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November/December 2024

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Maryland's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Premier Events



Kim Keller
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AND THE WINNER IS...

Leuvene Merryman of Upperco, MD and pamela Hart of Brooklyn Park, MD both won a copy of "The Pie Spy: Grandma's Secret Recipe".

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here comes
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Special Events	
November	
1.....	Neal Hurst Lecture - Mathews Museum - Mathews, VA
8.....	Quilting Elissa Bag Lecture - The Sewing Box Quilt Shop - Meyersdale, PA
9-10.....	Maryland Alpaca and Fleece Festival
15-16.....	Handmade Market - Trappe - See Ad Pg 8
23-24.....	41st Annual Kris Kringle Holiday Craft Show - Hagerstown - See Ad Pg 4
29.....	Frosty Friday - Charlotte's Cottage - Frederick

Deadline For the Jan/Feb 2025
Edition is December 10th!

Happy Thanksgiving!



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Photo and project details can be emailed to:
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Crushed candy canes
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-Patti Lee Bock

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

(Answer on page 12 of this issue)



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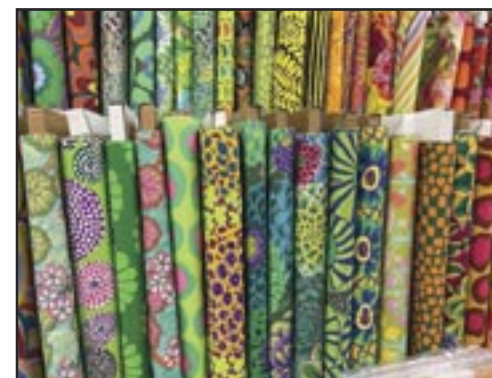


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Book Review

The Crazy Quilter

When Dana's great-aunt Angie passes away, she is bequeathed an unexpected inheritance—Angie's New England quilt shop, including her upstairs apartment. But as Dana questions whether the lifestyle of a small-town quilt shop owner will fit her, strange things are happening, leading Dana to wonder if the shop might be haunted by her great-aunt's restless spirit.

What dark secrets did Angie harbor? Why are her most prized quilts mysteriously missing? And could Angie's time in a psychiatric asylum long ago somehow be connected to the supernatural occurrences Dana experiences?

Faced with unearthing her family's hidden history and finding her great-aunt's legacy, Dana embarks on a journey of personal discovery. She is embraced in this quest by a group of local quilters: Edna, Janet, Alice, and Margo. These four women become Dana's allies and friends, offering her a sense of belonging and support as she delves deeper into her great-aunt's past. Through them, she comes to understand the importance of quilting for Aunt Angie and the town.

This charming, haunting tale blends mystery, quilting, and the power of family to uncover the essential meaning of being true to yourself and finding the threads that stitch a heritage.

The Crazy Quilter by Ronni Chavez, softcover, 118 pages is published by Road Home Quilting. The book is available in eBook and print format and coming soon in audio. You can find a link at Books2Read.com/TheCrazyQuilter. To get an autograph copy from the author go to Payhip.com/RoadHomeQuilting.

About the Author – Ronnie Chavez

Ronni Chavez is a quilter and storyteller who weaves her twin passions of quilt design and creative writing into heartwarming mysteries full of community, craft, and fun. With a degree in library science, she brings an archivist's eye for detail and a love of research to her creative process. When not overseeing the operations of Road Home Quilting, Ronni can be found in her home studio, stitching new quilt designs and crafting mystery stories. She finds inspiration in the natural world, vintage textiles, and the rich quilting traditions passed down through generations of makers.

For quilters, *Road Home Quilting* on Payhip offers patterns that not only entertain but also ensure your time is well spent and your creativity is rewarded.

Book Giveaway! Enter to Win!

