

We're Family Park Newsletter

Dedicated to the family of James & Amanda Dennison Issue 6, December 2004

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Mom's Bed And Breakfast written by Garywayne Dennison

I recently spent the night at a unique Bed and Breakfast location, Which advertised they treat patrons as their own mothers would. I doubt that anybody was able to live up to that impossible claim, But being on a business trip for several days, I hoped they could.

After knocking on the door, I was greeted by a cheerful old lady, Who began pampering me in ways I hadn't enjoyed in fifty years. She poured me a warm cup of milk and then fixed my bath water; Then because of the advertising, told me to wash behind my ears.

Being real tired, I had passed over her telling me a bedtime story, And since the wall switch was in the hall, she turned off the light. I snuggled into seemingly the most comfortable bed in the world, And then placed my false teeth under the pillowcase for the night.

There're really good aspects to lodging with a pampering hostess, But I decided that Motel 6 could have my future business to keep. The next morning I discovered thirty-six dollars under my pillow, Obviously, the "Tooth Fairy" made her rounds while I was asleep!



Mr. & Mrs. Trevor Dennison

Trevor (02-2-2-1) and Becky got married at Roan Mountain State Park in Tennessee on August 7, 2004. Before getting married, Trevor and Becky dated for 5 years. Trevor is working as a computer programmer for IQ Marketing, an advertising / marketing company located in Edina, MN. Becky is currently attending law school at Hamline University in Saint Paul, MN. Their plans for the future include finding someplace warmer to live once Becky graduates from law school. :)



Mr. & Mrs. Justin Dennison

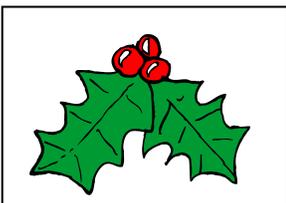
written by Justin's mother – Sherie Dennison

Justin (02-3-4-3) is currently a Sergeant in the United States Air Force and is stationed at Hurlburt Field in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. He is also attending college at OSU in Florida.

Christina (Dienes) works and attends college in Pensacola, Florida. She has completed her courses and has been certified as a Pharmacologist. In the fall her plans are to pursue a Sociology degree. Christina had once placed 2nd in the State of Montana for Piano Recitals and she enjoys painting.

Justin & Christina were married on August 15, 2004 in Browning, Montana. It was a beautiful wedding. Justin's Washington State family traveled two days getting to Montana to attend the wedding and spent quality time getting to know Christina and her family. Justin's father (Rick) was best man in the wedding.

Justin and Christina came to visit us in Washington a few days after the wedding so Justin could show Christina his childhood home and his favorite places growing up. We were fortunate to have another two days of communication and relaxation with the newlyweds before they returned to their home in Florida. They left our home with our blessing and wishes of many years of love and happiness.



...but still remembered



“Elizabeth Anne Dennison” Born 01-04-1949 ** Died 02-09-1981
written by Garywayne Dennison

Most of you never met “Beth” for she was only a part of this family of ours for a very short time. We were married only three days shy of five years. She died in her sleep from having a seizure. I was left to raise a nine year old (Sandra “Dede”) from a previous marriage as well as a two year old (Sarah) and our new baby (Christina) who turned five months old that very day. Beth may have left behind a husband and three children but she left behind a far greater legacy than only that. Most women spend a lifetime in trying to change their husbands. So did Beth, but hers was a shorter lifetime than most. Many women die and leave behind people, but this remembrance is about Beth leaving behind a different man than the one she married. Beth was not the one that changed me; it was God working through our marriage that caused the transformation within me.

There seems to be this unwritten law that says never speak evil of the dead. So this is where you may expect me to praise her for being such a great wife and wonderful mother that her family would forever sense her smiling down from Heaven upon us. That was not the way it was. It was a very difficult five years of marriage, but I felt that we had just turned the corner and things were getting better. It wasn't that she was a bad person; it was that we were such opposite personalities. She was an extreme extrovert and I was an extreme introvert. Both of us being extreme was about our only common ground. She knew how to push every emotional button known to mankind, and I always ended up saying the wrong things at inappropriate times. I went through a five-year crash course to see what kind of stuff I was made of.

