

Notes from TOAD HALL

Holiday 2001



B Blue Wreaths

Earlier this month I looked across the street and saw our neighbors putting the final touch on their light display which will need an industrial-sized tap into the utility company. When they plug in, our lights flicker.

I know it takes more than a little attention to detail to have a really good Christmas. Just getting your lights to shine requires dexterity and skills in carpentry and electricity that I don't have. However (not that I ever could or would want to keep up with the Larsons), I did want a little blue color. Just a little decorating.

Understated. Elegant, maybe. I only wanted to hang one wreath festooned in blue lights above the porch on the second story of our house.

The trouble was that my husband was out of town and I had to do it myself (though he may have sensibly vetoed the project). The second tiny problem was that to get to this spot I had to climb out our bedroom window onto the porch roof which required squeezing past our old-fashioned storm window by lying down and crawling under it and over the sill. Next I had to force the wreath through the window. Luckily it was flexible and popped through the opening, requiring only a little reshaping.

I had driven in one screw and was thinking it would be a lot easier to merely pound nails into the siding for the rest of the job when a young man on the front lawn called up to me.

"Are you trying to keep up with the neighbors?"

I was not in the mood for conversation, but I didn't want to say, What do you think, idiot? So I replied, "No, that would not be possible, I only want to make a little point. Hopefully, it will be understated and elegant."

I don't think he understood because he said, "I've lived across from them for three years and their display gets better every year."

Three years?! I felt guilty for not recognizing him and decided talking for a few minutes would be the godly thing to do. He informed me he'd just gotten a new career and turned over a new leaf. Suddenly, I knew him. He rented a room next door. He was the figure in the window across from our living room, day after day, hour after hour, playing video games and drinking milk from a carton he kept on the window sill.

What do you do, he asked? It's so hard to answer that question I ignored it. He went on, "I see you

got a new roof this year, I'll bet that cost a lot like around \$5,000? It looks very nice, and so does the new paint job. You chose a nice color..."

"Ya," I said, using my best Minnesota accent. I was chilled to the bone, a wind from the north was picking up, and the wreath was beginning to flap behind me. I shivered and said,

I oppose to the Devil all the things of the world whose virtue and splendor are beyond his ken...I oppose to him

"Well, I'd better get this done before Spirit, Water, and Blood..."

"WHAAAT?" he shouted up at me, "I COULDN'T HEAR YOU. THAT BUS WAS TOO LOUD."

I could see he wasn't leaving, so I decided to tell him part of what I do. I'm a writer, I said. Usually people go away when I tell them. Undaunted, he said that was cool though he hadn't read much since grade school...

At last I said, "I really must finish this job, though it was nice meeting you." And that was when he got down to business: "I wanted to ask if you'd let me demonstrate the APOLLO Air Purifying System for your home. It would only take an hour and it would help me practice. There'd be no obligation." (Oh, yes there would.) I had no trouble answering. No. I don't 'do' demonstrations. I felt like Scrooge.

Just then a brilliant light engulfed me and my wreath. The neighbor across the street was standing on his front porch with a spot light. It must have been about a thousand watts. "Shut that thing OFF," I yelled. I did not want to be highlighted in purple leggings and a red sweater for all the commuters on their way home. He said he only wanted to help (by then it was

dark), but I could hear him laughing. Finally, I ended up driving nails into the siding. Denis wouldn't like it, but I would find some way to appease him.

Blue Heaven

Today snow is softly falling along with the temperature. I got the wreath up just in time. It glows gently in the night and the fact that it is blue is important to me. I think the reasons are bigger and deeper than the fact that the Christmas tree lights of my childhood were all blue. (My siblings and I thought our tree was so lovely.

After it was up, we always ran out to see how good it would look from the outside. We were certain that anyone who drove by our place in Northern Minnesota would be astonished by its beauty.)

