



The Country Register

Available across the U.S.A. & Canada

Minnesota's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Premier Events

Free! - Take One!

July/August 2025

Happy Independence Day!



Minnesota's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Premier Events



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www.countryregisterofminnesota.com

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Months July/August 2025

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the

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Special Events	
<u>July</u>	
11-13.....	Monthly Sew In - Up North Quilt Shop - International Falls
16-19.....	Party Express Shop Hop - Michele's Quilting - Blue Earth
18-20.....	Monthly Sew In - Up North Quilt Shop - International Falls
17-August 19.....	Crazy Days - Quilt Haven on Main - Hutchinson
25-August 16.....	Quilt Minnesota Shop Hop
<u>August</u>	
1.....	Braham Pie Day - Braham
1.....	35th Annual Show of Small Quilts - Braham
1-3.....	Monthly Sew In - Up North Quilt Shop - International Falls
15-17.....	Monthly Sew In - Up North Quilt Shop - International Falls
30.....	Youth Sewing Class - Cabin Quilting - International Falls
<u>September</u>	
25-27.....	Des Moines Area Quilters Guild Quilt Show - Des Moines, IA
25-27.....	Junk Bonanza - Shakopee

The Country Register

Available across the USA & Canada

A Complimentary Guide to Specialty Shopping and Events

Traveling? Take us with you!

The Country Register is a great guide to local shops & events across the United States & Canada

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www.CountryRegister.com

*Indicates these editions are available online

Where in Minnesota?

Somewhere in Minnesota the image to the right can be found.

Where is it?

(Answer on page 10 of this issue)

AND THE WINNER IS...

Michelle Mohler of Johnston, IA won a copy of *Fabric + Paint + Thread = Fabulous*. Michelle picked up her copy of *The Country Register* at Quilted Dog in Cloquet, MN!

Congratulations Michelle!

GOD BLESS AMERICA, LAND THAT I LOVE

Recipe Exchange!

We want your recipes!

Have your favorite recipe featured in the next issue of *The Country Register*!

With every recipe you send in you will be entered in a drawing to win a copy of *Brown Family Favorites*!

Many families have their favorite recipes and often say they should publish a cookbook to save the recipes for generations to come. The Brown family of WaKeeney, Kansas, didn't just talk about it ... they did it!

Ernie and Janeen Brown come from a family that is well-known for its good cooks. They collected an amazing assortment of 537 recipes from family and friends. The professionally printed book is presented in a ring binder which allows more recipes to be added!

Send in your recipes now!

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Book Review

Artful Insights in Fabric

by Diane L. Murtha

Get ready to be inspired by Diane's stunning fiber art quilts in her first collection, "Artful Insights In Fabric"! With 40 gorgeous full-color images, Diane blends traditional and modern techniques in original contemporary designs. But this book is more than just a showcase of beautiful textile pieces - it's a personal journey that reveals Diane's delusions of grandeur, successes, and failures, along with the stories that inspired each quilt.

Whether you're a seasoned quilter or a fiber art enthusiast, Diane's art, wit, and wisdom are sure to inspire. Learn from her experiences as you explore her exquisite designs and discover the limitless possibilities of fiber art quilting. Learn more at: www.dianeLmurtha.com or on Instagram @dianelmurtha.

Available at Book Baby: <https://lstore.bookbaby.com>; Amazon and your other favorite bookstores. Retail \$19.99

You can register to win a copy of *Artful Insights in Fabric*!

Clip and mail in this form! If you prefer not to cut up your paper, write the form below on a note card and mail to: The Country Register; 2920 - 144th Ave NE; Ham Lake, MN 55304.

You will be notified and receive your prize by mail! Good Luck!

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Don't Forget to Renew Your Quilt Guild Membership!

By Janet M. Bair



In the swirl of summer activities, it's hard to even think of fall. But summer is often the time to renew your Quilt Guild membership. Our guild has a late fee, probably so it would contribute enough to be able to pay the speakers for the meetings on time. Besides listening to interesting speakers and learning new skills, I have enjoyed our quilt guild's "Show and Tell" each month immensely. I love seeing what other members are making, looking at the colors they chose and I can appreciate all their hard work.

One of the many blessings of being part of a quilt guild has been the generosity and sharing from other guild members. There is a table at our meetings where members can put out fabric, lace, ribbon, yarn, patterns, and quilting magazines and books that they no longer need. As a newcomer to the quilting world, I have really appreciated the opportunity to pick up quilters' magazines and extra fabric. Most of what I sew goes to charity, so this has been a huge blessing.

I also sew a lot for my two granddaughters. Recently, my daughter was given seven 18 inch "American Girl style" dolls! Her two girls were thrilled. One of them asked for a doll sweatshirt but when I looked through all of my patterns, I didn't find one.

Sadly, I went to Joann Fabrics one last time before they closed to look through their patterns. This has been my favorite fabric and crafts store for fifty years. I found a doll sweatshirt pattern but it was \$24! I don't even like spending that much on a shirt for myself let alone for a doll.

To my amazement, when I went to my quilt guild meeting, someone had donated over fifteen brand new doll patterns the exact size I was looking for. Among the patterns was one for a doll sweatshirt. Proverbs 10:22 came to my mind: "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."

Besides the many fabric pieces, I have gained, I have made some very special friends over the past three years. If you ever had any doubts about joining a quilting group, don't hesitate any longer. The benefits and the inspiration from a group are well worth the membership fees.

- © Janet M. Bair of Ansonia, CT. You may contact her at librarybair@hotmail.com



Des Moines Area Quilters Guild

Quilt Show

Quilt Makers
Village

September 25-27 2025

Iowa State Fairgrounds
4-H BUILDING



dmaqg.org/quilt-show



RAFFLE QUILT

Tilda Fabric & Quilting
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Alison Gootee/Studio D

Looking for a fun and quick project to do this summer with the kids or grandkids? Make your very own decorative pots!

There are so many options! Use paint to decorate with smiley faces, flowers, dots etc. Mod Podge can help to apply fabric, lace, yarn or jute. Use Glue to affix twigs, bark, seashells or burlap. All you need is a few craft supplies you probably already have, some old terra-cotta pots mixed with your creativity!

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*Happy 4th of July from
 The Country Register*



This month in
Minnesota
 History

July 3, 1863: Minnesota's first railroad fatality. A train strikes a wagon driven by Captain Abraham Bennett at the Como Road crossing in St. Paul. There had been talk of building a bridge at the site, and ironically, Bennett himself had opposed it.

