

Sunday worship schedule

(Check weekly bulletins and church web site, bcmc.ks.us.mennonite.net, for updates.)

Prelude 9:00 a.m., Worship 9:30 a.m. during December
Fellowship time 10:30 a.m.
Christian education 10:50 a.m.



December—Advent 2007 TURNING TOWARD THE LIGHT

- 2 1st Sunday of Advent: *Turning toward God's way and wisdom*—Communion will be served during the worship service.
- 9 2nd Sunday of Advent: *Turning toward God's promise of fruitfulness*
- 16 3rd Sunday of Advent: *Turning toward God's justice*
- 21 Longest Night Service: A service of lament and healing. 6-7 p.m. in the sanctuary
For many of us, Christmas is a bittersweet time of year. It is a time for remembering persons and events that have been a part of our lives in the past, but that are now changed or gone. It is also a time when we may have a heightened awareness of that which we long and hope for in our lives. On this longest of winter nights, a time when we may especially long for light, we offer this quiet, meditative worship service that makes time for remembering, sharing our hurting places with God, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ. We will sing, ponder scripture, light candles, silently reflect and pray together. All are welcome.
- 23 4th Sunday of Advent: Turning toward God's salvation
- 24 6 p.m. Making of the Christingles; 7 p.m. Christingle service
11 p.m. (Prelude at 10:45 p.m.) Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols
- 30 First Sunday of Christmas: *Turning toward God's gift*
9:30 a.m. prelude, 10:00 a.m. service. Worship will be followed by refreshments in Fellowship Hall. Bring goodies to share; no Sunday school today.

January 2008

- 6 Epiphany: *Turning toward God's light shown in Christ*
Bring Food for Salvation Army
Memorial and Communion Service at 7:00 p.m.
- 13 Golden Agers Pot-luck—Noon, Fellowship Hall
- 20 Soup Lunch at noon and Congregational Meeting at 12:45 p.m.

Bethel College Mennonite Church
PO Box 364
North Newton, KS 67117

Return service requested

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BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH

December 2007-January 2008/1:6



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CHRISTMAS EVE FOR CHILDREN AT BCMC!



This year, the children will participate in a new experience for all of us—a Christingle service!

The Christingle (see picture) was invented by a Moravian pastor in 1747. Bishop John de Watteville was looking for a simple way to explain the meaning of Christmas to children. He gave them each a candle wrapped in a red ribbon with a prayer that said “Lord Jesus, kin-

dle a flame in these dear children's hearts.” This was the first ever Christingle service. Soon after, the symbol grew to include an orange and dried fruits and nuts attached to the orange with toothpicks. The orange represents the world, with the red ribbon around it representing the blood of Jesus. Fruits and sweets represent the fruits of the earth and the four seasons and a lighted candle represents Christ, the light of the world. Christingle means “Christ-Light.”

Christingle services were introduced in Great Britain in 1968, and the cus-

tom has spread since then.

Beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve, the children will gather in Fellowship Hall, where volunteer youth and adults will help them make their very own Christingle. From Fellowship Hall, they will proceed upstairs to the sanctuary at 7:00 to begin the Christingle service.

They will take their Christingles to the front of the sanctuary, where they will be lit during the service. Junior Choir and Cherub Choir will also sing during the service.

If you have a visiting child, grand-child, or cousin, please bring them to make a Christingle! We invite everyone else to join us at 7:00 for this unique and joyful service. ~ Linda Willey, Education Coordinator

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THANKSGIVING TORNADO CLEAN-UP IN GREENSBURG

Ten BCMC youth braved the cold and wind on November 21 and joined Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers in re-building efforts in Greensburg, KS. Megan and Kevin Leary, Emily Harder, Ben Kreider, Isaac Yoder, Joe Kondziola, Chris Wagoner, Erin Loeffler, Becca Trumble, John Bergen, Ruth R. Harder, Cliff Dick and Marlene Ewert spent the day re-shingling a small shed belonging to Margaret Jantz (pictured in the red hat). The tornado destroyed most everything of Margaret's, including her house and belongings. The shed is all that remains. Margaret said it's only been recently that she's been able to recover the ability to say and feel thankfulness. With tears in her eyes, she thanked us for helping her to see, all these months later, that re-building in all its various forms is what it means to live in, through and by faith. ~ *Ruth R. Harder*



Ben Kreider dismantles a roof



HAPPY 80TH MARY ANN GERTSEN!



