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Minnesota's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Fun Events

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September/October 2024

Happy Fall Y'all!

The Country Register

Minnesota's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Fun Events



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Deadline For the Nov/Dec 2024
Edition is Oct 10th!

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Special Events

September

7.....Fall Opening - Country Craft Shed - Duluth
12-14.....Sidewalk Sale - Old Alley Quilt Shop - Sherburn
21.....National Jelly Roll Day - Quilted Dog - Cloquet
26-28.....Our Quilting Legacy Quilt Show - Des Moines, IA
30 - Oct 12.....Minnesota Charms Shop Hop - Cabin Quilting - Cook
30 - Oct 12.....Minnesota Charms Shop Hop - Up North Quilt Shop - International Falls
30 - Oct 12.....Minnesota Charms Shop Hop - Quilted Dog - Cloquet
30 - Oct 12.....Minnesota Charms Shop Hop - Creations Quilt Shop - Duluth

October

1-3.....Featherweight Festival - Quilt Haven on Main - Hutchinson
3-5.....Junk Bonanza - Shakopee
5.....One Day Shop Hop - Quilt Haven on Main - Hutchinson
5.....Acorn Antics Bus Hop - Old Alley Quilt Shop - Sherburn
5-6.....Celebrating Our Stars Quilt Show - St. Cloud
11-12.....Pumpkin Party - Quilted Dog - Cloquet
14-19.....11th Anniversary Celebration - Quarry Quilts and Yarns - Sandstone
18-19.....Fall Retreat - The Calico Cat Quilt Shop - Pipestone
18-19.....Quilt Fest on the Mississippi - See ad page 19

November

7-9.....Hometown Holiday Road Trip - See ad page 11
7-9.....Hometown Holiday Road Trip - Sewing Seeds Quilt Co - New Ulm
7-9.....Hometown Holiday Road Trip - Timble Box - New Ulm
7-9.....Deer Camp - Quilt Haven on Main - Hutchinson
8.....Christmas Arrives - The Farmer's Daughter - White Bear Lake
8-9.....Festival of Trees Holiday Open House - DeAnn's Country Village - Litchfield
29 - Dec 1.....Christmas Sale - Country Craft Shed - Duluth

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Happy Halloween!

Where in Minnesota?

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

(Answer on page 7 of this issue)



15th 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
The Country Register
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Or email to:

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The Country Register

Be included in our Quilt Guild Guide

- Have your guild name as well as website included in our guild guide located in a prominent location of the paper!
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The yellow and orange colors you see actually always exist in leaves but they are overpowered by the abundance of green from chlorophyll. The amount of chlorophyll starts to decrease as the sun weakens and the days grow shorter.

Red and purple leaves are only that color because of the presence of sugars and sap that are trapped within the leaves. These sugars provide plants with the energy they need to survive.



The Power of Hope

by Lesley R. Nuttall

Hope and positive thinking are powerful tools in our lives. Being motivated and optimistic helps us to survive. Never underestimate the power of hope. It gives us faith and the power to cope.

Hope is always looking confidently onward, helping us to set our goals, so we can move forward. Positive thoughts are supreme and good for our Soul. Hope carries us towards our present goal.

With hope, you can become inspired. Your creations can become what you've desired. Hope means joyful and confident expectations. Your successful dreams are accomplished with high aspirations.

Martin Luther said, "Everything that is done in the world, is done with HOPE!"

Rejoice in your HOPE! (Romans 12:12)

©2024, Lesley R. Nuttall is the author of *Secrets of Party Planning* and lives with her husband in Thunder Bay, ON, Can



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GIRLFRIEND WISDOM



"I have always felt that we did not give an honorable enough place in our communities to the teachers."

Eleanor Roosevelt - 1953

And the quotation continues... "Day in and day out they are at work preparing the future citizens in our communities..."

GIRLFRIEND WISDOM: Start the school year out by honoring your children's teacher. Support them, encourage them, and let them know that you stand with them in creating these new future citizens.

Teachers are trained experts in their fields. They deserve respect.

They want to be recognized for the professional, dedicated, and responsible work that they do. Eleanor Roosevelt was right in 1953, and these values remain true today in the School Year 2024-25!

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

Quilt Preservation

Tips to Safeguard These Stitched Treasures

by Steve Baker

Quilts are beautiful pieces of artwork that hold significant meaning for their creators and their families. Over time, quilts can become heirloom treasures that are passed down from generation to generation, making them even more valuable.

In this article, we will discuss the ways to preserve a quilt so that it can be enjoyed for generations to come.

1. Store Quilts Correctly to Prevent Damage

One of the most important steps in preserving a quilt is to store them correctly. It's vital to avoid folding or stacking quilts for extended periods of time because this can create permanent creases, which can weaken the fabric and damage the batting.

Instead, it's recommended to roll the quilt and store it in a cool, dry place, away from direct sunlight. When rolling a quilt, it's important to use acid-free tissue paper, which will help prevent damage to the fabric over time. The tissue paper should be placed between the layers of the quilt to help prevent the growth of mildew or mold. Quilts can also be wrapped in cotton muslin or a clean white sheet, which will help protect them from dust and sunlight.

2. Clean Quilts Carefully

Quilts should be cleaned carefully to avoid damaging the fabric or causing them to fall apart. Quilts should be washed by hand using a mild detergent and cold water.

Gently swish the quilt through the soapy water without rubbing and then rinse it thoroughly with clean water. After washing, gently squeeze out the excess water and lay the quilt flat on a clean, dry surface. It's best to allow the quilt to air dry – avoid using a dryer or hanging the quilt outside where it may be exposed to direct sunlight.

3. Avoid Exposure to Direct Sunlight

Direct sunlight can cause fading and deterioration of quilt fabrics over time. For this reason, it's important to avoid exposure to bright sunlight or prolonged exposure to direct light.

4. Handle Quilts with Clean, Dry Hands

When handling quilts, it's important to use clean, dry hands to avoid transferring oils and dirt to the fabric. Cigarette smoke and other harsh chemicals can also be harmful to the fabric.

5. Protect Quilts from Pests

Protecting quilts from pests is essential in preserving them. Bugs like moths can eat through the fabric and batting, leaving holes and weakening the overall structure of the quilt. To protect against pests, it's recommended to store quilts in airtight containers, like vacuum storage bags or plastic containers with tight-fitting lids.