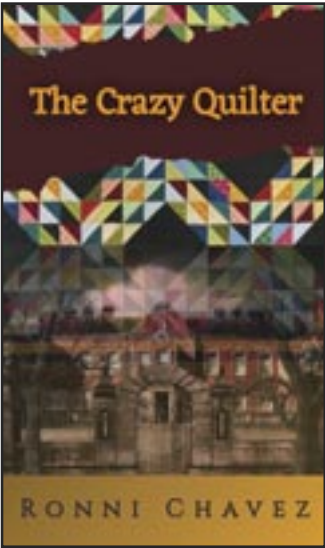
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Christmas – A Time of JOY – or is it?

by Janet Young

Traditionally Christmas symbolizes a time of Peace, Love, and Joy. As we enter into "the most wonderful time of the year", our hearts are filled with excitement, as we begin our preparations for the upcoming festivities. But as the years roll by, perhaps we experience moments of sadness instead of joy as life's changes has brought us to a new level.

For example, maybe for the first time your grown children will not be able to fly home for Christmas. Or, maybe someone in your family is seriously ill, and your heart is not in the usual planning, cooking, baking mode. Whatever the reason, you muddle your way through. With a smile on your face, whenever someone asks, "How are you doing"? You always answer, "Fine, just fine". Even though your heart is aching and you wish things would be the way they used to be even a few years ago—you carry on.

Why is this time of the year so difficult? Could it be this is a time when families gather together to relive the old family traditions, such as decorating the Christmas tree after going out to the tree farm to cut it. Or baking cookies and other holiday treats. Whatever the traditions might be, along with them come memories. And these are the memories that open the floodgates to a river of sadness. For if you have ever lost a loved one, memories are all that you have. And so, as you look around the table and see an empty chair, or hear a particular Christmas song on TV, flashes of memories come forth leaving you filled with sadness. It does not matter if this is your first Christmas without that special someone or your 20th, memories of those you held dear will produce heartache. But as you recall those times, perhaps you will soon find a happiness knowing that you shared your love with a very special person, and how fortunate you were to have had that privilege, whether it was for a short while or for decades.

Life goes on, and yes, we wish things could stay the same throughout our journey, but that unfortunately is not the way it works. Instead, we have to release our expectations of what Christmases past were like, and form new memories by dwelling on the goodness we have sharing our love with others. For it is then, you can believe that while Christmas celebrations will never be the same, it can be good again.

Merry Christmas!

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

Chocolate Candy Cane Mug Cake

- 3 tbsp flour
- 1 tbsp cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 1/2 tbsp melted butter
- 3 tbsp milk
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 small candy cane, crushed
- Peppermint oil



1. Mix the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and sugar in a mug.
2. Stir in the crushed candy cane.
3. Pour in the melted butter.
4. Add milk, vanilla and drop of peppermint oil.
5. Mix all ingredients together.
6. Microwave on high for 1 minute.
7. Check for doneness and add 15 seconds at a time until cooked.

Recipe by Best Mug Cakes



On this day in History

November 15, 1777: After 16 months of debate, the Continental Congress agrees to adopt the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union. Not until March 1, 1781 would the last of the 13 states, Maryland, ratify the agreement. Less than 5 years after the ratification leading Americans decided the system was inadequate to the task of governance. In 1789 the modern United States was established when the US Constitution replaced the Articles of Confederation

December 25, 1941: "White Christmas" receives its world premiere on Bing Crosby's weekly NBC radio program, *The Kraft Music Hall*. It went on to become one of the most commercially successful singles of all time.

Information found on www.history.com

Christmas Memories

by Nancy Nash

"Daddy, is Santa Claus real?" I was a small child when I asked my father that all-important question. I believe his reply included something about using our imaginations to make a story for children and their parents to enjoy together. The news was somewhat disappointing, but I rallied and asked, "Will I still get my presents?" Dad assured me he and Mom would continue that part of the tradition. I was satisfied.

Over the years, I could count on at least three gifts: a needed piece of clothing, a book (I was a bookworm), and a doll. I outgrew the clothing long ago, but even now I take pleasure from my childhood books and displaying my doll collection.

