

Welcome to...

The Country Register of Kansas

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On Our Cover...

Our cover bunny is by Lainey Daniels and is appropriately called "Bunny Love. She is represented by the Linda McDonald Agency.

Every effort is made to have an error-free paper, however, mistakes do occur. Please double check dates, times, and locations with a phone call before traveling a great distance.



From My Desk... to yours

By Cindy Baldwin

This issue of the paper (Feb./March) is always kind of awkward -- is it a spring issue or a winter one? Do we use graphics that remind of us of snow, cold and long evenings by the fire? Or do we start hinting at spring flowers and warming days.

As I write this we've had temperatures in the single digits and snow, and days where the highs are in the 50s -- all within the space of a couple of days. You get just a whiff of spring, and then winter pulls us right back. Guess that's living in Kansas. I think I'll look forward to spring and enjoy my warm house when the winds are blowing cold.

We've had a busy few months at the Baldwin house. You might think this would be a down time for us between fall harvest and spring planting. But, this year we are trying a new venture that has changed up our normal routine. My husband got the wild idea to plant some popcorn last year -- not just a few rows in the garden, but five acres. Popcorn is not a widely grown crop in Kansas -- fewer than 200 acres statewide -- and it's not something that you can haul to the local elevator and sell. So, when our crop actually grew and yielded well, we were left with the challenge of marketing it. The result has been a new business, Papa Baldy's Popcorn. We are learning about marketing, finding outlets that will sell the product, and all about the regulations that we have to follow when selling a food product. It's been interesting as we do the packaging and selling to both individuals and stores. We are mostly having a good time, especially since we have a good product that people enjoy. It just proves that you are never too old to learn something new. The grandkids are especially enjoying posing for pictures with the popcorn for promotional posts on Facebook and Instagram.

And, I'm excited about this issue of The Country Register. The 2018 Quilt Shop Directory is featured in this issue -- and we have a new Block of the Month quilt designed by Maria McKenzie of First City Quilts in Leavenworth. The quilt is designed as a mystery quilt -- we won't reveal the completed quilt until it's time to set the blocks together. I think I'm going to join you in this one. We'll see how well I'll do.

There are also several shop hops and guild quilt shows planned for the next few months that are advertising in this issue. Start planning those road trips. It's a great way to get some creative ideas and see a new part of the state.

I have had several readers asking where the Quilts That Redeem column, written by Sherry Osland of Praiseworks Quilts in Abilene, has been the past few issues. I've missed Sherry's columns, too, but she is taking some time off from writing. Her family has been dealing with some health issues and her husband recently retired from his career in law enforcement. We're hoping that Sherry will be sharing her writing with us again when her life adjusts to her family's new routine.

As always, I encourage you to visit our Country Register advertising shops and let them know that you saw their ad in the paper. It helps them know their advertising dollars are working -- and your support helps locally owned shops. Imagine what it would be like without them there. Until next time Cindy

FM-18 **The Country Register of Kansas**

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The Country Register is distributed as a complimentary gift from its advertisers. We encourage you to stop by your favorite shop to pick up each new issue. However, for the convenience of those who are not able to get to a shop, we do offer postal delivery for **\$18 per year** to cover the cost of postage and handling. Or if you want a certain issue mailed, send \$3 & circle which issue - Dec/Jan, Feb/Mar, Apr/May, Jun/Jul, Aug/Sep, Oct/Nov

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- Advertisers' businesses • State-owned tourist information centers
- Some locally-operated visitor centers
- Most Lawrence grocery stores • Other various locations
- Online www.countryregister.com/kansas

ADVERTISERS BY CITY INDEX

- Number to LEFT of each city is the city's # on map below
- Coordinates AFTER city will help locate that city on map below (accuracy not guaranteed, please check official map before traveling)
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- Hays C-4
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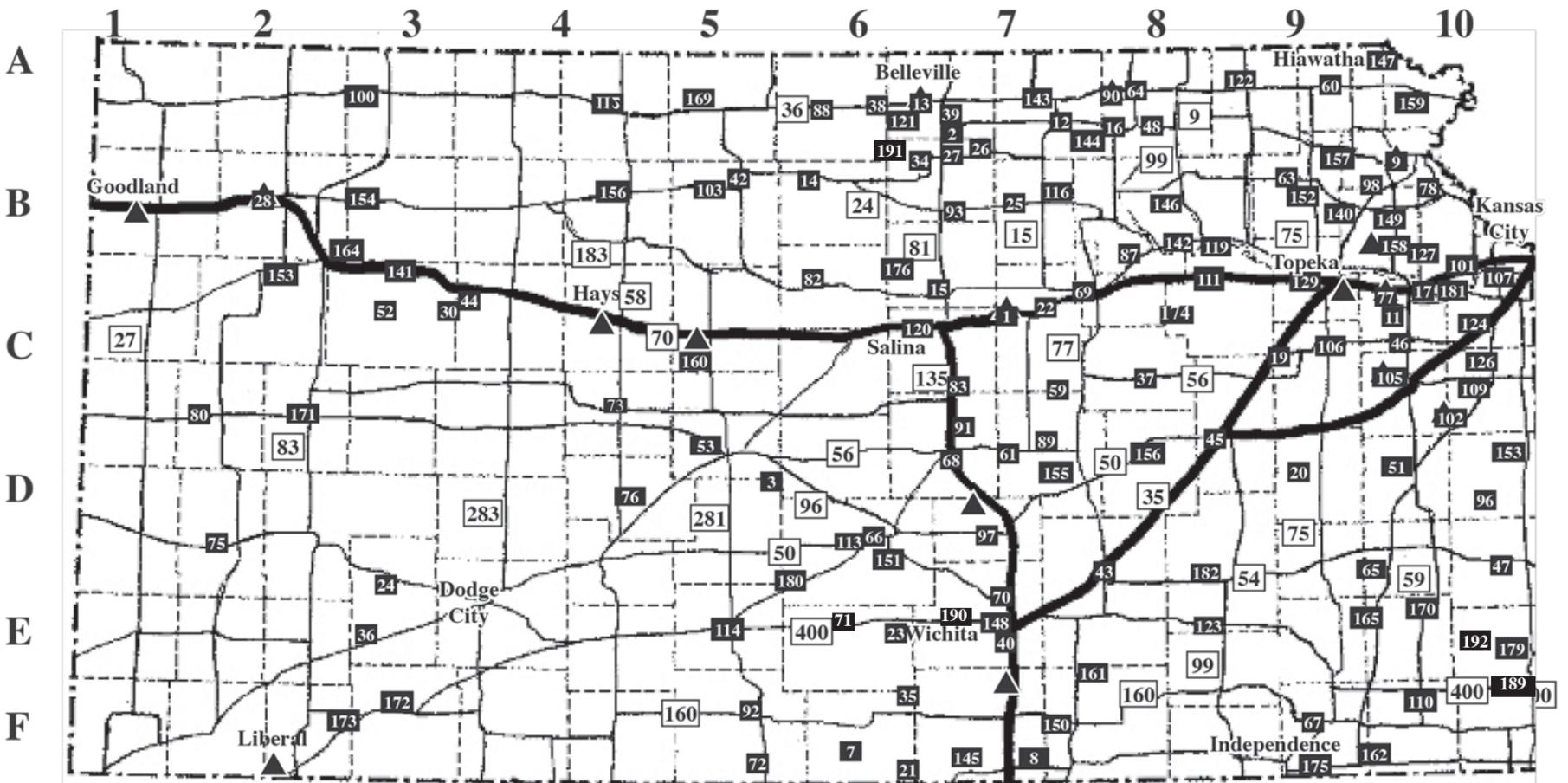
Upcoming Events Shop Hops & Quilt Shows:

- Quilters' Schoolhouse advertising in this issue
- Bunny Shop Hop Sunflower Journey Quilt Show
- Scott City Shop Hop Kaw Valley Quilt Guild Quilt Show, Lawrence
- Prairie Stars Quilt Shop Hop Kaw Valley (Wamego) Guild Quilt Show
- Embroidery Garden Event Perfect Quilter's Retreat
- "A Kansas Quilt Shop Hop"

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Map Index:

- # City numbers = white number in black box
- # Highway numbers = black in white box
- p Information Centers with papers = black triangles



Pieces of my heart ...

By Jan Keller

Accounting for Time

At the end of every December I sit down at my kitchen counter with my nearly obsolete, smudged and filled calendar and the clean, blank new one. One provides an accounting of time past; while on the other, I will program the future.

Very methodically I go through the months, beginning with January, transferring the various birthdays, anniversaries and occasions I'll want to remember in the coming new year. During this process I can't help noticing what a hectic life I lead. Busyness seems synonymous with contemporary society. A calendar gives a good overview of a spent year, indicating my state of health and how well I brushed and flossed by the number of doctor and dentist appointments. By reviewing the calendar's full and grimy pages I can give an accurate listing of all of our activities. With a quick glance, it's easy to see that, throughout a year, very few of those little two-inch by two-inch blocks of time remain blank. Most are filled with places to go and times to arrive. With a longer study, I become painfully aware of how little time was set aside for important things, like interactions with family and friends.



The calendar represents a year. Each page stands for a month. Every square is one

day's twenty-four-hour allowance of time. And somehow, every midnight, I am miraculously sucked from one little box into the next, to make of it what I will. One day, maybe this year, or maybe another year, I will enter one of those little boxes and not find my way out. My life will be over and it will be my survivors who will ultimately review my life and how I spent it to determine if there was meaning, purpose or value.

Come to think about it, next year when people ask me what I want for Christmas, the best answer might be a brand-new year.

Actually, I can't think of any greater blessing.

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Keep Pedaling

By Juleann Lattimer

There are many milestones in life...my granddaughter, Alison is facing one now. Learning to ride a bike. She isn't keen on it, but her dad says everyone needs to know how to ride a bike.

So, on her ninth birthday, they bought her a fancy "rainbow" colored bike equipped with a handy little basket to carry all her stuff. Of course, she had to have a fashionable helmet to match. And there it sits.

Her dad lowered the seat as far as it would go to enable her feet (toes) to touch the ground thinking that would give her some security and boost her courage. But to no avail. She'd prefer to go back to her little two wheeler with training wheels -- which had been passed on to her younger sister. Let's just say it wasn't her favorite birthday gift ever!

I remember learning how to ride a bike. It was a scary endeavor. I reluctantly hopped up on the seat while my dad held the shiny blue bike. Then he told me to pedal as he ran behind holding onto the seat to steady me.

"Promise you won't let go" I pleaded. "I've got you," he assured me.

I pedaled faster and he ran faster... but then I realized something. His hand wasn't on the seat. He had let go, and was on my own. Scary! I looked back, and he was standing in the middle of the road smiling. "You've got it!" he called out to me.

Just then I lost my balance from looking backward and fell off! But he was right there to pick me up. "You did it," he said. "See, you don't need me anymore." But I did in so many ways.

Right now, I am also facing a milestone. I'm embarking on a new way of living -- alone. And it's scary, and I no longer have my dad here to steady me and pick me up when I fall. However, I am blessed to have the assurance that my heavenly Father is still with me and will always be here to steady me and pick me up when I fall.

"I will never leave you, nor forsake you...the Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid..." (Heb. 13:6,7).

Little Alison, keep pedaling. You will eventually get the hang of it.



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by Barbara Floyd, Founder of The Country Register

If you are a reader of *The Country Register*, chances are you use Facebook as well in this day of electronics. We have a very large readership that spans the USA and Canada. This next year marks our 30-year anniversary, which means a big thank you to our advertisers, publishers and readers!