6. Check for Signs of Wear and Tear

Regularly inspect quilts for any signs of wear and tear. If you notice any holes or tears in the fabric, they should be repaired immediately.

7. Protect Quilts from Extreme Temperatures or Humidity

Extreme temperatures or humidity can lead to damage in fabrics and affect the structure of the batting. It's recommended to store quilts in a climate-controlled environment with stable temperatures and humidity levels.

With the right storage, cleaning, handling and protection, quilts can be enjoyed for many years without losing their beauty and integrity. By following the tips listed above, you can ensure that your cherished quilts remain in the best condition possible.

Steve Baker is the Director of Marketing at SewEndipitous located at 1093A Albright Road in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Visit www.SewEndipitous.com for more information.

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The Comfy Cozy Quilt

by Deb Heatherly

The leaves are falling, the days are cooler and it's time to pull out those fall quilts for snuggling.

Nothing feels better on a chilly day than a flannel quilt. Whether it's used for a quick nap, to wrap up at a Friday night football game or just to cuddle under while watching a good movie, a flannel quilt just makes you feel loved.

This quick and easy quilt can be stitched up in no time at all. Pre-wash and dry your flannel before starting because flannel tends to shrink and then cut and sew this in a day. Sew in rows and then sew the rows together. Tip: I use sticky notes to hide all but of the row I'm working on. This will help you stay organized so that the right colors end up in the correct position.

With just three colors, fabric selection is easy. Make it in school colors, Christmas colors, winter blues or whatever fabric 'speaks to you'. Gather a group of friends and have a quilting party! Have everyone pre-cut their squares, bring their favorite fall treat and then settle in for a day full of fun.

The Comfy Cozy Quilt finishes at 71" x 71". Mine is well loved and starting to show its age, but it's the first thing I pull out every year in the fall! I keep telling myself to make a replacement, but wrapping up in this one is like hugging an old friend.

- 1 1/4 yd. Color 1: Dark
 - Cut (7) 6" x WOF strips.
 - Sub-cut (41) 6" squares
- 1 1/4 yd. Color 2: Medium
 - Cut (7) 6" x WOF strips.
 - Sub-cut (40) 6" squares
- 1 1/4 yd. Color 3: Light
 - Cut (7) 6" x WOF strips.
 - Sub-cut (40) 6" squares
- Outer Border:
 - Cut (7) 6" x WOF strips
- Binding:
 - Cut (8) 2 1/2" x WOF strips
- Backing: 4 yds.



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/770429649800457/>. 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.

Country Register Recipe Exchange Classic Chili



- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 tbsp olive oil | 1 - 1/2 tsp salt |
| 1 medium yellow onion - diced | 1/2 tsp ground black pepper |
| 1 pound lean ground beef | 1/4 tsp ground cayenne pepper |
| 2 - 1/2 tbsp chili powder | 1 - 1/2 cups beef broth |
| 2 tbsp ground cumin | 1 (15oz) can petite diced tomatoes |
| 2 tbsp granulated sugar | 1 (16oz) can red kidney beans, drained |
| 2 tbsp tomato paste | 1 (8oz) can tomato sauce |
| 1 tbsp garlic powder | |

Add the olive oil to a large pot and place it over medium-high heat for two minutes. Add the onion and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the ground beef to the pot. Break it apart with a spoon and cook for 6-7 minutes, until the beef is browned, stirring occasionally. Add the chili powder, cumin, sugar, tomato paste, garlic powder, salt, pepper, and cayenne. Stir until well combined. Add the broth, diced tomatoes (with their juice), drained beans, and tomato sauce. Stir well. Bring the liquid to a low boil. Then, reduce the heat (low to medium-low) to gently simmer the chili, uncovered, for 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove the pot from the heat. Let the chili rest for 5-10 minutes before serving.



*Add a little pizzaz to your fall
holiday decorations by painting
some small pumpkins with aqua,
black and gold paint! Dip some of
them in glitter too!*

Photo by Igisheva Maria

Duluth

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Peach Cobbler in a Mug

Ingredients:

- 3 tbsp Original Bisquick or Jiffy baking mix
- 2 tbsp water
- 1 can peach pie filling (use 4-5 slices)
- 1/2 - 1 box sugar in the raw
- 1 jar cinnamon sugar

Directions:

1. In a microwave safe mug combine baking mix and water.
2. Stir to combine completely.
3. Fold in 4-5 slices of peach pie filling.
4. Sprinkle to taste with cinnamon sugar.
5. Sprinkle 1/2 - 1 tbsp raw sugar on top.
6. Microwave for one minute.
7. Allow to cool for about 5 minutes before eating.



Photo by The Monday Box

Recipe by TheMondayBox.com

When Grace Amazes

by Kerri Habben Bosman

This September 6th it is eighteen years ago since my grandmother passed away. It was at exactly 1:12 pm as I sat alone with her in her hospital room. My mother was down the hall by the elevator waiting for friends on their way to see her.

My grandmother was 99 years old. Her name was Augusta Weisgerber Mai. For much of her life she was called Gussie. When it was discovered that the mid-wife had incorrectly recorded her as “male” on her birth certificate, everyone began to teasingly call her Gus. She liked the shorter version so much that it stuck. It inspired her playful streak.

To me, she was simply Huba. I began calling her this when I was nine months old. She became Huba to all my friends as I grew up. It is Huba who taught me how to crochet when I was nine years old. She especially taught me how much love flows through our hands and into what we make. I felt her passion and creativity; this devotion fed my desire to learn. Through watching her share what she made, I discovered how much tangible grace there is in giving. It is a grace that affirms two ways, both for being able to give and for knowing your gift was accepted and appreciated.

In her later years, Huba kept extra items she’d made in her back bedroom. We’d be sitting in her living room, visiting with friends. It didn’t matter if she’d known someone twenty years or five minutes, when someone compelled her, she would catch my eye. Then she would give the slightest movement of her head towards the hallway leading to her cache of blankets. I would always know which one she wanted me to bring. Together we’d watch the person’s face light up when receiving the unexpected gift.

Huba learned to crochet when she was eight years old from a shopkeeper near where she lived. There were square potholders in the store window and my grandmother liked them. She stared at them so long and for enough days in a row that the lady invited her in and asked her if she wanted to learn.

For the rest of her life, crocheting was a haven for her. She crocheted through every joy and every grief that life brought her way. Her hands moved the same when the sun was shining and when the winds blew too hard. She only stopped the last three weeks of her life when aplastic anemia had weakened her.