Mary Ann Gertsen is no stranger to BCMC and the wider Newton community! Having grown up in this area, she has been involved in numerous activities and touched countless lives. Mary Ann's past and present involvements are impressive: Christian Endeavor, Minnie-Beths Society, Camp Wood, Et Cetera Shop, Warkentin House, RSVP program, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, and church commission work (President of women's fellowship, church board, outreach, visitation, personnel selection and funeral committees.) Currently, Mary Ann is a member of the Fine Arts Sunday School class. She can also be seen playing bridge in Newton and Wichita, exercising at the Body Shop and playing with our

church toddlers on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Mary Ann was the sixth and final child born to her parents, Susie Hiebert and Henry Unruh, on January 13, 1928. She has fond memories of growing up in BCMC. In fact, she has many stories to tell about her peers (many of whom are still BCMC members): Rupert Hohmann, Mary Esther Loganbill, Gladys Niles, Betty Enns Schmidt, Roland Ensz, Arnold Wedel, Harold Moyer, Richard Seimens, Maurine Hean, Marjorie Schowalter, Roland Brown, Vi Unruh and Orville Voth. She especially remembers being baptized with 10 classmates in May, 1942 by J.N. Smucker. (She can still list the names of those 10 people!)

Mary Ann graduated from Newton High School in 1946 and from the University of Wichita in 1950. In June of 1951, she married William Marvin Gertsen, whom she met in kindergarten at Cooper School. Early in their marriage, Mary Ann taught middle school for three years. Then, following the birth of their three children (Jane, Bill and Karen) she did off and on substitute teaching. When Karen, their youngest daughter, started college, Mary Ann worked at Wichita State University in the "difficult areas" of Administration of Justice, Vice President of Academic affairs and the Dean's office of College of Health Professions. She also helped organize a classified Senate and served as its first president.

From 1968-1975, the family of five lived in Stillwater, Oklahoma and from 1975-1991, Marvin, Mary Ann and Karen lived in Wichita. Mary Ann and Marvin's marriage ended in 2004. "The end of our marriage was a tragedy," she says, "for both of us."

Through the years, the words of Matthew 7:1, 25:34-40 and Romans 8:38-39 as well the words and sound of hymns like *Children of the Heavenly Father*, *Open my eyes*, *We shall walk through the valley* and *God be in my head*, have inspired and comforted Mary Ann.

As year 80 approaches, we wish Mary Ann continued health, deep and lasting friendships, good reading material, laughter and a spirit of play as she continues reaching out to children and to "the least of these." ~ *Ruth R. Harder*

PASTOR'S CORNER—BY RUTH R. HARDER

Advent turnings

During the course of life, we turn and turn and turn. We turn into, turn toward, turn from, turn away, turn for, turn inward, turn outward, turn right, turn left, etc. Our life's turnings can be complete or partial, slow or fast, welcomed or un-welcomed, mundane or profound, expected or unexpected, full of excitement and or full of loss.

Advent is a good time for us to take stock of our various turnings and orientations. It is a good time to contemplate what it means to collectively and individually turn and yearn toward the light of Christ. And in taking stock, I hope we will reflect both on *our* turnings, to what and to whom *we* are aligned with, as well as God's orientation toward and alignment *with us*. As hard as it may be to understand, turning is not entirely ours to do alone. God turns toward us. In and through Jesus, God meets us, participates *with* us and shows us the Way. It is this basic, yet profound truth—that God *first* turned toward us—that I hope captures us and fills us with awe this Advent season.

As we listen to what, for many of us, are familiar stories, characters and scenes leading up to the birth of Jesus, may we allow God to surprise us, stir us, meet us and may we join in turning toward the God who turns toward us. May we be like Sharon, in the prayer below, and together whirl around the good news of the Incarnation.

