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Minnesota's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Fun Events

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September/October 2023



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The Country Register began in Arizona, in the Fall of 1988, to provide effective, affordable advertising for shops, shows, and other experiences enjoyed by a kindred readership. Since then the paper has flourished and spread. Look for the paper in your travels.

Barbara Floyd, founder • barbara@countryregister.com • 602-321-6511

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Months Sept/Oct 2023

Volume 29 Number 5

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Deadline For the Nov/Dec 2023 Edition is October 10th!

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Minnesota's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Fun Events



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Special Events

September

2.....	Fall Opening - The Country Craft Shed - Duluth
6-9.....	1st Anniversary Sale - Bluffview Quilt Shop - Winona
7-9.....	The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show - Madison, WI
9-10.....	Hill City Quilt and Fiber Arts Show and Sale - Hill City, SD
15.....	Closing Sale Begins - Rather Bee Quilting - Lake City
22-24.....	Fall 2023 Quilt BusTrip - Old Alley Quilt Shop - Sherburn
22-24.....	Fall 2023 Quilt BusTrip - Quilted Steeple - Lone Rock, IA
22-24.....	Sew In - Up North Quilt Shop - International Falls

October

6-7.....	Pumpkin Party - Quilted Dog - Cloquet
9-14.....	10th Anniversary Celebration - Quarry Quilts - Sandstone
14.....	Fall Arts and Crafts Festival - Brainerd - See ad pg. 8
14.....	Piece on the Prairie Outdoor Quilt Show - Quilted Steeple - Lone Rock, IA
20-21.....	Fall Retreat - The Calico Cat Quilt Shop - Pipestone
20-22.....	Sew In - Up North Quilt Shop - International Falls
28.....	Youth Series (Folding Star) - Up North Quilt Shop - International Falls

November

3-4.....	Christmas Open House - Past & Present Antiques - Waseca
9-11.....	Hometown Holiday Road Trip - See ad pg. 10
10.....	Christmas Arrives - The Farmer's Daughter - White Bear Lake
24-26.....	Christmas Sale - The Country Craft Shed - Duluth

Leaves are falling! Autumn is calling!

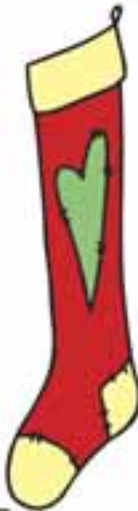
Back To School!



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Happy Halloween from your Country Register

PLANNING A DRIVE TO SEE THE FALL COLORS?

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Oh...and be sure and let the advertisers know that you found them in



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Brain Teasers

The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I? Footsteps

What 8 letter word can have a letter taken away and it still makes a word. Take another letter away and it still makes a word. Keep on doing that until you have one letter left. What is the word? Starting (Starting, staring, string, sting, sin, in, I)

What has a head, a tail, is brown, and has no legs? A penny

Two fathers and two sons went fishing one day. They were there the whole day and only caught 3 fish. One father said, that is enough for all of us, we will have one each. How can this be possible? There was the father, his son, and his son's son. This equals 2 fathers and 2 sons for a total of 3!

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Threads of Life

by Janet M Bair

I was sewing on my machine very late one night when my daughter was home from college. Knowing that she was tired from her flight and wanted to go to bed, I asked "Will the noise bother you?"

"Oh no," she said. "When I was little, I used to fall asleep with the sound of your sewing machine in the background. It's a very comforting sound."

I never thought about sewing that way before—comforting. I realized cutting out pieces of fabric and putting them together to create something beautiful is a soothing process in this hectic world.

I made my first quilt when I was in my twenties because I had so many fabric scraps from dresses I had made in high school and college. I remember cutting out over 100 squares with a paper pattern and how long it took to sew them together. I used an old blanket for filler and old curtains for the backing. When that enormous job was done, I said, "That's it! I'm not making another one for a long time!"

Fast forward to retirement, I recently joined a quilt guild with the naiveté that I could make some of the amazing creations I saw at their quilt show. Even though I have sewn many complicated things over my lifetime from animal costumes to bridesmaid's dresses, quilting is harder than it looks. Re-training myself to sew only one quarter inch seams was difficult. Planning a large quilt is an expensive endeavor as material prices have soared.

However, I love my new rotary cutter and cutting board which certainly saves time. Slowly reading my way through quilting books showed me there are quicker ways to piece together fabrics. I have enjoyed making smaller lap-sized comfort quilts this year. Even though fabric is expensive, I think I will always enjoy looking at material thinking about what I can make next.

I also realized my family has woven many threads of creativity into my life. My Grandma Scaduto (my mother's mother) emigrated from Sicily in the early 1900's. She could look at an outfit in a store window and go home and sew it without a pattern. After her eight children were grown, she worked in a coat shop.

My Grandma Mac (my father's mother) also sewed and crocheted. She quilted and did tatting. My mother sewed and worked in a factory doing piecework.

My mother-in-law was a master seamstress. As a girl, she would wash the empty calico printed feed sacks animal grain came in and make dresses out of the material. This was on a northern Vermont dairy farm during the depression. Besides sewing clothing, she made beautiful quilts.

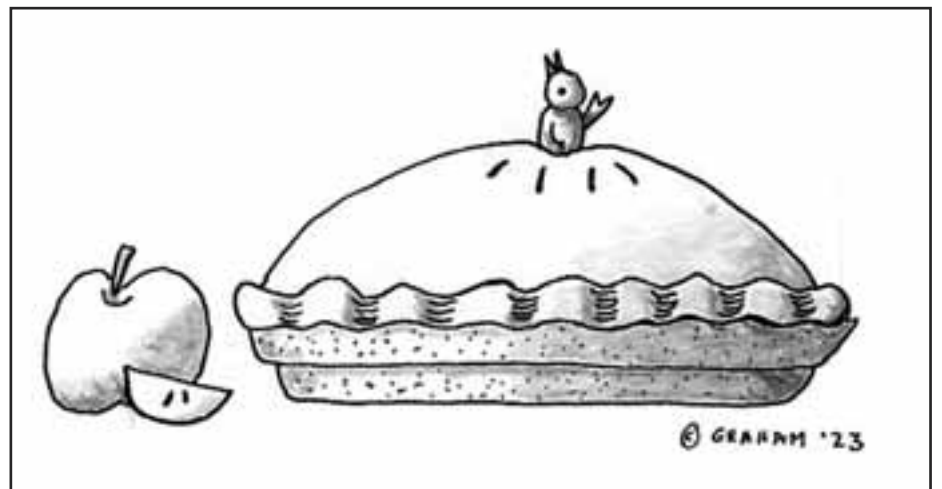
Both of my girls learned to sew at young ages, making clothing for a 4-H fashion show at the Big E in Mass. Recently, my younger daughter, Emily, sewed 140 cloth dolls to be sent to children in underdeveloped countries. My older daughter, Joanna, has designed and sewn many costumes for different theater productions.

Over the years, many colors of threads have been sewn by the women in our family. Sewing is a way of life with us. We have blended thriftiness, patience, love, and creativity to create a heritage that I hope will be a comfort to many.



Countryberries Designs

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Designed by Kathy Graham

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COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Pepper Steak

From Colleen Gust, publisher of
The Country Register of Manitoba/Saskatchewan



I have been making pepper steak since our early married days. Working for newspapers, both of us had indeterminate quitting times, so a meal that came together quickly was a must.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 lb. round steak, cut into 1/4-inch x 2-inch strips | 2 Tbsps. butter |
| 1 Tbsp. paprika | 3 garlic cloves, minced |
| 1 can (10-1/2 ounces) beef broth | 1 medium onion, thinly sliced |
| 2 medium green peppers, cut into strips | 2 Tbsps. soy sauce |
| 2 Tbsps. cornstarch | |
| 1/3 cup cold water | |
| 3 fresh tomatoes, peeled and cut into wedges | |

Sprinkle the meat with paprika. In a large skillet, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Brown the steak strips. Add the broth and garlic. Simmer, covered, for 30 minutes. Add green peppers and onion. Cover and continue to simmer for 5 minutes. Combine cornstarch, soy sauce and water; stir into meat mixture. Cook and stir until thickened. Gently stir in tomatoes and heat through. Serve over rice.

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14th Annual 12 Days of Holiday Baking

Send in your favorite holiday baking recipes including cookies, cakes, appetizers, main dishes, etc!

Entries will be included in the November/December issue in the 12 Days of Holiday Baking special!

Send your recipes to
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Pieces From My Heart

by Jan Keller

Eat Well, Laugh Often and Love a Lot

A popular French saying: Mangez bien, riez souvent, aimez beaucoup!

John and I have been married 55 years and it seems we've taken the above French advice to heart throughout our marriage, as well as during our recent celebratory trip to the French-speaking Canadian province of Quebec—except in reverse order, we've Loved a Lot, Laughed Often, and Eaten Well.

As with any lasting marriage, it has been critical for us to 'love a lot' as we've faced and maneuvered through a wide variety of life's challenges. Compromise has often been necessary. Related to our trip, I've always wanted to visit France, but John didn't—so our trip focused on Quebec and the maritime provinces of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, including Cape Breton Island—but this column focuses on Quebec City.