When I married my husband, Wayne, his family became my family. Everyone receives a hand-made gift for their birthday and for Christmas. It is a gift of grace to shower love upon all of them and to receive it in return.



I also donate much of what I make, from baby hats to blankets. When asked about this, I answer that it is for my grandmother, who taught me. Her hands are still now, so I carry on her work.

When I was sitting with Huba eighteen years ago this September, I doubted she could see me. When I’d come in, her eyes were open, unmoving, and vacant. But I didn’t touch her. I didn’t want to draw her back when there was nothing physical remaining here for her.

Instead, I sang to her. Portions of three of her favorite hymns: *How Great Thou Art*, *Will the Circle be Unbroken*, and lastly, *Amazing Grace*. She stopped breathing during the third verse at the line, “And grace shall lead me home.”

When I hear this hymn without warning, my eyes fill with tender, redeeming tears. I look up to say thank you for this last moment of grace Huba and I shared together.

Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer living in Cape Carteret, NC. She can be reached at 913jeeves@gmail.com.



Cloquet • Duluth • McGregor




National Jelly Roll Day: September 21st

Minnesota Charms Shop Hop
Sept 30th - Oct 12th

pumpkin party
October 11th and 12th

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Pieces From My Heart

by Jan Keller

Sunflower Wisdom

Is it the distinctive taste of a juicy tomato picked fresh from the vine that marks the coming of Autumn? Or the way the dewy morning haze brings out the naturally vivid and intense colors of nature? No—for me it's the sunflower boldly emblazoned with all of Autumn's glory. Nourished and fed by a deeply-rooted support system, the sunflower basks in the lingering rays of Indian Summer light for as long as possible.

Almost every summer my husband John traditionally plants sunflowers. With a shovel he prepares the soil and then with a hoe a straight trench is made in the dirt. While he is doing that, I'm scratching my head as I try to remember where I put the seed packets. I know John and I selected and bought them; but where on earth did I put them?



As soon as the seeds are located, I tear open each envelope and mix them so my sunflower patch will be an interesting assortment of color and variety. John and I carefully selected seeds to provide for a wide range of sunflower colors— from yellow to bronze to rusty red—as well as varieties that will grow to have mammoth blossoms over a foot wide. I then give all of the seeds to John in a single envelope so he can evenly plant them in a straight row. Soon the seeds are planted and covered with a layer of soil—and then it's time to patiently wait and watch day by day as the sunflowers grow tall quickly—up to our knees, waists, shoulders, and finally our heads.

Once the stalks begin to bloom, I ponder the wisdom of the sunflower. Just watch them. The sunflower is wise—so smart it somehow knows it should follow the light. Every morning they quickly turn their heads to watch the sunrise. At noon they're looking straight up toward the sky. All day the sunflowers follow the light and get to watch every sunset.

This year, however, even though we planted sunflower seeds, the sunflowers didn't grow. John and I watched as sprouts poked through the soil—only to be devoured prematurely by silly crows. If they were smart and patient, in the fall, there would be plenty of sunflower seeds to eat and enjoy all winter long!

All too often I'm like those eager crows—very quick to devour and destroy, even though my desire is to be more like the sunflower—always, first, and foremost seeking the true source of light.

Jesus told us, *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* (John 8:12)

©2024 Jan Keller No reprint without permission Jan shares other pieces of her life in her books, *Pieces From My Crazy Quilt*, and *The Tie That Binds*. These books can be ordered by calling 719-866-8570, or writing: Black Sheep Books, 11250 Glen Canyon Drive, Peyton, CO 80831

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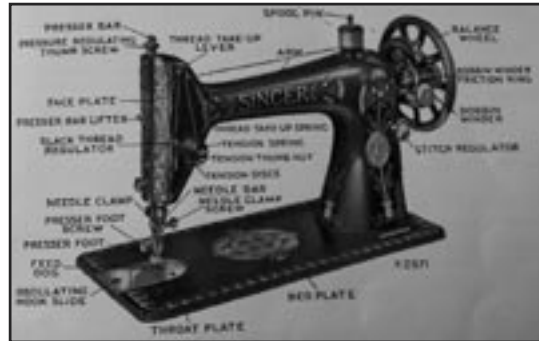


weave the pieces of a treasured tapestry into a vivid depiction of life and love

And Sew On

by Wayne M. Bosman

It might have been the cowboy shirts. Or maybe the black corduroy pants. Either way, some of my earliest memories center around Mom's sewing machine. When I was quite young, Mom made most of my brother's and my clothes. Dad hadn't settled into a career yet and making your own clothes was a thrifty way to keep the budget balanced. There were four of us brothers, all under five years old and it seemed that by the time each child outgrew an outfit there wasn't much left of it to hand down to the next youngest.



When my two older brothers were at school during the day my brother Ron and I spent a good bit of time in Mom's bedroom watching her work at the old Singer treadle driven machine. We were both fascinated with it, watching the treadle go up and down and listening to the steady sounds as she used her "spare" time keeping us in clothing. She still remembers when Dad got her the electric motor for the machine. It was 1947.

The cowboy shirts were a memorable special project for her, finishing one for each of us before Christmas. I remember the corduroy pants for the softness and warmth in the Wisconsin winter. Mom grew up in a time when many, if not most, of her friends made their own outfits. She had a drawer full of patterns that she had made or wanted to make.

Eventually, as we became teenagers and as she had to spend more time being the unpaid worker at Dad's growing business, the Singer started to gather dust. She made some clothes for my sister, who was six years younger, and did alterations on the tight pants that were the style then. By the time bell bottoms were in vogue, the Singer was retired.

As time went on, my fascination with sewing machines remained. I spent 49 years as a car mechanic and learned to value machines of all types for their simplicity and usefulness. Every once in a while I would happen on a sewing machine that spurred my curiosity. I would usually end up buying it and spending happy hours getting it back in working order. I never learned to actually sew with them, so they would end up in the hands of someone who could.

The latest acquisition is a 1984 Montgomery Ward machine that cost \$10 at an estate sale. I always have mixed feelings when I get something from an estate sale. Someone is clearing out all of the personal items from another person's life. The buyers are looking for useful things and it is easy to forget that someone loved and used those things. When I opened up the machine, the care that the previous owner had put into it was evident. The tools are neat, clean and organized. There was a small sampler of some of the stitches, but even more, it felt loved. I went online to find an operators manual and threaded the machine. It worked beautifully. My wife Kerri's eyes lit up as she tried it out.