Now perhaps you will give us a like on Facebook at *The Country Register* and see and learn things from other parts of the country, shared craft ideas, good recipes, all in addition to your local Country Register. This service is also free, just like *The Country Register* has been free to the readers all these years. Many of the individual publications also have a Facebook page for just your state or province that will also pop up when you search for The Country Register. "Like" both and consider it a bonus to your paper. Add to your Country Register experience and join us on Facebook.

Have a wonderful 2018 and thanks in advance for your online and offline support.

Editor's Note: *The Country Register of Kansas* also has a Facebook page! Have you been following us? Like us on Facebook and get updates from advertising shops, craft tips and other information of interest. Be the first to know when the latest edition hits the stores!

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AND THE WINNER IS February-March '18 Gift Certificate Winner

The lucky winner of our February/March gift certificate is Joan Broeckelman from Esbon, Kansas. She has requested that her gift certificate be from Hidden Treasures in Mankato. Joan likes to shop at Hidden Treasures because of the friendly and helpful staff, as well as the many ideas that the shop offers her. Congratulations, Joan. Enjoy spending your gift certificate.

You could be like Joan and be one of our gift certificate winners. Just fill out the form on this page and send it in. You can also enter online at www.countryregister.com/kansas. Click on the Contact Us tab and include the same information asked for on the entry form. Good Luck!

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The Dropped Stitch . . .

by Sharon Greve

Let's Talk Mohair



Many knitters shy away from mohair. For centuries mohair has proven its luxurious appearance, softness and durability. Yet, we seem intimidated by this fiber, even though we admire finished mohair projects of others.

Mohair has a hidden knitting secret -- the number of stitches and the number of rows does not control garment size, as other yarns (wool, silk, cotton and linen) do. Instead a mohair sweater's size is regulated by needle size: big needles make a big sweater; small needles make a small sweater. This is due to mohair's forgiving nature that fills in the spaces between the stitches.

Once a pattern is designed, the size is adjusted to needle size. This technique makes it possible for knitters of various skill levels to create or adjust patterns. To stop mohair filaments from flying, store the yarn in the 'fridge until needed as cold makes the fiber stand up. A strand of other yarn carried with the mohair gives more body to the project.

The word "mohair" is derived from a Turkish word which means "the best or selected fleece." Mohair is the fleece of the Angora goat whose origin is unknown. The Angora goat's history wasn't recorded until 1584 when a pair of goats was sent to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Turkey protected the Angora goat until the 16th century. When a Dutchman discovered the goat's exceptional fleece quality, the goat became almost extinct as demand exceeded supply, because the fiber was spun by women for their families only. As a result, the Turks crossed the Angora goat with the native Kurdish goat, but the demand dropped because of the poor fleece quality.

In 1835 England pressured Turkey to lift the exportation ban on Angora goats, making mohair widely known in the form of spun yarn throughout Europe. Exportation failed, though, due to the delicate nature of the goats. The Angora thrives in a warm, dry climate. Angora goats came to the United States by accident from Turkey, mistaken as Cashmeres. It wasn't until 1853 that Rich Peters of Atlanta discovered his three goats were really Angora goats. The news traveled so fast that one goat sold for \$1,500 and another for his weight in silver.

Today Angora goats are world-wide: Argentina, Australia, Lesotho, Turkey, South Africa and Texas. The first two shearings sold as "kid mohair," the first fleece that sells at the highest price. Each animal provides an average two kilos of short hair, but the total mohair output is only one quarter of one percent of all natural

fibers. A single hair is shaped like a slippery bamboo pole, making it difficult to handle. Skilled craftsmen sort, wash, comb, spin and weave the fleece fibers. The more time spent in processing mohair, the better the product.

Mohair garments can be hand washed with a liquid detergent in lots of water. Squeeze it gently, don't rub or allow soaking. Rinse in plenty of warm water the same temperature as the washing water. Fabric conditioners can be added to the final clear water rinse. Squeeze out as much water as possible before rolling the garment in a clean towel for more squeezing. Lay the wet garment on a dry towel away from direct sunlight and reshape it. When dry, restore the fluffiness of Mohair with a soft brush drawing up the fibers or warm air blowing from a hairdryer through the garment backside. Store the garment folded, never on a hanger that causes misshaping. A washing machine with a wool wash program may also be used. Spinning removes the maximum amount of water. Avoid dry-cleaning if extras (beads, buttons, ribbons, etc.) have been added.

Mohair yarn is available combined with cotton, wool, nylon and acrylic in a variety of colors and thicknesses. It knits up quickly, is soft and silky, tough and warm, and springs back into shape after each wearing.

Be shy no more! Choose mohair as your chosen fiber for a warm, but lightweight, garment, scarf or cowl for winter wear.

Mohair—be mine!

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Essential Oils ...

Sweet Marjoram (*Origanum marjorana*)

By Wanda Headricks

Sweet Marjoram was a very popular and common medicinal herb amongst the ancient Greeks. The name "Origanum" comes from the Greek words "oros" and "ganos" meaning splendid or joy referring to the color and scent of their flowers and leaves. Sweet Marjoram became referred to as the "joy of the mountains" due to the hills from which they originally came.

Sweet Marjoram is a tender, bushy perennial herb, growing about 10-inches tall with small, oval, woolly, hairy leaves, and pink or white flowers. It originates from the Mediterranean region and is cultivated in France, Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Germany, Turkey and others. Sweet Marjoram essential oil is steam distilled from the dried leaves and flowering tops of the culinary herb *Origanum marjorana*. Pure Sweet Marjoram essential oil is a pale-yellow to pale-amber colored mobile liquid with a warm spicy, aromatic camphoraceous, woody odor.