In knowing where I started and where I am now, I must say that God used the right person for the job. I did think that Beth was awfully hard on me at times, but the Lord knew the time frame she was under. It was in going through my marriage experience with Beth that I developed a deep confidence in God and a greater comfort level in my own abilities. I became a better father, a better man, and after a couple years of being a widower, a better husband to my wonderful wife, Ro. I may be the only one who will fully understand Beth's impact on my life, but there is no doubt in my mind that my family is far better off in having me in their lives now than the person I was.

The next time your spouse presses upon you to be a better father, husband, or whatever, it might help to think about this story. They may simply be instruments in God's hand to help Him scrape away your protective outer shell. You might think of them as a surgical knife being used to remove a cancerous tumor to make you a healthy person. The Bible refers to the Lord as the great physician, so that this analogy works for me. Just don't think about the fact that He was also a carpenter. They often use an awry of blunt force tools to get their tasks accomplished.

That is what it felt like during most of our marriage, but I was too close to it to see the big picture. During prayer two months after her death, I realized that God honored me by being chosen to be her husband in her final days. I was thinking that I was made of the right stuff to hang in there to the end. I was quickly shot down by that inner voice that revealed to me that I just did not understand what had taken place. It may have been true that Beth was blessed because of my relationship with her for a short time, but God working within that relationship blessed and changed me for eternity. There is not a week that goes by that I don't praise God for changing my view of the world and making contentment the cornerstone of my faith in Him because of a life long gone, ...but still remembered. “Beth.”

Obituary:

We are saddened by the passing of Sharron (Shaver) Helton 05-9, daughter of Scott & Lena (Dennison) Shaver. Sharron battled cancer for a long time. She died on October 24th and was buried in her hometown of Ballpark, Georgia on Thursday October 28, 2004. She was 62 years old. Please remember this family in prayer for the loss of a loved one has far reaching effects.

CHRISTMAS OF 1968

Written by Janice Shaver 10-2s

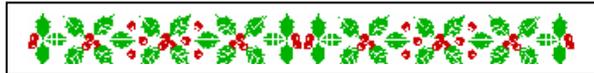
Our oldest son, Barry, was ten. He was of the age that he knew it all. He just knew there was no Santa Claus. He was older than his brother, Keith, of seven and his sister, Nannette, of six. He laughed at them because they still thought Santa Claus came on Christmas Eve.

Now Robert and I enjoyed playing our parts and wanted to hang on to it for as long as we could. There was always a mystery or thrill of excitement during that time of year. You know – getting pictures taken with Santa, they are still in our album after all these years. Making a wish list, which wasn't much as we had very little money. The stockings hanging somewhere near the Christmas tree, which later would be full from the little toys and candy. Of course we always had fruit in them as well. The fresh baked cookies sitting nearby with a tall glass of milk. Hope you have the picture of Christmas Eve at our house. Oh, I forgot to mention, the children always got new red pajamas to wear on Christmas Eve. On Christmas day red shows up better.

The spirit of Christmas of 1968 had more of a sober mood with Barry telling all, and the other 2 children believing it. We made a plan to turn things around at least for one more year. As I lined them up, in the bathroom for their baths, undressed, all but their underwear, Robert ran around the house to the back porch stomping his feet hard on the wood deck carrying the three new red pajamas and saying "Ho, Ho, Ho, Merry Christmas". Leaving the items by the door and quickly returning to his chair in the living room so the kids would know it was not their dad.

At first with the noise coming from the bathroom, I thought they would not hear Santa calling out. But the Stomping of the feet settled them down and they plainly heard what we all hoped was "Santa". Barry's eyes were so big when he heard "Santa", Keith started asking what it was and Nannette was laughing. Now all three crowded out the bathroom door to get to the back door and see Santa. Once there, they found the new pajamas, making a believer out of all three when they ran in the living room finding their Dad relaxing on a chair.

There is a Santa and he came to our back door.



TIS BETTER TO GIVE - A VALUE LESSON

written by Gene Dennison 02-6

We have been instructed in Sunday schools and at home that it is better to give than to receive and it is a lesson well earned. There were times within our own family when I wondered whether the lesson was universally accepted but I suppose it was, as much by my brothers and sisters as it was by myself. In any case, I would like to tell you about an occurrence that left me with some thinking to do.