The thought that some things in life especially exist to confound our great foe, the devil, and affirm the glory of God took on a new dimension at our dinner table this past year with dear friends. What are the things that keep us going despite our failure, disappointment, sin? Ron Lutjens, pastor of Old Orchard in St. Louis, shared a quote from an out of print book: *The Devil's Share* by Denis de Rougemont (1944). It was from a chapter titled "The Blue of Heaven:"

I oppose to the Devil all the things of the world whose virtue and splendor are beyond his ken. I oppose to him the pledges of a confidence which his wile shall never assail.

I oppose to him the hierarchies of Order: the celestial order and the war cry of the laws sworn to in the commonwealth, the order of language and the order of virtues.

I oppose to him Spirit, Water, and Blood, 'which bear witness and the three are in harmony.' (1 John 5:6-8) I oppose to him the Fire of

tongues, Salt and Oil. I oppose to him Bread and Wine.

"I oppose to him also the works of men in which his share has been consumed.

"I oppose to him the blue of heaven. I oppose to him the blue skies that I have loved. The blue sky of Manhattan, bursting like an inexorable joy between the silvery verticalities of its skyscrapers.

I don't confuse New York City with Zion. Or America with the

church. But, as a Christian, it reminds me of our future heavenly city with its glory all done in blue as Isaiah 54:11 records:

"O afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted, I will build you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with sapphires."

These days when I recall the deep blue of Lake Superior spread out beneath us as we crest the hill above the Duluth Harbor, I think of how this vast lake in all its beauty may oppose the devil and his temptations. Or I

think of the brilliant turquoise skies over the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of New Mexico, and how they may oppose the discouragements of Satan. Solid beneath the sky of our hope is the powerful joy of the Blood of Christ. How appropriate is the blue of heaven!

Thus my wreath. A small joy and hardly worthy to represent so great a thing, but there it is. I love blue. It is my reminder of the only sure thing in this world. ✠

Pagan Scripture, Dyed Hair, & Peace Babes

Several years ago I had a brief encounter with an attractive young woman who stopped by our home to pick up something she had purchased from me. I invited her in for a Coke and as we sat at the table chatting, I couldn't help noticing tattoos winding around her wrists and arms. Finally out of curiosity I asked her about them: What does this one mean? Will the color fade? Did it hurt? I didn't know an honest question would unleash a torrent. She not only took off her clothes to show me other tattoos, it was as if this was a pretext for undressing her soul. She told me she was a high school drop-out. She was six months pregnant. Her husband had left her just as her own father had abandoned her mother...

I was stunned as she poured out her story. I had done so little to expose such hunger in someone who at first glance seemed totally unlike myself.

We live at a time in history when what is "foreign" has come home to us here in the West. In the past we Christians went "abroad" to foreign lands to share the gospel. Today we are no longer a Christian culture or nation (if we ever were); we are exiles living in our own Babylon. The practical atheist, the Muslim, the Hindu, and

the neopagan is our neighbor. Right here at home, in the midst of our own people, we are missionaries called of God to tell his great meta narrative—the story of redemption.

Recently as I was preparing to give some talks at Covenant Seminary, I reflected on the church's rich heritage of missionaries stretching back through the centuries. They were men and women who engaged the culture at great cost to themselves and through them God called lost families, tribes and peoples to himself. I wondered what we could learn from this cloud of witnesses that might help us with today's postmodern culture. How can we live faithfully among a whole generation of people whose every aspect of life is molded by what we call popular culture? Its music, stories, movies, dress, its spiritual salsa, and even its tattoos and piercings. And more, how do we communicate the gospel?

What struck me is that missionaries have always sought ways of identifying with the people to whom they are called. They study their habits, learn their language, translate their stories, and find ways into the heart of the culture in order to love and understand. Only then could they speak and be understood.

Take the following three stories for example.