I soon learned the joy of giving to others. I was still quite small when my older brother and I decided to buy presents for my parents. With a few dollars donated by our grandparents, we walked to the corner store. It wasn't like a corner store on a city block, with everything from watches to embroidered handkerchiefs to imported chocolates. It was in the country, and the corner was simply a place where a side street joined a bend in the main road. This establishment sold bread, milk, and popsicles, the latter being of great interest in the summertime.

We scurried down the aisles searching for holiday gifts. There was nothing seasonal on display. The proprietor, taking note of our disappointment, asked about our mission and informed us that the store sold razor blades. We decided they would be perfect for Dad, who shaved away his face whiskers each morning, lest he come to resemble Santa Claus! And lo and behold—a travel kit for Mom, complete with a nail file? What exciting discoveries these were!

We purchased the articles, wrapped them loosely and placed them at the bottom of a cardboard box big enough to have held much more. In a sense, it did hold much more—our love for Mom and Dad and our joy in having a surprise to give to them.

Christmas evolved over the years. As my mother grew older and found shopping and wrapping more laborious, my brother and I enjoyed finding presents for Dad and Mom to exchange with each other. Such memories of our rituals of gift-giving open window after window into the past.

Material goods are not an end in themselves. At best, they simply reflect a glint of light from afar—from that night when the stars spread their glow over a town called Bethlehem and over the birth of a very special Child. May your holidays be filled with gifts of many kinds, especially those of the spirit that still spring forth from that perfect Love.



2024 Nancy J. Nash

Nancy J. Nash is the author of *Mama's Books: An Oregon Trail Story*, and *Little Rooster's Christmas Eve*, each available on amazon.com. She has a B.A. in English composition from Mount Holyoke College and an M.F.A. in Writing for Children from Simmons College. She can be reached at nancynash341@gmail.com

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Pieces From My Heart

by Jan Keller

Turkey Talk

Turkeys wouldn't win the prize for being God's most beautiful creation.

They're really a rather disgusting ornery creature, even while prancing around in the wild. Their highly praised fanned tail feathers are actually tattered and torn, if any remain after the bird fights through all its initiated squabbles. I wonder if the poor turkey even realizes that behind its puffed chest is a ragged rear.

The turkey, a perfect picture of pomposity, has become a synonym for a jerk.

The turkey that will grace holiday tables across our country hardly even resembles the ones eaten by our forefathers.

According to history texts, those early birds were exceptionally thin and meager 10-pound scavengers. When a pilgrim was fortunate enough to kill the critter, eating the gamey, stringy bird was a real trial. If not careful, a tooth could be broken on bits of buckshot.

Even though today's turkeys are injected with butter, wired with timers, stuffed full of dressing, and scientifically groomed to weigh 40 pounds, they remain foul fowl because they're also injected full of artificial chemicals and drugs to speed growth while living in their ultramodern artificial environment.

Despite all the advanced technology designed to improve and perfect the turkey, the poor critter still must endure the humiliation of a caste system. In the grocer's freezer case, exposed for all the world to see, turkeys are divided according to apparent quality. The extra-fancy double-breasted birds command a greater premium than the pitiful and pathetic generic Grade-C fowl that's missing a portion of its wing or has a small nick cut into its skin.

Who are we mortal human to be so demanding of the ultimate perfection in our turkeys?

Who among us is perfect—lacking any physical or emotional scar, impairment or deformity?

If I were coldly and nakedly displayed for the turkey that I am, my scars and imperfections not only would be visible, but glare out with blinding intensity.

This Thanksgiving, because I am a fallible turkey, just like everybody else, I'm grateful God loves and accepts me just as I am.

When I realize I've been pompously strutting around with a puffed chest and a ragged rear, I find consolation in the following little anonymous song, sung to the tune of *On Top of Old Smokey*:

If God can love turkeys, then He can love you,
'Cause you are a turkey, and I am one too.

So, when you are doubting, remember it's true:
If God can love turkeys, then He can love you!

©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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Life in Skunk Hollow

by Julie A Druck

Best & Worst—Making Others Feel Valued

I find people fascinating. And I find them even more so when they are sharing about their life, experiences, and passions. I've lately begun a simple practice that teases out the things that light people up. It's really rather simple—I just ask the person to share the best and worst of an experience. Usually it's in relation to their job or life's work, but it can also be about an event, a trip, or something they've been through.