During my seventh grade at the Scott's Fork Elementary School, I was given the job as janitor. My responsibilities were to open the building, start the fire in the heating stove at one end of the one room school house, sweep and clean as necessary the school house at the end of the day and oil the floor at the beginning and end of the school year. Sometimes in the winter, I went over the hill from Middle Fork to the school, between one and two miles, when it was still dark and hovering around zero degrees Fahrenheit or below. For this, I was paid \$45 every three months. My first paycheck arrived a little before Christmas. It was good timing because I could get presents for the family. I walked to Flatwoods where there was a general store and purchased the presents, which ranged from the butcher knife that Mom used for the rest of her life, to a tube of toothpaste. The latter took my last forty cents. In all, there were eight or nine presents.

On Christmas day, we opened the presents and emptied our Christmas stockings, as usual. I was very proud of the attention my presents received. We had little money so gift giving was not expected. Then I realized that, other than the stocking, I had been given not a single present. That made me stop to take stock of what it meant. Were my siblings benefiting more than I was? Was it better to give than to receive?

I have thought about this over the years, much longer than anyone else has remembered the event, and I always come to the same conclusion. It was better for me to make the sacrifice for my family because I felt good for doing it. My family was happy to receive the presents and the attention I paid to them by virtue of shopping specifically for them. And, also, I became the owner of a wonderful anecdote that I have used to teach the point with my own family over these many years.

Staff Memo - from the President of WFP – Robert Shaver

We want to wish everyone associated with this family a "Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year".

As Janice and I close out the year of 2004, I just want to express how good "God" has been to us all year. He gave us the strength to move from our two large homes into two smaller homes for our retirement. Then we had a three-week western vacation that I think was one of our best vacations ever. We also had a workweek at WFP making good progress with some finishing touches on the pavilion. The Family reunion was held July 24th and 25th. It was the best. Each year they get bigger and better. If you missed this year, you missed a wonderful weekend.

Janice's sisters came the 24th and spent the whole day sharing in on the "Family" fun. They loved it and had the best time experiencing the auction, the entertainment, and most of all the genuine good fellowship. It was something they will never forget. They could not get over the good time they had. Please put next year's reunion at "We're Family Park" on your calendar for July 30 and 31, 2005. We hope to see you there for the fun and fellowship. Make your plans to come now.

I want to thank every family member that helped in anyway to make the 2004 reunion successful. This acknowledgment also is for those who worked all year lining things up so the Park would run smoothly. My hat goes off to the ones in charge of ordering, picking up, and laying of the brick. The crew of cleaning and upkeep of the grounds and buildings, the Fund management team, those responsible for seeing that the utilities get paid, Food workers, and our Editors of the "We're Family Park" newsletter, all should know that they are very important. I can't name them all but you know who you are who worked and helped on and for the Park. Without each one of you, no matter how large or small your job, we couldn't be the success we are. Thanks again. Robert Shaver

"Life After Retirement"

written by Marge Kinser (01-3)

I retired in 1967 after 22 years with the Newark Air Force Station (Newark, Ohio) and before those, I spent 11 years with the Newark Stove Company. I was an executive secretary, a job I loved (for the most part) and started working after graduation from high school. Upon retiring, I did nothing for two weeks because I was worn out; I threw out the alarm clock and telephone.

I was involved in church, did ceramics, a little traveling. I did a lot of sewing, especially quilting, so I always had plenty to do. I had a house at Apple Valley, Ohio, about 40 miles from Newark. We spent every weekend there fishing, swimming, biking and participating in activities. They had excellent July 4th celebrations with fireworks over the lake. People would come in their boats to watch and with their lights reflecting in the water, it was a beautiful sight.

Not too long after retirement, my husband began having leg problems and this was the beginning of five years of pain, which included five leg operations that ended up with the leg being amputated. He was put in a nursing home to recuperate but he never fully recovered. He was there for eight months. It just about drained me physically and mentally.