August 7, 1915: Towed by the Ottumwa Belle, the last log raft passes Winona. The sawmills downstream soon cease operations as the lumbering era draws to a close.

From The Minnesota Book of Days (Minnesota Historical Society Press)



Exploring the World of International Quilt Festivals: A Global Journey of Inspiration Part 3 of 4

by Kim Caskey of Kim Caskey Tours

The Festival of Quilts in Birmingham, UK, is the largest quilt festival in the UK and truly one of the highlights of the quilting calendar. Although held in a convention centre, it is renowned for its unique "vignette" atmosphere and extensive array of exhibits. This festival draws thousands of quilters, textile artists and enthusiasts from all over Europe and beyond. With hundreds of quilts on display, the festival showcases a breathtaking variety of styles and techniques, from traditional piecing and applique to avant-garde art quilts and experimental textile designs. The competition categories span everything from novice to professional levels, offering attendees a chance to admire the work of both emerging and established artists. It is easy to see why this is one of my favorite events, as it embodies the diversity, creativity and excitement of the quilting world.



Knitting & Stitching Show

The vendor mall at the Festival of Quilts has a welcoming, open layout winding throughout the exhibition hall rather than in a rigid row-by-row setup. This inviting arrangement encourages exploration, making it easy for attendees to wander from one vendor to the next while discovering an incredible variety of fabrics, tools and quilting supplies. The international vendors bring unique products, from specialty textiles to innovative quilting tools, giving visitors access to materials often hard to find elsewhere. This thoughtful layout fosters a sense of community and discovery, adding to the friendly, vibrant atmosphere that makes the Festival of Quilts such a beloved event.

Additionally, the event features a full schedule of workshops, lectures and demonstrations led by industry experts, allowing quilters to learn new skills and connect with others who share their passion. The sense of community, the quality of exhibits and the chance to engage with quilters from all over make the Festival of Quilts an unforgettable experience every year.

The Knitting & Stitching Show™, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, UK, is a series

of annual events held across the UK, celebrating all things related to textiles, knitting and stitching. These shows have become a staple for quilt, textile and craft enthusiasts, offering a rich blend of exhibitions, workshops and demonstrations. They attract makers of all skill levels—from knitting and crochet to quilters, embroiderers and textile artists—

providing a welcoming space to explore new techniques, discover innovative materials and gain inspiration. The shows feature a wide array of exhibitors, including yarn and fabric suppliers, tool vendors and artisan craftspeople, offering unique products which cannot always be found in local shops.

The largest of these events takes place in the beautiful spa town of Harrogate and offers an expansive exhibition hall filled with creative showcases, including contemporary textile art, historical needlework displays and interactive installations. In addition to the stunning exhibitions, the event features a full schedule of hands-on workshops and talks, led by industry experts. Of course, the atmosphere is one of creativity and collaboration, with attendees eagerly exploring the latest trends, meeting fellow crafters and learning new skills. The competitions at this event are often open, encouraging a broad range of entries which blend quilting with other textile techniques, such as embroidery and knitting. This creates a dynamic showcase of interdisciplinary creativity.

We'll cover *Pour l'Amour du Fil* and *The European Patchwork Meeting*, both held in France, as well as the *Japanese Quilt Festival* in Japan in the next issue of *The Country Register*!

Kim Caskey, who is based in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, is a professional longarm quilter and owner of Kim Caskey Tours. Kim hosts specialized textile-based tours in numerous international destinations with unique and exclusive textile visits and activities creating memorable experiences for quilters, stitchers, their family and friends. Everyone is welcome on Kim's tours! www.kimcaskey.ca/tours, kim@kimcaskey.ca, 1-780-288-9008.



Knitting & Stitching Show

Owatonna • Waseca



1101 N. State St.,
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507-835-4000

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10am-5pm

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Recipe: Circus Peanut Salad
submitted by Patti Lee Bock

Ingredients:

- 1 large box orange gelatin
- 30 circus peanuts candy
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 can crushed pineapple or 1 can mandarin oranges
- 1 cup Cool Whip

Directions:

Dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Add cut-up candy and stir until the candy is melted. Drain fruit and add enough water to the juice to make 2 cups. Add this to the first mixture. Chill until partially set and add Cool Whip and fruit. Chill before serving.



A Cup of Tea with Lydia

by Lydia E. Harris

Celebrating Eight-TEA Years of Life



Years before my birth, God began weaving my life through the prayers of others. Unbeknownst to my parents, my five sisters were praying for a baby sister. My mother had already given birth to eight children and was approaching 44 years of age, so another child was not on her prayer list. Nonetheless, when my sisters saw used baby clothes hanging on the clothes

line to dry, they knew their prayers were being answered.

As my birth approached, my brothers predicted, "It's going to be a boy. We already have too many girls."

"Did you pray about it?" the girls asked.

The boys sheepishly hung their heads.

"We did!" exclaimed my sisters with confidence, "and we prayed for a girl."

I'm thankful God answered their prayers with my birth. After my mother's long delivery, the doctor said I was a dead baby. I've been proving him wrong for 80 years.

In the Bible, Psalm 90:10 (NKJV) states, "The days of our years are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years." So here I am!

You only turn 80 once, but thanks to God, family, and friends, I celebrated my birthday several times with birthday gifts and Cards and birthday gatherings.

From Lydia's Recipe File: Almond Bars

Makes 2 dozen or more bars, depending on size

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened

1 egg

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup sliced almonds

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar. Mix in the egg and flavoring. In a medium-sized bowl, mix together flour, baking powder, and salt. Combine the dry ingredients with the creamed mixture. Press the dough into the bottom of a well-greased 9x13-in. pan. Use moistened fingers to smooth the top of the dough. With a pastry brush, brush a little milk across the top of the dough. Sprinkle with sliced almonds. Lightly press the almonds in.

Bake 18-20 minutes or until beginning to brown around the edges. Do not let the bars brown. Cool in the pan for 5 minutes. Then cut into bars with a knife. If too soft to cut, cool longer. Carefully transfer the bars to a wire rack. Cool completely before icing.

ICING

1 cup powdered sugar

1 to 2 tablespoons milk

Add a tiny bit of milk at a time to the powdered sugar.

Add flavoring to the icing.