Sharon's Christmas Prayer

She was five,
sure of the facts,
and recited them
with slow solemnity
convinced every word
was revelation.
She said
they were so poor
they had only peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to eat
and they went a long way from home
without getting lost.
The lady rode a donkey, the man walked,
and the baby was inside the lady.
They had to stay in a stable
with an ox and an ass (hee-hee)
but the Three Rich Men found them because a star lited
the roof.
Shepherds came and you could pet the sheep but not
feed them.
Then the baby was borned.
And do you know who he was?
Her quarter eyes inflated to silver dollars.
The baby was God.
And she jumped in the air
whirled around, dove into the sofa
and buried her head under the cushion
which is the only proper response
to the Good News of the Incarnation.
- John Shea, *The Hour of the Unexpected*



band and a highlight was our senior year when the jazz band and the madrigal group went on a one day tour. Great fun. Three other things happened in high school that are of note. During my freshman/sophomore years, the Watergate scandal happened. Since I spent many long hours on the tractor, I listened to practically all of the Senate Watergate hearings and was fascinated by it all. This I think was one of the reasons I went into the history education business.

Second, my junior or senior year, I was motivated to write a few editorials to the school newspaper. And it was through this experience that I discovered I enjoyed writing.

Third, I went, during the summer before my senior year, to a Mennonite Workcamp in Meridian, Mississippi. It was a wonderful experience and it was here that I met two life long friends, Dwight Peters and Dorothy Stucky.

After high school, I went to Bethel College for five years, graduating with a History major, Communications minor, education degree and a 3.88 gpa. In college, I participated in band, jazz band, intramural athletics and lots of reading. I also participated in forensics for two years. I had a speech on pigs that was good enough to get me to nationals one year. This speechifying helped immensely in my teaching.

In my fourth year of college, I began to date Dorothy Stucky. We both got teaching jobs after college and were married on May 29, 1983. I taught at Newton High four years and Santa Fe Middle School one year while in Newton. In high school I taught mostly freshman and coached freshman girls basketball. I was very successful at this compiling a record of 65-8 over five years. I was successful mostly because the head coach, Bob Graber didn’t steal my talent and move them up to varsity.

I was moved to Santa Fe Middle School in 1986-87 because they didn’t need that many teachers at the high school and I was low man on the totem pole. I hated teaching junior high kids. The staff was wonderful, but the kids were awful. I got very depressed. I then got a job at Maize High school where I taught from 1987-91. There the teaching was good, but the coaching was awful. The last three years I was 3-17 each year. This was girls varsity. I was very depressed again. An additional thing which really brought me down was witnessing the death of an 8th grader, Justin Posty, while working a basketball camp at Maize. He died of an asthma attack. It took me about five years to get over that.

About this time my Father got an opportunity to take a job in Newton. He became the president of Schowalter Foundation. At Christmas of 1990, he said this was a chance for him and mom to transition off of the farm and for him to use some of the other talents that he had. He said that any of us kids could take over the farm or they would sell the place and rent the land. After much soul searching, Dorothy and I decided to take over the farm. I inquired at Hesston whether they had any teaching jobs that could help with the transition to full time farmer. They had a part time position which I accepted and have been there since the fall of 1991 to 2005. My present plan is to continue teaching three more years and then quit to farm full time.

Two major events which have brought much happiness to my life are the births of my two children, Ben (1987) and Emily (1992). Ben’s gestation was very troubled and was a minor miracle that he came out with everything normal. That he has the intellect he does is frosting on the cake. Emily’s birth was uneventful and awe-inspiring.

Throughout my teaching career I have taught almost all the courses in the social sciences area. At Hesston I have specialized in U.S. History. Throughout my career, I have tried to make my classes as interesting as possible. One of the ways I try to do that is to occasionally dress up like historical characters. I have dressed up and pretended to be Socrates, Sigmund Freud, Mark Twain, Ulysses Grant, James Longstreet, Columbus, Karl Marx, The Fonz, J.S. Bach, Fred Funston and Cap Prouty. Milly has made most of my costumes.

My Dad put me on a tractor when I was 10 and the combine when I was 12. I fell in love with harvesting. There’s no place I’d rather be than on a combine in June. I went custom cutting with some neighbors in 1979 and 1981. And Irrigated corn harvest is just the best because the grain is rolling in at 200 bu./acre. Our farm is centered 10 miles west of Hesston. We currently rent the farm house out and our family lives in Hesston. We currently farm 1100 acres, 600 of which are irrigated. We currently are mostly a no-till farm which allows me more time to teach and to be with my family.