When we embarked on this trip, we got up at 4:45 a.m. and headed to DIA to catch our flight to Toronto, and then on to Quebec City. Anyone who has flown lately knows things rarely go as planned. We arrived at the airport in time to eat breakfast prior to boarding. After that, nothing went as planned as we endured lengthy delays. We finally landed in Toronto with the knowledge we had missed our flight on to Quebec City. We were able to catch the last flight out headed to our destination. We finally arrived in Quebec City at 11:45 p.m., where we had a rental car reserved and only had 15 minutes to get off the plane and figure out which way to go. John took off hoping we were in time to get our reserved car while I headed to baggage claim. Finally, at 1 a.m., we arrived at the Fairmont Le Chateau Frontenac Hotel. It took a few days, but soon we both could look back upon our travel adventure and 'laugh'.

Overlooking the St. Lawrence River, our hotel is perched very visible and high upon a hill and reportedly is the most photographed hotel in the world. From its founding in 1608 by French explorer Samuel de Champlain, Québec City has seen many battles and sieges. To defend against attacks, a wall was built around Québec City in 1690. The town was conquered by British forces in 1759, the Citadel was built between 1820-1832. Quebec is Canada's only French speaking province and Quebec City is North America's only 'walled' city and today is so European in



feel and flavor I felt like we were in France.

We started our days by visiting the hotel's breakfast buffet, including decadent French Croissants. Yum!

On our first morning we went on a guided city bus tour, including 'Place Royale', the site of the first commercial street in North America. Here the city pays homage to its French beginning, complete with a statue of France's King Louis XIV in the center of the square. We also drove a few miles north to Ile d'Orleans, with beautiful fields of red strawberries, and Montmorency Falls.



Our last evening in Quebec City we returned to the various shops along the narrow cobblestone streets of Lower Old Quebec City, which happens to be North America's first commercial district. We delighted at every turn with incredible sights, like this street, Rue du Petit-Champlain with colorful umbrellas suspended above. There were also the sounds of street musicians and agile acrobats!

Hungry for pizza, we went to "Sapristi," with its delightful outdoor patio. Soon we were seated at a small table where we could watch the people.

When the waitress came, we ordered our pizza, only to have her ask, "And do you want French Fries?"

John and I, a bit puzzled by the question, declined.

As we waited for our pizza, I noticed EVERYONE, no matter what they had ordered for dinner, had added French Fries to their meal. As I considered and pointed out this realization to John, and not wanting to miss out on anything special, we decided we better add fries to our meal, too. Served in a mini cast iron skillet, which kept them hot, along with mayo and ketchup, the French Fries were AMAZING!



Those French Croissants and French Fries were indeed 'eat well' culinary delights we'll long remember!

We only scratched the surface of all Quebec City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has to offer—and it would be wonderful to one day return!

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Front Porch

by Gayle Cranford

Growing up in the 40s and 50s, my town was a town with front porches. Nearly every house on my street had a front porch and even some back porches. Originally, our old home had a small back porch. The house lacked a proper kitchen, so my father braced the back porch with cement blocks and changed it into a kitchen...however small.

Our front porch was a place where my playmates and I gathered to play.

Sometimes, we'd spread an old blanket and sit for hours cutting out or creating paper dolls. We sewed clothing from scraps of cloth for our dolls. Primitive as the pieces were, still, we were learning how to thread and use needles.



Sometimes, neighborhood friends would gather to play board games on the porch...especially in weather not conducive to other activities. For my brother, who was always fascinated by weather changes, the front porch was his "station" for watching electrical storms. The adults in the neighborhood frequented each other's porches to catch up on news or gossip.

And, then, porches began to disappear in newly constructed homes everywhere. An old era had died and the new one lacked something important...community.

I'm not sure when front porches reappeared in new construction, but lovely front porches have again become popular. Many are graced with beautiful railings, some wrap around corners, and many sport beautiful furniture especially made for such locations. The porch has again come into its own. They're not mere attachments to a house anymore. They're integral to the overall design, augmenting the curb appeal.

I see neighborhood developments here in Florida now that are very, very inviting and appealing. The house designs are nearly like turn of the twentieth century cottage designs. Some of these neighborhoods have houses built close together with narrow streets that shout out "community, friendliness, parties, neighborliness" as were found in the 40s and 50s of my youth.

But I believe that today's world is just too busy for the residents in these beautiful neighborhoods to live the lazier, friendlier "front porch" kind of lives of the past. Hopefully, those porches will instigate a much-needed change in today's American culture.

- Gayle Cranford lives in Florida with her daughter and their dog. She enjoys writing, walking in their neighbor, dining out with friends. At 86 years young, she is often compared to the energizer bunny.

GIRLFRIEND WISDOM

Joyfulness

Golden Threads & Silver Needles

What brings you JOY? Golden Threads and Silver Needles?
 Reading a good book in a comfortable chair? Playing with your children or grandchildren? Taking a silent walk at sunset?

Each one of us finds our JOY that fits our day, or the uniqueness of our own personalities. We are each one of a kind and no other person is exactly like you or me. Showing activities or projects that express your uniqueness shows your true self. One of the benefits of being unique is that you can become a huge success! Bringing something unique to the business table, or the art canvas, or a discussion, is what helps people and businesses thrive. Having a distinct element to yourself means that you stand out. And those who stand out become joyfully successful!

GIRLFRIEND WISDOM:
 Seek out what brings you JOY
 and you will find your true Uniqueness!

Joy & Blessings,

Girlfriend Wisdom is written and illustrated by Jody Houghton®
 For color files of this writing, contact Jody at: jodyhoughton@msn.com



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pumpkin party
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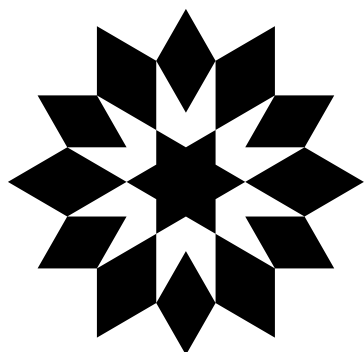
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we've got news to share...we're moving!

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about the new space...

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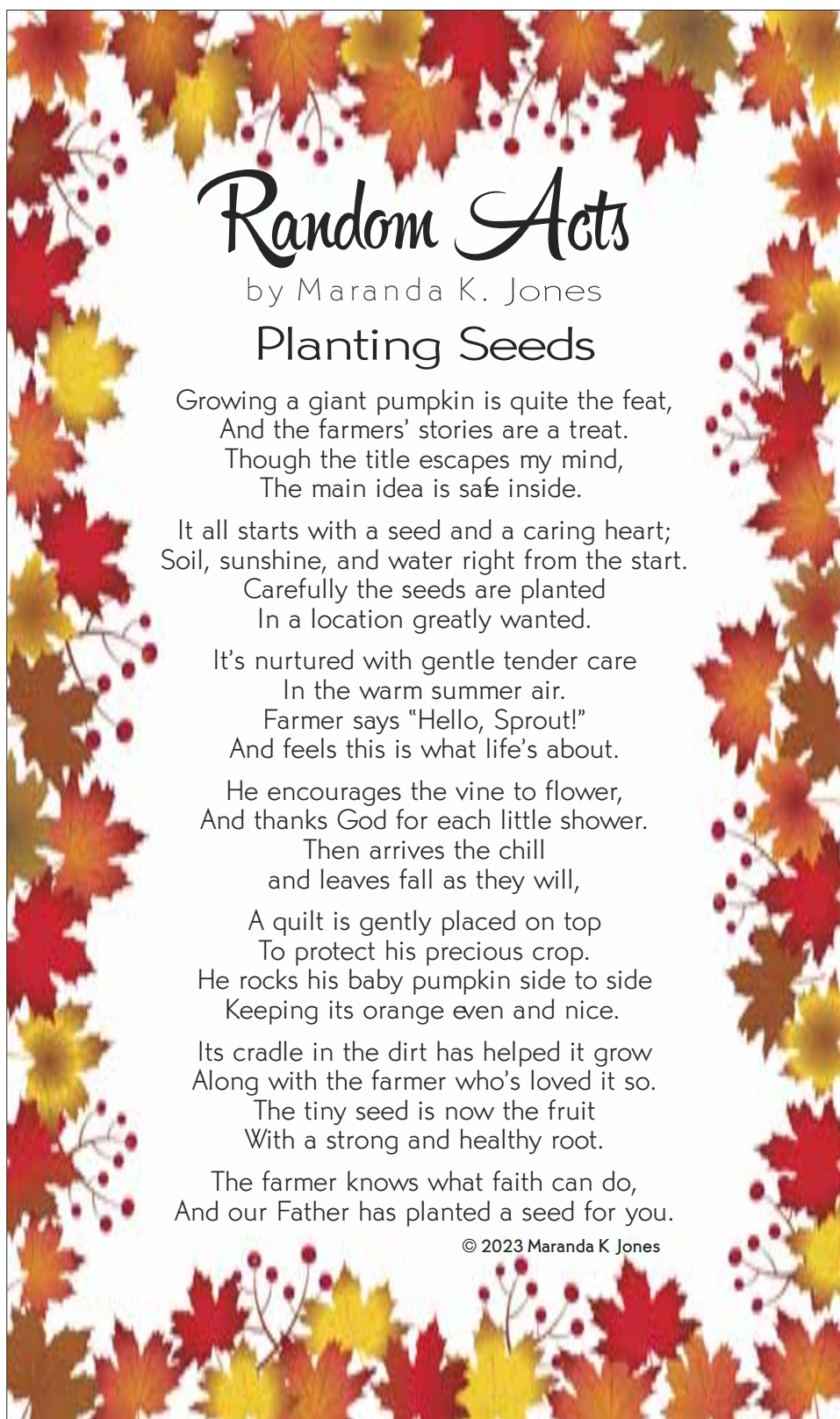
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Random Acts

by Maranda K. Jones

Planting Seeds

Growing a giant pumpkin is quite the feat,
 And the farmers' stories are a treat.
 Though the title escapes my mind,
 The main idea is safe inside.

