Christmas Eve church services, all bundled up inside a closed car. When our parents were children, they'd have ridden in an open carriage or a one-horse open sleigh—completely

exposed to the wind and blowing snow.

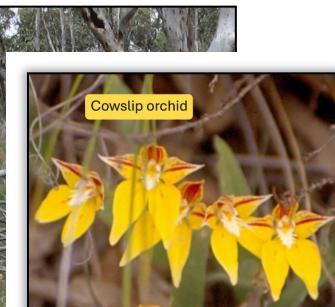
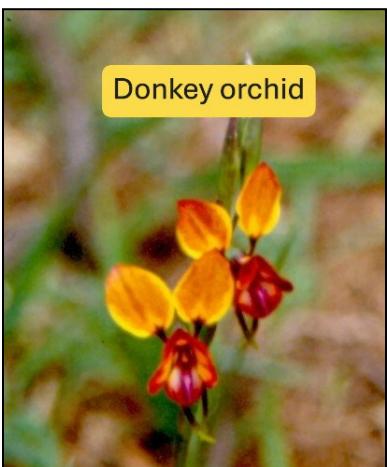
By the 1960s, most new cars came with heaters and depositors as standard equipment. Air conditioning had started earlier—Packard offered factory-installed A/C in 1939, followed by Cadillac in 1941. After the war, it became more common, and by the 1960s and 70s, many cars came with A/C built in.

Before that, though, we joked about having "4-60 air conditioning" open all four windows and drive 60 miles an hour. Of course, in our Model A Ford, we probably needed a downhill stretch to hit 60. But we could also open the windshield, which was hinged at the top — so maybe we had "5-50 air conditioning" instead.

Known, Grown, or Killed

submitted by Richard Vanderlip

Last month, I gave a talk at the Kansas Orchid Society on "Native Orchids of Southwest Australia." Below are some of the photos I shared. Keep in mind that Australia is roughly the same size as the contiguous United States, and because it's in the Southern Hemisphere, spring there occurs in September and October. All the orchids found in this region are terrestrial—they grow in the ground—and there are more than 350 species. They're easy to find in national parks and along roadsides.



EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Message from the Outdoor Committee

It is getting close to Christmas. If you are looking for a healthy and affordable gift, consider buying a cute teddy bear-shaped bottle filled with our extra special Meadowlark honey. Bottles are only \$6.45 each. Inquire at the Hospitality Desk!

Additional note from resident Sue Hunt: Meadowlark has bee hives on campus! They are located in the south meadow near Kimball Avenue. These hives are maintained and harvested by Valor Honey.

Line Dancing

Starting in January, Meadowlark is planning to offer Line Dancing classes to residents and Passport members. Before days and times can be finalized, we need to have an idea of the number of people interested in the classes. If you would like to participate, please sign up in the Blue Book at the Hospitality Desk. More information to come.

The Dancin' Stew Holiday Spectacular

Friday, Dec. 19, at 7 p.m.

Join us in the Event Center as we welcome back The Dancin' Stew for a fun and festive evening of music. This group began after the performers sang together in *Beehive: The '60s Musical* and decided to keep the harmony—and the fun—going. Known for their groovy '60s diva sound, they'll bring a special holiday flair to this performance. You won't want to miss it!

Shopping at Target & Dollar Tree

Saturday, Dec. 20, at 10:30 a.m.

The next scheduled shopping trip is Saturday, Dec. 20, with transportation going to Target and Dollar Tree West. The bus will depart from the Village Entrance at 10:30 a.m., and the return time is set for 11:45 a.m.

Next month's trip will travel to Hobby Lobby and Dollar Tree East on Saturday, Jan. 17. Please sign up in the Blue Book to participate.

Worship Services

Sunday, Dec. 21, at 10 & 11 a.m.

Join Rev. Melanie Nord, Spiritual Life Leader, for worship at 10 a.m. or 11 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 21, in the Community Room/Chapel. Continuing the four-part Advent series, this week's sermon title is

Darkness Continues.

All are welcome to enjoy coffee and fellowship before or after worship in the lobby between 9:30 a.m. and 12 p.m.

Retirement Party for Rick the Mailman!

Monday, Dec. 22, at 1 p.m.

All are invited as we celebrate Rick the Mailman and his retirement! Be there on Monday, Dec. 22, at 1 p.m. in the Event Center as we show Rick how much we appreciate him! More information to come.

Even More About Artificial Intelligence

Friday, Dec. 26, at 2 p.m.

All are invited to a presentation with Wesley Fryer, son of resident Tom Fryer, as he shares "Even More About Artificial Intelligence." The presentation will be at 2 p.m. Friday, Dec. 26, in the Community Room.