In addition to farming and teaching, I like to snow ski, read and go to movies. Kurt wrote this in February 2005. Nobody could have said it better.

TUESDAY EVENING PRAYER

Every Tuesday night at 9:30 pm, just as many of us begin turning off our lights at home, a group of 8-10 young adults, mostly college-aged, gather in our church Chapel, turn on the lighted cross, and begin a service of prayer and song. Leaders, Ruth R. Harder and Nathan Koontz, pastor at Faith Mennonite Church in Newton, invite everyone to turn to the section of Jesus’ parables in *Take our Moments and our Days: An Anabaptist Prayer book*. (This book, now in our church library, is “scripture saturated prayer” designed to focus us daily, moment by moment, on Jesus’ life and teachings.) The evening consists of responsive readings, a time of greeting, listening and pondering biblical texts, intercessory prayer and song. Thanks be to God for young people who eagerly come week after week and place their lives in conversation with the life within Scripture. ~ Ruth H. Harder

HAPPY 80TH HOLLY KELLER!



On January 1, 1928 the folks in Perkasio, Pennsylvania welcomed in the New Year and the Hollenbach family living there welcomed a new addition whom they named Lorraine. Early on her schoolmates gave her the name of Holly and the name stuck. Holly says the only time she hears “Lorraine” is when she is visiting with family members. Holly was 14 years old when her mother passed away and her family moved to nearby Souderton. In Souderton she attended the Zion Mennonite Church and it was there in high school she met Frank Keller.

When Frank returned from the service in 1946 they were married. At this point it became impossible for the interviewer to separate these two beautifully intertwined lives. Holly has been very much an integral part of Frank’s activities for more than 60 years. Following high school graduation Holly worked for a local grocery store. After they were married Holly and Frank operated a meat market in the grocery. Holly did whatever needed to be done, from wrapping portions of scrapple to keeping the books. Holly also became a mother to two children, a son and daughter. They operated the meat market for 19 years until Frank, responding to a call to the pastorate, became a student at the Lancaster Biblical Seminary. While Frank was attending the seminary Holly worked in the administrative offices of Franklin and Marshall College. At home she used her typing skills to type Frank’s school papers.

School completed, Holly and Frank returned to Zion Mennonite church where Frank served as pastor till 1972. In 1972 Frank accepted a call to pastor the Hoffnungsau Church here in Kansas. In 1979 Holly and Frank moved to North Newton where Frank served as Western District pastor. During this time Holly worked at the Harvey County Court House and later at the General Conference Headquarters. In 1990 Holly and Frank began a service with MCC in Egypt for nearly three years. When they returned from Egypt, Holly assisted Frank in his role as development director for the Western District.

Holly is an avid reader of historic novels and current political books. With her interest in reading it is not surprising that part of her service to BCMC included the church library. Holly’s presence is truly a blessing to her family and the community and we wish her a very happy 80th birthday. ~ W. Dale Horst

HAPPY 80TH LIDIA PAGAN!



Lidia was born December 27, 1927, in Barranquitas, Puerto Rico, to Ricardo Pagán and Juanita Pagán Fortis. Juanita died several months later, so Lidia never knew her birth-mother. Her father remarried, but his second wife died when Lidia was still a girl. Her father’s third wife, Verónica Rodríguez Torres, was the woman Lidia really considered her “mother.”

Lidia went to elementary school in Barranquitas, and graduated from high school at Baptist Academy of Barranquitas. She received her bachelor’s degree from Presbyterian College in St. German, Puerto Rico. A highlight of college was belonging to a choir that traveled and performed in the United States and in Central and South America. Throughout her life, Lidia has lived, traveled and worked in many places. Her experience includes social work and fraud investigation.

Lidia joined BCMC in 1995, but after some time away she returned to Newton in 2002. Lidia lives in an apartment at Kidron Bethel, Inc., which she has decorated with pictures of her children, grandchildren and other family and friends, and eclectic art work. She enjoys art and decoration, gardening, writing poetry, playing tennis and golf. Lidia volunteers her time helping out at Meadowlark Center, and putting inserts in the *Kansan* to raise funds for the Senior Center.