It all starts with a seed and a caring heart;
 Soil, sunshine, and water right from the start.
 Carefully the seeds are planted
 In a location greatly wanted.

It's nurtured with gentle tender care
 In the warm summer air.
 Farmer says "Hello, Sprout!"
 And feels this is what life's about.

He encourages the vine to flower,
 And thanks God for each little shower.
 Then arrives the chill
 and leaves fall as they will,

A quilt is gently placed on top
 To protect his precious crop.
 He rocks his baby pumpkin side to side
 Keeping its orange even and nice.

Its cradle in the dirt has helped it grow
 Along with the farmer who's loved it so.
 The tiny seed is now the fruit
 With a strong and healthy root.


The farmer knows what faith can do,
 And our Father has planted a seed for you.

© 2023 Maranda K Jones

Over The Teacup

Chillin' IN THE FALL

by Janet Young



As the weather turns cooler and the nights grow longer, you may want to take advantage of this perfect weather to host an outdoor event before the cold arctic air comes blasting across the plains.

Of course, the traditional hayrides, or going to a farm where you can go through a corn maze, or perhaps go to a pumpkin patch, and pick pumpkins that you can take home and carve into a famous Jack-o-lantern is always a great way to spend the day. But suppose this year you are looking for something different. Perhaps a night-time event that includes the whole family, as well as inviting some neighbors and friends.

First, begin by asking your attendees to wear an ugly flannel shirt. After all, why should holiday sweaters be the only garment to get the reputation for being ugly. Later on, you can have a contest to see which shirt is the ugliest.

If you want to have a food station, you could ask each guest to bring a dish, or plan your own menu instead. Cover the table with a flannel tablecloth to carry out the theme. You can probably purchase flannel by the yard at a fabric store.


After you enjoy your refreshments, it is time to gather 'round the bonfire. If someone in your group plays the guitar, this would be a perfect time to have background music playing as you sit around the bonfire toasting your marshmallows etc. If no one plays an instrument, perhaps someone who can sing really well, could lead the group in singing around the fire.

As the night winds don't take time to judge the flannel shirts. Perhaps each participant can tell a story about the shirt, or explain how it has become their prized possession or comfort. A prize can be given to the winner(s).

This is just a suggestion to get you started on one more outdoor celebration before the cold weather hits, and before we turn our attention to Thank and Christmas, and New Year's.

In the meantime, we wish you HAPPY CHILLIN' in the Fall!

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



A Tisket, A Tasket, A Beautiful Basket!

by Barbara Kalkis

Occasionally, one news story breaks through the usual daily dose of madness and mayhem to stop us in our tracks. For me, this momentous event occurred some months ago as I was preparing to settle in for a night of TV re-runs.

I had gathered my placemat, napkin, drinks, chips, chocolates, tissues (for unexpected sneezes), crochet, mystery novel, magazines, iPad, a friend's unread letter, scratch paper, and pens (in case one runs out of ink during an important idea). Dropping that armful on a work (versus 'coffee') table, I plumped up the sofa cushions, plopped myself into a reclining position and hit the clicker.

During the commercials, I scanned news headlines for the least upsetting stories. The startling announcement appeared like a bolt of lightning. Martha Stewart had replaced the roof of her basket house. At first, I thought the headline was a spin on the story of the three pigs and the unwise choices of building homes of straw and twigs before thinking about brick. It was not. The headline was for real.

The proof was in the photo. Martha stood in the wide doorway of a barn-like structure holding baskets. Behind her, countless baskets crammed every square inch of space on the floor and walls. More baskets dangled from the ceiling. I nearly choked on the handful of M&Ms that I had thrown in my mouth only moments before. (You cannot eat just one.)

I read the article again, thinking I had mistaken some key element of the story. I hadn't. The proof was in the details. A painted metal roof replaced old cedar shake shingles. Well, that made sense. Those metal roofs are known for their longevity.

What nagged me, however, was the need for a house of any size to store baskets. I glanced around my living room and then reviewed my kitchen and dining area. The kitchen counter was lined with baskets holding bananas, avocados, tomatoes, and fruit. Baskets on the counter held pens and pencils, note pads, address books, mail waiting to be read, coupons, and a phone directory.

The dining table basket was a centerpiece on a rattan woven charger. In the living room, every free surface was covered with a mandatory doily and (wait for it) a basket holding a plant. Baskets on the floor held magazines. My seasonal baskets were displayed on a shelf in my office, waiting until the appropriate holiday. Trick-or-treaters could easily grab Halloween candy out of a big round shallow basket. Christmas cards and letters were stacked in a large square basket. Another held holiday photos. They were all beautiful to look at, but they were all used every single day. A basket even carried baby Moses down the river.

A House Should Be a Home.

When I flicked through the pages of magazines, I saw design trends focused on contemporary styles: cold metal dining chairs that no one wants to sit on. Sofas were set on four pencil-thin legs that looked like they would collapse under the weight of anyone over 90 pounds. The awful wire guest chairs were waiting for those not fast enough to beat the hosts to the sofa. Contemporary wall art featured smears of color like the ones your 2-year-old made when he was in his 'budding artist' stage.

Like hand-crafted quilts, shawls, sweaters, doilies, paintings, greeting cards, wood carvings—or whatever—baskets are an intricate art form. They reveal the crafter's creativity, attitude, thinking, design sense, skill, care, intelligence. They are both traditional décor and functional items to be used and enjoyed daily. No separate house here. They are what makes a house a home.



©Barbara Kalkis. Barbara spends her time writing, teaching and working as a marketing consultant. She's author of *Little Ditties for Every Day: A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm*. Contact her at BarbaraKalkis01@gmail.com

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Country Register Recipe Exchange

Apple Toffee French Toast

submitted by Shirley Ross of Alexandria, MN

8 cup cubed french bread (1-inch cubes)

2 medium tart green apples, peeled & chopped

1 - 8oz package cream cheese, softened

1/4 cup sugar

3/4 cup brown sugar, packed

1 3/4 cup milk - divided

2 tsp vanilla

1/2 cup English toffee bits

5 eggs

Place half of the bread cubes in a greased 13"x9" baking dish. Top with apples. In a mixing bowl beat cream cheese, sugars, 1/4 cup milk plus 1 tsp vanilla until smooth. Stir in the toffee bits. Spread this mixture over the apples. Top with remaining bread cubes.

In second bowl, beat the remaining milk, eggs and remaining vanilla. Pour over the bread. Cover and refrigerate over night.

Before baking, remove from refrigerator about 30 minutes. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 35-45 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

Country Register Recipe Exchange

Grape Salad

submitted by Shirley Ross of Alexandria, MN

1 package 8oz softened cream cheese

1 cup sour cream

1/2 cup sugar

1 - 2 tsp vanilla

3 - 4 pounds grapes

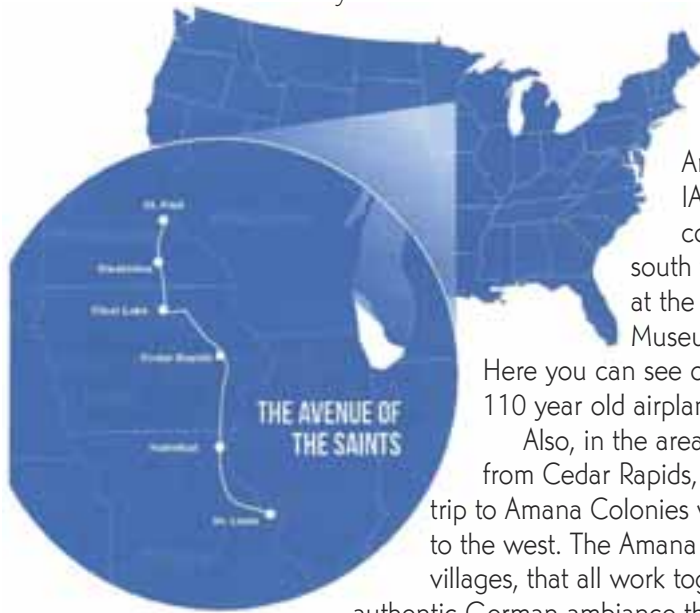
1/4 cup brown sugar

1/4 cup chopped pecans

In a mixing bowl beat cream cheese, sour cream, sugar and vanilla until well blended. Add the grapes and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Just before serving, sprinkle with pecans and brown sugar.

Traveling the Avenue of the Saints

By Carl & Denise Wieman



Part two of "Traveling the Avenue of the Saints" took us from the Mall of America to Cedar Rapids, IA. In part three we will continue our adventure south to St. Louis! We left off at the National Motorcycle Museum in Anamosa, IA.

Here you can see old cycles as well as a 110 year old airplane.