There is often confusion regarding the various species of marjoram. Sweet Marjoram should not be confused with Spanish marjoram (*thymus mastichina*), which belongs to the thyme species or oregano (*origanum vulgare*), which is used to produce oregano essential oil.

The ancient Greeks used Sweet Marjoram to treat spasms, remove excess fluid in the tissues and as an antidote against poison. It was also used as a digestive herb. Because it was referred to as "joy of the mountains" it was commonly given to newlyweds as a token of good fortune. On another spectrum of life, it was planted in graveyards to help bring peace to the departed! It was also used in nosegays to mask unpleasant smells. It is used in European herbal medicine for the treatment of respiratory ailments, bronchitis, antispasmodic and as an expectorant. It is also used as a flavoring in many food products.

Therapeutic properties found in Sweet Marjoram are listed as: analgesic, antiseptic, antispasmodic, antiviral, bactericidal, digestive, diuretic, expectorant, fungicidal, hypotensive, nervine (strengthens or tones the nerves), sedative, stomachic and vasodilator among others.

The warming properties of Sweet Marjoram make it helpful for treating chills, muscle spasms, rheumatic pains, sprains and strains. It is considered effective for use as an inhalation or a chest rub for the treatment of colds and flu due to its antibacterial and antispasmodic properties.

Sweet Marjoram essential oil is considered non-toxic, non-irritating and non-sensitizing. Sweet Marjoram is contra-indicated during pregnancy. Sweet Marjoram is considered an anaphrodisiac. Prolonged use can cause drowsiness.

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Sweet Orange Essential Oil	30 drops
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Blend the above essential oils into a 4-ounce amber glass bottle with a glass dropper lid. Fill the 4-ounce bottle with 2 ounces Jojoba Oil and 2 ounces of Emu Oil. Use on chest and back for comfort and relief when you are suffering from colds and flu.



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Over The Teacup ...
Benefits of Snow

By Janet Young

Outside the window, the snow is falling on a starlit night to the sound of silence. In the meantime, indoors you hear the crackling of the fireplace as you sit by the fire sipping your mug of tea.

This quietude brings a smile to your face as you lean back to enjoy the moment. For that one fleeting moment you can bask in the warmth of the room, while swallowing that last drop of cinnamon tea.

This is life at its best. This is the time of year when Mother Nature makes us slow down, when she causes the wind to blow and the snow to fall silently to the ground. In the midst of this whirlwind, we have choices to make. Are we going to fret and worry? Or, is this the time you are going to honor the promises you have made to yourself over the last few weeks or even months? Promises such as spending more time with the children, or reading that novel you have been yearning to read, but have been putting off.

This is a time to remind ourselves that we were made to take time to slow down and relax. It is a time to experience our everyday routine in a different way, in a slower way. This is an opportunity to do something for you.

Whatever you choose to do with that time, I would encourage you to use it wisely, because in the morning you may find yourself outside shoveling the driveway as you prepare for another ordinary day.

—Janet Young, Certified Tea and Etiquette Consultant, is a founding member of Mid-Atlantic Tea Business Association and freelance writer/national tea presenter. Visit her website at www.overtheteacup.com.



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Building Harmony

Episode 58: A Trip in the Shed

By Jeff Cappis

We've got an old shed out back. It came with the place. It's ugly as sin, but I have to admit it is sturdily built. It's about 16 by 8 feet with a pitched roof and a plywood floor. In the summer, we keep the winter stuff in there. In the winter, we store the summer stuff in there.

It was made of scraps of things. Doors from a metal garden shed, different colored shingles and sided with different types of wood. Like I said though, somehow it was solid. A lot of attention was paid to the structure, but not the foundation. That was too bad, because it was built on the side of a hill and, over the years, the downhill side was sinking into the ground. The lean was so bad that things inside would slide across the floor.

My wife was getting concerned about all this, so like a man, I set out to "fix" it. (Structural work -- huge brownie points). But how? This thing weighs a ton.

I tried using a jack, but it just sunk into the ground. In fact, that just made the shed lean more. I could hear things inside slide across the floor like deck chairs on the titanic. Time to empty the shed.

Going inside I was amazed by all the stuff that had piled on the low side of the shed. What a lousy @\$ job this turned out to be. Well, I had no idea. As I started climbing over the stuff to get started, the shed let out a loud creak. I froze.

"What the heck was that?" I wondered to myself looking up. I waited. Nothing else happened. Just an odd noise I guessed. Nothing more.

Then the shed leaned some more. The door slid shut and the shed got dark. My sense of sight was gone, but my sense of balance told me the shed was still leaning. I lost my balance and fell on the stuff. This caused the shed to lean even more. Was it going to roll down the hill?

The lower side of the shed had dug into the ground and the rest of the building was going over! I braced myself as best could. The things under me were shifting and a few things that were hung from the ceiling fell on my head. I could tell by now that the entire structure was going to roll.

Then it stopped. It teetered on the edge, and it actually stopped. I didn't dare move. I froze. The slightest movement could send it over. You can imagine I started to sweat. Do I lean one way or the other? Maybe I should try to move something. Anyway, it didn't matter. As I was pondering these questions, a quarter fell out of my pocket. I heard it tink-tink-a-linging its way down through the various snow tools and onto the floor where it rolled down to the corner of the shed. It stopped with the customary rattling noise a coin makes when it's winding down. Then the shed creaked again.

After that things get a little sketchy.

The shed went over, and all I remember was something like a scene from the *Poseidon Adventure*. No, wait, it was more like riding inside an electric dryer. A dryer full of snow tools, boxes and chairs. At any rate, I must say it was a surreal trip.

I got caught up in a few spare tires and the tumbling seemed to go on for hours. The door at the end of the shed was slamming open and closed causing the inside to go bright and dark, bright and dark. I got beamed with a box of Christmas ornaments.