Tip: If too thick, the icing won't drizzle nicely over the bars. If too thin, the icing will melt into the bars. If unsure, test a bit of it on the edge of one bar before drizzling the icing over the entire batch.

When icing is firm, store Almond Bars in a covered container. Place wax paper between layers of cookies.

Lydia E. Harris is a tea enthusiast and the author of three books for grandparents: *GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids*, *In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together*, and *Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting*, all available at amazon.com.



SILENT SALUTE

by Barbara Kalkis

*They are not scarlet poppies fluttering in the breezes as of long ago.
But, determinedly, gently, they are planted row on row.
Nor do they fade as daybreak bows to dusk and twilight.
No, they keep solemn watch throughout the bleakest star-less night.*

*These sentinels stand for those who can no longer speak or share
Tales of sacrifice, fear, determination, dedication and care
To fight when country and duty called
In any land around the world.*

*Yes, in red, white and blue the flag of our birth proudly waves
Next to each name etched in the cold stone of a grave.
Stay a while and remember. Give thanks to this silent multitude
That cannot speak but earned the flag of honor and gratitude.*

Barbara Kalkis
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Quilt Minnesota Shop Hop!
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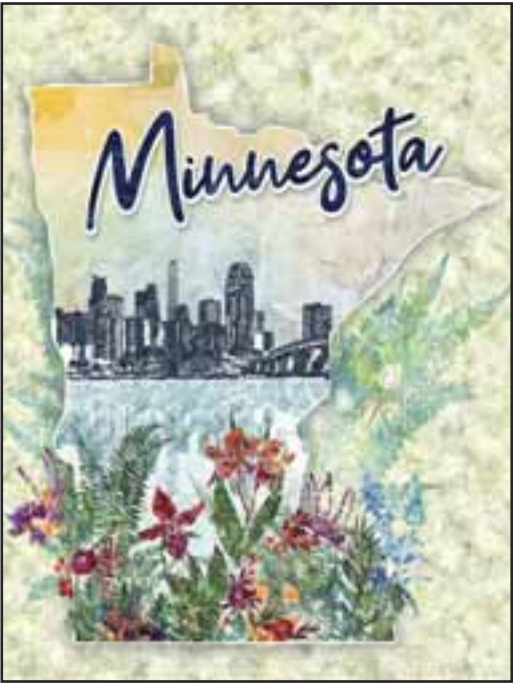
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July 25th - August 16th

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I USA

Become Inspired

By Annice Bradley Rockwell

Spectacular Summer Luxuries

The warm, hazy months of summer are some of the most anticipated ones of the year. With more daylight hours to enjoy, we can take delight in outings with family and friends that are relaxing, spontaneous and fun. To celebrate the season of summer, taking in the sights and sounds of a traditional Main Street parade is one of the inspiring luxuries of a country life. Streets lined with vibrant American flags are also filled with people young and old ready to share in a celebration of freedom. Groups of proud, uniformed Veterans are joined by the hometown Little League teams, Girl Scouts and local Fife and Drum Corps. Huge American flags wave beautifully in the summer breeze as the symbolic sound of cannon fire hearkens back to days of the past. Small children waving petite flags of glory are filled with wonder as their very own American town comes together in moments of unity and collective joy.

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Quaint Coastal Towns

Quaint coastal towns are fully alive and bustling on these warm summer days. Boutique shop doors are wide open to welcome eager buyers to sample their wares and to see the latest summer displays of seascape paintings, handcrafted jewelry of colorful sea glass and hand-stretched saltwater taffy.

Ice cream shops stay open extra late to catch the attention of the spectators who enjoyed a band concert by boat at the white town gazebo. A fireworks display once all is pitch black is a special grand finale on a day well-spent with friends. Unexpected precious moments of solitude also tend to greet us more frequently on these long, summer days. We might finally have time to enjoy a long morning walk into town, taking in all of the sights and sounds of summer. Passing by Middle Cove we see all the boats docked in the snug harbor ready for the day. Cozy restaurants are getting ready to welcome out-of-town guests who will undoubtedly want to return. And the local historical society is advertising a "Plein Air" event that catches your interest as a perfect summer afternoon activity with a best friend to try your hand at watercolor painting.

In Full Bloom

Summer provides us with the perfect opportunities to indulge in newfound joys. We will often have time to practice and refine a recently acquired soulful skill. Without a doubt, the long-anticipated season of summer is one to be treasured. It is when nature's beauty is in its fullest bloom—and usually so are we. So, this summer embrace the happiness that this special season affords. Recognize nature's powerful proclamation of pride. And as you see the splendor in its full glory, you may begin to see it reflected beautifully within.

--Annice Bradley Rockwell is an educator and owner of Pomfret Antiques. She is currently working on her book, New England Girl. NewEnglandGirl2012@hotmail.com

Happy Fourth of July!

Food and Photographs Worth a Thousand Words

by Kerri Habben Bosman

"Love that someone is there for it," the text reassures.

I am transported to a high school gym on an evening this past January as I sent my stepdaughter, Kira, photos of her daughter cheerleading. I had inundated her with images, so I said I hoped I wasn't being a pest. She answered, "Not at all! Love that someone is there for it!"

It was the last text I would ever receive from Kira. She wasn't at the game because she was in a cancer center three hours away. Her condition deteriorated suddenly, and a week later she passed away. As all the family and I sat with her those days, I quietly said to her that we would love her children as our own. She has three children, Kaylie (20), Emma (18), and Hunter (15).

In these months since Kira's death, we've continued being there for her family just as we did when she was with us. My husband, Wayne, and her husband, Nic, work on projects in their garages together and this spring we went to nearly all of Hunter's high school lacrosse games. His team won the State Championship in May. He will be his team's main goalie next year. And, he has a 4.0 grade point average! Not that we're proud of him or anything.

Often, Wayne and I pick up Hunter from school or after practice. We take him to and from his friends' houses and to see his girlfriend's soccer games.

When Hunter and I are sitting in the car, I silently pray. I ask that Kira's love for Hunter surround us. I ask that my own love for him be infused with hers, and that he will feel our combination of energies supporting him.

Because he is a teenager, he says little during our drives. But as we ride along, the quiet isn't awkward. It is just a comforting silence.

My mother taught me that food sometimes speaks louder than words. So, I cook Hunter's favorite meals and bake brownies and cookies for him to share with the lacrosse team. Sometimes he says something like "those meatballs were delicious," or "you make the best sandwiches." And I am filled with a happiness I cannot fully explain.