Also, in the area while heading south from Cedar Rapids, you can take a side trip to Amana Colonies which is about 15 miles to the west. The Amana colonies consist of 7 villages, that all work together. It is a world of authentic German ambiance that was created by their

ancestors and preserved for today. The unique culture has its roots in Germany and flourished in the USA during a communal era for over 90 years, which can still be seen today in the villages.



This is the location of the Amana Counter Top Microwaves that were invented in 1967. These were the first counter top models of microwaves for household use.

The villages also are known for their great foods, and large servings as well as the many different local wines and beers.

There is much more to see and do in Amana Colonies that you will want to plan for several days on your visit. We have been

there many times through the years, and sometimes staying for more than one day at a time. That is because it is like a place that takes you back in time in many of the villages, and is very relaxing.

Denise and her two sisters spent 4 or 5 days there about 10 years ago and did not run out of things to see and do. Many of the places to stay are B&B's that provide a home cooked meal for breakfast. Yes, it is a meal, as it contains so much German style food and different varieties.

From Amana Colonies you can head back to the Avenue of the Saints towards Iowa City, and south to Swedesburg, IA. Here you will find the Swedish American Museum. After this visit, it is another 100 miles and you will be in Hannibal, MO.

On this section of the Avenue you will see a lot of flat farm land to the east for about 1-2 miles and then some trees with the Mississippi River on the other side of the trees. Looking to the west will be also farmland and then slopes uphill to the trees. This area is flat land from the ice age when the water was very high and created some good farm land without the hills or valleys.

Hannibal was home to Mark Twain. You can visit his home along with many other historical places. On this trip, we spent almost two days here. The Mark Twain Riverboat on the first evening was a fantastic way to relax. This is an old riverboat built in 1964 that serves a great Missouri style buffet meal the night we were there, and a one-man



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band. Or, should I say, he played his Tenor Saxophone with some backup recorded music at times. He also sang a few songs.

The next day we took a tour of the Mark Twain Cave, located south of Hannibal. The tour guides are very informative with the history of the area and the cave, and this cave has been giving tours since 1886, making it the oldest operating show cave in the state.

That afternoon, we took a trolley ride through the town. We were very lucky, as we were the only passengers on the trolley and could ask questions very easy of the guide. It was like having a private tour. She explained the history of the town as well as the famous people from Hannibal.

We went past the Mark Twain Boyhood home and Museum which she gave us a lot of details on this house, being we were not planning to visit it on this trip. These are just some of the places to visit in Hannibal, before heading back on the Avenue of the Saints towards St. Louis, which is about 100 miles away. St. Louis is where the end comes for the Avenue of the Saints. From there we continued south to Cape Girardeau, MO which is about another 100 miles for the home of STAR 2022.

I hope everyone enjoyed our information about Traveling the Avenue of the Saints.

Until next time, ride safe...Carl & Denise Wieman, Owatonna, MN



Happy Halloween!

A Moment in a Day of Life

by Kerri Habben Bosman

I have consciously collected very detailed moments for over twenty years now and I wish that I had thought of it sooner. It is more than simply being present. I try to memorize every aspect about a particular time and space.

I begin with everyone around me. Then I pay attention to the temperature, surrounding sounds, and aromas. I hone in upon myself, right down to how my bones feel against a surface. Lastly, I choose one particular sensation as a catalyst to remind me of that moment.

The first time I did this was in 2002. My mother and I were sitting with my 96-year-old grandmother in her cozy room at the assisted living community. She had moved there a few months before. Mom and I had spent most of that summer cleaning out her house to sell. I was stretched out upon my grandmother's twin bed. Huba (as I called my grandmother) was crocheting in her recliner and Mom was cross-stitching in my great-grandmother's rose chair. I had been crocheting, but I was tired. I quietly watched them as they were immersed in their tasks.

Perhaps the idea came to me because we'd just been through that murky process of sorting through a lifetime. Not just my grandmother's things, but also family who had passed before her. It occurred to me that if I memorized this moment, it would always be with me.

The hallway still smelled of what they'd served for supper and Canada geese had just honked by. I grew cold every time the air conditioning came on. My lower back ached from moving furniture earlier in the day. Mom's right hand was on the top of her embroidery hoop and her left hand was meeting the needle and thread underneath. She peered at her work through her favorite purple reading glasses. Huba finished up a ball of yarn and bent for the next. As was her custom, she was making a lap robe to donate to the hospital.

Thus, over two decades later, I can always sit "just one more time" with these two strong, solid and loving women who raised me.

One moment I collected recently took place this past July. We were staying with my 102-year-old mother-in-law, whom I also call Mom. It was a Friday evening, and we sat outside the home she has lived in since 1946. My husband, Wayne, had picked up fish dinners. The three of us ate outside at the picnic table that has served well for generations and countless meals.

Cars passed on the nearby road with occasional thumps of truck tires. It was a mild summer night with a slight breeze arriving off and on. In the tree to our left, red wing blackbirds had gathered and then had flown off in one motion. We'd watched the leaves shimmer back into place. The air smelled of a summer evening; a scent of flowers from somewhere and that hint of humidity that hits your nose every once in a while.

Mom prepared her food in that gentle yet certain way she does everything. She eased her fish to the side and evenly spread her sour cream into her baked potato. We'd just held hands and said the blessing. I ran my fingers over the table, feeling the slight roughness of the wood as I watched the sunset in the distance behind Wayne's back. The orange orb began to slip into the horizon, casting lingering light at a slant across the yard before settling upon Mom's treasured statue of the Blessed Mother. We all gazed at her for a bit as the sun fully descended.

Whereupon Wayne nodded and smiled at us before quietly affirming, "A moment in a day of a life."

Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer in Chapel Hill, NC. She can be reached at 913jееves@gmail.com.



Cowgirl Poet, Quilter, Entertainer



Yvonne Hollenbeck

The Little Red Geranium

I wrote this about my Grandmother, who lived in a sod house for many years.

*The church that day was crowded,
it was filled clear to the brim,
as the organist was playing
her favorite old hymns.*

*I thought how folks would miss her,
for the most of ninety years
she'd been doin' things for others,
and the thought brought me to tears.*

*Pretty flowers lined the altar,
but among the large bouquets
sat a little red geranium,
and it looked so out-of-place.*

*I wondered how it got there,
but I didn't wonder long
for the service was beginning;
first a prayer, and then a song.*

*Then the pastor started talking
and he left the Speaker's Stand;
he picked that scraggly plant up
and held it in his hand.*

*He said he went to see her
just before she passed away,
how she gave that plant to him
with instructions for this day.*

*She first told him a story
that he'd tell to us today,
because she asked him if he'd share it
just before she passed away.*

*Her folks came West to homestead
when she was just a girl
and her mama got so lonely
in this strange and foreign world.*

*But one day a kindly neighbor
brought a red geranium,
she gave it to her mama
and that was to begin*

*a long and lasting friendship;
then every year towards fall
her ma would make some starts from it
and she would give them all*

*to others that were lonely,
or sick, or needed care;
she'd take a red geranium
and leave it with them there.*

*She said her mama told her
it reminded her of God,
how He made us in His image
from a little clump of sod.*

*With a little bit of kindness
and a little bit of care,
plants, like His love, could multiply
and be for us to share.*

*Then she married and was living
in a soddy in the hills,
and always had geraniums
blooming in those big wide sills.*

*Red was the only color
in her drab and dingy home
reminding her that God was there
and she was not alone.*

*Then came those awful thirties
when the hills were parched and brown;
those pretty red geraniums
were the only thing around*

*that seemed to keep on growing,
and how she loved them so;
she kept right on a-giving them
to visitors when they'd go.*

*Now her life on earth is over,
but before she went away
she started many little plants
to give to you today.*

*She hopes you all will take one
and you'll have it in your home,
then when you're feeling lonely,
you will know you're not alone*

*because blossoms fade and leaves wither;
seasons come and seasons end
but your plant will live and grow
if you share it with a friend.*

*We all were taught a lesson
at the funeral that day:
The greatest love we will receive
is the love we give away!*



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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Please Fly!

by Becky Van Vleet

Recently my husband and I enjoyed watching an Andy Griffith episode on Netflix entitled "Opie the Bird Man." (Season 4, episode 1, 1963) Opie got himself into a jam when he accidentally shot a mother bird with his new slingshot. And soon poor Opie realizes there are three baby birds now abandoned in the nest. But with new courage and trying to make things right with his horrible blunder, Opie becomes a surrogate mother to the little birds. Nestling the little creatures into a bird cage, Opie sets out to gather worms as he cares for his new babies. He takes great pride in his successful endeavors. But Opie becomes quite anxious when his pa prepares him that it's time to let the growing birds out of the cage so they can fly away. Opie becomes worried and sad. He tenderly cups each bird in one hand before upwardly throwing them into the air, shouting, "please fly, please fly."



Over the next few days, I thought about Opie's courage to let the little birds fly away. And it made me think about how we parents invest our love and our hearts into our children, preparing them for the future, preparing them to be independent. We worry, we are sad, but we know it's time to let them "fly" into the world. And I don't believe the preparing of children to become independent young adults only lies with the parents. I believe this groundwork and influence falls upon all adults—grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbors, pastors, teachers, babysitters, coaches, club leaders, and so many others.

