

Granny's Porch

Battery Powered Radios



Hello everyone. This is granny once again, ready for another visit on this beautiful February day. It's hard to believe that just last week most of us was without electricity and the ice and snow storm had closed most of the businesses and made it next to impossible for people to get out of their homes. Losing my electricity last week and having to use my oil lamp took me back to a time when I was a child and we had no electricity. At that time, we did not even have a battery powered radio which did not become available for many years later. I remember my first experience with

a radio and it belonged to our neighbors, Chester and Minnie Caldwell. My daddy would often go there to listen to the news when something happened. There had been a flood around the country and mother and daddy were getting ready to go find out more about it when I asked if I could go along and they said yes. I remember it wasn't long after this that other people began to get radios. A battery about the size of a small car battery powered them. When it started getting weak you could pour water around the ground rod so it could get better contact and this made the volume pick up for awhile. The batteries would last about six months and then we would have to order another one from Sears and Roebuck. When the new one arrived we would have news and music for another six months.

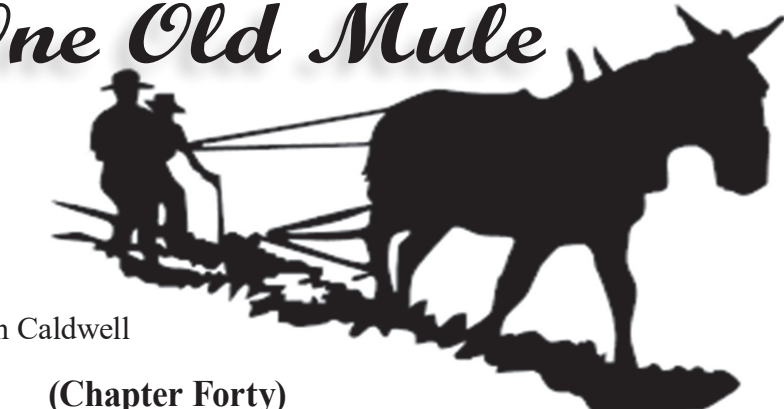
When I got married and had my children, they always enjoyed listening to the Grand Old Opry on Saturday night and the mid-day Merry-Go Round each day. One day when Danny was small, he was up real close to the radio listening to music and after awhile he looked up and said, "This sounds good to my ears." We had noticed that he often listened to the music this way. We always had a guitar around the house so it was no surprise that our children learned to play one. We soon realized that Danny wasn't content with just learning to play the guitar. He was learning to play the banjo also. (And numerous other string and non-string instruments.) My brother Hardy had an old banjo that Danny borrowed one day and my husband Foister told him that if he learned to play it that he would buy him one. It was about a week later that Foister was on his way to buy a banjo for him. Then as he grew older he would go and play with other groups eventually he acquired a Dobro and was soon playing it also. When he was sitting with his ear up close to the radio little did I realize that today he would meet and be playing all over the country with a good group of men called The Kerby Knob Boys. He plays the guitar and dobro with the group and also writes songs and sometimes sings.

I have had the opportunity to travel to Arizona, Indiana and other places where the Kerby Knob Boys have had concerts. It is always such an honor when I am able to get up and sing my favorite gospel songs with the boys and the crowd always seems to be very pleased.

I will put my pen away for this week and enjoy the beautiful sun shiny day the Lord has given us. Until next week, bye for now. Join me next week to hear one of my adventures through the years.

Love,
Granny.

One Old Mule



By Dan Caldwell

(Chapter Forty)

The sun had not showed any signs of creeping over the mountain, not even an indication of rising yet as the old farmer made his way to the barn. This was, according to the almanac, only the fourth full day of winter. Today was Christmas Eve and the old farmer and his four sons had a big day ahead of them. As he approached the barn the old farmer heard quite a commotion coming from the stalls. The two huge horses that belonged to his friend Drew Wilson were pacing around and around the stalls and snorting, blowing long blasts of air through their nostrils. The old gray mule snickered excitedly and pushed hard against the door.

Straining his eyes against the early morning darkness the old farmer stared ahead towards the barn. Something or someone had disturbed the animals it seemed! As he came closer, nearing the hallway, the old farmer was startled by Highbones, the old red hound as he shot past, nearly knocking the old farmer off his feet! With a terrific roar he bounded around the corner of the barn and ran down the hallway, disappearing out the other end of the barn. Almost instantly he was back, head down, barking with nearly every breath, sniffing the ground along the hallway near the horse's stalls. Some wild animal had no doubt been in the hallway! The old farmer's first thought was of the huge black bear he had encountered earlier this summer. Highbones' bark echoed down the hall and the two huge horses whinnied loudly, stomping their feet and crashing against the stall doors. The old gray mule was still. He knew the voice of Highbones and somehow knew it was all right. As the old farmer came into the hallway he reached up and took a lantern from the peg and lighted this, turning the wick up slowly as he looked away down the hall. He knew better than to look directly into the blaze for that would cause him to be temporarily blinded and who could tell if there was something close by. The old farmer would take no chances. Highbones kept on, sniffing, barking and running to one end of the barn and back again. Whatever had been here was gone now it appeared. The old farmer studied the ground near the stall doors, holding the lantern low as he looked for tracks. There! Right in front of the old mule's stall was a footprint. The footprint of a huge bear!! And there in front of the horse's stall were more. As he looked the old farmer saw even more evidence. On the door to one of the stalls were huge scratch marks! The bear had been trying to get one of the horses! Or maybe he wanted the old mule.

