

# Steve's Report

### THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS



Steve's Report  
By Steve Kall

One afternoon, my young son, Max, came home from school and asked if I had ever read the book, "The Pearl" by John Steinbeck. He explained that it is the story of a Native American trapper that lived along the Mexican coastline. One day, the main character found the greatest pearl that ever existed. It was valuable beyond belief. The story is about how this pearl of great price affected the tribe.

As soon as the main character, Kino, found the pearl, he began to think about all the things he could buy with it, like a larger house and better clothing. For years, Kino had enjoyed his modest home and humble lifestyle. He had been truly happy. But after he owned the pearl, those things were no longer good enough; he needed more. He began to be suspicious of his neighbors as he realized their jealousy would drive them to try to steal the pearl from him.

As Max described the plot, I could tell how deeply the book had affected him. I don't think he has read another book that has made him stop and think about things the way this one has. I could tell it has really forced him to con-

sider what is truly valuable - what brings real happiness in life. I need to interrupt myself for just a moment and express how pleased I am with the quality of education available to students in Nicholas County. The teachers here take a genuine interest in the material they teach and make a sincere effort to reach their students and to make a real difference in their lives. I am also grateful that Max's teacher introduced this story at this time, when most kids tend to focus on what they want for Christmas. I believe the timing makes the kids more receptive to the message.

As I discussed Max's ideas with him and read his homework assignments, including an essay on materialism, I was reminded of an eye-opening experience in my own life. From 1995 to 1998, I had the unique opportunity to work with an organization called Joint Task Force - Full Accounting. I spent a good part of those three years in extremely remote regions of Vietnam, helping to determine the fate

of those who are still missing as a result of the war in Southeast Asia. In many of the villages I visited, it was common to see 6-7 year old girls carrying around their baby brothers on their tiny hips while both parents worked in the rice fields. At the end of the day, the men would bathe in the river as their wives washed their only set of clothing. Then the men got dressed in the same clothing and let it dry as they walked back to the village.

Their homes were made of bamboo, palm fronds and thatch - whatever materials were available. The people lived on what they raised. Their annual income was the equivalent of about \$30. Most had never seen a car, and very few had electricity. Those people were some of the true Spirit of Christmas we come from in a non-Christian, this year, however, I have been blessed to witness first-hand how this same Spirit is alive and well in Nicholas County, with folks eager to do whatever they can to help bless the lives of others, giving from the goodness of their hearts.

Thank you for keeping alive the message sung by angels over 2000 years ago: "Peace on earth and good will toward men."

# Bookworms

By Melissa Mitchell  
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The Bookworms club has been enjoying reading the novel "The Rest of Her Life", Laura Moriarty. The author Laura Moriarty received her master's degree from the University of Kansas, and was awarded the George Bennett Fellowship for Creative Writing at Phillips Exeter Academy. Her first novel was the Center of Everything. She lives in Lawrence, Kansas.

The novel, "The Rest of Her Life", is a very interesting and heart-wrenching novel that everyone must read. Leigh is the mother of high-achieving, popular high school senior Kara. Their relationship is already strained for reasons Leigh does not fully understand when, in a moment of carelessness, Kara makes a mistake that ends in tragedy, the effects of which will only divide Leigh's family, but also polarize the entire community. We see the story for Leigh's perspective, as she grapples with the hard reality of what her daughter has done and the devastating consequences her actions have on the family of another

teenage girl in town, all while struggling to protect Kara in the face of rising public outcry.

This novel will make you do some thinking about the teenagers to do with their teenage daughters. I have really enjoyed that both of them read this novel. And I strongly encourage every parent to read it as well. This novel will make you do some thinking that normally you would not think about. No one wants to think that a tragic could happen to your family and tear you apart. With teenagers, parents hearts are always wrenching around how we might not understand some things with them but this novel, makes you think about how we should be there for our children and help them through a tragic experience that they might have to go through.

I challenge every parent out there to get this novel from the public libraries or bookstores and read it then let us know what your response would be by contacting me at Melissa@thecarlislemercury.com.

Until next time  
Happy Reading.

