



## Newsletter

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Sunday, August 19, 2018

Gene and Nita want to say thank you to all who spent so many hours and so much energy pulling off the celebration last Sunday of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their work at Anna Street.

We got it wrong in previous newsletters when we reminded our readers of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at the Canyon Hills church. Their 4 to 6 p.m.

reception is set for Saturday, the 18<sup>th</sup> (not Sunday, as we said). They will also have special activities all day on that Sunday.

Jenelle Smith is home again after several days in ICU. Her bad fall left her looking battered, but she seems to be OK. Mike Atchley is also home after his stroke. He expects to have carotid artery surgery any day now.

“The Sermons in Acts” is the theme of Lee Kendle’s Wednesday evening series. He’s encouraging us to listen to these historic sermons more closely than we usually do.

Our change cans for High Plains Children’s Home are due back at the church no later than Sunday, Aug. 26. As we finish up this summer project, it’s time for us to start bringing large trash bags for the fall trip of the supply-pickup man from New Mexico Christian Children’s Home.

Preparing communion for our large crowd last Sunday turned out to be a big job. Thanks to Joyce for having everything ready. Who can fill the empty slot on the sign-up sheet for September? (How did that month get here so soon?)

It seems as if some of our folks are roaming at any time. Yvonne Booth is somewhere in North Carolina this week. Tyler and Jann Allen have their new RV on the road.

On our calendars we need to mark Nov. 20 as the day for Amarillo’s annual prayer breakfast.

### Worship Assignments for This Lord’s Day

In charge, Lyndon; Prayer, Gaylord; Scripture, Jim C.; Bread, Gene Smith; Wine, Ben P.; Serve, Jerry D., Ron J.

### Nuggets of Wisdom

By Dr. Joe Barnett

“Generosity, like any other virtue, is a growth process.”

“Don’t let your wants outrun your generosity.”

“God measures donations not by the size, but by the sacrifice.”

## Matters of the HEART

### Covering the Grave

In the epilogue of Greg Isle’s incredibly thick adventure novel *Mississippi Blood*, he takes his readers to a cemetery for the burial of his multi-volume hero, former Texas Ranger Walt Garrity.

For readers who might not know the usual post-funeral routine, Isle explains that most of the time graves are filled quickly and effortlessly. After the last mourners load up and drive away from the grave, cemetery workers using backhoes or tractors take only a few minutes to shove the dirt into the hole atop the casket.

To convey the immense respect Garrity’s military and law-enforcement colleagues felt for him, however, Isle tells how several of those veterans impetuously picked up nearby shovels and filled his grave by hand.

I had been reading this best of Isle’s best-selling novels almost non-stop during the first three days of this year’s spring getaway with my brothers at the Key Place, our mother’s old home. Reading Isle’s graveside scene would have impacted me regardless of where I read it. But being there with those guys in that place caused it to hit home a lot harder.

Just that morning my brothers had driven out to the family cemetery south of town to check on the growing cluster of gravestones, including those for our parents.

More than a quarter of a century has slipped by since the day when we gathered with kinfolks and a host of family friends to say goodbye to my mother. And I’ll never forget what happened there that day.

When the proper words had been spoken, the final prayer prayed, and the last hugs and tears shared, we came to the time when folks normally start leaving. Only when all of us are gone can the undertaker and his grounds crew tend to the final closing of the grave.

But that day, on the spur of the moment, without a smidgeon of preplanning, my brothers and I spontaneously grabbed several shovels and, while our friends and family drove back to town to begin lunch at the church, we paid our final tribute to our mother. We filled her grave by hand.

The blessedness of that long-ago experience ignited anew in my heart as I sat at my mother’s childhood table and read Isle’s account of a similar graveside tribute. In his story it is a powerful scene. I’m sure the writer thought he was being original. But I’ve been there, done that, and I’ll always be grateful for that blessed hour.

By Gene Shelburne