New Years Eve Party

Wednesday, Dec. 31, at 6:30 p.m.

Ring in the New Year with music, dancing, and fun in the Event Center starting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 31! Meadowlark welcomes back Johnny Cyrene, the Prairie Rose DJ, who has been sharing his love of classic country and '50s-'60s hits since 2006.

Enjoy an evening of great tunes and good company, with an early countdown and toast at 8 p.m. All are welcome!

Grief & Loss Education Program

Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 1 p.m.

Meadowlark invites residents and guests to take part in a compassionate 8-week Grief & Loss Education Program designed to support anyone grieving the loss of a loved one. Each weekly session offers a meaningful blend of education, community connection, and practical tools to help participants navigate the emotional, physical, and spiritual impacts of grief at their own pace.

The program will meet on Tuesdays, January 13 through March 3, from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Flint Hills Room. This initial series is dedicated to healing after the loss of someone close.

Looking ahead, a second 8-week series will begin in April, created especially for those adapting to significant life changes.

Art Engagement *from the Beach Museum of Art*

Principles of art are the strategies used to organize the art elements into an effective composition. Techniques like **balancing** the distribution of visual weight, using **pattern** and **repetition** to create visual interest, and establishing **movement** with **rhythm** to guide the viewer's eye through the art. An artist may **contrast** opposing elements (i.e. value or texture) or highlight a **focal point**. Developing **unity** amongst the **variety** in the arrangement is desired. As you look at this print, which principles do you observe the artist used to create a successful composition?



Franz Geritz (United States, born Hungary, 1895 - 1945)
WPA Federal Arts Project (United States, 1935 - 1943)
Crestline, 1936
Color linocut on paper
KSU, Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art purchase, 2007.137

RESTAURANT SPECIALS

Sunday, Dec. 21	Sunday Brunch Brunch Menu available from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.	\$16 Dinner Pot Roast
Monday, Dec. 22	\$11 Lunch Shrimp Po' Boy Coleslaw	\$15 Dinner Maple-Roasted Pork Tenderloin Sweet Potato Mash Roasted Broccoli
Tuesday, Dec. 23	\$11 Lunch Cuban Sliders Macaroni Salad	\$13 Dinner Stuffed Bell Pepper Cheesy Potatoes Glazed Carrots
Wednesday, Dec. 24	\$11 Lunch Indian Taco Refried Beans <i>Restaurant will close at 2 p.m.</i>	\$15 Hot Dinner Delivery Advanced sign-up required. <i>Register in the Blue Book.</i>
Thursday, Dec. 25	Christmas Meal Reservations required. <i>Contact Prairie Star Restaurant.</i>	\$10 Box Dinner Delivery Advanced sign-up required. <i>Register in the Blue Book.</i>
Friday, Dec. 26	\$11 Lunch Pasta Bar	\$17 Dinner Pecan-Crusted Trout <i>served with Dijon Sauce</i> Wild Rice Asparagus
Saturday, Dec. 27	\$10 Lunch Chili Dogs Pub Chips Fried Pickle Spear	\$24 Dinner 4 oz. Filet & Garlic Shrimp Baked Potato Asparagus

Weekly Opportunities Calendar Dec. 21 to Dec. 27

Sunday • Dec. 21 *Put your trash at the curb!*
 8:45 a.m. ~ Transport to College Ave UMC, ME
 9:30 a.m. ~ Sunday Morning Fellowship, ME
 10:00 a.m. ~ Transport to College Ave UMC, ME
 10:00 a.m. ~ Worship Service, CR/**1960**
 10:30 a.m. ~ Transportation to FUMC, ME
 11:00 a.m. ~ Worship Service, CR/**1960**

Monday • Dec. 22 *Trash pick-up*
 9:30 a.m. ~ Seated Strength, CR/**1960**
 9:30 a.m. ~ Memory Care Partners Group, **STM**
 10:30 a.m. ~ Weights 101, CR/**1960**
 11:00 a.m. ~ Rock Steady Boxing, **PF**
 11:30 a.m. ~ Sit & Be Fit, CR/**1960**
 1:00 p.m. ~ Parkinson's Exercise Class, CR/**1960**
 1:00 p.m. ~ Rick "The Mailman" Retirement, EC
 4:15 p.m. ~ Hable Espanol, FHR
 2:00 p.m. ~ Tai Chi, **1960 only**
 7:00 p.m. ~ Community Bingo, CR

Tuesday • Dec. 23
 10:00 a.m. ~ Memory Activities Class, EC
 10:30 a.m. ~ Steady Yourself, CR/**1960**
 11:15 a.m. ~ Chair Yoga, CR video/**1960**
 2:00 p.m. ~ 10-Point Pitch Group, GR
 2:00 p.m. ~ Social Circles, PS
 3:00 p.m. ~ Coffee Corner, EC

