

# THE VOICE

## Grain Valley Historical Society



### Historical Society Meeting

**November 21, 2019**

**Join us for a pot luck  
dinner at 6:00 pm  
followed by our  
program and meeting.  
Hope you can attend.**

### *The Voice*

*Is published monthly as  
an internet newsletter. If  
you know someone who  
would enjoy receiving a  
copy, please let me know  
and I will add them to the  
list!*

*mlnmizzou@gmail.com*

November is the 30 days between Halloween and Advent. Growing up, I personally looked forward to November. After all, it was the month of my birthday and presents! It was also the month of Thanksgiving! And finally, from the beginning of November until Christmas, it meant weekly shopping trips to the square in Independence, the Country Club Plaza, or downtown Kansas City.

I did most of my growing up in the 1950s. Birthday parties in those days were a family gathering with cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. My family was small, so all of my nearby relatives meant five extra people! Many of you probably had more immediate family members than I had relatives! None the less, we celebrated with dinner, usually a roast with potatoes and carrots, and a birthday cake. My personal favorite was my mother's angel food cake from the Better Homes and Gardens Cookbook. It had powdered sugar frosting. For my birthday, Mom added pink roses and green leaves.



Was your mom like mine? On your birthday, did she bake cookies or cupcakes and take them to school for all of the kids in your class. The "party" was at the end of the school day and usually included red kool-aid! Lane Lasher, a classmate, also had a November birthday and sometimes our moms would collaborate and we'd have a real party with games.



*Petticoat Lane  
Looking west toward Macy's*



*Country Club Plaza  
The Red Candles on 47th Street*

## Visit our website

[www.grainvalleyhistory.com](http://www.grainvalleyhistory.com)

For information on museum hours, meetings, special events and building rental, check out our website. The website is provided and maintained courtesy of the

### **Valley News**

*Grain Valley's Community Newspaper*

The days following my birthday were spent preparing for the big Thanksgiving feast. My mother and Aunt Opal (Fristoe) took turns hosting the big event. But everyone contributed to the food for the day. I'm guessing most of you are reading this article and remembering what everyone in your family brought to the table. As I sit here typing, I can taste Grandmother Rumbo's homemade noodles and stuffing, Grandmother Napier's homemade dinner rolls and Aunt Opal's home canned green beans and her baked macaroni and cheese. Mom added the turkey, "real" mashed potatoes and rutabagas and they all brought a yummy dessert which included Manor Bakery fruitcake, heavenly hash, and pies — pumpkin, pecan, and chocolate. Aunt Opal always spoiled my brother with a chocolate meringue pie. Her chocolate pie was the best! My job was to help mom with the relish plate. I think the men's job was to make sure there were enough chairs around the dining room table, and to keep the conversation flowing!. At least, that's what I remember.

Finally, November was the month to begin our Christmas shopping. My family always made one trip to downtown KC to see the windows at Emery Bird Thayer and Harzfeld's Petticoat Lane and the talking Santa at Macys.

Another yearly trip was to shop and see the lights at the Plaza. Do any of you remember the big red candles that once lined the streets or the reindeer that were destroyed by vandals in the early 1960s?

And, of course, there were numerous trips to Independence Square, where my favorite place was Woolworth's "big" dime store. I still display the nativity my family purchased there around 1954. On the bottom of one of the wise men is the price tag. It was 29-cents.

So, as November approaches, I have much to anticipate, although the birthday, not quite so much anymore. I write this with the hope that each of you will reflect upon your recollections of past Thanksgiving seasons and remember all that we have for which to be thankful in 2019!