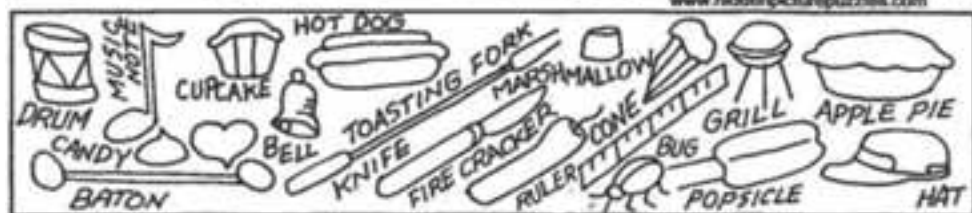
Throughout his lacrosse season this past spring, I shot photos at nearly every game using my zoom lens. Over the months I could see my own improvement at capturing the moments. I not only take photos of Hunter, I also take pictures of other players. After each game, I send the photos to Hunter, and he and his friends on the team enjoy them. By the end of lacrosse season, I was on the side of the field with the team photographer and the local newspaper reporter.

After one mid-season game, I told Hunter I'd found a good spot to take pictures. He answered, "I know. I saw you." From then on I never left the side of the field until the game was over. I wanted him to see me there supporting him, whether he had a shut-out or let in a few goals.

I know my role as a bonus grandmother; Hunter has his mother, who is always within him. He has his grandmother, who has been there his whole life and, then there is me in this unique space of loving him through his grandfather's and his mother's eyes. And through my own eyes, which sometimes fill up with tears when I know he isn't looking. They are not tears of grief, they are a tangible release of this not completely definable love that overflows within me. In those moments, I know that my car-ride prayers have been answered.

And that somehow, some way, Kira knows someone is there.

Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer living in Cape Carteret, NC. Her email is 913jeeves@gmail.com.



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Yvonne Hollenbeck

Old Eagle Eye

He can tell if a heifer is starting to calve, I swear from a mile away,
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He can see if a windmill is working or not from his horse on a faraway hill,
and tell what direction the wind's coming from by watching the tail on the mill.

He knows if a coyote or badger is near by watching the tracks in the sand,
and see if a staple is loose from a post on the fence that encircles his land.

He's got eyes like an eagle for finding new calves their mamas have hidden all snug;
so why can't he see the mud on his boots that he's tracking all over my rug?

Order Yvonne's new book, "A Stitch in Rhyme" at
www.yvonnehollenbeck.com — just \$15 + \$3.50 postage.

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Yvonne Hollenbeck, from Clearfield, SD, performs her original poetry throughout the United States, captivating audiences in her wake. She is one of the most published cowgirl poets in the West and is not only a popular banquet and civic entertainer, but also co-writes songs with many western entertainers. Yvonne also pens a weekly column in the "Farmer-Rancher Exchange" and writes articles about life in rural America in various publications throughout the West. For more information, visit <https://www.yvonnehollenbeck.com>





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Recipe: Turkey Stuffed Peppers

Ingredients:

- 8 green peppers, tops removed
- 1 lb ground turkey
- 1/3 cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 - 1/2 cup croutons
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- salt to taste

Directions:

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add peppers and boil for 5 minutes. Drain peppers well. Arrange in a lightly greased shallow baking dish and set aside. Brown turkey and onion together in a skillet over medium heat. Drain. Stir in 1/2 cup cheese, croutons, tomatoes and Worcestershire sauce. Sprinkle salt inside peppers. Fill peppers with turkey mixture. Cover and bake at 350° for 25 minutes. Uncover and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake an additional 5-10 minutes.



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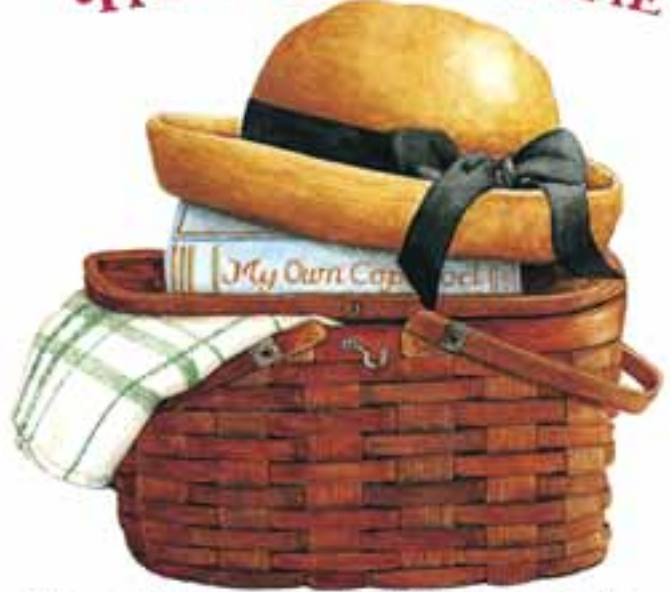
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Recipe: Strawberry Salad
submitted by Patti Lee Bock

Ingredients:	Directions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 pkg strawberry gelatin• 1 cup hot water• 1 cup chilled 7-up• 1 pt drained, frozen strawberries• 1 cup celery, diced• 1 cup drained crushed pineapple• 1 cup chopped nuts	<p>Dissolve gelatin in hot water. Cool. Add 7-up, strawberries, celery, pineapple and nuts. Chill until firm</p> 

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Find lots more of the little things that make the seasons bright at [susanbranch.com](#).♥

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How Do You Choose Fabric?

by Deb Heatherly

People have told me time and time again that choosing fabric is the hardest part of the process when making a quilt. When I owned my quilt shop, customers would tell us that they just did not know what would look good together, once the quilt was complete. Here are a few suggestions.

If you have a local shop, go in and let them help you. My employees had "a great eye" and loved helping customers put together stunning fabric combinations. Once you voice your preferences such as bright, muted, floral, novelty, etc., let them point you toward those fabrics and help you audition pieces that look great together.

Do you have a fabric in your stash that you've had forever because you absolutely love it, but have no clue what to use it for? Take that fabric with you to your local shop and ask them to help you pull companion fabrics that will make you smile. There's nothing like being surrounded with lots of options and many times the perfect combo might contain fabric you would never have purchased on your own. Be open to suggestions but remember you have the final say.