The shed finally came to rest on a fairly level piece of ground at the bottom of the hill. It landed there with a womp! Inside everything settled around me.

Had it stopped? Yes. Was it stable? I moved around a bit. The shed didn't. Thank God. I began to work my way towards the door.

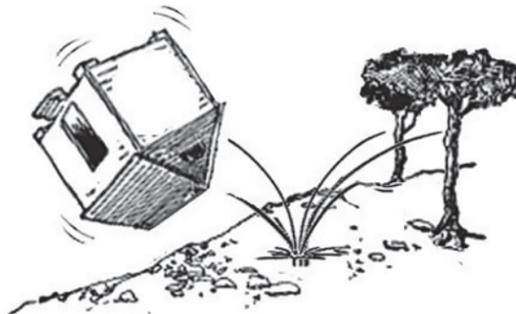
Outside, Cathy had heard the commotion. She later told me it sounded like scrap metal rolling around inside a cement mixer. She came running just in time to see the shed land. She stood there for just a moment wondering what to do when the door slid open. I crawled out all disheveled with Christmas ornaments and a tire hanging on me.

"Interesting idea. I would never have thought of moving the shed here. I hope it's alright." I just glared at her for a moment. Maybe she should hope I'm alright.

But it's funny how things work out. The shed is on level ground, closer to the driveway and easier to get at. I guess it was worth the trip (and a lot of brownie points).



Happy Valentines Day



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KISSed Quilts

Alpine winters and fireside chats

by Marlene Oddie

If you live in alpine regions or go to alpine elevations during the winter, it is cold and white and sometimes just grey!

I can remember going skiing in the Sierra Nevada mountains as a child. We'd ski until the very last possible bit of light, but the sun goes down so early during the winter. It was often dark by the time we arrived back to our lodging each night. From the light beams of the car it was a sea of black and white, sometimes mostly white. This was all long before I began designing quilts, but this lap-size treasure would make a fireside chat cozy.

Island Batik has come out with two new Alpine lines of fabric -- Alpine Ice (white/grey/blue) and Alpine Jingle (red/gold/green). I've chosen the white and grey colorways of Alpine Ice to create this row quilt, "Alpine Nights," that would make a great five-session Block of the Month learning opportunity. It includes using a couple of unique prints from the fabric collection to give special effects between each row of blocks and in the border. Various techniques are used, including diagonal stitching, paper piecing, applique and fussy cutting. Start looking for these fabrics in the new year!



Alpine Nights

The snow-ball block is a great, simple start with sewing diagonally across a square of fabric. I've chosen to use several values of this fabric for depth. The half square triangles also use several values and are placed to give more of an illusion of a mountain. You might consider other placement options in your own creation. The diamonds and six-pointed stars are paper pieced and the top row of trees is appliquéed. These block shapes were chosen to mimic the motifs printed in the batik fabrics.

Want the pattern? Would you like to take a class on-line? Please write to me if you'd like to be notified when it is available. I'll take you through the making of each block and fussy cutting details. Warm wishes during this typically cold time of the year.

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 enjoys long-arm quilting on her Gammill Optimum Plus, but especially enjoys designing quilts and assisting in the creation of a meaningful treasure for the recipient. Patterns and kits are available at <http://www.kissedquilts.com/shop.html>. Follow Marlene's adventures via <http://www.facebook.com/kissedquilts>, <http://kissedquilts.blogspot.com>, instagram [marlene.kissedquilts](https://www.instagram.com/marlene.kissedquilts), twitter [@kissedquilts](https://twitter.com/kissedquilts), pinterest [marleneoddie](https://www.pinterest.com/marleneoddie).

Back Porch Break . . .

by Nancy Parker Brummett



Happy fresh year!

New snow. The first rays of dawn. A crisp apple. We appreciate all these things and more because they are fresh—unspoiled and full of promise. Should we appreciate this fresh, new year any less?

The problem many of us have is not how to appreciate the freshness of the new year, but how to keep it fresh. A diet that includes plenty of healthy fruits and vegetables is always a good idea, but that alone won't sustain freshness in our hearts and minds. No amount of Tupperware® or Saran Wrap® will do the job either. We have to make a conscious effort to keep things fresh all year long — beginning with our own attitudes.

What comes to mind when you think of celebrating and sustaining freshness in your life? I'll list just a few thoughts in hopes of motivating you to think of more:

Fresh marriage. My husband and I have been married almost 30 years, but I never want to take God's gift of a second, redemptive marriage for granted. I'm going to look for ways to keep our love fresh as we move toward a time of life neither of us has experienced before — to be open to new places, energizing experiences and different living arrangements.

Fresh work. I need to return to an old project with renewed energy. Writing a new book is a creative exercise with all the joys and angst of birthing a baby. I want to keep my work fresh—to use more primary resources and less of my tried-and-true secondary ones. To think thoughts I've never had and use vivid, descriptive words so that I deliver a fresh manuscript to the publisher.

Fresh friendship. This year I want to be totally present with friends old and new. To truly listen when they speak and find a fresh level of intimacy with each one. Friendship is a treasure to cherish—and keep fresh.

Fresh faith. A new year means beginning a new daily devotional, but what else will be fresh about my faith? According to Isaiah 43:18-19, we can always count on the Lord to bring freshness and renewal. The Lord said through Isaiah, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" I don't want to miss any fresh, new thing the Lord wants to do in me this year. In fact, I want to recapture the freshness of the hour I first believed.

How about you? How will you keep 2018 fresh until the last day of December? May you have a happy, healthy new year—and may it stay fresh!

Nancy Parker Brummett is an author and freelance writer in Colorado Springs, CO. "Like" her author page on Facebook, or to learn more about her life and work, visit www.nancyparkerbrummett.com.