William Carey

In 1793 at the age of 32, William Carey arrived in Calcutta, India. He died 41 years later having never returned to England, his native homeland. He became known as the "Apostle of India" and the founder of the modern missionary movement. During his life's work there, he not only translated the Bible for the first time into Bengali, Oriya, Hindi, Marathi, and Sanskrit, he also translated smaller portions of the Bible into twenty-three other dialects. But what is perhaps more significant for us today is that in order to better know and love the Indian people, he translated the Hindu Scriptures into Bengali, the common language, something that had never been done before, not even by their own people. He knew that in order to understand them, he needed an intimate knowledge of their beliefs.

Now think of this: Until recently, his work was considered, by Indian scholars to be the best and most accurate translation of their own holy scriptures.

(For more on the life of William Carey, read *The Legacy of William Carey* by Vishal & Ruth Mangalwadi.)

Hudson Taylor

In the mid 1800's Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, scandalized and even outraged other Christians by adopting the customs and dress of Chinese men. What astonished and delighted me is that he dyed his sandy colored hair and eyebrows jet black. Then he shaved the top of his head and began to grow the remainder into a long braid. In the meantime, he had extra hair strands and silk cord woven to make a long braid down his back. Then he pitched the European style pants, shirt, and tailored frock coat in order to wear the traditional silk padded jacket

and pantaloons. No white man had EVER done this before; it was considered a compromise with heathenism. It was sinful. Even Satanic. But he did this in order to identify himself with, to show respect and love for the people he was called to and thus be able to share the gospel. His change in dress caused people to open their lives to him—as a result he was no longer spared from seeing the effects of centuries of deep spiritual darkness and sin. This seems to be something we should expect as we befriend postmoderns who are not Christians. As we love them, it is inevitable that we will learn the grief they walk in—the legacy of sin they carry.

The effects of Taylor's life and dedication have long outlived him. Another result: hundreds of missionaries went to Asia. The ripple effects are still felt today in modern China. Edith Schaeffer has memories of living there as a young girl and a few years ago, when she was past the age of 80, she traveled back to China and met an aging man who had lived in their compound. He had survived all the years with a vibrant Christian faith and was a leader in the church in his city. All this because a man defied the conventions of white missionaries. (To read more about Hudson Taylor, see the gift list.)

Don & Carol Richardson—Peace Child

In the book *Peace Child* by missionary Don Richardson, we find what it means to live in a culture whose language seems to contain no concept or words for a deity who would lay down his life to save his people. Only through suffering, patience, and intimate knowledge did Don and his wife Carol find the key that unlocked the heart of these people.

In 1962, the Sawi of New Guinea were still a stone-age tribe of head hunters who had never heard the gospel or had contact with people from the outside. The Richardsons eventually learned that the virtues most valued among this war-like people were treachery and betrayal. They had a phrase for it: to “fatten with friendship.” It referred to their way of adopting a wild pig, taming and feeding it, until at last it was thoroughly accustomed to people. When it trusted them completely they butchered and ate it. The sinister frightening application of this was to people. The Sawi would purposely befriend a victim and after a long while, when this person was completely comfortable, when he could laugh, eat, work and finally even lie down to sleep among them, they slaughtered and ate him.

When at last Don knew enough of the language to tell them the story of Jesus, of his betrayal by Judas, his crucifixion and death, the Sawi identified not with Christ, but with Judas. Judas was the hero. There could hardly be any more discouraging, bewildering response for a missionary.

They experienced no breakthrough in their efforts until a crisis of war between two villages revealed something they did not know. Rarely used, but the only way to make peace, was for a family from each village to give up a beloved child to become a member of a family in the enemy village. This exchange baby was called “The Peace Child,” ensuring that they were all related by blood and allowing a peace agreement to be reached. The anguish this caused the parents, especially the couple who had given their only son, opened a way for Richardson to explain what the gospel meant.

That was the beginning of many conversions. Had Don not been willing to learn the culture and language (its unique meaning and symbolism), had he not genuinely loved them, and if he had not spent the time it took earning their respect, there would have been no means of communicating the most important truths they would ever know.

Mere recitation of the gospel cannot tackle a cultural dilemma like this.