Kits are another great way to pick your next project. Many times, shops will have a sample hanging that catches your eye. They already have that fabric or something similar in a kit, so it's a win, win! You already know you are going to be happy once the quilt is finished because it will look similar to the one that was in the shop. Grab that kit and let the fun begin!

What about a scrappy project? To me using scraps is like visiting old friends. I love to reminisce about the quilts that each of the fabrics was used in. For a challenge, toss them in a bag and without peeking, vow to use each one in the order they were pulled. This can be a fun thing to do with a group of friends. You can even take turns pulling from each other's bags. Laughter and fun are sure to follow.



Finally, let the project go to the dogs, or in my case cats. When unsure of a fabric to begin, lay out several on the floor and let your dog or cat decide. Max loves this game and will quickly walk on them all and then pick one to lay on. When we play that game, I always take his 'advice' and begin selecting companions to go with his choice. It makes for some interesting quilts and you never know what will jump start your next masterpiece.

My last piece of advice is to just do it! Start sewing and see what evolves. Every quilt is a work of art and there is always someone who would love to snuggle under it, build forts with it, or use it on a teddy bear picnic. Get sewing and think of the possibilities.

Deb Heatherly is a designer for Creative Grids® rulers and the author of eight popular pattern books. Creative Grids® fans are invited to join her Facebook group, "Grids Girls," for tips and inspiration, and two free mysteries each year. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/7704296498004571>. Shop Owners are invited to join her group just for you, "Grids Girls for Quilt Shop Owners Only" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/273593657256524>. Visit Deb's website at www.Debcatsnquilts.com.

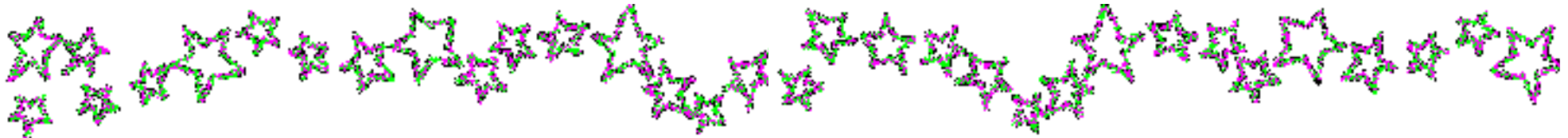
Search for the underlined words in the recipe in the word search below!

Chipotle Beef Tostadas

recipe by The Food Network

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
 - 1 pound ground beef chuck
 - 1 large white onion, minced
 - Kosher salt
 - 1 to 1 1/2 tsp chipotle chile powder
 - 1 - 10oz can Mexican-style diced tomatoes w/ green chiles
- 1 - 15oz can pinto beans, drained
 - 1 medium zucchini or yellow squash, diced
 - 2 cups coleslaw mix
 - juice of 1 lime, plus wedges
 - freshly ground pepper
 - 8 tostada shells
 - 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

Heat the vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the ground beef, half of the minced onion, 1 tsp salt and the chipotle chile powder. Cook, stirring and breaking up the meat with a wooden spoon, until the meat is browned and the onion is tender, about 7 minutes. Add the tomatoes, beans and zucchini and cook, stirring occasionally, until the zucchini is just tender, about 6 minutes. Meanwhile, toss the coleslaw mix, lime juice and salt and pepper to taste. Divide the tostadas among plates and spoon the beef mixture on top. Top with the cheese, slaw and the remaining minced onion. Serve with lime wedges.



Eagan



Kissed Quilts

by Marlene Oddie

Fireworks on Display

It is that time of year when we celebrate our nation's independence, often with fireworks! Can you believe next year is 250 years? Many years ago I enjoyed seeing the fireworks on the Mall in Washington D.C. What are you doing to prepare for the celebrations? I've got a quilt that might inspire you!

The Island Batik division of Lumin Fabrics has produced a patriotic batik collection called Jubilee that I thought was just perfect to make into a quilt that somehow represented Fireworks.

With these fabrics, I created stratas—a collection of strips sewn together like layers. Next step is to cut triangles from the strata which yields two versions of triangles. Use each, paired with a single fabric to get squares. Join four of the same squares to get two different 4-patch blocks and alternate them in the quilt. This is a quick way to show off these fabulous Jubilee fabrics. I imagined the night sky and fireworks exploding in the air.

This quilt design I'm calling Fireworks Display. Ask at your local quilt shop that carries Island Batik fabrics for these fabrics and pattern. You can also find this pattern and some fabrics while supplies last here at KISSed Quilts.



Marlene Oddie (marlene@kissedquilts.com) is an engineer by education, project manager by profession and now a quilter by passion in Grand Coulee, WA at her quilt shop, KISSed Quilts. She quilts for hire on a Gammill Optimum Plus but especially enjoys designing quilts and assisting in the creation of a meaningful treasure for the recipient. Fabric, patterns, kits and templates are available at <http://www.kissedquilts.com>. Follow Marlene's adventures via <http://www.facebook.com/kissedquilts> and <https://www.instagram.com/marlene.kissedquilts>



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GIRLFRIEND WISDOM

Highland Cows

I LOVE Highland Cows



Trends - how does that happen?

Trends are spread by people! One by one, either creating a product that emulates a design or even a phrase. Remember, "Where's the Beef?", or noticing a style of jeans that you decided looked great so you purchased them, then your friends liked them too, and the **trend** was growing.

Right now, if you notice, Highland Cows are everywhere! Folks are purchasing the actual cows, and images of the cute - long hair creatures are everywhere. They are a current trend!

GIRLFRIEND WISDOM:

Let's start a Trend of Kindness! All it takes is a moment to be nice, to smile at a person as you stand in line, or pass them by on the street.

Nod your head as you make eye contact with a stranger.

Kindness is contagious, we can make it a Trend! Have fun!

Joy & Blessings, Jody

Girlfriend Wisdom is written and illustrated by Jody Houghton®.
Color files of this writing and artwork are available: www.JodyHoughtonDesigns.etsy.com



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Toblerone Lava Mug Cake

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- 32g Toblerone (one large piece from 360g bar)
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- 2 tbsp canola oil
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsp milk
- 4 tbsp flour
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- pinch of salt

Directions:

1. In a small mixing bowl whisk together the egg, sugar, oil and vanilla extract.
2. Add the flour, baking powder and salt.
3. Mix to combine.
4. Stir in the milk gradually until the mix is thick and gloopy but not runny. When it reaches this consistency stop adding milk.
5. Pour mixture into a coffee mug.
6. Sink a piece of Toblerone chocolate into the middle.
7. Microwave for 90 seconds.
8. Serve on its own or with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.