Recently I got a "behind-the-scenes" look into a man's six-year stint in being a staff photographer for an NFL team, heard the frustrations and benefits of being an electrical lineman for three decades, and was amazed by the sharings of a 90-year-old man who looks (and acts) more like 70.

I can't express how much I LOVE doing this. Upon asking myself why I enjoy the practice so much, I think it's because it makes people feel seen, recognized, and valued. When someone takes the time and care to genuinely express interest in another's life (even if only for a few minutes), it seems to make them feel special and honored. Without fail, every single time I do this, I notice that when people share about things that are important to them, they—physically—light up to some degree. And the feeling I get from making others feel valued in this way lights ME up. Such a simple little practice that costs me nothing but a few minutes of time seems to give others such a boost.

Why would I not want to invest in that?

Julie Druck is from York, Pennsylvania, and writes from her farm in Skunk Hollow. She'd welcome your comments at thedrucks@netzero.com.



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Third Annual Bayside Quilters Handmade Market



Anytime an organization tries something new there is a wonderment if it will work for the group or be a total bust. Three years ago Bayside tried something new-the Handmade Market. Many members had a collection of quilts and other handmade items they had lovingly made but had no outlet where we could share them. For the past 2 years they've been sharing those treasures and are about to offer

more handmade goodies to you.

What might you find in the treasure chest of handmade gems? Popular items have been small purses for credit cards and a bit of cash, table runners, soft toys. rope bowls or containers are a great addition to any decor. How about someplace to lay your head or decorate your home, there will be pillows too. Books in a Bag for young readers are a big hit. Bags of many sizes and shape will be for sale too.



Almost everything is made out of fabric. You'll have your choice of quilts in all sizes, baby to large bed size. Prices also range from baby to large.

One of Bayside Quilters' missions is to promote the art of quilting. Membership opens the door to quilters of all levels, beginner to advanced, by offering classes, demonstrations and lectures. Quilter styles are traditional, contemporary, modern, art and quilt collectors. Bayside classes and lectures cover all styles and techniques. During covid many instructors started to present lectures and classes on the Zoom platform. This allows members to check in to meetings when they are not able to attend in person. Many instructors only teach via an online platform. Membership is open to all.



Another part of Baysides' mission is Outreach in the community. Proceeds from the sale are used to buy supplies to make the quilts and other items donated to various organizations. The Clark Comprehensive Breast Center receives mammo pillows. They are placed between the seat belt and the surgical site or infusion port to relieve pressure. Hospice facilities are another area where quilts provide comfort to the patients. Veterans in hospice care receive a patriotic themed quilt. The families keep them as a memorial to their loved one. Various individuals that are experiencing the aftermath of a crisis are also provided comfort with a quilt.

Come on down to Trappe, MD on Friday, November 15, 3pm to 7pm or Saturday, November 16, 9:30am to 3pm. You'll find a treat for a gift or yourself. This year several businesses and individuals helped with our expenses for which we are grateful. See the ad in this issue. Visit Bayside Quilters of the Eastern Shore on Facebook; website, baysidequilters.com.

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Quilt Raffle

Friday Nov 15th
 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Trappe Fire House
 4001 Powell Avenue
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Saturday Nov 16th
 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

 **Bayside Quilters of the Eastern Shore**

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Designed By
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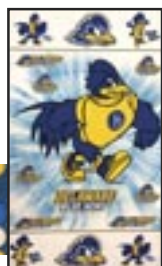
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Enjoy Our
12 Days of Baking!

Thank you to everyone who submitted a recipe for us all to enjoy. You will notice some of our contributing authors have submitted their favorite Holiday recipes!

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Christmas Shortbread

submitted by Lydia Harris author of "A Cup of Tea with Lydia"

Cream together:
1 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup brown sugar

Blend in:
2 cups flour
Pat into a greased 9x9-inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until light brown.

