

Newsletter134

Keith's Corner/McGill News

December 3,2021

Christmas Tree Hunting



The first day of December has a way of sneaking up on everyone, especially after a great Thanksgiving of fun and food. We, McGill heathens, had just enjoyed several days of freedom, while out on parole from that local impoundment place, called school.

It also meant that it was time to go on the annual hunt for the perfect Christmas Tree. We all had our own preferences. Some liked the pinyon best, mainly for the great pine scent that they exude. My family always went for the white fir or blue spruce, to avoid the ultra, sharp pine needles while decorating it. The phony plastic trees were not in use and were actually unknown to us heathens of the wild west.

We didn't need a permit from the gubbermint to get a tree back then. The first year of permits, we the people that pay the taxes were told that there would be no charge. That of course didn't last and soon the price went up and up. People used to scatter all over the county to get a tree. A tree here and there was not noticeable. Then we were told where to cut. This meant that a lot of trees were taken in a short area, which made a lot noticeable bare spaces. It also took the decision away from us taxpayers. This took a lot of the fun and excitement out of getting a tree.

The day of the hunt we loaded an axe and some rope into the trunk of our 41 chevy sedan and headed for our favorite spot. Most years, Dale Cottrell, or as we called him "snort" took his car and met us at the mountain. Many trees were looked over and usually my Mom picked the perfect tree. It was cut leaving some stump and branches so it could grow back.

Dale and family had gone in a different direction, but we soon learned that Emma had found a tree. They were out of sight of us, but we knew the instant he cut the tree. There would be the boom, boom of his 12 gauge shotgun and the loud call of, "timber". The trees were tied onto the top of the car for the trip to town.

The next project was to mount the tree on a sturdy homemade stand. Then we left the tree in the garage for a few days to get any snow and ice off and let it fold out. Branches were trimmed and sometimes Dad would drill a hole in the trunk and add an extra branch to fill a gap. There were, many extra branches, due to the fact that the trees always looked shorter in the wild.

These branches were carried over to the sleigh riding street and put in the fire. We enjoyed the smoke and smell. It also flavored the baker potatoes in the coals. We had a lot of taste treats that don't exist in these "modern" days.

The Boy Scouts would go door to door and get orders for trees during the Thanksgiving parole break. They would deliver the trees and help the older folks set them up. After Christmas they would come around and collect the discarded trees.

The Christmas tree hunt was usually a family outing. The distractions of TV, iPhones, etc. were unknown, thankfully. It was a fun time, hiking in the snow and finding the right tree. After the tree was tied on the car the Moms treated us with some hot homemade chili and biscuits, while we dried our wet boots and pants in the campfire. It was another wonderful day of fun and exercise. Another day to always remember. Funny thing, I don't remember any day, watching TV.

McGill News

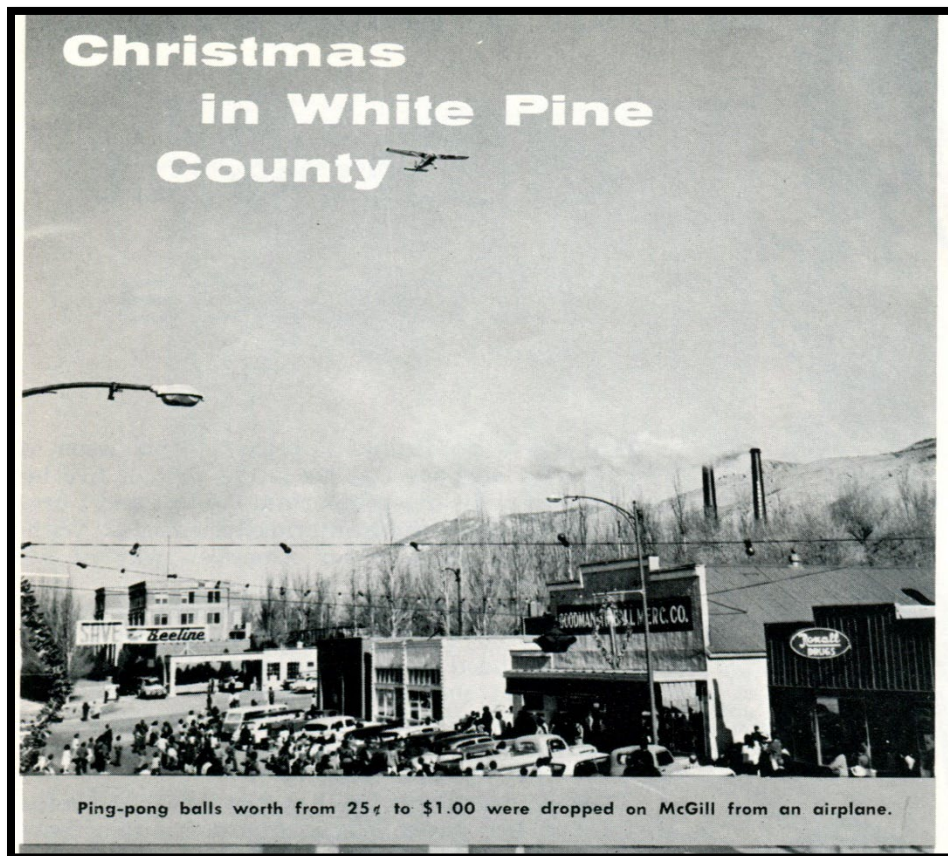
Rudy, the IOOF guy , took me out to his soon to be, recreational park, just north of the Bassett Lake road. It is spread over 80 acres. There are sites for folks to put up a tent, or rent a Yurt, or park a camp trailer. There will be a large amphitheater with a large parking area. He plans to hold live concerts there on an elaborate stage. It is quite impressive.

Oldies

1915-June 14—Steptoe Drug in McGill was owned by V. F. and R. L. Henry.

1917—September 24—The Henrys were bought out by Nick and Jessie Thompson.

Old Photos



The one time McGill was "bombed". Thankfully it was only ping pong balls.