Whenever we demonstrate honesty by taking an item to lost and found instead of keeping it, we are training children to be honest adults. When we hold the door open for others, we are influencing children to have good manners. When we pick up clothing items we try on in dressing rooms instead of leaving them on the floor, we are encouraging tidiness and respect for the store. When we are not texting when driving, our example to children says safety behind the wheel is imperative. When we are not cussing, children will choose their words more carefully when they are older. When we are not taking a Walmart basket home to keep for personal use, children will understand that stealing is wrong.

As adults, we are always training and grounding children within our sphere of influence. Our actions and behaviors today will create memories for tomorrow in our children when it's time for them to fly away. And let's hope the memories are positive ones for the new "baby birds" to emulate.

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



This month in Minnesota History

September 1894: A forest fire kills 413 people and burns 160,000 acres of timberland around Hinckley. Railroad engineer James Root saves more than 100 people by loading them onto train cars and driving through the blaze. The devastation of this fire convinces many of the importance of forest conservation.

October 8, 1956: Southdale Shopping Center, the world's first fully enclosed shopping mall, opens in Edina. Austrian war refugee and architect Victor Gruen designed the mall, which he hoped would become "the town square that has been lost since the coming of the automobile. It should become the center of this civilization." Later realizing that civilization was in fact crystallizing around the mall in a commercial way rather than according to his utopian vision, Gruen retired from architecture in 1967 and became one of the most ardent critics of commercialized mall culture until his death in 1980.

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

Where in Minnesota?

Somewhere in Minnesota the image to the right can be found. Where is it?

(Answer on page 19 of this issue)



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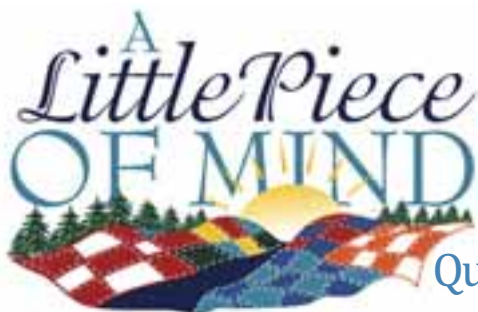
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Stop Saying

you'll do it "one day" and just do it. At some point you have to make the first move. You have to make all the things you plan inside your head happen. You have to start taking steps to get what you want, even if they are baby steps. It's time to start working on that life that you've always dreamed of, put the fear of failure aside and just do it. The one thing more scary than starting is regret.



Happy Halloween!

Improvising!

by Barbara Polston



I consider myself a traditional quiltmaker. Even when creating art quilts, I use traditional techniques. When piecing, I work to make intersections match. If points are part of the design, I try my best to make sure they fall exactly where they should without cutting off the tips with an errant seam. All my projects have a plan for what they will look like when complete.

The Quilt Alliance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to document, preserve, and share the American quilt heritage, is marking its 30th Anniversary with a Block of the Month sew-along. (You can learn more by visiting their website, www.quiltalliance.org.) Once a month, for nine months, members receive a free pattern for a quilt block. Each of the patterns is designed by a different, well-known quilt artist. Participants are encouraged to post photos of their finished blocks on social media, tagging the designers and the Quilt Alliance. I am participating in this celebration and look forward to receiving each new pattern... well, for the most part.

Last month's block was a nod to "improvisational quilting." What is that?, you may ask. An improvisational quilt is defined as one made without specific intention. One of the most common forms used to create such quilts is the sewing of random pieces of fabric together with no regard to straight seams. There is no worry if block joins meet precisely. One undertakes the process without knowing exactly what it will look like in the end.

Given my predilection for precision piecing and a solid vision of my end point, tackling this block of only 12 inches square literally struck fear in my heart. The designer shared their method, which was to just sew fabric together in haphazard rows and then trim the resulting pieced fabric down to the desired size. The pattern did acknowledge those of us who would find this challenging. Directions were given to cut some 30 pieces of fabric to specific sizes and a layout was provided to stitch to an improvisational-looking result. This confused me even further. If one followed a precise pattern, how would that be improvisational? I procrastinated until the next pattern arrived in my inbox. With a need to move on to the next month's block, it was time that I took on this improvisational challenge.

I decided to "do my own thing." I cut strips of fabric and pieced them together, varying the width of the exposed fabric. These strips were cut to a generous length and then sewn together. As planned, the created fabric was larger than needed and trimmed to size. Whew! I did it! Put that block in the "done" column.

Sometimes we need to improvise. You may discover you are lacking an ingredient for a recipe under way and must improvise a substitution. A colleague is absent and you are called upon to make a presentation with little preparation. Based on your knowledge, you improvise and present. The need to improvise, I believe, is a rare occurrence. I learned that improvisational piecing and quilt-making is not something I would choose to do, but I also learned that, if necessary, I can improvise.

© Barbara Polston. Barbara, who is the author of *Quilting With Doilies: Inspiration, Techniques, and Projects* (Schiffer Press, 2015) lives in Tucson, Arizona, where she is now spending time in the pursuit of life-long dreams, many of those at her sewing machine. Contact Barbara at barbarapolstonquilter@gmail.com.



Ann's Lovin' You

by Ann Stewart

September is a Grand Time

We've celebrated Mother's Day, Father's Day, and maybe even our birthday. But when is Grandparents' Day? This year it's on September 10, the first Sunday after Labor Day.

I grew up in the same state with both sets of grandparents, two hours from one set and 45 minutes from the other. That closeness meant I spent nearly every weekend at one of their farms. As we drove down River Road in Duvall, Washington, my little brothers and I would chant, "We're almost to Grandma's house! We're almost to Grandma's house!" Fond memories include swimming in the Snoqualmie River, eating green beans from Grandma's garden, and dipping Sinterklaus cookies into hot tea with lots of cream and sugar. At my other grandparents' home, Grandpa told lots of stories, and Grandma served warm brown bread, Maple Bars and homemade borscht. I can almost taste the red raspberries that ringed her garden where we'd also nibble on fresh peas. We loved ziplining from one end of a barn to the other, clam digging at Birch Bay, and riding the Ferris Wheel with Grandma. Their heritage of faith, and the blessing of their love and prayers linger long.

My parents continued the memory making with my daughters. Though we live on one coast and they live on the other, their influence was still life changing with less frequent but concentrated reunions. When Christine was 9 months old, she affectionately dubbed her grandpa, "Bumpa." As she grew older, if she became anxious, I would say, "Call Grandpa," and my retired attorney dad would counsel her from 2500 miles away. When my husband and my parenting was too intense or mixed with frustration, the grandparents showed love and grace. They were only a letter, phone call, or text message away.



I also created and adopted the idea of GIFT (Grandparents in Future Training.) When I'd get to know kind people who were my parents' age but didn't have grandchildren, I would ask if they would grandparent my two girls. Thus Gampa George, Gamma Sharon, and Aunt Rae were born into our lives. These additional grandparents gave gentle instruction, babysitting relief, and poured prayer and fun into my daughters' days. They were indeed a GIFT for all of us and a profound influence with their wise perspective and love.

And that love and influence lingers beyond death. When my father was given a terminal diagnosis, we flew to Washington to see him one more time. Our family gathered around his bed and ate ice cream bars and told stories. My dad's was a life well-lived and well-loved. For those final days, my daughter Christine sat next to his bed holding his hand. I'm not sure if it was because my dad, her Bumpa, knew she needed it, or if he longed for her touch. But after he passed, my daughter made plans for a career in nursing.

Someday when I'm a grandma, I want to be just like my dad and make grandparenting my favorite career. What kind of memories will my grandchildren and I make together? I hope one of them is Grandparents Day. Then again, though I was in my teens forty years ago when Jimmy Carter declared the first Sunday after Labor Day a National Holiday, I'm not sure I ever honored the day. Nonetheless, I hope my four grandparents knew how dearly I treasured their love.

If you have a grandparent who is still living, take a minute to honor them and if your children have grandparents, encourage them to honor their grandparents. We can never underestimate or imagine the influence, perspective, and wisdom of grandparents. The impact they can make will last for generations.

For ideas on grandparenting or gifts for grandparents, I suggest Country Register's "A Cup of Tea with Lydia," author of three books for grandparents:

In the Kitchen With Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together; Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting: For Grandparents at any Stage of the Journey; and her upcoming release: Grand Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids.

©2023 Nostalgic memories like these can be found in Ann Marie Stewart's novel *STARS IN THE GRASS*

Country Register Recipe Exchange Halloween Baked Macaroni

submitted by Patti Lee Bock of New Ulm, MN



- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 cup elbow macaroni - uncooked | 1/2 cup oil |
| 1 1/2 cup milk | 1 onion - divided |
| 2 tbsp cornstarch | 1/2 green pepper - diced |
| 1/3 cup water | 8oz can sliced mushrooms - drained |
| 1 1/2 cup colby longhorn cheese, diced | 1 - 2 cups soda crackers - crushed |
| 3 eggs, beaten | |

Cook macaroni according to package directions. Heat milk without bringing to a boil, in a saucepan over medium heat. In a small bowl whisk together cornstarch and water. Slowly stir into warmed milk. Cook just until slightly thickened, about 2 minutes. Combine macaroni and milk mixture with remaining ingredients except cracker crumbs. Pour into a buttered 3-quart casserole dish. Cover with cracker crumbs. Bake covered at 350° for one hour until golden.

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Cocoa Mix

Mix all ingred. & keep in airtight container.