Bring Me Your Dreadlocks

In view of our own “foreign” culture, these three stories bring questions to mind. Would I be willing—like the Richardsons who lived in a tropical swamp alongside a tribal people—to live among my people in intimacy and love until the culture cracks open its gem of the Peace Child?

Or, as I think of the Hindu Scriptures and the raw practice of its polytheism, would I be willing to translate it not just with accuracy but with beauty, like William Carey? Would I want to be remembered for that?

And finally, when I think of Hudson Taylor with his fake braid hanging down his back, padding around in silk and pantaloons—I can't help but wonder if our present day churches would allow us the same privilege with postmoderns today.

A few years before she died Mother Theresa was invited to speak at the Women's Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, USA. Issues of women's rights and abortion were high on their agenda. But as Mother Theresa ended her address, she leaned forward and said to them: “If you don't want your babies, bring them to me, I will

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Christmas 2001 Gift Suggestions from Toad Hall

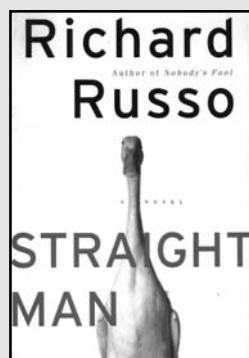
SEABISCUIT: An American Legend by Laura Hillenbrand

(A non-fiction bestseller) This is a saga of a racehorse who was a crooked-kneed, mishandled, angry, unimpressive mess—a loser until the right men bought, trained, and rode him. In 1938 Seabiscuit received more press coverage than FDR or Hitler. In a style as informed and pleasing as Stephen Ambrose, Hillenbrand writes: Most thoroughbred racehorses are “God’s most impressive engines. Tipping the scales at up to 1,450 pounds, he can sustain speeds of forty miles per hour...he swoops over as much as twenty-eight feet of earth in a single stride, and corners on a dime...His mind is impressed with a single command: run. He pursues speed with superlative courage, pushing beyond defeat, beyond exhaustion, sometimes beyond the structural limits of bone and sinew. In flight, he is nature’s ultimate wedding of form and purpose.” (p. 70) I love horses, but this book would fascinate anyone who understands that life (and Christianity) is often counter-intuitive. Seabiscuit was one of those packages that utterly belied its contents.



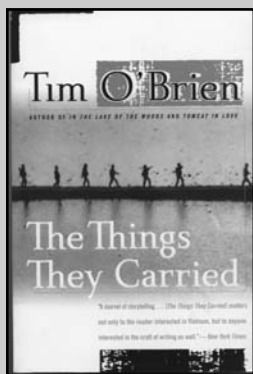
Straight Man by Richard Russo

(Fiction) This is my favorite novel of the year. Laugh-out-loud funny, compassionate, full of insight and moments of grace. William Henry Devereaux, Jr, the unlikely chairman of the English Department of a state university, is confronted by every dreaded crisis a man of his age and standing could want to avoid. In a single week he is threatened by the administration, his nose is caught in the spiral wire of a notebook brandished by a feminist poet, his bladder refuses to function, he learns his secretary writes better fiction than he, his wife may be having an affair, he needs



to confront his philandering elderly father, and, in a moment of absurd wise-cracking, the local TV catches him brandishing a goose on campus and threatening to kill one a day until the administration coughs up his annual budget.

More powerful than the humor of this story are lessons in how to receive the grace which helps us come to terms with the worst of our history. (Language and adult situations.)



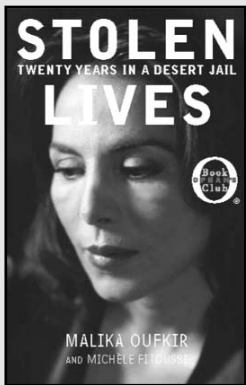
The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

(Fiction) They carried malaria tablets, love letters, 28-pound mine detectors, dope, illustrated Bibles, each other. And if they made it home alive, they carried unrelenting images of a nightmare—the Vietnam War. The power of these stories is made stronger from the contrasts he builds between the seeming insignificant mementos of everyday life and the fatal wounds of life and death.