Photo by Rosanna etc.

Recipe by Rosanna etc.



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Summer Fun!

by Janet Young

It has been said, "The most precious jewels you'll ever have around your neck are the arms of your children". Most mothers would agree with that. Only now, you are in the middle of summer with a house full of one or more children, who are probably telling you daily how bored they are. What

to do? Why not do some of your favorite activities with a twist.

For example, suppose they want to set up a lemonade stand. There are various ways you can get them involved. They set up the table, make signs, and why not let them help make home-made lemonade. This could be a challenge even for you, but together you can squeeze the lemons, add the sugar syrup and water, stir it up, and add the ice cubes. The twist, is in the making of real home-made lemonade.

Another project might be to go picking strawberries. When you get home, you clean them up and make some strawberry shortcake with the help of the kids. There are lessons to be learned from this activity from beginning to end. First, they learn where strawberries come from, and then how to make shortcake from scratch.

In the evening you might want to get the fire pit going and tell scary stories (appropriate for the age of the child). Or, put up a sheet outdoors and have movie night. Stargazing is another fun thing to do. Watching the sunset or sunrise is a beautiful awareness of nature.

There should always be time set aside daily for reading. Perhaps you could set up a tent in the yard or inside where you can gather for reading, and to slow down and relax for a little while. A corner nook would also make a nice reading area filled with pillows, a soft blanket and books. Another approach would be to go to the park, and pick up trash. Or, write a letter to a resident of a retirement home.

For exercise try volleyball or pickleball since it is all the rage right now. Perhaps your child would like to hike on a trail, or ride their bike on the trail or at the park. How about a water balloon battle on a hot sunny afternoon? Another day have a picnic, or a tea party. Remember part of the fun is allowing the child to help prepare the menu.

The list goes on and on. You adjust the activity according to the interest or the age of the child. The thing to remember is the memories you are making together. It won't be long before the neck-hugging will stop, and will be replaced by a quick kiss as they hurry off to play with their friends.

Remember summer is a time for fun and relaxation. These ideas are nothing new, and I know as a mother, how difficult it is to entertain your children all summer long. But if you focus on how you are impacting their lives, and on the memories, you are creating, take pause and everyday ask God to give you the strength to do this one more day. He will see you through.

Happy Summer!

— © Janet Young is a Certified Tea and Etiquette Consultant, Co-Founder of Mid-Atlantic Tea Business Association, and prior owner of Over The Teacup



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The Guinea with Nine Lives

by Becky Van Vleet

What fun it is for this Colorado grandma to visit her daughter and son-in-law's homestead in Tennessee. Add two sweet granddaughters, and life doesn't get any better. I've never seen a more glorious garden which produces everything under the sun it seems. Picking fresh blueberries is a wonderful way to start the day. And I never mind sharing a few with the chickens and guinea fowl that meander around the property.

At my last visit a few weeks ago, I noticed one of the guineas was a little standoffish, not quite as social. But I soon learned from my granddaughters, Belle and Ava, that Ginny Guinea boasts nine lives. Really? I thought only cats could brag about that.

Ginny developed a limp her first year when one of her legs tangled with a wire in the guinea run while she was trying to scamper away. With her limp, she was never quite able to travel around the yard at the same speed as the other guineas. No matter. She hobbles where she wants to go, continues to lay her precious eggs, and never complains.

But birds of the air have taken notice of her slowness. The hawks in particular. No doubt their birdbrains have accurately assessed that a wounded guinea wanders around on the homestead. Easy prey. But the hawks are apparently clueless for Ginny's perseverance. She holds her own. No hawk as yet has been able to carry her off for a tasty snack, though they've tried. Belle and Ava have witnessed the attempts after threatening hawks alerted them to run outside to check. Poor Ginny would be hiding in bushes minus feathers.

After one vicious attack, Ginny was a bareback. All her feathers across her back had been stripped by a greedy hawk. The girl was bleeding. Belle and Ava didn't think she'd survive. But they hoped for the best as they gently placed the suffering guinea back in her coop. And with tender loving care, Ginny made a comeback.

But one day, Belle thought for sure Ginny had succumbed to a menacing attack. She'd trained their labrador, Luna, to join the family rescue team. On this particular day, Belle and Luna dashed to the back yard at the alarm squawk from the guineas. All the chickens and guineas must be protected after all, and especially Ginny. While Luna scared away potential hawks, Belle counted the chickens and guineas to ensure their safety and well-being. All were accounted for except Ginny.

Belle's heart sank. She summoned her mother and Ava to the yard for the rescue mission, if there would even be one. When Belle discovered a fresh-plucked guinea feather, then another, then another, she followed the trail until she noticed a big pile of feathers next to a tree. Calling out to her mother and Ava, she thought for sure the hawk had flown away with Ginny for an appetizing lunch. The evidence pointed to Ginny's demise.

But then—Belle heard a faint cackle from a bush. Could it be Ginny? No. Belle and Ava thoroughly investigated the bush. Not once, but twice. About to give up, Belle and Ava sauntered to the house, grieving. But another chirp drew them back. And there was Ginny, standing upright next to the bush, minus a few feathers, as if to say, "Were you worried about me?"

Not only did Ginny recover and grow her feathers back again, she continues to humbly strut around their homestead today. Unassuming. Persevering. Overcoming. Thank you, Ginny. Good character traits for all of us.

Becky Van Vleet, a retired school administrator, lives near Colorado Springs with her husband, Troy. They are the parents of four grown children and enjoy spending time with their nine grandchildren. Becky is a children's picture book author, and her website is devoted to family stories and creating memories: www.beckylvanvleet.com.