Combine:
1 1/3 cups flaked coconut
1/2 cup mixed red and green candied cherries, chopped slightly
1/3 cup candied pineapple chunks, chopped slightly (Or substitute candied cherry-pineapple mix for cherries and pineapple)
1/3 cup golden raisins
1/3 cup chopped walnuts (or substitute almonds, pecans, cashews)
1 cup sweetened condensed milk

Spread over shortbread and bake an additional 35 minutes or until golden brown. (Check after 25 to 30 minutes.) Cool. If desired, dust with powdered sugar. Cut into small squares. Makes 2-3 dozen cookies.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Holiday Morning French Toast

submitted by Wayne M. Bosman, contributing author

1 cup brown sugar	
1/2 cup butter, melted	1/2 cup dried cranberries or raisins
3 tsp cinnamon, divided	
3 tart apples (Granny Smith) peeled, cored, and sliced thin	6 large eggs
1 loaf Italian or French bread, cut into 1" slices	1-1/2 cup milk
	1 tsp vanilla

Combine brown sugar, butter, 1 tsp cinnamon in a 13x9 pan. Add apples and dried cranberries or raisins. Toss to coat well. Spread apple mixture evenly over the bottom of baking dish. Arrange slices of bread on top. Mix eggs, milk, vanilla, and remaining 2 teaspoons cinnamon until well-blended. Pour mixture over bread, soaking it completely. Cover and refrigerate for 4-24 hours. Bake covered with aluminum foil in pre-heated 375° oven for 40 minutes. Uncover and bake 5 minutes more. Remove from oven, and let stand 5 minutes. Serve warm.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Sugar Cookies

submitted by Freda Jansen of Paynesville, MN

1 3/4 cups sugar	1 tsp vanilla
2 cups butter	1 tsp baking powder
1 cup whipping cream	1 tsp baking soda
2 eggs lemon extract	4 1/2 to 5 cups flour
1 tsp salt	

Mix butter, sugar, eggs and cream together. Add the next 3 ingredients together and stir. Mix in baking powder, baking soda and flour. Chill dough for 1 hour. Roll out thin and cut with your favorite cookie cutters. Bake at 350° until golden brown. Cool and frost.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Cherry Christmas Cookies

submitted by Shirley Ross from Alexandria, MN

1/2 cup sugar	1 tsp almond flavoring
1 cup butter	1/2 tsp salt
1 (3oz) package cream cheese	1 cup chopped almonds
1 tsp lemon juice	red candied cherries cut in half
2 cups flour	

Cream butter, sugar and cream cheese together. Add almond flavoring and lemon juice. Stir in salt and flour. Add almonds. Roll into one inch balls and press 1/2 cherry into top. Bake at 325° for 20-25 minutes.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Cherry Oreo Dessert

submitted by Marty Druck author of "Life in Skunk Hollow"

2 1/2 cups crushed Oreo cookies	8 oz. Cool Whip
1/4 cup melted butter	1/2 cup sugar
8 oz. cream cheese, softened	1 can cherry pie filling

Mix together Oreo cookies and melted butter. Press into an 8x8 pan. Beat until smooth and spread over crust. Top with cherry pie filling. Refrigerate.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Apple Nut Cake

submitted by Brenda Vanover of Myersville, MD recipe from Judy Conrad

1 cup oil	1 tsp cinnamon
3 eggs	1 tsp ground cloves
2 cups sugar	3 cups apples, finely chopped
1 tsp salt	1 cup walnuts, chopped
1 tsp vanilla	1/2 stick butter
3 cups flour	1/2 cup light brown sugar
1 tsp nutmeg	1/2 tsp vanilla
1 tsp baking soda	2 tbsp milk