I finally gave up the idea of keeping two houses once my husband came home for much of my time was being spent on caring for him. I decided to sell the house at Apple Valley. This house was a project that I bought and paid for myself, so it wasn't an easy decision. My son, Dennis, was visiting me at the time and was an immense help with the closing, auction, etc. He was going to school at Ohio State University after having retired from the Air Force with 22 years of service. Once he was finished taking classes at OSU on a new career, I went back to Spokane, Washington, with him for a couple of weeks to rest and keep him company on the trip. On the way, we went through North Dakota, which was the last state I had to travel in to having traveled in all 50 states. Three months after that, October, my husband died and I've been alone and taking care of things, mowing an acre of grass, etc.

In the meantime, I kept up with my usual activities and started attending a beginners line dance class, mostly for exercise, fun, and fellowship. This is something I could do by myself. This has now gone on for over six years and it has developed into other activities; I've been in four dance recitals, and belong to a group that entertains at nursing homes, assisted living homes, clubs, etc. Not bad for all of us being in our 70s.

I am on a committee of one that does travel trips for our federal retirees (NARFE). I had to give up being president of our Afternoon Circle after 12 years, volunteer tutoring, volunteering at Dawes Arboretum, and other activities after developing serious eye problems. I had two laser treatments to save what vision I have. This is where I stand now. I just had carpal tunnel surgery (July 2004) probably caused from years of typing, sewing, etc.

I have been on 299 bus trips and tours, hoping to make it 300 in September with a trip scheduled for Washington DC. I love to travel and see the beautiful places in this great country of ours. I've been to several other countries, but none as beautiful as good old U.S.A. !! Two years ago, while attending a NARFE state convention, I met Ken, which started a very lasting and loving relationship. We have a lot in common and enjoy each other's company. He also has been a godsend to me with my eye problems. I want to take this time to thank him for his friendship, caring, and love.

OUR 2004 STORM EXPERIENCE

By Robert Shaver

While Janice and I were on our Western Vacation in June, two severe storms with very high winds interrupted our vacation. We became very concerned the Fifth wheel trailer would roll over. During the first night out, a tornado ripped through the state park taking down large trees in its path but did not hit us. On our way home another storm came across the plains and again our trailer rocked from the wind.

Once we arrived back in our new home in Ravenswood, WV, we were greeted by two very large trees laying on the ground, missing our house by inches and another large tree leaning towards the electric lines that go into our home. I had a job for days cleaning up the trees.

Shortly after the WFP reunion we headed back to Florida, stopping off in Panama City Beach to check on our home there. We spent several days, cleaning up the yard until Hurricane Bonnie started coming in on shore. We decided to pull our trailer down to our new place in Polk City, Fl and get away from Bonnie. Bonnie turned out to be a tropical storm. We went through some pretty heavy rains to get home.

Hurricane Charlie was now out in the Gulf of Mexico and was believed to be a dangerous storm. It was. We didn't have any damage to our log home but a lot of limbs on the beautiful large oak trees were broken and many leaves came off of them. We had debris in our yard up to our knees. Again we worked "cleaning up" for days. Temporary hurricane shutters were put up on the new home as it did not have any on it when we bought it. We bought this property by a quiet lake with many large oaks around the house, which I love. The shade was the one thing I was looking forward to.

One week later, Hurricane Frances hit Polk City. No serious damage but many more limbs and leaves fell. We cleaned up for days only this time we had to bag most of it. The county had not picked up from Hurricane Charlie yet. Two weeks later, Ivan hit Panama City Beach. We loaded up our camper and headed northwest to Panama City Beach. This home has hurricane shutters, even over all the doors. Again, no damage just a few expected shingles and some debris in the yard. Clean up time.

While we were cleaning up there we received a call that the large home we had just sold in West Virginia had five to six feet of water in the basement, from the Ohio River. It had never flooded the whole time we lived there. Strike Three over Polk County, Fl: We left Panama City Beach and headed back to Polk City hearing that Hurricane Jeanne might hit Florida at the same place Frances came in.