"Perhaps he has a short memory" the old farmer chuckled to himself in spite of the danger. "Looks like we're gonna have to go a-huntin' soon" he said to Highbones, who by this time had returned to his side.

"Talkin to yerself agin" asked Drew.

"You like livin dangerous" the old farmer mimicked his speech, then laughed, "You should be careful 'bout slippin up on a man in the dark."

"What gives?" Drew asked, "I heard the commotion out here."

"Oh, just an old bear been sniffing and pawing around in the night".

"Figures" said Drew, "They're pretty hungry this time of year. I thought they would be gone to den by now, but I guess the warm weather has kept them up a little longer than usual."

"This one is an ornery ol' cuss" said the old farmer, "We tangled once before, back in the summer. I recognize his footprints there, if you notice, he's missing a nail! We'll meet again someday I reckon and a lot sooner if he keeps hangin around the barn."

"Young Andrew and I are taking off." said Drew, "We'll keep an eye out for him along the way."

"We should feed the horses and, you fellows should stay and have breakfast too before you go."

"Nah, the horses are too nervous to eat and Andrew and me don't usually have breakfast anyway. We'll saddle up and head up the trail. It's been really good seeing you again though Ben. Thank Elizabeth for the coffee this morning and give her all my best, bring her for a visit sometime."

"There's some things for you fellows in your saddlebags" said the old farmer, "Thank you for everything."

As the two rode away into the darkness the old farmer turned his attention to the old mule. He would be fed, watered and curried before the day's work would start. The same would happen at the end of each day as well. It had always been so, for as long as the old farmer and the old gray mule had been friends!

As he returned to the house with the morning's milking the old farmer caught the scent of fresh coffee and frying bacon floating on the warm early morning air. It was actually warm enough to rain today, but the sky looked clear as he gazed away to the east. A faint pink glow was just appearing in the eastern sky. It would be a good day. Elizabeth would be eager to get started with her visit with her daughters in law. John had said that Luke's wife Mary might even be coming today! The old gray farmer smiled that would be good for Elizabeth to have all her son's wives with her on Christmas Eve!

"Breakfast looks good this morning", said the old farmer "As usual."

"Get yourself washed up then" she answered, "and please wake Jacob so he can get ready too."

"He can take the wagon and drive you to Matthew's house this morning. I think he's ready for that now. He's learned a lot this summer and has become quite a little helper."

"I think he's taking after his Grandpa." Elizabeth smiled.

The old farmer removed his hat and began to wash his hands but said nothing. Elizabeth watched as he washed his face and, with hands still dripping, wiped his silver hair back into place, shaking the excess water back into the washpan. As he reached for the towel he said, "That's not a bad thing, I guess. We've done pretty well for country folk."

"It's a great thing" she spoke softly, "Sit."

Breakfast was done in silence, as was custom for the old farmer. There were plenty other times for talking, in his opinion, so conversation was kept to few words. As they were finishing, they heard the sound of footsteps on the front porch, followed by a knock and then the opening of the front door.

"What did you fellows do before lunch?"* Mark teased as he, John and Matthew entered.

The old farmer laughed, "Oh, nothing much except plow the north forty, where's Luke?"

"He'll be along in a bit," said John, "He's hitching Big Joe to the wagon so he can pull it out of the barn."

"I'll go and bring up the other wagon and the old gray mule for Jacob" said the old farmer to Matthew, "He's taking his grandmother to your house to visit today."

By the time Jacob had gone with Elizabeth the sun was just coming over the mountain up East Branch behind the tiny cabin. Today would bring a great change for this tiny house where the old farmer had lived and raised a family with his Elizabeth. The old farmer looked about and without another word, picked up his crosscut!

*This is an old saying that folks in the Sandy Fork would use to tease somebody about sleeping too late.

Community Connections



Do you need help to make important Health Insurance decisions? Then, now more than ever, is the time to sit down and talk with someone that can provide you with the up-to-date information. Community Connections is here for you to find abundant resources. There are more choices available for 2021 more than ever before. Contact us so we can go into more great detail. There are options for everyone. If you have Medicare, now is the time to come on board with us so that we can help you cut your cost and get all the benefits that you have worked for.

Choosing health insurance can be pretty expensive and sometimes you may feel there is no way that you can afford the premiums and all the copays that come along with it.

Well, I am here to walk through and guide you with all possibilities. COVID 19 has brought about change to our communities and there are help out there for almost everyone.

If you do not have health coverage, contact me and I will get you covered. Most plans are at \$0 cost. Ask us about the COVID 19 Medicaid.

We have lots of good companies to choose from. We want to assist you with any type of coverage. Need dental or vision. We have the solution for you. Stop and take a minute to call us and watch us take care of your health insurance needs for all ages. To learn more call Jennifer or one of the girls at 606-658-2276. Due to our call volume, please be patient if you are put on hold.