Kerri learned to sew from her mother. Her skill of choice is crocheting, so she only pulls out her mother's 1960 Singer when she decides to make a new apron or alter a dress for dancing. Because she really enjoys the handwork, she has hand-sewed each of my grandchildren's pillowcases that are personalized to each's particular interests and favorite colors. National Parks, sports teams, zebras, the Eiffel Tower, flamingos, dinosaurs and sea creatures have all appeared on the pillowcases. She always does the final stitches with a little prayer that laying their heads on the things that they love will bring good dreams. It can't hurt, can it?

Wayne M. Bosman is a retired auto mechanic living in Cape Carteret, NC. He has the good fortune to be married to Kerri Habben Bosman, who is a regular contributor. His email is wbosman1@gmail.com.



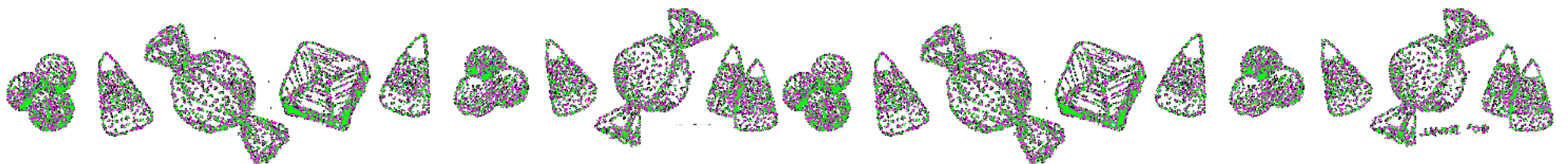
Search for the underlined words in the recipe in the word search below!

Butternut Squash Soup

recipe courtesy of Taste of Home

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 pound <u>bulk</u> Italian sausage | 1 tbsp <u>chicken</u> base |
| 1 medium onion, <u>chopped</u> | 2 cans (15.5 oz each) great northern
beans, <u>rinsed</u> and drained |
| 4 garlic cloves, minced | 2 cans (15.5 oz each) <u>fire roasted</u>
diced tomatoes undrained |
| 1 large <u>butternut squash</u> (about 5lbs)
peeled, <u>seeded</u> and cut into 1" pieces | 1 tsp salt |
| 16oz frozen corn, <u>divided</u> | 1/4 tsp pepper |
| 4 cups water | |

Cook sausage, onion and red pepper over medium heat for 9-11 minutes or until sausage is no longer pink and onion is tender. Break up sausage into crumbles as it cooks. Add garlic and cook another minute. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside. Discard drippings. Add squash, 1.5 cups of the corn, water and chicken base to same pan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer covered for 15-20 minutes or until squash is tender. Remove soup from heat and cool slightly. Process in batches in a blender until smooth. Return to pot. Add beans, tomatoes, salt, pepper, sausage mixture and remaining corn. Heat through.



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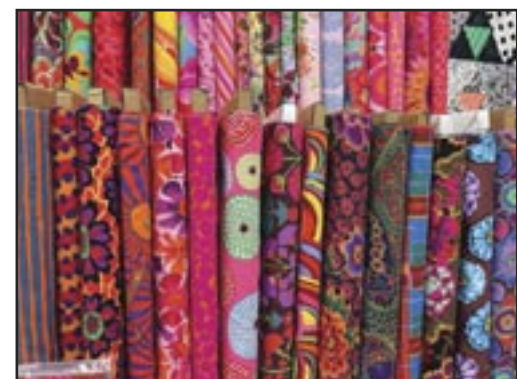
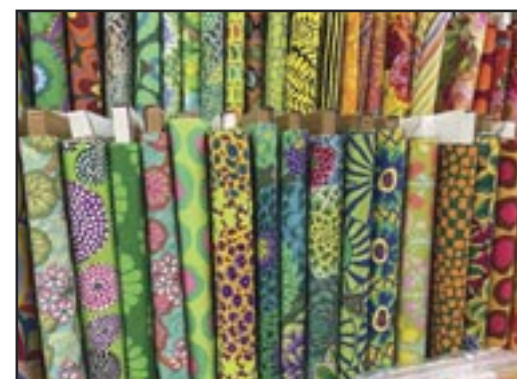


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Become Inspired

by Annice Bradley Rockwell

A Bountiful Harvest

As the long days of summer begin to wind down, there is a noticeable shift in the air. Cooler breezes and crystal-clear sunshine greet us now as fall slowly arrives. Tall corn fields and overflowing gardens lining our country roads bring us a feeling of fall and a promise of a bountiful harvest. Our pumpkin vines are loaded with huge orange and white pumpkins and speckled among the garden beds are striped gourds in green, white and orange—perfect for our country decorating.

As we enjoy our happy, fall weekends, we notice our local farm stands selling colorful, freshly harvested bundles of Indian corn. Weathered harvest baskets are filled with just-picked apples of all varieties. And cider spiced with cinnamon and clove is an ideal treat as we shop for other special fall delights.

Fun Fall Destinations

Harvest festivals and antiques shows are a fun fall destination to celebrate the season. Gatherings of vendors offering everything from handcrafted scarecrows to hand-poured jar candles in splendid scents like pumpkin souffle and cornbread and honey are blended with food trucks offering signature specialties like hot apple dumplings with vanilla ice cream or pulled pork barbeque sandwiches with a side of baked beans. These celebrations, whether large or small, provide us a chance to bask in the glory of fall.

Antiques shops are also filled with fresh inspiration and vibrant color in fall. Displays are often rearranged and layered to reflect a season of creating added warmth and ambiance in our home. Tin lighting paired with antique redware along with hand-hooked textiles of a fall scene are the perfect tablescape for fall. Freshly picked pumpkins arranged with warm-toned garden mums in antique stoneware crocks create a new look on our front step and around our keeping room fireplace. And a towering scarecrow designed with tobacco pickets, a classic checkered flannel, overalls and a worn hat add autumnal interest to our garden beds. These creations can become part of a family tradition where everyone leaves with a finished fall project.

Harvesting Blessings

Whether it is venturing out to find just the right elements to change your accents to fall or gathering with friends to enjoy a harvest festival or a nighttime agricultural fair, fall is a time of fun. All around us nature is providing a bounty all her own. And as we take the time to celebrate this new season, we will indeed be harvesting blessings of our very own.