# COMMUNITY FOCUS

## NICHOLAS NEWS TRANCE HEADQUARTERS-SALTWELL-BARTERVILLE

By Ramona Holter George  
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rmdg@ncnews.org

Mr. and Mrs. Kimball Booth and Ms. Betty Morford visited Barboursville, KY last Sunday and attended the United Methodist Church there. They heard Rev. Ernie Carmiche's sermon and afterward the congregation served them a wonderful meal in the fellowship hall. Ms. Morford has visited the Headquarters United Methodist Church a number of times during our revivals.

Ms. Sharon Vice Hoyer, who has lived in Ohio until she lost her husband, has moved back to Moorefield. She would like for anyone to call her with Civil War stories of Nicholas County. Phone 859-404-3006.

Mrs. Rachel Marchen and her lovely daughter Jires, of Portsmouth, Ohio, visited Ramona George Saturday afternoon.

Our communities send congratulations to the newweds Mr. Jack [Sue Kirby] Conley who were married on December 13th. Mrs. Conley has lived on Buffalo Trace Road in Headquarters with her family for many

years. The Headquarters United Methodist had their Thanksgiving-Christmas meal Sunday. The choir practiced a musical program after the meal. Mr. Mike Sosby will be the narrator. This will be the service. Next Sunday they heard Rev. John Phyllis and Bobby Brady, Maxine and Fred Whitson Jr and Dave Whitson and Jeremy and others enjoyed a Dove and chicken supper at the home of Carl and Rhonda Whitson and children, Mt. Carmel Lane, on Monday night. Carl grills the meat, putting bacon around the dove. Everyone enjoyed the meal. The fellowship and seeing the decorations.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Doyle enjoyed the "Oakland Beside Us" last Sunday night at the Park Lodge Christian Church in Pendleton County. Joyce Smith and others enjoyed the one held at Bedford Acres Christian Church this weekend.

Sympathy is extended to the families of Britany Ruble, Timothy Mitchell, Steve Finch, Rosie Myers, from our county who passed away this past week. Jeff and Darlene Doyle, Bridget and Michael Doyle,

and little Shelby, Phyllis and Bobby Brady, Charles and Shelby Doyle a several others from Nicholas County enjoyed the Woodmen of the World Christmas supper held at the 4-H grounds, Cynthiahans on Friday night. It is a pot luck but Charles and Shelby cooks the turkeys and hams, tea and bread. They also decorate and get about 20 door prizes. Jeff Doyle gave an informational talk and also the blessing.

The Barterville United Methodist Church had its Christmas play on Saturday night. It was very good and was directed by Libby Earlywine. A good crowd also enjoyed refreshments. Several good hugs from a beautiful angel (Jewell Davis).

Phyllis and James Gaunce were among a large crowd who enjoyed dinner and dedication of the new roof at the Carlisle United Methodist Church on Sunday.

Nineteen members of the Saltwell United Methodist Women very much enjoyed their December Christmas meeting on Saturday afternoon at the church. Phyllis Gaunce gave a wonderful devotion. The project for the month was bringing

gloves, scarfs, toboggans, etc. for the needy. Other gifts for several people including Sharon Feack had received a basket of goodies. She had serious burns, from doing good for others, which is typical of her, but she is much better, Phyllis Brady was surprised and happy to be presented a "special mission recognition" which is a pin and certificate. This means money was given to Missions in her honor. This is usually done for each member. After all usual business Ester Weide and daughter gave a good program. Secret Pal gifts were exchanged and Ester had a homemade gift for each one, which she does every year. Phyllis Brady also gave out cards and a small gift to each one. The decorations for the tables, etc. couldn't have been any prettier and each received an ornament by their plate.

A very good Christmas program was given at the Carlisle Christian Church on Saturday and Sunday night. Such talented singers and stories of Christmas' past were told by several, which were true and touching and brought back memories.



Nicholas County Animal Welfare Society

**Pet of the Week**  
In the dead of night, Eve was abandoned at the county shelter, and found the next morning by our volunteers. We have no idea why someone would abandon her, as she is a sweet, playful and smart girl. She is about a year old, and looks somewhat like a Vizsla, but with blonde coloring - very pretty! Please visit our website at [www.ncnews.org](http://www.ncnews.org) for more information and an adoption application, or call 473-2714.



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Contact Melissa to get it on the Calendar of Events  
The Carlisle Mercury  
289-4425

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**BLUE LICKS STATE PARK LODGE**  
Wednesday, December 31st  
7:30pm  
Music by Eddie & Melissa Hill  
\$7.50 per person  
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FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL  
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