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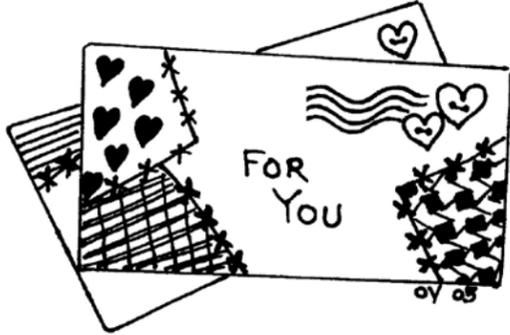
Life In Skunk Hollow . . .

by Julie A. Druck

An Evening of Valentines

It's become a long-time tradition in this season of the year for the women of my family to gather together for an evening of Valentine making at my sister's home. We try to plan our get-together at least a week or two before February 14 so that we'll have time to send our Valentines through the mail.

Part of the fun is collecting Valentine-making materials throughout the year. Thrift stores and yard sales are perfect places to pick up garnishes. We also save greeting cards, bits of ribbon and any other little seasonal thing that comes our way through the year that would be appropriate. Before the rest of us arrive, my sister sets up a few tables and lays out the community "stash," which we add to when we come. There's a table of pink and red ribbons, lace, rick-rack and paper doilies of various hues. There's also a table of greeting cards, cardstock and construction paper as well as a box of tissue paper and fabric samples. In the center of my sister's large dining room table, she puts various types of adhesives (tape, Elmer's glue, rubber cement and glue gun supplies), along with several pairs of regular and patterned scissors, stickers and cut-outs.



Besides supplies, we each bring a little something for a light supper since food, of course, makes every event more festive! One year, part of my edible offering was a plate of festively pink Cherry Drop Cookies (see recipe below).

As we "get down to work," it's fun to see what ideas take shape. There is, of course, no right or wrong way to make a Valentine! As I have a rick-rack obsession, mine usually contain some of that, and my mom loves adding glitter glue to hers. My sister's Valentines look like miniature collages, and my aunt's are very Victorian with lots of garnishes.

The gathering is always a good time of visiting. And I love that inspiration flows freely around the table -- whether it's in regard to our Valentines or other projects we're working on at home. My aunt brought along three gorgeous Valentine decorations she had crafted at home. They were paper Victorian ladies that she had printed from the internet and attached to a heart background -- the skirts of each lady were vintage handkerchiefs that she had pressed in folds and attached. Just lovely!

The evening always ends with clean-up and packing up our stash until next February. We divide what's left of the supper treats and happily cart our Valentines home to ready for the mailbox. Perhaps you'd enjoy an Evening of Valentines - creating cards and memories on a cold winter's night, too . . .

Cherry Drop Cookies

(The pink color makes them great for Valentine's Day and the cherries go right along with a Presidents' Day theme. Also perfect ANYTIME with a cup of tea!)

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| ¼ C. chopped and drained maraschino cherries | ½ tsp. vanilla extract |
| 1 C. butter, softened | 2 C. flour |
| ½ C. 10X sugar | Extra 10X sugar |
| ½ tsp. almond extract | Red food coloring, optional |

Preheat oven to 325. Drain cherries on paper towels then coarsely chop and set aside. In mixer bowl, beat butter for 30 seconds on medium speed. Add ½ C. 10X sugar and the extracts. Beat until combined, then add as much of the flour as you can with mixer. Using wooden spoon, stir in remaining flour and cherries, plus a few drops of red food coloring (if desired, for pink dough). Shape into 1" balls and place 2" apart on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 18-20 minutes or until bottoms are lightly browned. Cool on sheet for 5 minutes and roll warm cookies in 10X sugar to coat. Transfer to wire rack and cool completely. If desired, roll again in 10X before serving or packaging.

Julie Druck is from York, Pennsylvania, and writes from her farm in Skunk Hollow. She spends her days rejoicing in the love of God and encouraging others to do the same. She'd welcome your comments at thedrucks@netzero.com.

Shop News

Owners of Yarns Sold & Told retiring, shop closing

SALINA, Kan. -- The owners of Yarns Sold and Told in Salina have announced that they will be retiring from the business with plans to close the shop.

The shop, located in downtown Salina, has one of the largest inventories of yarn in central Kansas and has been a promoter of the fiber arts through a number of activities and events including The Central Kansas Yarn Shop Hop, held in October, trunk shows, classes and other teaching opportunities. The couches and comfortable chairs in the shop have been inviting crafters to come, sit a while and share since they opened.

The shop's quitting business sale will begin Feb. 1 and will continue until the shop closing date, which will be determined by how quickly inventory is reduced.

Owners Carla, Jane and Marilyn have enjoyed all their customers and friends they have made in the shop, but "it's time," Marilyn said.

Enjoy your next adventure ladies and thank you for making Yarns Sold and Told a welcoming place for yarn lovers.

Seams Like Olde Times announces closing

ELLIS, Kan. -- Colette Buchholtz has announced that Seams Like Olde Times Quilt Shop, Ellis, will be closing this spring. The store is currently having a going out of business sale and anticipates closing within the next month or two.

Colette opened the store in 2015 and has been active in quilt shop hop groups in northwest Kansas. Her plans after retirement include travel and taking some time for herself.

We wish you well in retirement, Colette.

Quilt Shop opens in Wellington

Wellington, Kan. -- A new quilt shop and toy store will be opening in downtown Wellington in March. Owners Annarose White and her mother Connie Hart have been operating the shop as a kiosk and are looking forward to moving into their permanent location in the renovated JC Penney building. In addition to over 2,000 bolts of fabric, the shop is also an authorized Brother dealer and sells Accuquilt products.

They are looking forward to participating in the Bunny Hop Shop Hop March 17 with Field to Fabric, Winfield and McDonald's Sew and Vac in Arkansas City. Good luck in your new venture.