- 3/4 c. unsweetened cocoa
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 c. crushed peppermint candy (opt.)

TO MAKE COCOA:

Add 2 Tbsp Cocoa Mix to 8 oz. (1c.) hot milk; stir until dissolved. Pour hot cocoa over marshmallows. Good with cinnamon toast. ♥

Hi all! Happy Fall! Our new 2024 Calendars have arrived! Come claim yours at www.susanbranch.com 'Tis the season! ♥

With Love from the Heart of the Home Come... Susan Branch

Writing From Life

by Jeanette Lukowski



[...Blank...] of the Month Club

I remember hearing about a Block-of-the-Month program at a local quilt store perhaps 10 years ago? While I was intrigued by the name, I was too distracted by other things to ask questions that day. Perhaps a year later, in the summer (when life feels a little more relaxed for me), I finally got around to asking.

For that store, Block-of-the-Month was connected to a class offered once a month. During the day. In the middle of the work week. Not an option for my work schedule. But the idea stayed with me.

A few years later, I ran across a store promoting a different kind of Block-of-the-Month program. Simply purchase the four necessary fat quarters to create the block (she supplied the pattern for free); if you returned to the store the following month, with your finished block, you would then receive that month's free pattern—and get a discount on any additional fat quarters purchased to make THAT block. I was hooked! I received and made my January block, and February block—but then the store experienced a fire, and closed on February 28th. No March block pattern. Or April, or May...you get the idea.

It took me six years to figure out a different project in which to use those two blocks-of-the-month.

Not one to abandon an idea, though, the idea resurfaced on its own in about January of 2022. I was trying to figure out a wedding gift, when I remembered a cute little panel of seasonal gnomes I had purchased during the previous summer. What if I made mini wall hangings with the gnomes?

Viola, Gnome-of-the-Month began. I measured the center framing of each gnome, pulled out some graph paper, and started configuring. Using 2-1/2" squares of fabrics, I could outline each gnome's frame with seasonal designs specific to that month! Batting, backing fabric which wraps around to become faux binding in the front, and a hanging pocket across the top; each finished wall hanging measures roughly 10" x 13".

The pace of creating 12 mini wall hangings in a month-and-a-half almost killed me, though. Okay, not literally killed me, but I get bored by the redundancy of working on a singular project for a long time. Knowing I had purchased two of the gnome panels—and had decided to use the second to make myself a set of Gnome-of-the-Month mini wall hangings—I worked on a variety of other projects until about November of 2022.

December 1st, I hung the first of my new mini wall hangings, and returned to working on other projects. Then, sometime mid-December, I began working on January's gnome. To my surprise, the joy of working on the gnome mini wall hangings had returned!

That's when it hit me: the [whatever]-of-the-Month program is enjoyable ... if I only focus on completing one of whatever each month. An idea for any craft! Big or small, quilting or hand-work, scrappy or color-themed. Variety!

© Jeanette Lukowski 2023. Jeanette is a mother, grandmother, teacher, and author who lives in Mankato, MN. She is inspired by the lives of strong women. Her email address is: writingfromlife@yahoo.com



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

Reuben Casserole

recipe courtesy of Gooseberry Patch

- 8oz package wide egg noodles, cooked
- 1/4 cup butter, softened and divided
- 14-1/2 oz can sauerkraut, drained and rinsed
- 12oz can corned beef, diced
- 8oz package shredded Swiss cheese
- 1 tomato, sliced
- 1/2 cup Thousand Island salad dressing
- 1/2 cup fresh rye bread crumbs
- 1/2 tsp caraway seed

Toss cooked noodles in a large bowl with 2 tablespoons butter, sauerkraut and corned beef. Add Swiss cheese and lightly toss; spread in a greased 13"x9" baking pan. Layer tomato slices on top. Cover with salad dressing and set aside. Melt remaining butter in a small skillet over medium heat. Cook bread crumbs and caraway until golden; sprinkle over top. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.



Country Register Recipe Exchange Crock Pot Hot Chocolate

submitted by Shirley Ross of Alexandria, MN



Place the following ingredients in a crock pot:

- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 - 14oz can sweetened condensed milk
- 6 cups milk
- 1 package milk chocolate chips
- 1-2 tsp vanilla

Stir to mix well. Cook on high for about 2 hours, stirring several times until melted and ready to serve. Garnish with small marshmallows and candy canes.



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Located 14 miles northeast of Grand Marais on Highway 61 is one of the most spectacular waterfalls in Minnesota. The Devil's Kettle Waterfall is the main feature of Judge C.R. Magney State Park. 9 miles of trails in the park offer scenic vistas of Lake Superior and the surrounding forests as well as amazing views of the raging Brule River. The vast open waters of Lake Superior moderate the area climate. Summers



are generally cool and winters are usually mild with abundant snowfall. The scenic Brule River races through the park, forming whitewater rapids and waterfalls on its way to Lake Superior. Along the lower stretches of the river are a series of spectacular waterfalls. Birdwatchers will find a bonanza of warblers during the nesting months of May, June, and July. Early fall is a good time to observe migrating hawks

as they congregate along the shore of Lake Superior. Large white spruce grace the campground and other upland areas. The forested areas are dominated by birch and aspen stands. Wildflowers begin to show in early spring with the marsh marigold, wood anemone, and violet. In summer, look for the rose, thimbleberry, moccasin flower, coral root, clintonia, wild sarsaparilla, and fireweed. Asters and goldenrod add to the fiery colors of autumn.



The park offers camping, picnicking and hiking. Come for the quiet, the solitude, and the famous Devil's Kettle waterfall! The most popular hike leads from the trailhead upstream along the Brule River to Devil's Kettle. Here the river splits around a mass of volcanic rock. Half of the river plunges 50 feet into a pool, while the rest pours into a huge pothole. Anglers can catch brook and rainbow

trout in the Brule River or its tributary, Gauthier Creek.


If you're looking for wildlife while in the park, keep your eyes open for moose, white-tailed deer, black bears, and timber wolves among the larger animals that inhabit the park. Smaller mammals include woodchuck, snowshoe hare, red squirrel, and chipmunk. In the spring and summer, listen for the songs of warblers. All year round, chickadees, nuthatches, jays, woodpeckers, and ruffed grouse can be seen in the park.

Information from www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks. Visit the website for more information, pictures, hours and fees.



fall bucket list

- Bake a pie
- Pick apples
- Make & eat caramel apples
- Jump in a leafpile
- Visit a pumpkin patch
- Go Trick or Treating




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Advice From a Pumpkin

*Be well rounded.
 Get plenty of sunshine.
 Have a thick skin.
 Keep growing.
 Be outstanding in your field.
 Think big!*

Life is a Circus!
 by Barbara Kalkis



Life is a Circus.
 It suddenly jerks us
 Out of our comfy easy chair
 And tosses us, breathless, into the air
 Like a leaf in a gray November storm.

We're transformed into players in the Big-Top tent,
 Stars in the acts of the show's main event,
 Wondering where normalcy and routine went,
 Remembering the lazy times we spent
 Carefree and sure and safe and warm.

It summersaults us with casual ease
 As if we're gymnasts high on a trapeze.
 Without any safety net below
 We miss our mark and down we go,
 Without the rescue of a catcher's arm.

Then we're scooped up again and shot from a cannon
 And land, facing a growling lion.
 We search for a clown, but he's on a tightrope,
 Without an umbrella or even a slight hope
 Of reaching the other side.

Eventually the bizarre show ceases
 And we see we're still whole and not in pieces.
 All is well, but who knows when
 The Circus will arrive again.
 And Life gives us another such ride.

~©Barbara S. Kalkis

Wit and Wisdom

The Gift

by Juleann Lattimer



It's that time of year again? Another birthday. These days I don't look forward to another one. Time is going too fast. At this point in life I am not interested in acquiring more things. In fact, I'm trying to scale down. "What would you like for your birthday?" I was asked. What if I could choose anything I wanted?

I remember many years ago my grandmother offered to my brother on his fifth birthday anything he wanted. I was envious. She never made that offer to me. One hot August day I went with them to the store, anxious to find out what he would choose—anything he wanted. I looked at all the enticing toys that I would have chosen if given the offer. It would have been a difficult decision with so many choices on the shelves. There were many I would like. But five-year-old Jack only took minutes to decide. He chose a rope. A rope! With all the more age appropriate choices, he chose a rope!

We tried talking him out of it, showing him one toy then another, but he was adamant, "I want this rope!" What a wasted wish! I would never have been that foolish—which might be why she never made me that offer. It's been way over fifty years and I still have not forgotten it.

So, what would you ask for if given the same opportunity? A new car... a bigger house... a Gucci handbag... diamond necklace?

God gave Solomon the same offer—anything he wanted. Solomon did not ask for riches or power. He asked for wisdom. That pleased God. While Jesus prayed to his Father, He asked for his Father's will. That pleased God.

"Ask and it shall be given to you, for everyone who asks receives, for what man is there among you when his son shall ask for a loaf, will give him a stone? How much more shall your Father in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him?" *Matthew 7:7-11*

What will you ask for? Why settle for a rope? When He offers us so much more, things money can't buy, but what He offers us is priceless—peace, joy, hope, comfort, heaven.

If you enjoy reading articles from the Wit and Wisdom Writers such as Cheryl, you may also enjoy the books authored by the group. Contact the authors at: witandwisdomwriters@gmail.com.