And yet in the telling of these exquisite stories we find the yearning for peace, the longing for understanding and wisdom that lies beyond our words and memories. It is hard to read without being moved to tears. Through-out the book I kept thinking: “Come, Lord Jesus, heal us. Be this world’s Prince of Peace as you have promised you would be.” Get this book. It is an amazing piece of literature. (Violence and language.)

Hudson Taylor & Maria by John Pollock

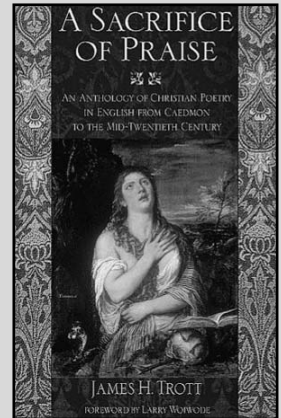
(Biography) Hudson Taylor left London in 1853 at the age of 21 and arrived alone in Shanghai. At that time no white missionaries had ever gone into the vast interiors of China. Facing illness, opposition from both missionaries and nationals, extremes of climate, Taylor founded the China Inland Mission, one of the church’s most effective missions to the Orient. At the time of his death in 1905, the CIM numbered 825 and the church in China had experienced extraordinary growth. As a result of the Cultural Revolution, China became a closed land and yet years later when westerners were allowed back in, Christians had grown in untold numbers despite persecution and martyrdom. At the heart of this work of God was his marriage to Maria. They shared not only a passion for the gospel but the deepest love for one another. In this book we read not only about the victories of faith and answers to prayer, but of the grief of opposition and setbacks. And still they remained faithful. I loved this book for its accounting of the risks Hudson and Maria took to bring Christ to a culture so different from their own.



Stolen Lives: Twenty Years in a Desert Jail by Malika Oufkir & Michele Fitoussi (Biography) Malika Oufkir, the oldest daughter of General Oufkir, King of Morocco's closest aide, spent her childhood in the palace of the king until the day her father was arrested and executed after an attempt to assassinate King Hassan II. For twenty harrowing years she, her mother, and five siblings were

kept in a desert jail, heavily guarded, on a starvation diet and without medical treatment. Ten of the years were spent in solitary confinement, completely cut off from the outside world and not even allowed outside their cells for sunshine or fresh air. Their escape through a tunnel dug with their hands is a remarkable story of the human will to survive. It is also a fascinating, albeit narrow window of insight into the lives of the privileged Muslims of the Moroccan court culture.

A Sacrifice of Praise: An Anthology of Christian Poetry in English edited by James H. Trott (forward by Larry Woiwode)



This anthology reflects twelve hundred years of praise, from ancient, medieval, reformation to modern church sources. It includes Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Anglican and evangelical traditions.

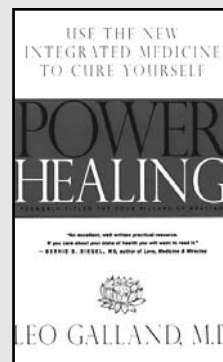
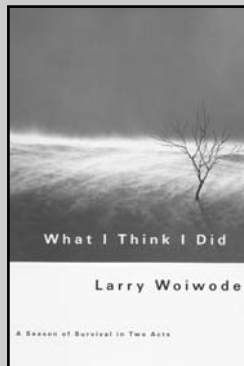
Poetry is highly expressive so this includes many forms and styles. It conveys the faith of an unbroken succession of believers back to the second century. Below is a sample from Mary Elizabeth Coleridge (1861-1907).