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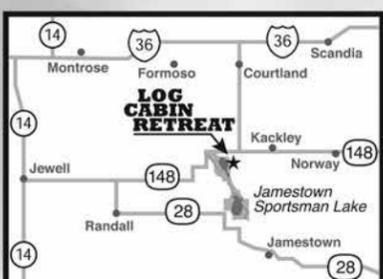
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Random Acts ...

by Maranda K. Jones

S. W. A. K.

"Lollipop, lollipop, Oh lolli lolli lolli," has always been one of my grandma's favorite choruses to sing to us. She claims that when I was a baby, she sang that song of the same name to me all the way from our Colorado home to her mother's house in Kansas. As my sister and I grew older, we sang along with grandma to pass the miles on our road trips together. As we have grown even older, Grandma has continued singing this catchy Chordettes' classic to our children. She sang this so much in fact, that my son donned her "Great Grandma Lolli" when he was just a few years young.

Another tune taught to us by Grandma was "K-K-K-Katy," a popular song during the World War I era. We always enjoyed chiming in, imagining our great grandmother Katie meeting her husband Henry at the K-K-K-Kitchen door when the M-M-M-Moon shined over the cowshed. We wondered if that song was really written about them. They were living on the farm, raising six boys, and celebrating many anniversaries throughout their lives. She was clearly "the only G-G-G-Girl that" he adored.

Speaking of adoration, the song "A Bushel and A Peck" warms my heart every time I hear it. Grandma often sang this one as we rode along in her green Pontiac. We would sing along on our way home from school, and before it got dark, my sister and I would take turns driving her car or the old blue pickup through the pastures as we checked cows. I thought the words "bushel" and "peck" were directly related to our family's wheat field across the highway, but later figured out that a peck could also be a quick kiss on the cheek.

Those pecks on the cheek were often apparent from my grandma's family, hours after they greeted us. She and her two sisters must have learned their love of lipstick from their mother. An antique lipstick holder with a mirror held many different shades on her bathroom vanity. My great grandma even carried metal cases with mirrors, safely securing her makeup in her purse. To this day, I cannot see a tube of lip color without picturing my grandma and great aunts touching up their lips in the rearview mirror before getting out of the car. It seems like just yesterday they were leaning over the counter at the department store, refreshing their ruby red lips mid-shopping spree.

Now when my daughters ask for lip gloss, I smile and remember the ladies before me. We pucker up and apply these memories that are definitely sealed with a kiss.



Batteries not included

Puzzles and Games Can Cure Cabin Fever

By Susan Baldani

It always surprises people when they walk into my living room and see a half-finished jigsaw puzzle. They ask, "Wow, people still do those?" Yes, yes, they do. They also play Monopoly, Clue, Connect 4 and other non-tech games.

As a matter of fact, board games are making a comeback. Go into the toy department of any store, and you will still see a large array of not only board games, but card games and jigsaw puzzles as well. According to ArticleBiz.com, "Games like Risk, Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit and The Game of Life are some of the classic games that are still very much in demand and well loved. And, traditional games like chess, checkers and backgammon will always be favorites."

Who doesn't remember sitting around with family and friends while laughing and arguing about who was going to win the game? Or hearing the cheers and boos of your fellow players as you push that round checker across the board or try to extricate that wooden piece during Jenga? That cannot be duplicated on a computer, phone or television screen. And no slick 3D video game can replace this live social interaction.

For most of us, it started out with Candy Land and Chutes and Ladders, and now the choices are many. Board games like Scattergories and Pictionary to card games such as Uno or Phase 10; there is something for everyone, at any age. Also, as stated on howandwhys.com, when it comes to kids, "Board games play a huge role in children's health and brain development: different types of board games help to develop logic and reasoning skills, improve critical thinking, increase verbal and communication skills, develop attention skills and the ability to concentrate for longer periods of time." Furthermore, if the power goes out or there are no batteries in the house, not to worry. You can still carry on with your game or puzzle. And besides, playing Twister in the dark may be a lot more fun and challenging.

So, go into your closets, dust off those game boxes (or pick up some new ones) and make plans for a get-together with your favorite people. Whether you make dinner first, or just serve coffee and cake, it doesn't much matter. Sit around and enjoy one another's company while the televisions, phones and computers sit silent and lonely in the background. And remember, no cheating. Enjoy!

Susan Baldani has an MA in Education and a BA in Psychology. She enjoys writing and in addition to writing articles about small town life, is currently working on her second book. You can contact her at suebaldani@yahoo.com or through her website at www.mywritingwall.com.



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Maranda Jones' new book *Random Acts* is now available at amazon.com.

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Knitting Savant . . .

Finding Your Knitting Tribe

By Andrea Springer

Do you have a knitting “tribe” – a group of like-minded crafters to spend a few hours a week with? If so, count yourself lucky. I never cease to be amazed by the variety of places knitters and crocheters settle in for craft and conversation. Your local yarn store (LYS) can be a great place to meet others who share your passion, but I’ve found fiber friends in coffee shops, churches, libraries, parks, bars and on cruise ships. We’re everywhere, and our time spent together produces good things – even if it’s simply the conversation around the table.

One of my favorite groups gathers once a month at a local restaurant -- not to knit but to visit, eat and swap handknits. The Dishcloth Exchange has a permanent date on the calendar – the first Monday of the month at 6:30 pm. We meet at a predetermined restaurant, carrying gift bags holding our treasures to trade, and with no real agenda but to enjoy each other’s company. After the food and the conversation, we pass the unmarked bags around and see what surprises materialize that month. Some dishcloths are colorful and practical, some have a seasonal theme, some are lacy and almost too lovely to use. Once they’re open, we pass them around, admiring stitch patterns and yarns used. We compliment creative uses of patterns and the fine handwork that went into the finished product. At the end of the evening, we decide the next meeting location, and we start working on our new dishcloth for the next month.