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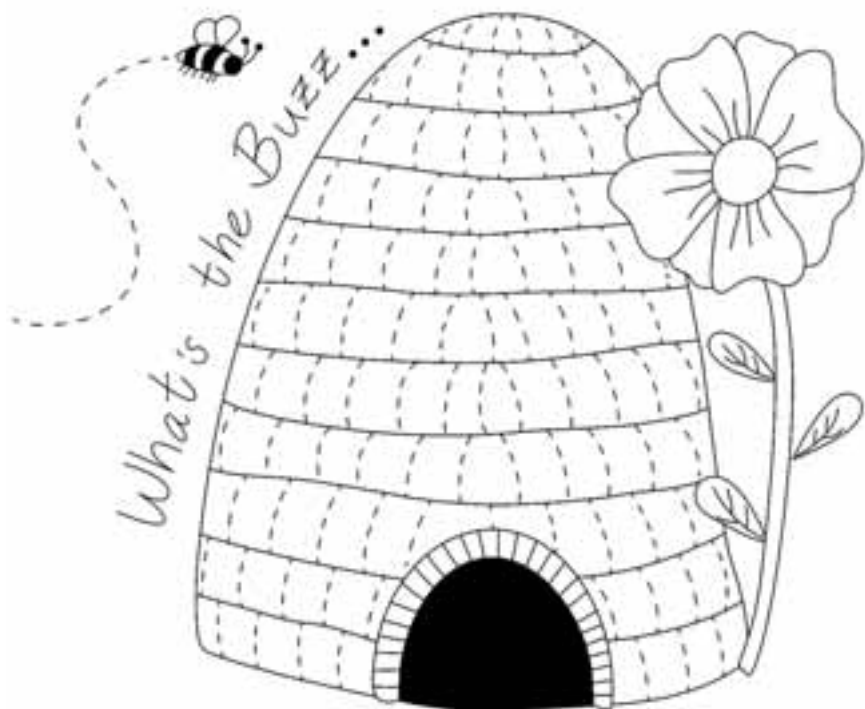
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Making An Old Singer Sing.

by Wayne M. Bosman

My name is Wayne and I am a sewing machine addict. If there were meetings to cure this condition, I wouldn't go to them anyway. I picked up my love of sewing machines very young and have no desire to lose it now.

Some of my earliest memories involve Mom working at her old treadle sewing machine, sitting almost in her way with my little brother Ron, both of us fascinated with the way the treadle made the big wheel go around. Mom's machine had been converted to an electric motor by then, but we loved to play with the treadle. Ron grew up to design and build assembly lines for a living. I worked 49 years as an automotive and aircraft mechanic. Is that where it started?

Mom's old Singer was retired in 1972, replaced with a Sears Kenmore. That machine now sits next to our dining room table, where Kerri makes a point of using it for everything she makes for my 8 grandchildren. She tries to pass along some of the love that Mom put into the machine.

Fifty years ago, the old treadle machine moved upstairs to my brothers' and my unused attic bedroom. One of my nieces claimed it while still in her teens, and there it sits, twenty-some years later, waiting to be part of her grownup life.

Mom is 104 now but still fourteen years younger than that sewing machine. She is fortunate enough to still live in the house that she and my dad bought in 1946, and that machine is still in that attic. A few times a year we drive the 1000+ miles from North Carolina to her home in Wisconsin. We stay with Mom for a few weeks. We don't do much while we are there. At 104, she simply can't. She and Kerri spend time sitting at the kitchen table solving the world's problems and talking over recipes. I mostly poke around and look at old things.

Last visit, I decided it was time to examine the old Singer machine in the attic. No one had used it since Mom got the "new" machine in 1972. Unlike many sewing machines, it was not moved out to the barn and forgotten. The lovely old sewing machine table looked the same as it did when it was retired. I wish that I aged that well.

I opened the table and rotated the machine into position. The handwheel didn't turn, but I was undaunted. I travel with sewing machine oil and tools. Doesn't everyone? I vacuumed all the accessible parts and oiled judiciously. After a few applications, I got the needle bar unstuck and the machine rotated freely. Fifteen minutes later she was ready for a test run. Beautiful straight stitches!

I brought a sample to Mom and sat down to hear her stories about her first sewing machine. The machine had been my grandmother's. She got it soon after she and Grampa married. After Mom displayed a talent and inclination to make her own clothing during the Great Depression, Grandma passed the machine on to her. It served her well for many years, from making diapers and baby clothes to cowboy shirts for her four sons. When my younger sister was born in 1957, only the patterns changed. Doll clothing came next, but having time to sew with five growing children limited her time at the machine.

The old Singer may stay in the attic there for quite a while yet before it migrates to its next home. The classic cabinet is its' main attraction to the current generation. For me, the years of work that Mom did with it have given it an aura of love that sticks to each stitch.

Wayne M. Bosman is a retired auto mechanic living in Cape Carteret, NC.
 His email is wbosman1@gmail.com.

2 Minute Lift

by Kathy J. Sotak

Staying in the Centre with Sacred Geometry

Fine. Let's talk about the elephant in the room. I don't like talking about the chaos of today's world. I keep my eyes forward, envisioning this beautiful new path in front of me.

All of us are going through hard things. Are you in the mucky chrysalis stage between a caterpillar and a butterfly? Are you being forged in the fire? Are you in a dark pit, not sure how to get out? Are you in that scary contraption, pulled in opposite directions? Or, do you feel like half of the world has gone mad?

Almost every day I hear about my dear ones' physical pain, mysterious symptoms, serious diagnoses, anxiety, life-altering chapter changes or break-ups. And, I hear about my dear ones' deep joy, miracles, new chapters, creations and limitless expansive themes.

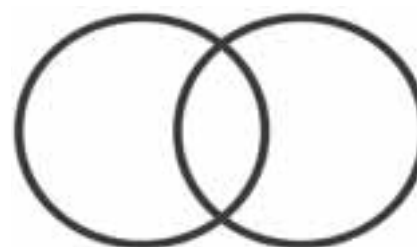
Now, let's assess our news feed. There are divisive, venomous insults being thrown across the aisles, keeping us in divide, judgment and righteousness. And, there are miraculous new discoveries and inventions. Every day there are inspiring new findings from deep within forests and under the ocean.

It is confusing, isn't it? It's as if there are two different realities playing out at once: Light, dark. Heaven, hell. Good, bad. Right, wrong. Forward, backward. Peace, hate. Creation, destruction.

How can we be living in the same world and have such polar opposite experiences?

Six months ago, I came across the Vesica Pisces symbol and it overcame me with obsession. These two slightly overlapping circles are an ancient symbol found in numerous traditions. For some reason I couldn't get the shape out of my mind. It showed itself to me in my dreams, my social media feeds and came into my mind's eye during conversations. Why are these circles stalking me?

