

June Bug lives in a drab, unpainted shanty up a dirt road about a mile and a half from here. He is one of eight children whose father works as a farm hand whenever and wherever he can. (The going wage for farm labor is \$5 a day.) Like his brothers and sisters, June Bug eats when he can and wears what clothes are at hand, regardless of condition. And for his family, Christmas is just another day. It would have been the same this year had it not been for the "Bikes and Trikes for Tykes" program which friends of Koinonia made possible. Two bikes and several trikes and strollers put June Bug and his siblings on wheels and their hearts on wings. This was true at his neighbor's, and at his neighbor's neighbors. In fact, 32 bikes, 16 trikes, 3 scooters, 8 cars, 3 wagons, 12 strollers and other toys were distributed throughout the area on Christmas day.

With the funds you provided (\$434.55), Al Henry bought the rolling stock from the Goodwill Industries in Columbus, thereby also helping the handicapped, who had re-worked and repainted it. Even after purchasing their entire supply, Al didn't have enough equipment to go around. So with the money that was left and which came in late (another \$951), Al is planning another distribution on Easter of approximately 75 bikes and related gear. Along with our thanks we send the flashing smiles of many kids who have joined the American rolling fraternity.

But while wheels can bring joy, they may also bring sorrow. During the past few months we have been involved in a rash of accidents. While Carol Henry was stopped behind a car waiting for it to make a left turn, another car smashed into her from the rear, jamming her little Volkswagen into the car in front, thus making a \$500 VW sandwich. She was charged with failure to have her car under control, but this was later dropped and the offending car's insurance paid all damages. No one was hurt, and for the first time we seemed to be getting a fair deal in court, a new experience for us. Shortly after this, on a black, rainy night, Clarence Jordan plowed into the rear of a black pick-up truck which had stopped ahead to make a left turn but which had no turn signal, no brake light and almost no tail light. There were no injuries, the truck was not damaged but Clarence's car was to the extent of about \$200. Clarence was charged with failure to yield the right of way, which he is contesting. His attorney is Koinonia's long-time friend, C.B. King of Albany. Again, it's a new twist for south Georgia when a Negro lawyer defends a white client. The case thus far has been repeatedly postponed.

Then not long ago Collins McGee was coming home from Americus one night when some white guys came up behind him and rammed his car with their bumper. He stopped and got out to see if they had done any damage. They stopped some distance behind him. Collins then got back in and as he started off, the car in the rear put its bumper next to his and began pushing him at high speed down the highway. For the next five miles he never got such good mileage. When he was almost at the Farm, the rear car quit pushing and came around him at high speed. Just as it got even with his front end, it cut into him. This caused Collins to swerve, and he turned over. He was shook up but unhurt. Damages: \$200.

The last accident occurred one night in mid-March when our three big (2000 lbs each) Santa Gertrudis beef bulls got into a fracas. One of them was pitched through the fence, so he decided to stroll down the road rather than continue the fight. He soon was met by a more formidable "bull"--a fast-moving car driven by the pastor of a near-by Baptist church. Undaunted, the bull would yield not an inch. The driver tried desperately to stop but could not. Fortunately, neither the pastor nor his wife sustained serious injuries, though the car was badly damaged. It cost the bull his life.

Shortly after Christmas Clarence and Florence Jordan went up east on a combination pleasure and business trip. While parked at a motel one night their car was broken into and among other things Clarence's brief-case was stolen. Unfortunately none of his old sermons were in it, but it did contain a big stack of unanswered correspondence which had accumulated during the pre-Christmas rush. So if any of you wrote letters during last

October, November and December to either Clarence or the Farm which were unanswered, you may eventually get a reply from the thief's secretary.

But wonderful things happen to us too. A new family, the George Hardins, have recently joined us. George is a native Georgian and his wife Marty is from Canada, while their only child, one-year-old Sarah is from heaven. We have known the Hardins for several years and were not surprised at their desire to join us. Though very young (he is now only 20), George was rising rapidly in the restaurant business, and resigned his job as assistant manager of a large Atlanta restaurant to come here. He had come to feel that life was more than just making a living, that there must be a larger purpose than "success." He wanted to be part of a community, not a cog in a machine. He believes that Koinonia's way of life based on brotherhood, peace and sharing is more fruitful than the cannibalistic, warring materialism which characterizes most of America's life. George will probably be in charge of production of our mail order items--pecans, fruit-cake and candy--as well as helping with cattle and other farm work.

Just before Christmas the Baptists of this area held a district rally at the First Baptist Church in Americus. The principal speaker, a prominent Southern Baptist clergyman, was the father of one of our members. Since the announcement of the event in the local paper stated that the public was invited, a number of us decided to attend. As the first ones in our group, who were white, entered the door each was handed a card on which to write his name and church. Clarence entered first, then Linda and Millard, then Collins (who is Negro). A card was automatically handed to Collins but when the usher noticed that his hand was black he just froze, and so Greg, Carol and Al, who came in next were not given cards, even though they are white. When it was clear that all had gotten past the door, the group walked down the aisle nearly midway, found a vacant bench and sat down together. The congregation was singing Gloria in Excelsis, Deo. Hardly had we taken our seats when the people in the pew in front of us started holding a conference with one another, and as soon as the congregation finished singing Gloria, they moved into the aisle and found seats elsewhere. This made an island of the Koinonia group, with a vacant bench in front and rear, and an aisle on right and left. This, however, did not prevent us from joining in the next hymn, "It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old . . of Peace on Earth, Good will to Men." About mid-way the first verse, the frozen usher, now thoroughly thawed, came down the aisle next to Al and said, "He (pointing to Collins) can't stay in here." When Al ignored him and continued to sing "Peace on Earth . .", the usher entered the vacant pew and stood in front of Collins and said, "Come on, nigger; get out of here; you can't stay in here." Then Collins, who sings Christmas carols like a buzz saw, discovered that he too could sing "Peace on Earth . .". Finally the usher said, "Am I going to have to drag you out of here? You're disturbing divine worship and I'm gonna have you arrested." With this he grabbed Collins and started to drag him over the bench. Clarence then stopped him and asked, "Do you have the authority to do this?" "Yes." "May we see the pastor?" "No, you've got to get out of here; you're disturbing divine worship."

The congregation was still singing "Peace.." We moved into the aisle and out the door. Standing on the steps outside, with about a dozen laymen and the pastor between us and the door, the head usher told us, "This is our church. We own it and we control it. The Federal Government didn't put one dime in it and can't tell us who we can let in." Clarence said he thought the Holy Spirit controlled a church, and the reply was, "That's beside the point. This is our church; we own it." "But doesn't God own the church?" "I told you that was beside the point." The pastor said that he and some others didn't personally agree with this policy of turning Negroes away, but that the church had adopted it and that it would be best for us to leave. Carol asked him to please tell her daddy that she came to hear him but was turned away. He said he would. We left.

But one of these days we'll all sing together, "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men."