--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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Random Acts

by Maranda K Jones

Chips and Dip



"Come on over!" is a rare phrase to escape my mouth. I am constantly in awe of the authors who write articles about their hosting abilities, welcoming people into their homes and serving them well-thought out treats, willing to please. These gracious people are sure to satisfy their guests' wants for conversation and confections. Thirsts are quenched at these parties, and I would love to be comfortable inviting others into my home. I am just not there yet.

Hospitality is indeed a spiritual gift that some have been blessed with. This was a recent topic of discussion in Sunday School with myriad opinions. Why do more people not invite others into their homes as much as they used to? Some people feel inadequate, fear their messes will be judged, or keep such a busy schedule that it feels impossible. Maybe it is a perfectionist attitude that thinks the menu needs to be elaborate and nothing will measure up to the guests' expectations. Do we worry that we won't measure up? We are humble people that need each other. Our society in general has shifted from gathering with neighbors often, and it shows in the layouts of our communities. Porches were once commonly placed on the front of the houses, lined up facing the street, calling to passersby to stop in, enjoy a refreshing drink while rocking and talking to (or about!) other neighbors. Now a backyard oasis is the ultimate getaway, the coveted landscape project of many home improvement plans.

My improvement plan involves prayer and developing this spiritual gift of hospitality. I usually pray that someone else will host and that I will be a gracious guest! Time for some transformation. Others have been blessed, and I feel I need to work to grow in this aspect of my life. Today I am feeling convicted about this self-construction project. Can I renovate enough to feel comfortable and eager to please? We shall see. We are starting small, with a snack.

My youngest daughter and I love chips and dip. When we take a road trip, we make a stop for those must-have snacks. Her go-to grab is always chips and dip. Whether it is salsa, cheese dip, bean dip or guacamole, one of these sides and tortilla chips is always her first choice. A combination of French onion dip and wavy potato chips comes in second, for she is not picky. When we are home, chips and dip are an easy appetizer for three hungry teenagers. They will grab a bag, a bowl, and a jar to feed their growing appetites. Snacking on chips and dip before a meal while we are cooking, they stand near the counter crunching and munching, conversing about whatever comes to mind.

This got me thinking. If conversation comes this easily over a simple shared snack, we should offer to share chips and dip with a neighbor. We could invite friends or relatives to come over and catch up over a bowl of chips. It isn't fancy, but neither am I. My friends and family already know that, so I should stop waiting and start feeding my growing appetite for connections. We would not have to clear a whole day, or even clear our whole table, to offer some grace, attention, and friendship to someone we love. And on those days when hosting at our own home feels too hard, we could still be outgoing. We could meet somewhere to break bread, or chips, rather.

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Maranda Jones' new book **Random Acts** is now available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Labors of Love Last Forever

by Barbara Kalkis

If the Year gave a party, I think September would stroll into the room with quiet assurance and accompanied by the muffled drum beat of a military marching band. There's an aura about the month that screams "schedules," "routines," "order," "discipline," "school is in session" and, worst of all, "summer is over"—although summer doesn't even end until the third week of the month!

What makes September feel like Summer is over? I think it's because kids are back in school's structured days, and the autumn sports, band practices, and drama club rehearsals are in full swing. At home, chrysanthemums and zinnias still blaze in their vibrant colors; fields fade to yellows and creamy whites. Trees begin their slow turn to autumn



with red, orange, gold and yellow outlining the veins of once vibrant green leaves.

Mostly, I think September stands out because of Labor Day. In the parade of months January hosts the new year. Hooray! Out with old! In with the New! February keeps us in suspense about when winter will end based on the whims of a groundhog. March boasts a Lion and a Lamb to excuse its alternating orion snows and breezy spring days. April welcomes foods. May begins honoring International Workers, Moms, and those lost in war. Who can compete with that?

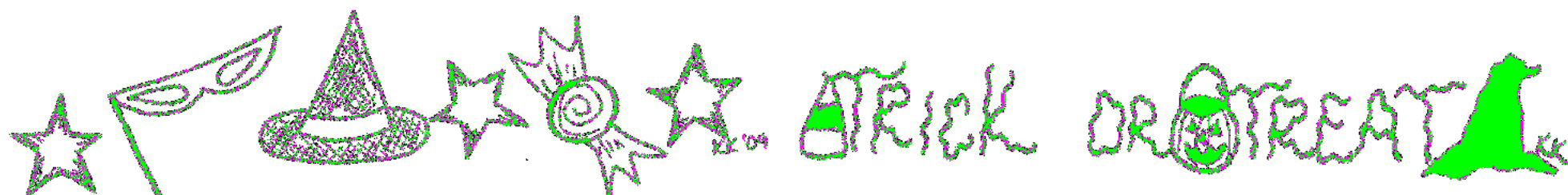
June formally welcomes Summer, regardless of not having a groundhog or other prescient animal. And what's not to like about all the graduations and weddings? July is Independence Day and just plain fun with 31 days of summer. August languidly meanders into the year's party with its dog days of heat and the listlessness of doing nothing but lazily dreaming in a hammock, or dreaming of owning a hammock. Barely waking from the wonderful dreams that Summer inspires, September arrives to wake us up to the reality of work.

Unlike May's focus on people who work, September focuses on the jobs that workers do. Labor Day is about all those occupations that require physical effort. Is there any word that speaks to intense physical effort, shoulder-to-the-grindstone, head-down concentration on getting a job done? I don't think so.

But every cloud has at least one silver lining, and September has many. There's honor in labor. Sure, there's honor in work, but work isn't the same as labor. Work is something we all do, like homework, housework, field work, earning-a-living work. Labor requires the diligence of doing a difficult job masterfully well, concentrating with a needle-eyed focus. Labor is about the pride we feel when we've completed a chore perfectly or close to perfect.

The crafting projects we undertake pale next to the labor of building a skyscraper, farming crops that will feed many, manufacturing electronic devices that drive technology, or working in a factory. What binds us are the qualities required for any job well done: energy, determination, and a deep-down love of doing something really well for ourselves and others. However, you labor—for work or for love or both—happy Labor Day! Join the party, September!