"I'll just read more about it," I said, thinking it will give me answers. The Vesica Pisces has significance with Pythagorean mathematical calculations (I'll spare you the numerical detail). It also forms the ichthys (fish symbol) in the Christian tradition. It has been found all over the globe as prehistoric art.



This research just didn't resonate though, and I knew I had to figure it out myself. After weeks of rumination, it dawned on me, pulling me out of this obsession: Deep peace and understanding lives in the centre. We can access it in every moment, today.

Okay, now I've got your attention.

See the centre eye, the overlapping part in the middle? This is where peace lives. The planet's history is a pattern of polarity, playing out again and again. Each generation believes we are changing the world, but I have to wonder, what if the chaos will never go away? What will we do then? What if the answer is simply finding peace, love and joy amidst it all?

Let me explain more. Imagine we are standing on a far edge of a scenario, e.g., on the furthest side away from the centre circle. From that far vantage point, we can't see the far opposite side. We may label this other side as wrong, crazy or bad. But the closer we come to centre we see both sides equally. We may not agree with the other side, but we can at least see it with more understanding. It is closer to our reality.

We can't get thrown off balance in the centre. We can't get hurt in the centre of the storm.

This new awareness became a game. One by one, I'd take each firm stance I held, my side, my righteousness on a certain topic and "run it through" the Vesica Pisces symbol in my mind's eye. If I am pointing at others about how wrong their beliefs are, I imagine myself standing on the far edge of the outer ring. Then, I slowly walk closer towards the centre. I feel my body soften and my mind clear out with each step. Now standing in the centre eye, I ask myself, "Can I stay in this calm centre where vision is 20/20?"

This is my transcription of this powerful symbol into human understanding. Lately, when someone asks, "How are you doing, Kathy?", the question is irrelevant. The answer is always the same, at least when I am standing in the centre. The energetic "weather" around me may be clear, cloudy or stormy, but I can breathe peacefully and stand still in the centre, if I choose.

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Ten Things I Love About Summer

by Nancy J. Nash

- Rare days. The poet James Russell Lowell wrote: "What is so rare as a day in June? Then, if ever, come perfect days...." You wake up in the morning, and the sun is shining in a clear blue sky that holds a few puffy white clouds. You don't need a sweater. The air is comfortably warm and dry, and life seems perfect. This is a rare June day, the month when summer officially makes its debut. Birdsong is everywhere.

- Ice cream. It's the universal treat. I'm reminded of this as I sit in our local "homemade" ice cream shop. People stand in line to choose all sorts of flavors, from black raspberry to mocha moo. It doesn't matter if you are young or old, or what your ethnicity or walk of life. Is there a person anywhere who doesn't like ice cream?

- Outdoor eating. Whether it's a juicy burger or fresh potato chips or a slice of sweet watermelon, food seems to taste better outdoors!

- Trees. The light green leaves of May have given way to the darker greens of June. Somehow, I think of the trees in our yard as grand and gentle guardians of us humans. They are there, quiet and sturdy, as we come and go in our busyness.

- Deer grazing in a meadow. Recently I spotted a doe with a fawn in the back pasture. The fawn was so tiny that it fit under the doe and craned its neck, evidently seeking to nurse. Then it walked and pranced and followed its mother. A week later, I saw them again. As the doe leapt gracefully across the pasture, the little one followed like a streak of lightning. Deer are among the loveliest of animals, are they not?

- Fireflies. The pasture behind our house is a showcase for these bioluminescent insects at the start of summer. At first their briefly flashing pinpoints of light appear chaotic, but then they seem to form patterns, as if an invisible conductor is orchestrating musical notes made visible in the darkening night. Who doesn't find them fascinating?

- Fireworks. You know there are fireworks nearby when you hear a loud boom and see a flash of light above the horizon. The skyline on evenings around the Fourth of July is filled with sparkling kaleidoscopes of colors. Fireworks never cease to amaze me as they shimmer against the night sky before dropping from view.

- Porch breezes. Whether you're repotting a plant on the back porch or watching the world go by from the front porch, gentle breezes are welcome friends. Have you ever noticed how even a warm August breeze can be soothing to the soul?

- Flowers. The variety of colors, sizes, and shapes delight us. Do we ever tire of looking at them? My favorites include Queen Anne's lace, pansies, verbena, and Sweet William. Simple or intricate, bright or muted, natural or elegant, they invite us to abandon our cares.

- Katydid and crickets. They begin to sing in August, reminding us that the season is beginning to wind down. Take time to savor summer's lingering sounds!



2025 Nancy J. Nash. Nancy J. Nash is the author of *Mama's Books: An Oregon Trail Story*, and *Little Rooster's Christmas Eve*, each available on amazon.com. She has a B.A. in English composition from Mount Holyoke College and an M.F.A. in Writing for Children from Simmons College. She can be reached at nancy-nash341@gmail.com



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Pieces From My Heart

by Jan Keller

Berry Good Donuts!

Simplify ... that seems to be my adopted life objective. I used to pride myself on baking and cooking yummy meals and treats, but no longer. Is my identity wrapped up in garnering praise and compliments in exchange for hours spent in the kitchen? I think not ... especially in the summer!

Many months ago, I happened upon an online photo of a jazzed up glazed donut, and I saved it to my desktop. I didn't want to forget what I considered a truly great idea for an easy-does-it dessert. I thought the photo presented what might be an especially appropriate refreshment or dessert idea to serve at a shower, luncheon or tea party.

Recently, and on an absolutely ordinary day, I came home with everything needed in hand—fresh strawberries, glazed donuts, and a spray container of whipped cream. When my husband was engrossed in front of the television, I very carefully sliced across a couple donuts with a sharp serrated knife. (Honestly, that was the greatest challenge to putting together this show-stopping dessert. Once that was done, all I had to do was spray whipped cream on the bottom half of the donut, top it with a few slices of strawberries, and then cover with the donut's top half. For a little extra pazazz, I filled the donut's hole by spraying a dab of shipped cream and topping it with another strawberry slice.

When our "Berry Good Donuts" were ready to sample, John and I both paused for a moment because they looked almost too good to eat ... but soon we both took a bite and simultaneously agreed our donuts were really berry, berry good!

Since that first taste test, I think a variation might be to get glazed donut holes, cut them in half, fill with a dab of whipped cream and a strawberry slice for a yummy miniature "Two Bite Berry Good Donut Delight."



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