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From The President's Quill

As another year comes to a close for the BRHS I would like to share a Holiday memory of mine from New Mexico.

I come from a ranching background and one of my favorite times of year is Christmas. We would head for my Gramo Mabel's house in Tularosa, New Mexico where all of my realitives lived, except for my aunt and uncle in St. Louis. They also would come every year for the Cordova Christmas celebration. We usually arrived the day before Christmas Eve and as soon as you stepped on the ranch you could smell the cooking coming from the kitchen.

You could smell the tamales and the posole as well as the many different types of Christmas Cookies. If the wind was blowing right, you could also smell the stables, both good and bad. Each year our chore was to fill the paper bags with sand and candles for the lumanrios which would be placed outside my aunt and uncles houses as well as throughout Tularosa. All day Christmas Eve these would be set out and at dusk we would start lighting them. My uncles would then hitch up the horses to the hay wagon and we would stop at each cousins house to pick the family up. My uncles, fortified with a bottle of Christmas Cheer, would lead us all in Christmas carols as we toured the town.

We would end up at my Uncle Tacho's house where each of us would take turns playing different roles in our live Nativity scene, which came complete with sheep, a cow and a donkey. People would come from miles around to see this. Afterward we would go inside to get ready for Midnight Mass and come home to a feast of tamales and posole before heading to bed.

I would like to reeate that for my own children, but living in Colorado it is a little too cold to be out for hours standing in the stable. So instead, I opt for the hayride at the Holiday Stroll and continue to try and make wonderful memories for the children of Basalt. Please join us on Friday December 9th for a community gathering and stop by for a ride, a bite and a sweet.

Happy Holidays!

Diana C. CordovaElliott
President BRHS

Calendar of Events 2005

BRHS VICTORIAN HOLIDAY TEA - Dec. 4, 1- 3:30 p.m.
Primavera Restaurant - Afternoon Tea, sandwiches, scones, desserts. Music by the Walt Smith Trio. \$20.00 per person. Take a break from Holiday Shopping and enjoy tea in a festive atmosphere. On sale November 1 at Basalt Town Hall or by calling 927-4693.

**BRHS/CHAMBER HOLIDAY STROLL & TREE LIGHTING
December 9, 4-6:30 p.m.**

Lion's park Basalt - Tree Lighting with holiday music by the Basalt Middle School Band, hay rides thru downtown Basalt, BRHS chili and bread supper (\$5.00), bon fire and cookies by the Lion's Club. Decorate Gingerbread Cookies at the Wyle Art Center. Please join us for a wonderful community gathering.

A PIONEER'S CHRISTMAS

In the pioneer days, the home was decorated with green branches and homemade decorations. They did not have a big Christmas tree because there was no room for a large tree in their small homes. Pine cones, nuts, berries and popcorn chains were hung on the tree. Figures or dolls out of straw or yarn were made. Cookie dough ornaments and gingerbread men were also hung on the tree.

The Christmas dinner was planned and preparation of the food began weeks ahead of time. The Christmas goose was fattened up and the plum pudding was left to age in the pot until Christmas day. There were chores that began months before Christmas - such as making the gifts for the family members (corn husk dolls, sachets, carved wooden toys, pillows, footstools and embroidered hankies). Scarves, hats, mitts and socks had to be knitted. Girls were able to knit before they were six years old. Boys would make boxes for presents. If there had been a good harvest that year, presents were placed inside stockings. The stockings were hung on the fireplace. Cookies and fruit might also be found in the stockings.

Christmas Eve was a night for singing carols and telling stories around the fireplace. Christmas Day the whole family attended church and returned home to a Christmas meal. Then it was time to visit friends and neighbors.

Volunteer Opportunities

BRHS/CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HOLIDAY STROLL

We need volunteers for the following events at the Holiday Stroll. We will be there from 4:00 - 6:30 pm.

- Hay Wagon Ride: 2 persons to assist with riders signing release of injury paper and helping riders on and off the wagon. 4-6:00 pm
 - BRHS Chili Supper: 3 persons to help serve chili and bread as well as collecting money. We also need people to volunteer to make chili for this event. 5:00 - 6:30 pm
 - Ornament Sales: 2 people to sell the latest BRHS holiday ornament, The Frying Pan Inn. 4:00 -6:30 pm
- If you can volunteer for any of these events please call 927-4693 or email us at mail@basaltheritage.org.**