©Barbara Kalkis, 2024. Barbara is a writer, teacher and high-tech consultant. She views these jobs as fun work, while cooking and house chores are labor. Her poetry book is *Little Ditties for Every Day: A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm*





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Pickles are such a Dill-light

by Colleen Gust

Pickles have a rich history that spans centuries, cultures and cuisines. They were born out of the necessity for food preservation and have evolved into beloved staples on tables worldwide.

The art of pickling, or preserving food in a vinegar solution brine dates back thousands of years. Ancient civilizations such as the Mesopotamians, Egyptians, and Chinese practiced pickling to extend the shelf life of perishable foods like cucumbers, cabbage, and other vegetables. The process was essential for surviving harsh winters or long journeys. As trade routes expanded, pickling techniques spread across continents, influencing local cuisines, with each region putting its own take on pickling.

The pickling process typically involves submerging vegetables or fruits in a solution of vinegar, water, salt, and spices. This acidic environment prevents the growth of bacteria, effectively preserving the food. Brining pickles makes them last much longer than fresh cucumbers, but packing them in an air-tight container—is what really seals the dill. Fermentation, another method of pickling, which has seen an uptick in home cooks utilization, relies on the natural fermentation process of lactobacillus bacteria present on the surface of vegetables. This process not only preserves the food but also enhances its flavor and nutritional value.

Beyond their delicious taste, pickles offer several health benefits. They are low in calories and high in fiber, making them a healthy snack option. Additionally, pickles are a good source of antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals, depending on the vegetables used. Fermented pickles, in particular, contain probiotics that promote gut health and aid digestion.

Pickles are incredibly versatile and can be enjoyed in various ways. They add a burst of flavor and crunch to sandwiches, burgers, and salads. Pickle juice is a popular ingredient in cocktails and savory dishes. Personally, I use olive juice in a simmered chicken and tomato dish. Pickles are a meal staple in some cuisines, as they contrast with rich and savory dishes. They have also gained importance in recent years with the rise of charcuterie boards. What do you call a pickle you got at a cheap price? A sweet dill.

Did you know fruits like mangoes, watermelons and peaches can be pickled? You can use pickled fruit as a shortcut to "shrub"—a beverage usually made with fruit, sugar, and vinegar. While the acidic base of a shrub is typically a bit sweeter than the pickling brine, just add an extra spoonful of sugar or simple syrup to your glass. Try pickling prairie cherries (Evan's sour cherries) and add a few pickled cherries with a splash of their brine and simple syrup and sparkling water for a refreshing nonalcoholic drink. If you like kombucha, you'll probably like this. The other day, I accidentally dropped some pickles in my Hawaiian punch; I guess it is now trop-pickle.

Pickles are more than just a condiment; they are a testament to humanity's ingenuity in preserving food and enhancing flavor. Remember, it's not just the jumbo kosher pickle that is a pretty big dill.



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by Marlene Oddie

Time For a Positive Attitude

If you haven't had breast cancer yourself, you probably know a family member or friend that has been through this experience. My mother is almost a 20 year survivor. I am so grateful to still have her in my life. October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. When given the opportunity to participate in a Pink-tober event, I designed this Positive Attitude quilt to remind us all, no matter the occasion, having a positive attitude is always a good thing.

This was originally made up in the Positively Pink collection from Island Batik (top). I started with a 10" square stack and added a background fabric to mix in with the low volume prints. Strategic placement of the low volume pink fabrics made for a subtle symmetrical design in the background.

I've also made it up in the Benartex collection by Christa Watson called Stitchy (bottom). This is a large collection with several low volume fabrics which begged for a scrappy background. Creating a strata of five fabrics with the same motif and ordering them in a reverse rainbow for the outer border gives it an extra glow.

There are so many possibilities with this design. The key is to maintain a contrast between the background and the plus symbols. Within the plus symbols there is medium and dark values to show smaller plus signs.

As we draw attention to Breast Cancer Awareness month—don't forget to do monthly self exams and get your mammogram annually. Positive Attitude patterns available at www.kissedquilts.com.

Happy Stitching!

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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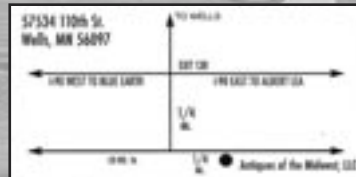
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This month in Minnesota History

September 11, 1971: The first Minnesota Renaissance Festival opens at Lake Grace in Jonathan. One of the largest of its kind, the festival now operates from a permanent encampment near Shakopee.

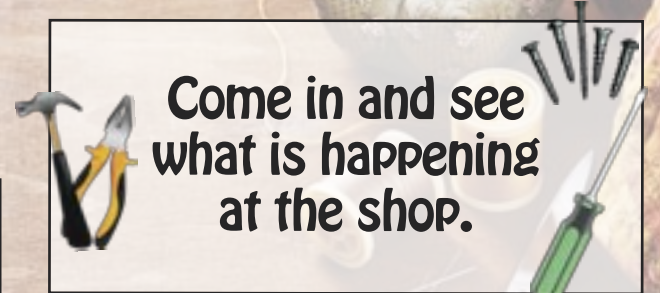
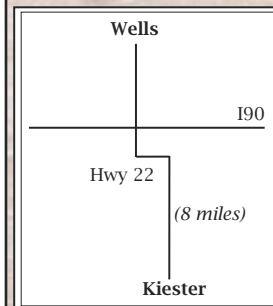
October 10, 1937: The Morris Fruit Company building in Minneapolis collapses, killing two employees. On November 1, a jury of experts learns that the building had shown signs of rotting and overloading on its third floor and had not been rebuilt after a 1933 fire.

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



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Chicken in Cream Sauce over Happy Rice

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2 lbs. skinless, boneless chicken
thighs and/or breasts
1 tsp. dried thyme
1/4 tsp. cayenne
salt & pepper to taste

4 Tbsp. butter
3 c. sliced mushrooms
1/3 c. minced shallots
1/4 c. chicken broth
1 c. dry white wine

1 c. heavy cream
1/3 c. chopped parsley
HAPPY RICE (below)
3 red pears, diced

Wash & cut chicken into 1" pieces; sprinkle them w/ thyme, cayenne, salt & pepper. Melt 2 Tbsp. butter in lg. skillet; cook chicken over med-high heat for 3 min. ~ do not overcook. Add in mushrooms & cook 2 min. more. Remove chicken & mushrooms from skillet & set aside. Melt remaining 2 Tbsp. butter; cook shallots for 2 min., stir often. Add broth & wine to pan, bring to boil, scraping up brown bits from bottom of pan. Simmer 5 min.; add cream; simmer 5 min. more. Put chicken & mushrooms back into skillet, add parsley & heat through. Spoon chicken over rice. Sprinkle chopped pears over all & serve.