Faith and devotional reading are important to Lidia, and she cites Psalm 23 and the song *Kum ba yah*” as favorites. At her 80th birthday, we pray – in the words of the Psalm - that God’s goodness and mercy may follow her all the days of her life. ~ Heidi Regier Kreider

HAPPY 80TH GRACE SCHROEDER



Grace Schroeder was born in Goessel, Kansas on December 27, 1927. Even though her birthday was two days after Christmas, her parents, George and Helen Abrahams always managed to celebrate it with cake and a small gift. The middle of three children in the family, Grace grew up in a ten-room farm house where her parents also cared for her grandparents. Vera Prouty of our congregation is her sister.

After completing her studies at Gordon Grade School and Goessel High School, she attended Bethel College for a time and later took classes at Hutch JuCo. After college, Grace worked as a secretary for an insurance company in Newton. She later did secretarial work at Koch Industries, Trinity Heights United Methodist Church, and in her husband John's construction business. She and John did volunteer work on the Oncology floor at St. Francis Hospital for ten years.

Grace and John were married in December, 1949. Shortly after their marriage, John built a house on East 23rd Street in North Newton, where Grace still lives. John died in March of 2006. They had two children. Jeff and his wife Mary Kay live in New Mexico. Catherine and husband Delvin Holdeman live in Wichita. Grace has four grandchildren--Jessica, John Wesley, Emily and Meghan.

Grace's family attended Goessel Mennonite Church where she was baptized by Rev. P.P. Buller when she was seventeen. She and John and their children continued to attend that church until the late 1960's, when they transferred to the Bethel College Mennonite Church in order to become more involved in the community in which they lived.

Knitting and reading are two of Grace's hobbies. She likes all kinds of books, but especially enjoys fiction. She doesn't even feel guilty any more when she spends an entire afternoon reading a book! A lifelong animal lover, Grace enjoys her shy cat, "Felix," and her loving Chocolate Lab dog, "Montana."

Among Grace's favorite scriptures are Psalms 23 and 121, and Romans 8:35-39 which includes this passage: "I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Favorite songs include "When Peace Like a River" and "You'll Never Walk Alone."

Happy birthday, Grace. ~ *Mary Ann Jost*

HAPPY 80TH ARNOLD WEDEL!



In between learning about John the Baptist, Dorcas, Erasmus, Menno Simons, Abraham Lincoln, Schussler Fiorenza and John Paul Lederach, I, as a Bethel student, came across two names I had never heard before: "Squeak" and Herman Bubbert. A certain mystery, of legendary proportions, still surrounds these two names, but perhaps this 80th birthday tribute to Arnold M. Wedel will shed light on this figure known across the land as "Squeak."

"Squeak" is not one to toot his own horn. Perhaps that is because he grew up with the saying, "you can do a lot of good in this world if you don't care who gets the credit." His daughter, Suzanne, said that "Squeak" is often QUIETLY behind the scenes of many good ideas then exits stage left, when others walk into the limelight. Rather than strictly talking about himself, he prefers to talk about genealogy (and probably knows more about your family than you!) Fortunately, for us, he has children who like to talk and they shared the following:

Arnold was born in Lawrence, Kansas; he grew up Methodist and was baptized into the Methodist church; he grew up in Oklahoma; he played violin and clarinet in high school; he was a sports writer in high school and college for the school papers; he led Bethel, a small school competing against big name schools to 14th in the nation in the Putnam Math competition in 1965; his Bethel heroes were Benny Bergen and "Uncle" Davy Richert; in the 60's he angered Bethel administration when he allowed Bethel students to have dances in his garage; he often gave all night exams and loved 7 a.m. classes; he would lock the door when his classes started, so if you weren't on time you were out of luck; he once sprayed a student with a fire extinguisher after he fell asleep in his class; he faithfully follows the stock market and manages investing funds for former students; Arnold's former math student, Samir Khabbaz, accompanied Arnold and Dolores on most of their dates; he considers northern New York God's country; in 2003, he threw the first pitch at a Red Sox game in honor of his 75th birthday; he has long been involved with Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association and spends time researching in the Mennonite historical library (or, as he lovingly calls it, "the hysterical library"); he has several favorite hats: Boston Red Sox, Enron, George Bush 1 and 2 (Dumb and Dumber) and #1 Grandpa; his favorite hymn is *There is beauty all around*; his favorite music is *Eternally* from

The theme from Charlie Chaplin's Limelight and his favorite scripture verse is Nehemiah 6:3. Finally, he likes to quote the following line from *Into the Harvest* by Milton Mayer: "You can't labor in the harvest and be heard of, both."

