

**Terrace Bay
Schreiber**

News

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Guest editor

Father Bill LeGrand
Dear friends in Christ:

At Christmas we experience the warmth of Christ's presence among us in a unique way- a young child born naturally to Mary and Joseph through the supernatural power of our Heavenly and loving Father.

It is God's will that he be known to us the warmest, intimate and human way as a vulnerable bundle of gurgling humanity.

This is awesome and totally unexpected that our God should call us personally into his fellowship to share in his great creation.

Christ's light in the world shines out of a cradle not a palace or in a cathedral with a glorious choir.

Later in our Christian year, we experience the vulnerability of Christ in the presence of the cross where God totally gives of himself to us in his son.

This too is awesome that the powerlessness of the cradle becomes transformed into the powerfulness of the cross.

The lonely hill changes to an empty tomb that brings great light into a dark world.

The Christ we know is never removed from our lives but is present among us as a living community.

This is what the incarnation means- God coming to us in his son.

Making us aware of a saviour who heals, comforts, affirms and forgives us and expects us to share in this personal transformation with others.

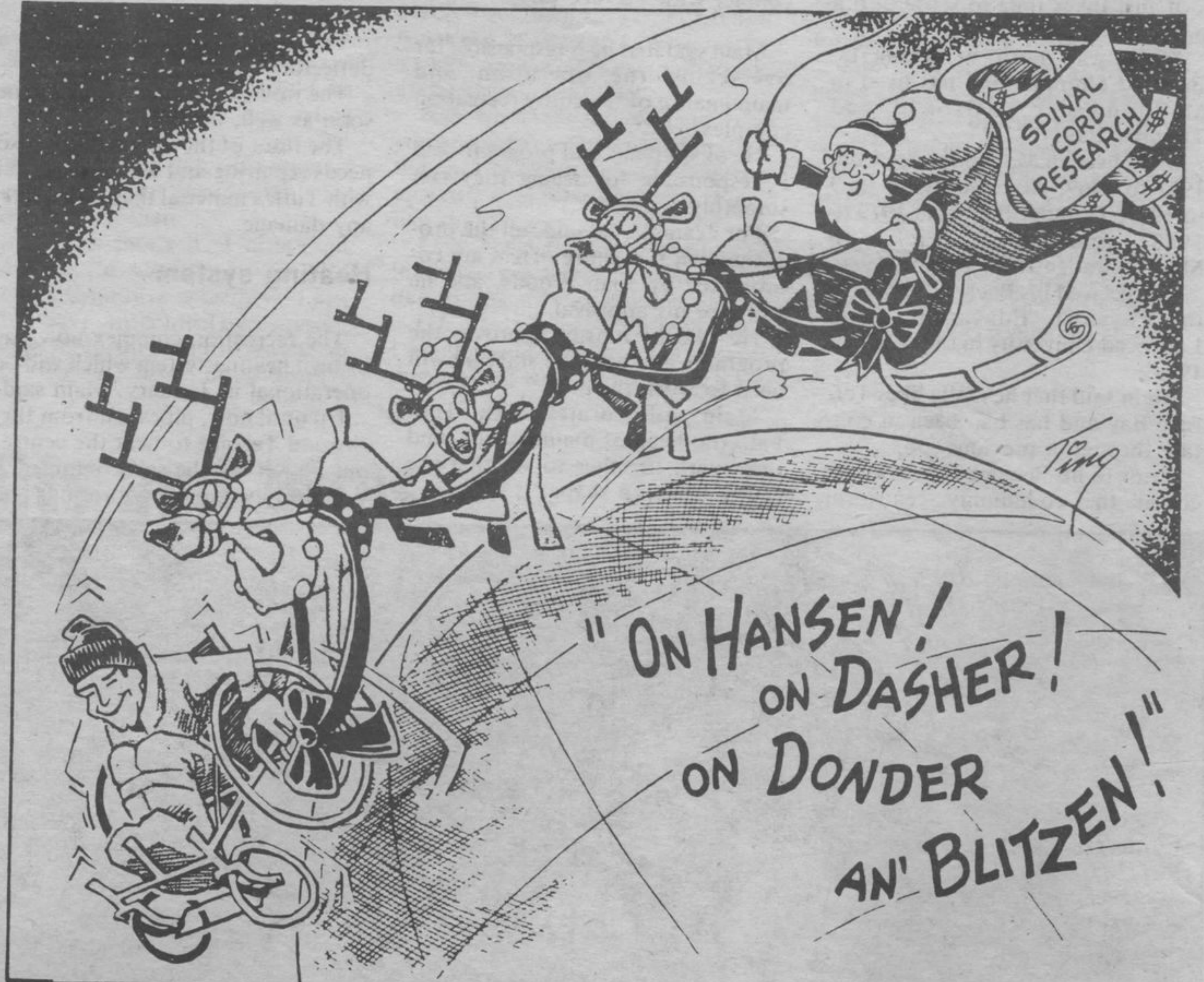
We are a living community because Christ is our community.

Whoever we are this Christmas, wherever we are, in our personal journey of faith, we are drawn by the power of God's love.

This too is awesome. It's this love which enables you and me to know God's power of love within each of us.

May this love born out of vulnerability transform us this Christmas.

Yours in Christ- *Father Bill LeGrand.*



Glad tidings for this holy season

We live in a world of uncertainty. In the past year many of us have known sorrow and tragedy and disappointment.

Friends we've held close to our hearts have died- that sudden, irreversible action which shocks our system.

Friends we've known have moved- and their departure has left an emptiness which seems profoundly deep.