HAPPY RICE

Makes 6 servings (5c.)

1/2 c. uncooked white rice
1/2 c. sliced almonds
1/3 c. golden raisins, chopped
seeds from 1 lg. pomegranate (opt.)

Cook rice according to pkg. instructions. When done, stir in all additional ingredients. **NOTE:** You can make Happy Rice even **HAPPIER** (when serving it in a menu that has no sauce) by adding 1/2 stick butter, 1/2 c. minced green onion, 1 Tbsp. minced fresh thyme, 2 Tbsp. orange zest, salt, pepper & 2 diced red pears.

HAPPINESS! HA-CHA-CHA!
♥ LOUIS ARMSTRONG

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Over Time

by Judy Ann Stupak

Living "off the grid" sounds cool. It represents freedom, anonymity, and self-sufficiency. Yes. When you can drive half an hour to a city. When you can communicate instantly with the world via iPhone or social media. When you can visit family, shower and eat a nice meal in a local restaurant. Then living off the grid may be cool. Even fun.

Not so much in the 1930s when my mother-in-law was a child. Coming from Eastern Europe, my mother-in-law along with her sister, two brothers and mom were deposited on a farm in Central Canada and left to fend for themselves. Being three miles from town didn't matter. Few people there spoke their language anyway. Her dad, the only one who spoke English, left home for days/weeks/months on end in order to work in a distant mine. He did what he could to provide for the family. He was the one who did all of the monetary transactions. When he was not around, they just had to make do.

Over time, they cleared land to convert it from bush to farmland. Over time they added animals. Anything to move from the random provision of hunted animals to the self-sufficiency and the dependency of domestic animals. Cows meant you had meat, milk, cream and butter. Pigs provided meat, sausage and lard for baking and making soap. Chickens gave meat and eggs. And from geese you collected feathers.

Survival in a foreign land required adjustment. Everything revolved around the four seasons—planting, growing, harvesting and winter. Very, very cold winters. Storms where you did not leave the house for days on end except to feed the animals. Nights when the temperatures inside the house were so cold the water in pails turned to ice.

But winter evenings in Northern Canada are not only cold. They are also long, with almost 18 hours of darkness. Going out? That was feared. It was much safer inside. And there was always something to be done. After supper, bags of geese feathers collected from the fall 'harvest' were brought out. As mother/children sat around the single source of heat for the house—a wood-burning stove, they stripped feathers until midnight when the last person going to bed would put a stick of wood on the fire for the night.

At first, the feathers were put into empty sugar or flour bags and sewn shut. These were pillows.

Later, the family became friends with neighboring Dukabars who showed them how to sew rows on sheets of fabric and stuff channels with feathers in order to make down comforters.

At some point feathers were replaced with wool. Bags of wool were taken down to the river to be washed. They were then carded and rolled into sheets. A quilting frame was set up in the living room where it took up almost every square inch of space. It remained there for weeks until the quilting was done. In this case it was hand stitched (loosely) so that the tops could be removed periodically to be washed or replaced.

Remnants of this life remain. My mother-in-law still has the treadle sewing machine, her spinning wheel, wool carding equipment, down filled pillows, wool quilts, tea towels made of recycled flour/sugar bags circa 1950s hand embroidered pillowcases and cross stitch done on hand made linen fabric. For my MIL, the legacy of quilting was simple and traditional—you made what you needed, but nothing extra. The 'nothing extra' applied to everything. There was no time for the extra stitching of blocks. There was no waste of extra fabrics and there was no waste of energy/time making quilts you did not need.

We have—and still use some of the feather pillows, down comforters (that are way too hot in today's world of central heating) and wool quilts that keep us warm on winter nights. The down and wool provided by geese and sheep who lived 75 years ago still provide us with warmth and pleasure!



Judy Ann Stupak lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada.



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Country Register Recipe Exchange
Bacon Ranch Cheese Salad

submitted by Shirley Ross of Alexandria, MN



1 (16oz) pkg bow tie pasta	1 carrot, peeled and diced
1 cup ranch dressing	1 small celery stalk, diced
6 slices bacon	1 red onion, diced
1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese	

Cook pasta uncovered about 12 minutes. Drain and refrigerate until cool. Brown bacon. When cooked, cut into small pieces. In a large bowl, stir together ranch dressing, bacon, parmesan cheese, carrot, celery and red onion. Lightly stir in the pasta to coat with dressing. Refrigerate 2 hours to blend flavors before serving.

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Gals Getaway

by Judy Sharer



For three days every year, my friend Linda and I take a gal's vacation to the shore where we catch up and enjoy each other's company. It's a five-hour drive to reach our destination and we talk nonstop from the time we leave until we return.

Once there, we shop, eat out, go to a show, walk on the beach, and go to the pool to work on our tans. And, of course, we talk. Linda usually brings a book to read at the pool and I enjoy watching other people enjoying their vacations, dip my feet in the pool, and work on my latest novel. The entire trip is relaxing and just what we busy women need, a complete break from husbands and daily routine.

You would think by the fourth day on our drive home, we'd be talked out but that's never the case when we're together. I mentioned that it was a welcome not having to cook for a change and that kicked off sharing favorite recipes. Conversation turned to odd food combinations our mother's cooked to stretch the food budget when we were young. We laughed about having to sit at the table until we finished everything on our plates.

Conversation about food was endless. We covered the entire gambit of crock pot meals, casseroles, meat dishes, meatless dishes, quick fix meals, salads, side dishes, sandwiches and soups, and my favorite - desserts. We shared which cookbooks we have and who wrote them, although we both agreed we seldom follow the recipes without adding personal favorite spices or other ingredients to make the recipe our own. The drive home flew by and before we knew it, our getaway was over.

This year my go-to recipe, especially for gatherings, is Orange Fluff Salad. It's easy to make, light, tasty, and everyone seems to love it. Enjoy!