I Saw A Stable

*I saw a stable, low and very bare,
A little child in a manger.
The oxen knew Him, had Him in their care,
To men He was a stranger.
The safety of the world was lying there,
And the world's danger.*

What I Think I Did: A Season of Survival in Two Acts

by Larry Woiwode (Autobiography) This is written as two stories interwoven. One is a gripping account of surviving the worst recorded winter (1996) in North Dakota, and revolves around the purchase and installation of a huge wood-burning furnace that heats all the buildings on the farm. As they run out of wood and begin to burn everything available, it becomes a metaphor for exploring Woiwode's own boyhood and family life. The other story is a recounting of his own hungry years as a young writer learning his craft and being mentored in the most singular way by William Maxwell, editor of *The New Yorker*. Full of wit, warmth, harsh honesty, and faith, his writing is so fine, it filled me with joy to read. Woiwode still lives in North Dakota and is an elder in an Orthodox Presbyterian Church.



Power Healing by Leo Galland, M.D.

Since I live with health 'issues' these days, I've done a lot of reading in this area. There aren't many medical answers to some of the 'syndrome' illnesses; they're hard to diagnose, hard to treat. A physician friend recommended *Power Healing*, an unfortunate title—probably marketing—but a helpful book. Galland is one of the more sane pioneers of integrated medicine and is renowned as a medical detective, successfully curing patients whose illnesses have defied prior diagnosis and treatment. He also does an interesting historical analysis of Western medicine and its reliance on the philosophy of the Enlightenment to treat disease. His strategy for restoring health includes practical advice on balancing stress, relationships, exercise, and nutrition. Not just the traditional avoid fat, eat fiber, but exploring many other aspects of the American diet and how it may contribute to poor health. I found it helpful and hopeful.

Continued from page 4

keep them, I will love them.” It was as though the conviction of the Holy Spirit fell on the place, people wept because of the hardness of their hearts.

Perhaps when it comes to welcoming homosexuals, rappers, neo-pagans, or whatever, we, too, need a wake-up call. I would love for Christ’s church to say to this generation: “Bring us your dreadlocks, your piercings, your tattoos, and your music and we will love you.”

Ransom Notes

Looking Back

Fall has included a lot of travel, especially for Denis. In early October we were in Seattle for a couple’s retreat for Covenant Presbyterian with a very good group of people willing to take a look at how to better relate gospel and culture. We stayed with our friends, David & Susan Persing and their eight children. The youngest, 2 year-old Ellie, brought back some sweet memories of our own; she felt that of her entire wardrobe, only three dresses were worthy of wearing. When her favorite, a worn red velvet was, well, filthy, she laid on the floor and howled over not being allowed to wear it. Susan was completely nonplused, which is one reason I like her so much.

Denis’ trip to Europe for SEN’s International Board meeting was a month after 9-11. Everywhere he went Europeans were sympathetic and concerned; it made the international impact of this tragedy much more clear.

In November we were at Covenant Seminary in St. Louis as plenary speakers for a conference focused on bridging the gap between the church and postmoderns. Among those who attended were thirty-one seminary students taking the week-end for credit. I was especially aware of those who supported us through prayer, and would like to thank you. In the days of prep beforehand, I had some trouble with health and felt a bit desperate. But it went well and I was so very grateful to God. Our series was titled “Piercing the

Tattooed Generation” and one moment of great fun for me was when a young man came down to the front and took off his shirt to show me his tattoos. (He, by the way, is applying for seminary this year.)

Coming up

Early December we hope to take a ten day writing retreat. I was discouraged by our lack of progress this year, but board member Bonnie Liefer scolded us for that attitude (I share it because I think it has wider application to all of us with unmet expectations and goals—often because God has other things planned.): “I wish that you would not feel so bad about how much you did or did not get done. Hospitality is one of the most draining things anybody can do since you can’t ‘go home’ after a day’s work. It wears me out just thinking of it. The value of what you are doing is worth far more than what didn’t get done. So you should just trust God since he knew what would get done anyway. As a board member, I am saying just chill about proposed deadlines. I am eager to see your writing work—but your investment in mentoring is irreplaceable and doesn’t happen much—see Dr. Guthrie’s article in a recent *Critique*.”