"Dad," his children said, "has always been an advocate for the underdog. "He is sentimental and saves everything," and finally, "Dad still teaches his grandchildren math via the phone."

As is the case with legendary figures, many of us have or have heard our own stories about "Squeak." In the short time I've been at BCMC, the stories keep coming. With that, here's wishing you, Arnold, many years of studying, promoting, advocating, baseball-watching (and winning!), reading, laughing, teaching, investing, traveling, syrup-making, going on dates with Dolores, spending time with grandchildren, square dancing in your garage and most importantly, laboring quietly and with intent and focus in the harvest of God. Our lives, our appreciation for genealogy and our story-telling wouldn't be the same without you! ~ *Ruth R. Harder*

WITH OUR MEMBERS

50-year anniversaries

Kenneth and Joyce (Juhnke) Kaufman, December 22, 1957

Births

To BCMC's mission partners, Joe and Anna Sawatzky:

Levi Christian Liechty Sawatzky born November 4, 2007



OBITUARIES

Mildred Margaret Regier—August 13, 1923 - November 25, 2007

Mildred Margaret Regier was born to Margaret Epp and Cornelius R. Regier in Newton, Kansas, August 13, 1923. Mildred passed away in the Kansas Christian Home November 25, 2007.

She was baptized on May 28, 1939 in the Zion Mennonite Church, Elbing, Kansas. In 1968, she joined the Bethel College Mennonite Church.

Mildred received her early education in the Elbing Elementary School and the Whitewater High School graduating in 1942. In 1951 she went to the Fort Wayne Bible College graduating in 1954 with a teacher's diploma. She received a degree for teaching from Bethel College in 1956.

After teaching one year at Berean Academy she stayed home to care for her mother. She enjoyed teaching children in church. She will be missed by her family. She is survived by brothers Otto, Howard and Menno and his wife Doris; also, two nephews, Myron and his wife Lori and children Bradley, Amy and Eric and James and his wife Debra and children Matthew, Katie and Kyle.

She was preceded in death by her father and mother.

Kurt Allen Harder—October 27, 1958 - December 4, 2007

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF KURT HARDER

I was born 10-27-58 to Willis and Dorothy Regier Harder. I grew up on a farm four south and five west of Moundridge. Our phone was Moundridge, I attended Buhler schools and went to Hoffnungsau church in rural Inman. I often joked that I had multiple personalities.

Growing up on the farm was filled with hard work, laughter and loneliness. Times were tough and we tried to conserve gasoline as much as possible. Trips to town were only out of necessity. Consequently, I didn't socialize much outside of school and church. There were no kids my age out near our farm so my brother David became my best friend and confidant. Since we were just 22 months apart in age, we spent many afternoons and evenings playing ball against each other in the barn or out in a field. I have many fond memories of those days. Those experiences and the hard physical labor of baling hay in little square bales, furrow irrigation, walking fields to pull or chop weeds built lots of muscles and self reliance. But I always felt like I was missing out on the social life that was going on in town.

School was easy and fun for me. I enjoyed math, English and Social Studies. My mom always had Walter Cronkite on while she made supper so my brother and I always watched the news and keeping up with current events was always important. In addition, my parents took Newsweek and Ebony magazine to help us see the outside world.

Family reunions were always fun also. Especially on the Harder side. I had five boy cousins on that side of the family and we would play games all afternoon and all night when we got together. A summer highlight was when Grandma Harder would have us or part of us over for a few nights stay. What a treat. We laughed ourselves silly.

While in school I participated in basketball, softball (7/8th grades) track and played the trombone. In high school, I played basketball 3 years, and golf 3 years, trombone four years. While in the band, I also played in the jazz