We did put permanent shutters up before Hurricane Jeanne hit. She came in with such force. The winds blew at 110 mph and rain poured so hard you could not see across the lake. This went on for forty hours. It started at noon Saturday. We lost our electric Sunday morning. Monday we woke up to sunshine. Our electric came back on Tuesday morning.. We had used a generator to save the food in our refrigerator and our freezer. It would run for about two hours every four hours apart. Just as the generator ran out of gas and wouldn't start, the electric came on. We didn't lose any food. But the large tree limbs that came down with this storm and leaves meant "Clean up". More work, dragging, sawing, and bagging. The piles of debris for the county to pick up were getting on everyone's nerves but slowly they are getting the job done.

Our pretty dock that we enjoyed, shaped in a circle on the water, just couldn't withstand the five-foot waves and high winds of Jeanne. It came apart with the force of the storm ending up on the neighbor's yard in toothpicks. We had parts of our neighbors dock on our yard.

The storms were very frightening and certainly tested our faith in the Lord. Prayer was top priority. Sleeping in storms of that magnitude, one did not know if it would be our last time to lie in that bed. So putting it in the Lords hands did ease the worry and He took us through it. We thank Him every day. Many lost homes and loved ones over these storms but we have been spared. Again let me say how good God is.

Who has time to retire?



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from the STAFF

Staff Members: Garywayne & Ro Dennison, Bob & Janice Shaver
Special Thanks to Dale Inman / proofreader



“The Annual Hog Roast”

written by Garywayne Dennison

On October 11th, my sister Linda and her husband Tony Wallace held their annual hog roast at their home in Goshen, Ohio. I felt that there was a poor representation of the Dennison side of the family due to a problem of timely communication. Being the editor of our family newsletter that is a problem I'm very familiar with. When I received the answering machine message of the hog roast being the following Saturday, with the only stipulations being to bring a covered dish, a lawn chair, a yard game, and a fishing pole, I translated that as saying "Free Food", and I cleared my calendar.

Other than the dinner bell signaling "Clear the way for Garywayne", there wasn't any real organization of the events. It was simply an easygoing afternoon. It was hard to get an actual head count due to people being spread out all over the place - inside and out, and coming and going. During the event I guessed 57 people were there. Later other people said that number was probably close to it.

At any given time you could find people eating, fishing around the 1/2 acre pond, playing what was supposed to be touch football, eating, catching up on the latest gossip (or should I say family news), riding a 4-wheeler around the yard and through the woods, eating, and then there were the inside baby-sitter/TV watchers. The men with a passion for cards were located at the far end of the yard in the gazebo; where the wives wouldn't hear the tinkling of coins at that distance.

The Wallace family gathering was as typical as ours normally was. There was plenty of food with an over abundance of pork this time. The hog dressed out at 160 pounds. I have come to learn from experience, and others have come to learn to expect me to carry a cooler in the trunk of my car when getting together with my fishing/hunting family members. I'm glad old/good habits never die easy. I did a very good job at rationalizing the filling up of my cooler with meat. Next time I need to rationalize putting a bigger cooler in the trunk.

I'm not real big on Ro trying new recipes for if you make an oversized quantity for a gathering as most people do, everyone ends up taking home some of what they bring. One of the things Ro brought with my encouragement was a pear pie. One of the things my Mom brought was a cherry pie. As dusk was beginning to show itself, my mother headed for home to avoid driving in the dark. She put her unfinished half of the pie with our unfinished half. When she did that I had a nice visual image of my future midnight snack.

Forty-five minutes later when it was time for us to go, I went to pick up my unneeded but wanted calories. What I found on the table was an empty pie plate in the circle of several women with smiles on their faces. In thinking (hoping) that Ro had already picked it up, I asked if anyone had seen a pear pie. One lady picked up a fork and said, "We sat down, took a bite, and it was very good." I guess that is how it is in real life, for if this was a fairy tale, you would have been reading, "And Garywayne lived happily ever after right through his midnight snack of cherry and pear pie."

Tony Wallace



The answer to the “Whose NC license plate is this?” question in the last newsletter, Issue 5, happens to be my daughter, Christina. She has since moved back to Ohio, but was unable to get the same license plate number. Her new number is:

KJV4MEE

We would like to print a picture of your personalized plates.



Marge Kinser