ORANGE FLUFF SALAD

16 oz. container of cottage cheese	4 oz. box of orange Jello
15 oz. can of mandarin oranges, well drained	8 oz. container of Cool Whip
2 cups mini marshmallows	1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts (optional)

Mix together the top 3 ingredients, then fold in the Cool Whip and marshmallows. Refrigerate for at least three hours. Once set, lightly dust the top with cinnamon and optional nuts.

Judy Sharer is the author of a historical family saga romance series titled A Plains Life. This four-book series is appropriate for the entire family and published by The Wild Rose Press. A Plains Life series is available on-line wherever books and eBooks are sold. Visit Judy's website for details on her latest releases at judysharer.com and follow her on Facebook and twitter.

Onalaska, WI

Cooking for Two

by Colleen Gust



Cabbage & Meatballs

I think the dill pickles are the secret to this simple yet hearty recipe.

Yield: 2 servings.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3 cups chopped cabbage | 1 cup tomato juice |
| 1 egg, beaten | 1 small onion, chopped |
| 1 Tbsp chili powder | 1 Tbsp cider vinegar |
| 1 Tbsp chopped dill pickle | 1/2 tsp salt |
| 1/4 tsp pepper | 3/4 lb. lean ground beef |

Place cabbage in a large saucepan; add tomato juice. Cover and simmer over low heat. Meanwhile, combine the egg, onion, chili powder, vinegar, pickle, salt and pepper. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. Shape into two-inch balls. Add to cabbage mixture. Cover and cook over low heat for 15-20 minutes or until meat is no longer pink, stirring occasionally.

Green Beans with Bacon

A different ways to liven up canned and frozen vegetables.

Yield: 2 servings.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 2 cups frozen cut green beans | 2 Tbsp. canned mushroom stems & pieces |
| 1 1/2 tsp dried minced onion | 1 bacon strip, diced |
| 1/4 tsp salt | 1/4 tsp butter |
| 1/8 tsp garlic powder | 1/8 tsp pepper |

In a small saucepan, combine all ingredients; add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cover and simmer for 13-15 minute or until bacon is cooked. Drain.

Cutout Biscuits

These biscuits come out so light and fluffy.

Yield: 3 biscuits

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 cup flour | 1 1/2 tsp baking powder |
| 1/2 tsp salt | 4 1/2 tsp cold butter |
| 1/4 cup ginger ale | 1 Tbsp sour cream |
| 1 Tbs. mayonnaise | |

TOPPING:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 2 tsp butter, melted | 1/2 tsp sugar |
|----------------------|---------------|

Place flour into a small bowl. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In another bowl, combine the ginger ale, sour cream and mayonnaise; stir into flour mixture just until moistened. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; knead 8-10 times.

Pat out to 3/4-in. thickness; cut with a floured 2-1/2 in. biscuit cutter. Place two inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Brush with butter, sprinkle with the sugar. Bake at 400° for 9-11 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve warm.

Colleen Gust is an avid baker and gardener and lives with her husband outside of Regina, Saskatchewan. Kirby and Colleen Gust are publishers of the Manitoba & Saskatchewan Country Register.

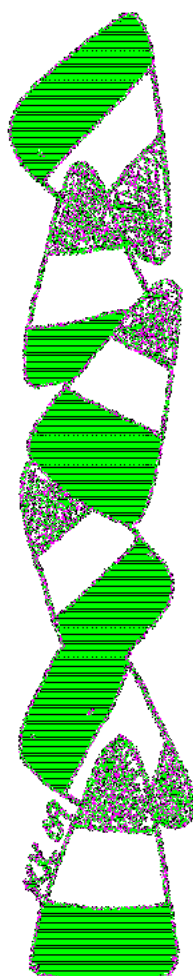
Country Register Recipe Exchange Simple Pasta Salad

submitted by Shirley Ross of Alexandria, MN



- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 (16oz) pkg linguini pasta | 6 cloves garlic, minced |
| 6 Roma tomatoes, chopped | 1/2 cup olive oil |
| 1 pound shredded mozzarella cheese | 1/2 tsp garlic salt |
| 1/3 cup chopped fresh basil | pepper, optional |

In a medium bowl, combine tomatoes, cheese, basil, garlic, olive oil, garlic salt and pepper (optional). Cook the pasta using the directions on the package. Drain the pasta, toss with tomato mixture.



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Autumn Sights and Smells

by Tammy Page

If you don't get to experience the autumn seasonal changes in your part of the United States, you're missing out on some spectacular and beautiful sights and smells. Around early September in Indiana, I can feel a change in the air from hot and muggy with 90% humidity to temps in the 70's with a dramatic drop in the humidity. The heaviness of the air has begun to be lifted and we can all breathe a little easier.

The Friday night football games are the best with temperatures in the 60's where all I need is a sweatshirt to ward off the chill in the air. There's nothing like the coolness on my face from an autumn breeze while I sit in the high school bleachers cheering on my grandchildren on the field. The smell of hot buttered popcorn drifts out of the concession stand and makes its way to where we are sitting. The scent of hot chocolate fills our nostrils as the air gets colder and we sit a little closer. The colorful, fallen leaves have started to dry up and you can hear them crumble under the fans feet as they make their way around the field to the stands.



The vibrant colors in Indiana are the brightest of bright. Sometimes so bright they startle you as you come around a bend in the road and see them for the first time. Vivid reds, burgundy's, oranges and golds adorn the country roadsides and pastures making a magnificent sight. Last fall I stopped on my way to work when a misty dew was still on the bean fields and took a picture of the tree-lined edge of my son-in-law's field where the trees displayed their peak colors. What a gorgeous sight it was! I've also paused on my way home to take a picture of the golden, orange sunset with the tall trees behind it. I'm sure I am not the only one who has stopped to take pictures of these eye-catching sights. At the same time the leaves are changing colors, the bean and corn fields are being harvested. Even the colors and smells of the dried crops are unique. They smell of clean, fresh grain and cannot be easily described. The golden glow of the ears of corn peak out from under the shucks as they are ready to be combined. And, when you stop to think about how many people the harvest will feed, it makes it even more special. The light brown dust can be seen for miles at times as the combine makes its way down each row. Many late nights, lights from the combines and tractors can be seen against the dark skies as the farmers try to get as much done as they can before the next rainfall.

As the last glimpse of color is left in the leaves and the limbs on the oaks are empty, I can still enjoy the autumn colors I've added to the inside and outside of my home especially when there is a never-ending bowl of sweet candy corn and peanuts on my coffee table-my husband's favorite!