Friends in our community share their anxieties... the possibility of a layoff looms as a dangerous, unseen threat.

Into this uncertainty, we experience the certainty of God's Presence among us in a cradle... a vulnerable, wee babe born in a lighted stable, surrounded by the cold darkness of a world threatened by its own paralysis of war, death and economic hardships.

Our God- in all of His Creative

Might- chose to have His son, the infant Jesus, arrive helpless and poor.

That no room was available for Jesus, "the light of world" is an illumination of our own fragility and limitation.

As the babe became a man, he too would find times of rejection- where the Son of Man would not even have a place to lay His head.

The power of Christ is not found in certainty of riches or guarantees of success- His ultimate destiny was to experience the loneliness, anxiety and abandonment of a rugged cross.

But that cross, like the cradle, possesses hope- for it's through our Lord's struggle with life that He made the Cross a sign of victory at Easter... the final destination of a Christmas journey of faith.

Christ's power is in His understanding of the struggle and uncertainty of life. He knows what it means to be human, to be poor, to be

vulnerable.

His response to us is not to offer the cheap grace of a life without struggle; rather, He joins us in our spiritual journeys, as He heals, comforts, inspires and conquers with us as His people.

On this Christmas Eve as we gather in fellowship, let's be sensitive to God's Word and sacrament in our Eucharist.

We celebrate not a life of endless happiness, but a life of hope that Christ is with us and in us in all our experiences and genuine joy.

It's in turning to meet Christ weekly in our community that we find peace and certainty, in our uncertain times.

May this Christmas give you cause for hope in God's peace, which passes all our human understanding.

May your struggles allow you to hear good tidings.

Bill Le Grand.

Black N' White

by Arthur Black

Puh leeze haylp me, ah'm faaaaallin'.....

Remember that nasal refrain? It's the title of an old Country and Western ditty sung by Ferlin Husky or Leroy Van Dyke or some such adenoidal crooner of the feathered-stetson-and-beat-up-guitar persuasion. I've been humming it under my breath a fair bit lately, because Lord help me, I'm a-fallin' too. Not in love, exactly. It's more like I'm being seduced.

By computers. I am going to buy a computer. I don't like the things and I certainly don't understand them, but just as sure as Santa's elves are working time and a half these days, I am going to buy one soon.

Don't know why, exactly. I suppose it's partly because everybody I know in the newspaper business treats me like a shuffling Neanderthal for clinging stubbornly to my battered, un-electrified Olivetti. What's more, I am slowly coming around to appreciation of the idea

that a floppy disc might be a more convenient way to file old columns and story ideas than the Duz Detergent cardboard box I currently employ.

My boss is in favour too. When I mentioned my intentions, the Editor You Love To Hate darn near sloped some of the Bay rum aftershave out of the shipped coffee cup he carries around. "Good idea!" he burred. "In fact, it's a great idea! Just be sure to insist on the model that can -- you know -- proofread your columns and correct your spelling and all."

I believe he's trying to tell me something.

At any rate, the signs of an impending purchase are unmistakable. I've been thumbing through computer catalogues a lot, trying to figure out my monitors from my printers from my coaxial duodenal modem caciators or whatever they're called. I buttonhole computer owners and ask them for advice. Then I try to figure out what they told me.

There is just one tiny problem in

all this: I don't want to buy my own computer right now -- for several reasons. Number one, I can't afford it. My state of financial solvency would not sustain a layout of one or two grand just to bring another machine into my life. (As a matter of fact, I am not financially solvent enough to put stamps on my Christmas cards, but that's another story.)

Number two, I sense that it is the wrong time to buy a computer. No profound market analysis there -- it's just that I always buy things at the wrong time. If I was to go out on a Wednesday and become the proud, new owner of the best, most popular computer on the market -- say a Golgotha X/500 Deluxe with infinite megabyte capacity and extra-sensory holographic disc drive, you could bet the mortgage money that by Thursday, company shares would have plummeted through the Stock Exchange basement, the chief executive officer of Golgotha would have taken up permanent residence in a Swiss Alps condo and I would be the

owner of the most expensive and complicated boat anchor in technological history.

I suffer, you see, from the reverse of King Midas' dread disease -- everything I touch instantly turns to dreck. Besides, the computer business is flaky enough on its own. Whole brand names rise up and crash back into the swamp of the marketplace overnight, disappearing without a trace. It would be just my luck to trudge on down to the local Comput-O-rama, lay down my hard-earned credit card and come back home with the computer equivalent of the Edsel.

Those are just a few of the reasons I shouldn't be thinking of buying a computer right now -- which in turn is why I keep the credit card I might use for the purpose wrapped in a yellowing scrap of newspaper. I've made a pact with myself to read that scrap of paper before I use the credit card. It's a story about a British computer installed a few years back by the Avon County Council. The computer was to print out

wages to Avon County staff, and it did...sort of. It raised one caretaker's wages from 75 pence to 75 pounds per hour. On the other hand, it stoutly refused to pay anything at all to one cafeteria worker for four and a half months.

One janitor received the princely sum of 2,600 pounds for one week's work. When he valiantly sent the cheque back, the computer instantly printed another one for the same amount and dashed it off to him by return mail. Before somebody finally managed to yank the plug on the beast, it was discovered that of 280 employees on the Avon County payroll, only 8 had been paid the correct salary.

Pablo Picasso, who knew more than just which end of a paintbrush was up, once said "Computers are useless. They can only give you answers."

Yup. And the answers they give you ain't necessarily correct, either.