"Simple Dutch Windmill"

Five Sizes Included

Introduction

I am excited to share a beginner friendly quilt pattern. Typically, pinwheels are made with triangles. Triangles for a beginner can be very tricky. This quilt is designed so you're basically just sewing two strips together and creating squares. Then organizing them on-point (turn the square 45°), you'll trim off the ragged edges and yield this fun setting to a simple

block. This quilt could be all about leaders and enders or made via strip piecing; in just two colors, an ombre fabric and neutral, a charm pack or layer cake with neutral yardage, jelly rolls, choose a color palette or scrappy.

Since there are five sizes specified in this pattern, I recommend that you go through the pattern and mark which size you're making.



Stroller 28" x 40"



Baby 39" x 47"



Heart 48" x 60"



Queen 64" x 81"



King 105" x 105"

Fabric Color/Usage	Fabric Recommendations	Yardage (Stroller, Baby, Heart, Queen, King)
Neutral Background	Contrast to color choice low volume or dark	(5/8, 1, 1 5/8, 2 5/8, 5 1/3) yds
Color	S: 1 Charm Pack B: Ombre *H: 4 colors Light to Dark (1/6, 3/8, 5/8, 1 (includes border)) Note: 1 10" square yields 2 blocks of the same fabric	(5/8, 1, *, 2 5/8, 5 1/3) yds
Border(s)	*S: 1/8 yd neutral - inner 1/4 yd color - outer All others recommend a Color Adjust based on desired finished size.	(+, 1/4, *, 1/3, 7/8 yd)
Binding		(1/3, 3/8, 1/2, 1/2, 7/8) yd
Batting		(7/8, 1 1/4, 1 1/2, 1 7/8, 3 1/8) yds
Backing	44/45" wide Optional 108" wide	(7/8, 1 1/2, 3, 3 3/4, 9 3/8) yds (x, x, 1 1/2, 1 7/8, 3 1/8) yds

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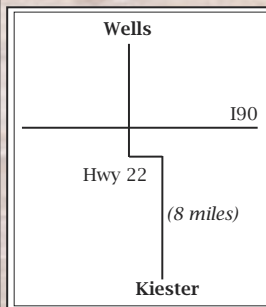
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Back Porch Break

by Nancy Brummett

Porch Pumpkins

As a child I wouldn't have imagined that someone would grow or buy a pumpkin for any reason other than to turn it into a jack-o-lantern. How we'd look forward to cutting off the top and getting the squishy insides out so we could begin to carve a scary or happily grinning face, secure an old candle stub inside, and bask in the glow! Those pumpkins would sit on the front porch until they shriveled up and looked like toothless old men.

Who knew pumpkins would one day become sought after not for their ability to greet trick-or-treaters, but to add color and design to a front porch and to sit there, imagine this, uncarved? Yet this is what has happened. Now farmers grow pumpkins in white tones and shades of green to add to the perennial favorite, orange. Design-oriented homeowners, especially those blessed to have front porches with steps, mix these colorful gourds in with mums in shades of gold, white or magenta, hay bales and corn stalks to create gorgeous displays that announce fall is here.



If I'm blessed to go to the South during October I'm amazed at the extent to which people go to create these colorful autumn arrays. Not only do porches of homes have pumpkins stacked up to greet visitors with the warmth and hospitality of the season, but every shop and business gets into the spirit as well.

One year I went to a little town in northern Tennessee with my sister and brother-in-law. In Allardt, founded as a community of German immigrants, they annually hold the Great Pumpkin Festival and vendors sell pumpkin-designed everything! T-shirts, plaques, candles, lawn banners—all feature pumpkins welcoming visitors who come to see which farmer grew the largest pumpkin of the year. And the entries are huge. Each year the winning pumpkin weighs well over a ton! Because who doesn't love a great pumpkin, Charlie Brown?


So whether you grow 'em or buy 'em, treat yourself to a plethora of pumpkins this fall. Create a front porch that delights all who drive by and welcomes all who visit with the very essence of the harvest season. Don't have steps? No problem. Position a wooden ladder or upside-down bushel basket on your porch and stack pumpkins of all sizes and colors around and on it. Or create a pyramid of pumpkins up against the wall. And don't forget to add some colorful mums or a cheerful scarecrow. Happy fall, y'all!

Nancy Parker Brummett is an author and freelance writer in Colorado Springs, CO. Follow her on Facebook, Instagram and Linked In or subscribe to her blog posts at www.nancyparkerbrummett.com.

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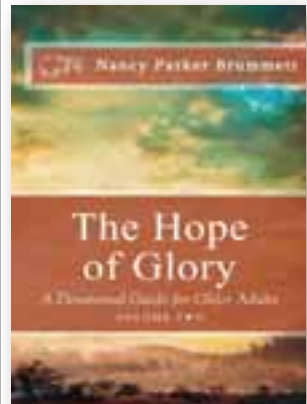
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COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Sausage & Tomato Bake 

From Colleen Gust, publisher of
 The Country Register of Manitoba/Saskatchewan

To soak up the sauce, we serve this with a baguette or sourdough bread.
 This is just about my husband's favourite tomato recipe.

4 lbs. tomatoes	2 sprigs each of fresh thyme, rosemary
4 bay leaves	1 Tbsp dried oregano
3 cloves garlic, chopped	1 1 lb, pkg of Johnsonville sausages
Olive oil	Balsamic vinegar
Sea salt	Pepper, freshly ground

Preheat the oven to 375°F in a roasting pan large enough to take the tomatoes in 1 snug-fitting layer. Put in all your tomatoes, herb sprigs, oregano, garlic and sausages. Drizzle generously with the olive oil and balsamic vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Toss together, place the sausages on top and pop the pan into the oven for half an hour. Give the pan a quick stir and turn the sausages over. Put back into the oven for 25-30 minutes.

*This creates an intense tomato sauce. If you prefer a thicker sauce, lift out the sausages and place the pan on the stove to cook down. Season with additional salt and pepper to taste..

The Power of Hope & Positivity

by Lesley R Nuttall

We all strive to have a good day—every day! Having hope and thinking positively can be a very powerful tool in your life!

What is hope? Hope is an indispensable part of life. Hope looks confidently forward. Hope is a powerful motivator to carry us forward towards our goals in life.

Martin Luther said, "Everything that is done in the world is done by hope."

Joseph H. Thayer said, "Hope means joyful and confident expectations."

Never underestimate the power of hope; keep the faith and be positive!

When my husband and I were married in August, 1961, the morning was dark and gloomy. The clouds opened up at noon, and the rain poured down. Some members of the wedding party were concerned that our special day was about to be weather ruined. I was too happy and optimistic to worry and suggested all would be fine! Sure enough, by three o'clock the sun came out, and our four o'clock wedding turned out beautiful with lots of sunshine.



Disappointment struck three weeks after we were married when my dear father suffered a heart attack. He was only forty-one. We, along with our entire family, were devastated. We knew we had to carry on and hope got us through this difficult time.

The following December, we planned a trip to see my husband's mother for Christmas. Before leaving town, my husband, a very positive thinker, bought a \$10 lottery ticket to win a new car and left instructions where he would be on New Year's Eve when the winning ticket would be drawn. Sure enough, the winning ticket was his! Miracles do happen! We really didn't need a new vehicle because he drove a company car so we sold the car and opened a florist shop for my mother. She was already a florist, and had been struggling since my father's death. It turned out to be a positive plan and she was happy!

Any day can be a new beginning. All it takes for anyone is to follow the three D's: Desire, Determination and Discipline. A podcast we listen to by Doctor T. Martin (a nutritionist) is so enthusiastic when talking about improving our health. He talks about cutting out sugar, cutting down on carbs, eating more protein, and drinking two liters of water daily. My husband and I used this method and lost 50 and 40 pounds respectively and improved our health for the better. Enthusiasm is one of the greatest sources of good health!

This method can be used every morning when we get out of bed. Tell yourself you are going to have a happy day and then strive to do it! If you wake up with gratitude, it will affect your attitude! As we grow in hope-filled optimism, we can find ourselves happier and stronger every day.

Remember, you can only live one day at a time! Yesterday is a memory. Fill tomorrow with hope!

Believe in yourself, always keep hope alive, and continue to think positive!

Free Pattern



Free Embroidery Pattern –
 May not be sold or used for commercial purposes. Use this pattern for embroidery, wool applique, punch needle or rug hooking, painted projects or whatever your imagination can dream up! Reduce or enlarge pattern as desired.