Jan. 11-12, Ransom Fellowship Board Meeting. As always we look forward to meeting with this a wonderful group of people.

Jan.14-19 Covenant Seminary, St. Louis. Denis will be teaching an inter-term course on Film and Theology. There are already 70 students signed up to take it.

Feb.1-2, 2002, Rochester, L’Abri Conference. The topic this year is Pluralism. So far, this is what we will be doing: “Chocolat and Pluralism in Film” (main session); “Artful Evangelism: What was ‘Left Behind’ in This Movie?”(workshop); “Lying to Tell the Truth: Some Postmodern Authors” (joint workshop with Marsena Konkle); and “The Pain of Pluralism: Unintended consequences for postmoderns” (workshop).

Ransom Financial News Notes

Denis writes this for *Notes*: September 11 has affected the economy (many of us personally) and will continue to do so. We don’t know how this may affect Ransom. Since the beginning we have determined to trust God to meet our financial needs through the generosity of his people rather than using fund-raising methods. All these years God has graciously allowed us to continue.

Things have been tight for Ransom in the second half of 2001, and we end the year about \$5,000 in arrears. We’ve been able to keep this from affecting Ransom’s cash flow by not paying our retirement benefits. That can be made up in the future and we pray that it will.

This takes place in a year when Ransom’s budget has increased to meet higher printing and postage rates. *Notes from Toad Hall* and *Critique* are both longer and have been upgraded in terms of layout and graphics.

Marsena Konkle's expertise in design and editing is an addition to our ministry and budget.

In past years, Ransom usually receives more gifts at the end of December than at any other time, allowing us to begin the new year with a positive balance to see us through the normal slow summer months. We never presume that Ransom will continue; perhaps this is the year that conviction will be tested.

How 9-11 will affect Ransom, I don't know, but it is in God's hands. And since that is true, we can face the final weeks of 2001 with both uncertainty and confidence. We ask for your prayers. That God would provide. That giving would allow us to not only continue, but make up the deficit. And that we and our Board would know how to plan and budget for the future in a way that will demonstrate that God exists, and that he is gracious.

Those of you who have so generously given to Ransom are partners with us in this ministry: we're so grateful to you, and to God, and want you to know that your gifts don't just help meet Ransom's financial needs, they encourage us to, as Dr. Schaeffer used to say, "keep on keeping on." 🙏

Final Notes

For your holiday baking I came across something in *The New Yorker* that will be a welcome addition for we who've sworn off sugar or fat or anything else good to eat: "Recipes from the Lying Gourmet."

No-Cal Chocolate Bar

1/2 cup candle wax

1 brown crayon

1/4 teaspoon artificial sweetener

Melt ingredients together. Pour into mold. Chill. Just like the real thing.

Fat-Free Guacamole

1 cup styling mousse

4 drops green food coloring

1 drop red food coloring

1 drop yellow food coloring

Mix everything together. This dip will completely fool your tastebuds.

Ultra-lite Sour Cream

1 cup Elmer's glue

1/4 cup hand lotion

1 small bottle correction fluid

Blend well. You'll swear it's the genuine article and so will others.

That's it from Toad Hall.

Warmly,

Margie H.
Margie Haack



Toad Hall is the name of our home, christened by our children. It is from the book *The Wind in the Willows*, a favorite of ours. In it Mole, a shy yet daring character, and Ratty, who is much nicer and more sensible than his name would imply, have many adventures along the river. One of their friends is Toad of Toad Hall. Toad is something of an aristocrat and lives in a mansion. Otherwise, he has very little to commend him and really doesn't deserve friends since he is a callous liar, lacks common sense and, well, he lives for the pleasure of the moment—which brings him no end of trouble.

When we moved to Minnesota in 1981, our children had rarely seen such tall homes with their imposing three stories. They were used to one-story adobes which rambled along in the hot New Mexico sun. So, to our children, a midwestern Gothic four-square looked amazingly like a mansion. Possibly even as great a house as Toad Hall.

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