Wednesday • Dec. 24
 9:00 a.m. ~ Messenger Team, KSU CL
 9:30 a.m. ~ Seated Strength, **1960 only**
 10:00 a.m. ~ Walmart/Dillons Shopping Trip, ME
 10:30 a.m. ~ Weights 101, **1960 only**
 11:30 a.m. ~ Sit & Be Fit, **1960 only**
 2:00 p.m. ~ Tai Chi, **1960 only**
 3:00 p.m. ~ Sing-a-long, FHR
 4:00 p.m. ~ 4th Floor Social
 4:00 p.m. ~ Christmas Eve Worship, CR/**1960**
 5:00 p.m. ~ Christmas Eve Worship, CR/**1960**

Thursday • Dec. 25 *Merry Christmas!*
 10:30 a.m. ~ Steady Yourself, **1960 only**
 11:15 a.m. ~ Chair Yoga, **1960 only**
 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. ~ Christmas Dinner, PS
By reservation only.
 1:00 p.m. ~ Parkinson's Exercise Class, **1960 only**

Friday • Dec. 26
 9:30 a.m. ~ Seated Strength, **1960 only**
 10:30 a.m. ~ Weights 101, **1960 only**

Friday • Dec. 26
 11:30 a.m. ~ Sit & Be Fit, **1960 only**
 2:00 p.m. ~ More About Artificial Intelligence, CR
 2:30 p.m. ~ Fanny & Furby, KR

Saturday • Dec. 27
 9:00 a.m. ~ Tai Chi, **1960 only**
 9:30 a.m. ~ Band Bust Exercise Class, **1960 only**

Room Abbreviations

1960 , TV Channel 1960	ME, Main Entrance
BR, Bison Room	MM , 120 Scenic Drive
CR, Community Room	MR, Manhattan Room
CY, Courtyard	PF , Peakform Wellness Center
EC, Event Center	PR, Patriot Room
FHR, Flint Hills Room	PS, Prairie Star Restaurant
GC, Grosh Cinema	STM , St. Thomas More Church
KR, Kansas Room	VBL, Verna Belle's Lounge
KSU CL, KSU Classroom	WPL , Wamego Public Library





GROSH CINEMA SHOWTIMES

MONDAY TO SATURDAY 1:00 P.M. / 4:00 P.M. / 7:00 P.M.

SUNDAY 2:00 P.M. / 6:00 P.M.

SUNDAY: Dec. 21

HITCHED FOR THE HOLIDAYS (2012) TV-PG, 1 hr. 27 min. *Drama, Romance*

Cast: Joey Lawrence, Emily Hampshire, & Linda Darlow

An attractive pair agrees to be each other's supposed significant other throughout the holidays to keep their meddling families at bay.

MONDAY: Dec. 22

CMA COUNTRY CHRISTMAS (2025) TV Special, *Music*

Cast: Lady A, Lauren Daigle, & Jordan Davis

Follows country music's biggest stars performing festive classics in Nashville, hosted by Lauren Daigle and Jordan Davis.

TUESDAY: Dec. 23

RESIDENT REQUEST

LES MISERABLES (2012) PG-13, 2 hr. 38 min. *Romance, Period Drama, Musical*

Cast: Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe, & Anne Hathaway

In 19th-century France, Jean Valjean, who, for decades, has been hunted by the ruthless policeman Javert after breaking parole, agrees to care for a factory worker's daughter. The decision changes their lives forever.

WEDNESDAY: Dec. 24

AN ALMOST CHRISTMAS STORY (2024) PG, 25 min. *Stop Motion, Adventure, Family*

Cast: Cary Christopher, Estella Madrigal, & Jim Gaffigan

A young owl meets a lost little girl in New York City. Together, they try to get home for Christmas.

THURSDAY: Dec. 25

A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS (1965) TV-G, 25 min. *Family, Animation, Comedy*

Cast: Ann Altieri, Chris Doran, & Sally Dryer

Depressed at the commercialism he sees around him, Charlie Brown tries to find a deeper meaning to Christmas.

FRIDAY: Dec. 26

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (1946) PG, 2 hr. 10 min. *Feel-Good Romance, Drama, Fantasy*

Cast: James Stewart, Donna Reed, & Lionel Barrymore

An angel is sent from Heaven to help a desperately frustrated businessman see the value of his own life.

SATURDAY: Dec. 27

HOLIDAY INN (1942) G, 1 hr. 40 min. *Musical, Comedy, Romance*

Cast: Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire, & Marjorie Reynolds

At an inn which is open only on holidays, a crooner and a hoofer vie for the affections of a beautiful up-and-coming performer.