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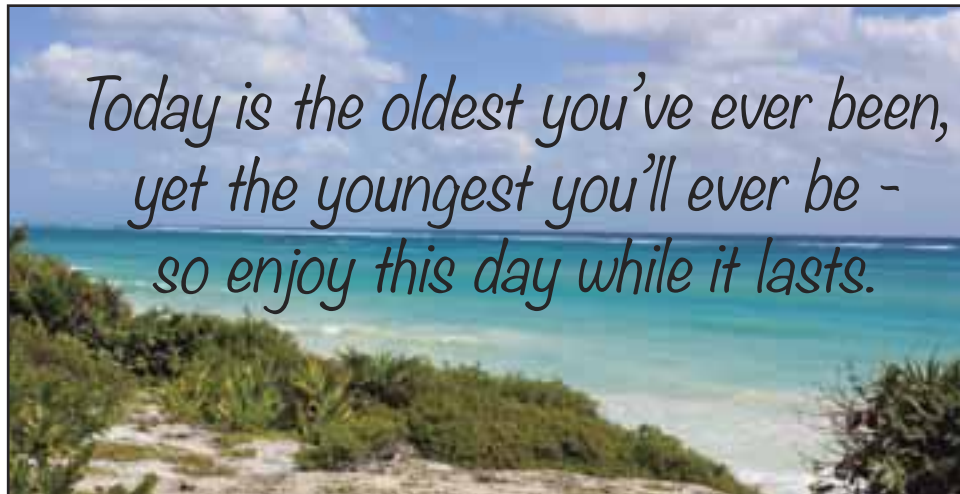
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Lemon Mug Cake

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 4 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup plus 1-3 tsp lemon juice
- 3 tbsp milk
- zest from 1/2 lemon
- 1/4 cup white chocolate chips
- 4-5 tbsp powdered sugar

Directions:

1. Spray the mugs with baking spray.
2. Combine the dry ingredients in a small bowl. Set aside.
3. In another small bowl, cream together the butter and sugar using a hand mixer until light and fluffy.
4. Add in the egg, lemon juice, milk and lemon zest.
5. Add in the dry ingredients and combine.
6. Scoop the batter into prepared mugs.
7. Top with a few white chocolate chips.
8. Microwave for 90 seconds.
9. Sprinkle powdered sugar on top.

Photo by 2cookinmamas.com

Recipe by Food Folks and Fun

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Country Register Recipe Exchange

Pineapple Cheese Ball

submitted by Patti Lee Bock of New Ulm, MN



- 2 - 8oz cream cheese - softened
- 8oz crushed pineapple - drained
- 2 tbsp finely chopped onion
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green pepper
- 2 tsp seasoned salt
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Beat the cream cheese, pineapple, onion, green pepper and salt together. Cover and refrigerate for 1 1/2 hours. Shape into ball and roll in the chopped nuts. Serve with crackers.



Scarecrows,
Corn rows,
Pumpkins on the vine.
Leaves curl, wind swirls,
Fall is right on time.



You Say Tomato, I Say Tomahito

by Colleen Gust

Let's NOT Call the Whole Thing Off, because tomatoes are the unsung heroes in the culinary world. And if I've planted an earworm in your mind with that song, let's give credit to Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong for the most famous version. That line has become a catchphrase, meaning "What's the difference?" or "It's all the same to me." Now, let's dig into the juicy details. We all know that technically tomatoes belong to the berry family, but remember: knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit, but true wisdom lies in knowing that you should never put it in a fruit salad.

Now, let's unravel the great tomato confusion: are they fruits or vegetables? This conundrum even sparked a legal dispute in the United States back in 1887. U.S. tariff laws imposed a duty on vegetables but not on fruit, which made the tomato's status a matter of legal importance. Luckily, the U.S. Supreme Court came to the rescue on May 10, 1893, declaring the tomato a vegetable. Their reasoning? Well, vegetables are usually served with dinner and not dessert. Case closed!

The tomato's journey began in western South America, Mexico, and Central America. The Mexican Nahuatl word "tomatl" gave birth to the Spanish word "tomate," which eventually led to the English word "tomato." The Spanish explorers brought the tomato plant to Europe, introducing it to other parts of the continent during the 16th century. It thrived in Mediterranean climates, and cultivation kicked off in the 1540s. It didn't take long for people to start eating tomatoes in Spain by the early 17th century.

Here's a fun fact: When tomatoes arrived in Italy, they were mainly grown for ornamental purposes and were used merely as tabletop decorations. It wasn't until the late 17th or early 18th century that they made their way into local cuisine. The tomato's knack for mutation and creating different varieties played a vital role in its success and spread throughout Italy. However, they weren't initially embraced by the general population as a staple food due to their less filling nature compared to other fruits available at the time. Not to mention, some toxic and inedible varieties discouraged many from experimenting with different types.

Today, numerous tomato varieties are cultivated worldwide, thanks to the wonders of greenhouses that allow year-round production.

Now, here's where things took a bit of a detour. The modern garden and commercial tomato varieties we enjoy today might not be as tasty as their predecessors. Why? Well, breeders focused on developing tomatoes that ripened uniformly red, resulting in a decline in taste and sugar content. Before this uniform trait was introduced, most tomatoes had higher sugar levels during ripening, making them sweeter and more flavorful. Nonetheless, tomato growers continue to strive for improved yield, shelf life, size, and resilience to environmental pressures and diseases. Do you know what type of tomato smells the best? A Roma!

Now suppose you're looking for a more natural approach to disease and pest control in your tomato garden. In that case, you can rely on plants with strong scents, like alliums such as onions, chives, and garlic, as well as aromatic mints like basil, oregano, and spearmint. Marigolds are another great option. These

plants are believed to mask the scent of the tomato plant, making it harder for pests to locate or find an alternative attack point. Another handy tip is to plant asparagus and tomatoes together. Asparagus plants contain Asparagusic acid, which repels nematodes known to attack tomato plants.

When it comes to growing tomatoes, irregular supplies of water can cause the growing or ripening fruit to split. Apart from cosmetic damage, these splits can allow decay to start. Luckily, growing tomatoes have a remarkable ability to heal themselves after a break occurs. On another note, there's a deformity called cat-facing that can affect tomatoes. It can be caused by pests, temperature stress, or poor soil conditions. Cat-facing results in deep indents, rough scars, puckers, uneven ripening, and sometimes segmented appearance. Despite its less appealing look, the tomato usually remains edible.

Now, let's talk about what to do with your tomato bounty! If you find yourself with an over abundance of tomatoes, one great solution is to can them. Canned tomatoes come in various forms, but taste tests indicate that whole tomatoes packed in juice are often perceived as fresher-tasting compared to those packed in purée. Whenever I see canned tomatoes, I can't help but think of my sister's favorite comfort food: a tin of tomatoes topped with saltines, salt, and pepper, and cooked until it's bubbling.

Allow me to share my basic recipe for fresh garden salsa or Pico de Gallo. Now, I often make substitutions—parsley instead of cilantro, for instance (because my friend swears cilantro tastes like soap!). And as for jalapenos, well, that's a matter of personal preference. Some years, we've grown knock-your-socks-off hot peppers. And when making a large batch, I confess, I cheat a little and use my food processor to do the chopping. Here's a little salsa-dancing joke for you: What's the worst thing about salsa dancing? Getting the tomato stains out afterward!

Pico de Gallo

- 2 large tomatoes, chopped
- 1/4 yellow or white onion, chopped
- 1-2 jalapenos, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- 1/3 cup cilantro leaves, finely chopped
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt



Gently toss the tomatoes, onion, jalapeños, garlic, cilantro, and lime juice in a small bowl; season with salt. Allow the flavors to blend by letting the mixture sit uncovered.

To wrap up our tomato-filled journey, I'll leave you with a quote by Lewis Grizzard that captures the joy of a homegrown tomato. He once said, "It's difficult to think anything but pleasant thoughts while eating a homegrown tomato."

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Become Inspired!

by Annice Bradley Rockwell

CLASSIC SCENES OF BEAUTY

The season of fall is anticipated with joy for all that it provides. Although the days are noticeably shorter now, the quality of the sunlight as it shines upon our landscapes is unrivaled at this time of year. An early morning walk to North Cove provides a scene of classic beauty as the sunlight reflects off of this quiet and historic cove. For a still moment, we are almost transported back in time. As the canopies of trees on a New England back road radiate now with reds, oranges, and yellows we are reminded of nature's consistent cycles that beautifully reinforce those of our own.

ABUNDANT HARVESTS

On one of the first fall weekends, we might feel as if the day belonged to summer, but as night draws near there is an invigorating snap of cold in the air and we build a campfire to ward off the chill. This simple country tradition brings us all together to chat happily and celebrate fall. Our vegetable gardens, carefully tilled and tended, are still producing in abundance. The huge field which was the last to come in is dotted now with the long-awaited orange glow of pumpkins and the welcomed decorative gourds can be picked and happily shared. Cucumbers that benefitted from additional summer rains can be made into bread and butter pickles and piccalilli as mother and son combine the slices with just the right bit of spices using a time-tested family recipe. The result of this day of effort is a harvest table lined with mason jars filled with homemade, homegrown produce that can be enjoyed all year round.



SAVORING THE ESSENCE OF FALL

Fall suppers satisfy our desire to draw into our homes as days continue to get cooler. Planning a home-cooked meal of beef stew and buttery biscuits followed by a homemade apple pie somehow works to enhance our experience of the season. The scent of apple wafting through the air of our kitchen as the apples bubble and bake is a true country joy.

Harvest festivals, large and small, are also an experience to take in and enjoy. With huge colorful tents filled with handcrafts, pumpkins and produce, and antiques, there is something for everyone. With a cup of hot, mulled cider, one can venture from booth to booth on a crisp autumn Saturday morning and feel the excitement of fall. Coming home with a handcrafted wreath made of cornhusks and bittersweet or an early blue decorated antique jug, we are reminded of our treasured day reveling in the wonder of fall.

This season spend time planning moments that create joy. Pursue experiences that capture the essence of fall. And as you surround yourself with nature's abundant blessings, share that magic with those you hold dear.

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

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