Mix oil, eggs, sugar, salt and vanilla; set aside. Sift flour, nutmeg, baking soda, cinnamon and cloves. Blend with sugar mixture. Add apples and nuts. Pour into well-greased/floured tube pan. Place in cold oven, bake 70 minutes at 350°. For icing, boil the butter, brown sugar, vanilla and milk for 1 minute; pour over hot cake.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Cocoa Peppermint Thumbprint Cookies



submitted by Kris Asleson from North Mankato, MN

- 1 1/2 cup flour

3/4 cup sugar, plus 1/2 cup for rolling

1/2 cup cocoa powder

1 tsp baking powder

1/2 tsp salt
- 6 tbsp unsalted butter, melted

2 large eggs, lightly beaten

1/2 cup confectioner's sugar

20 unwrapped Hershey Kisses, candy cane variety

In a large bowl, sift together the flour, 3/4 cup sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. Pour in the butter and eggs and stir to moisten and combine. When it gets all crumbly and uncooperative, use clean hands to knead the cookie dough together until it forms one smooth ball. Cover and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes. Preheat the oven to 325°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place 1/2 cup sugar in a bowl and the confectioners' sugar in a second bowl. Use a medium cookie scoop to scoop out balls of dough. Roll each first in the granulated sugar and then in the confectioners' sugar. Arrange on the baking sheet leaving 1-inch between each ball. Once all the balls are rolled out, press down in the center with your thumb to flatten and leave about a 1/2-inch indent. Bake for 10-12 minutes, until the cookies are puffed and cracked. Remove from the oven and wait 2 minutes then press one Candy Cane Hershey Kiss into the center of each cookie. Let cool for 5 minutes and then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Cheesecake-Stuffed Red Velvet



Cookies:

- 1 2/3 cups flour, scooped and leveled

1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

1 tsp baking powder

1/2 tsp kosher salt

1/4 cup baking soda

1 1/4 cups sugar
- 1/2 stick unsalted butter, melted

1 tbsp buttermilk

1 tsp red food coloring

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

2 large eggs

Confectioners' sugar for coating

Filling:

- One 8-oz pkg. cream cheese, room temp

1/3 cup sugar
- 2 tbsp sour cream

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

Make the filling: Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Beat the cream cheese, sugar, sour cream and vanilla in a large bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Spoon 1 tablespoon of the filling at a time onto the parchment papers so that you have 12 dollops. Freeze until solid; about 2 hours.

Make the cookies: Sift together the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, salt and baking soda in a medium bowl. Whisk together the sugar, butter, buttermilk, food coloring, vanilla and eggs in another bowl. Fold the flour mixture into the sugar mixture with a rubber spatula until smooth. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate until chilled, about 30 minutes (it will still be soft).

Preheat the oven to 350°. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Coat your hands generously with confectioners' sugar and scoop a heaping tablespoon of the cookie dough into your hand. Put one of the frozen cream cheese dollops in the middle of the dough and place another tablespoon of the dough on top of the cream cheese. Shape the dough around it to completely enclose the cream cheese, then roll to coat in the confectioners' sugar. Repeat with the remaining dough and cream cheese, coating your hands in confectioners' sugar as needed. Place the cookies on the prepared baking sheets about 2 inches apart. Bake until the cookies are firm around the edges and can be easily lifted with a spatula, 10-12 minutes. Let the cookies cool on the trays for 10 minutes and then transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Sugared Pecans



submitted by Deb Heatherly, contributing author

Put 1 cup of sugar and 1/2 cup water in a pan and stir. Add 1/2 tsp cinnamon. Cook and stir on high for 2 minutes. (Until it begins to thicken.) Add 4 cups of pecans and 1 tsp vanilla flavoring. Turn burner to medium. Continue to cook and stir until mixture sticks to the pecans. Spread on waxed paper and cool.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Soft Gingerbread Cookies



submitted by Patti Lee Bock of New Ulm, MN

- 1 cup margarine

1 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed

2 eggs, beaten

1 tbsp ground ginger

1/2 cup molasses

1 1/2 cup boiling water
- 1 1/2 tsp baking soda

5 cups flour

2 tsp baking powder

1 1/2 tsp salt

1 tbsp cinnamon

1 cup chopped walnuts

Cream margarine and sugar in a large mixing bowl; blend in eggs. Mix in ginger and molasses. Stir in boiling water. Set aside. Combine remaining ingredients except for the nuts. Add to sugar mixture. Fold in walnuts. Cover and refrigerate dough for at least 2 hours. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 425° for 10-12 minutes. Makes about 6 dozen.



Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Russian Tea Cakes



submitted by Freda Jansen of Paynesville, MN

- 1 cup soft butter

1/2 cup powdered sugar

1 tsp vanilla
- 2 1/4 cup flour

1/4 tsp salt

3/4 cup walnuts

Mix butter, sugar and vanilla thoroughly. Blend flour and salt. Stir in nuts. Bake 10-12 minutes. When warm roll in powdered sugar.

Country Register 12 Days of Baking

Candy Cane Puffs



submitted by Patti Lee Bock of New Ulm, MN

- 2 1/2 cups flour

1/4 tsp salt

1/2 cup butter softened

1 cup powdered sugar

1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

1/2 tsp peppermint extract

8 oz pkg. white chocolate chips

1/2 cup peppermint candies, crushed

Combine flour and salt. Set aside. Blend together butter and sugar. Beat in egg and extracts. Mix into flour mixture using low speed. Wrap dough in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for one hour. Shape dough into walnut-sized balls. Place on lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 10-12 minutes; cool. Melt white chocolate chips in a double boiler. Dip cooled cookies into melted chocolate. Roll in crushed peppermint candy. Set on wax paper until hardened. Makes about 4 dozen.

Where in Maryland?



The answer is...
Spocott Windmill in
Cambridge, MD

The Spocott Windmill is Maryland's last remaining operational English-style post windmill. It was rebuilt in the 1970s from parts of an 1880s windmill on the same property.

Random Acts

by Maranda K Jones

Sweet Memories



Would you like some hot chocolate? Or would you prefer some hot cocoa? My preference is hot cocoa, but we tend to use those names interchangeably. Hot chocolate is usually made by melting solid chocolate in warm milk or cream. Hot cocoa includes a powdered base of cocoa with added sugar that is dissolved in hot water or hot milk. Hot cocoa tends to be sweeter, lighter, and much thinner. All goals I aim for in my everyday life, so it fits that hot cocoa is my warm drink of choice.

Some people enjoy a well-mixed cocktail or a sophisticated coffee, but as for me and my house, we will drink hot cocoa any time. We once left our hometown high school football field and walked home up the hill when the chill of fall was too much to bear on the bleachers. Around our picnic table, we wrapped our mittens around warm mugs and listened to the announcers several blocks away. The stadium lights mixed with the stars above as we sipped our warm sweet drinks and made sweet memories with our little kids.

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It makes us happy! That alone is a great health benefit. Cocoa has been shown to increase levels of serotonin, helping to regulate mood and reduce anxiety, reduce fatigue and improve alertness. It satisfies the soul, reduces cravings and regulates how much energy is used. Some say it has positive effects on the immune system and heart health.

My heart beats joyfully thinking of our grandmothers and their hot cocoa recipes. My husband's grandma had the best recipe for homemade hot cocoa mix. Chris' grandma gave us a blue glass jar decorated with snowflakes full of her hot cocoa mix, and each time we emptied the jar, we would return it for a refill. That jar traveled back and forth between our houses often! When she finally shared the family recipe with me, Chris claimed she left out a secret ingredient because my mix just did not taste the same as when his grandma made it. Doesn't everyone have a family recipe that cannot be replaced? For my husband, his grandma was that one family member who cannot be replaced. Although we miss her greatly, we remember her with every mug of hot cocoa.

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GRANDMA'S COCOA MIX

- 1 8-quart package (about 10 cups) nonfat dry milk powder
- 16 oz. (about 4 ¾ cups) powdered sugar
- 1 ¾ cups unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 ½ cups instant malted milk powder
- 1 6 oz. jar (1 ¾ cups) powdered nondairy creamer

Makes about 16 cups.

Place 1/3 cup cocoa mixture in a mug; add ¾ cup boiling water.

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Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be the national bird of the United States! Instead, the Bald Eagle was selected.

Happy Thanksgiving!