I love meeting with my knitting tribes, working on my projects and sharing an activity that has meaning for all of us. At the same time, I love opening the kitchen drawer that holds the work of my friends – humble dishcloths that see daily service and make me smile very time they’re used.

One of my favorite dishcloth patterns is one you probably know by heart, a six-stitch repeat worked over and over. I have no idea what the formal name of this stitch pattern is, but I always refer to it as the “three three” pattern because of the three knit stitches and three purl stitches. It’s a great pattern for beginners and the finished dishcloth has a nice texture and lovely look.

Basic “Three Three” Dishcloth

Materials: One skein worsted weight cotton, cotton blend yarn

Needles: US 7 or US 8

Notions: Tapestry needles for weaving in ends

Pattern:

Cast on an odd multiple of three stitches (3 x an odd number) to your desired width (usually 39 sts or 45 sts)

Row 1: *K3, P3, repeat from * to the last 3 sts, K3

Repeat Row 1 for all following rows, binding off in pattern when the dishcloth reaches the desired size. Weave in ends.



Andrea Springer blogs at www.knittingsavant.com where she helps folks remember that they have everything they need to be successful in knitting and in life. You can share comments or ideas with her at andrea@knittingsavant.com or follow Knitting Savant on Facebook and Twitter.

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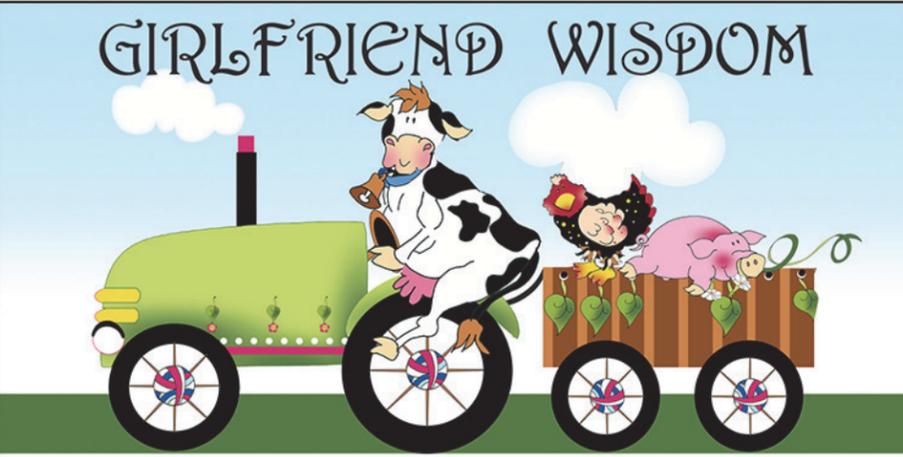
By Marla Wilson

Farmhouse buffet

The farmhouse look is so popular right now, so I decided to make a furniture piece to fit in with that décor. I am calling it a buffet, but it could be used in a kitchen, bathroom, entry, mud room or dining room. It would also make a cute crafting table.

I found an old work bench that was being used in a garage, so it had grease stains and other questionable marks on it. It obviously had been made with whatever was available at the time and was very primitive. I loved it!

I started by cleaning it, removing any unwanted nails and giving it two coats of a good stain killing primer. I had a door from a cupboard that was just the right size for the back. It was made of bead board, and I thought it would mix well with the work table. I painted the bench and door with a semi-gloss paint and stenciled the farm motif across the top. It is put together with some rusty brackets that were sprayed with clear



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Joy & Blessings, Jody

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

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acrylic to seal them. This keeps the rust from getting on other things. I added the door handle because I like the look, but it would also work as a hand or kitchen towel holder. Some wire bins or baskets would make a great addition to the bottom shelf and serve as storage.

Marla Wilson is the owner of The Rusty Wheel, a gift boutique in Scandia, KS. The shop features her floral designs and repurposed "junk," as well as kitchen and baby gifts, home decor and fashion accessories. Follow The Rusty Wheel on Facebook, or www.therustywheel.com or contact her at stumpy1954@hotmail.com.





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Prescription for Adventure . . .

Furry Therapy

by Naomi Gaede-Penner

A box of Kleenex sat beside him. He stroked her soft white head, dabbed his eyes, and apologized. "I'm sorry," he said. "That's okay," I replied. I planned to sit there as long as he needed the fluffy comfort of my therapy dog, and she appeared to be willing as well. I didn't know his story. I didn't feel it right to ask. I just knew this dog was fulfilling her mission of compassion.

She never talked. She just smiled, reached for the dog, and caressed her flat ears. When I'd first started visiting the center, I looked for people who were excited and extraverted; those who gave affirming feedback to my efforts. I learned quickly that the ones in the corner, perhaps even looking half-asleep, might be just as interested, just as in need, and just as responsive – in their own way.

He never said much. He just moved towards her in his wheelchair whenever he saw us coming. My Taffy dog seemed to understand his non-verbals and made her way towards him. He bent over and pressed his face against hers. It was as though they had their own conversation. I stood quietly and let it happen.

"She's white! She's white! My dog was white!" Tears edged out of the woman's eyes. "Oh how I miss my dog. She's white." The tears were bittersweet. Sadness and joy. Taffy stood for a while, and then sat down patiently to accept the ongoing firm and friendly petting. "She's white!"

I heard the shrieking first. Then I saw its source: crumpled little woman gesturing wildly. Taffy was not to lick people, but what was I supposed to do when some of these people delighted in such affection? "She kissed me!" Taffy was unperturbed by the uncontrolled motion. It almost seemed this stocky, thick-furred dog related best in such situations.

"She likes me!" The troubled teenager got down on his knees and enveloped her in a hug. "Can she stay here?" We stayed. I assured him that indeed this dog did like him. Finally I had to leave. I gave the young man Taffy's business card with her picture and bio that read:

English Cream Retriever. Hobbies – exploring open spaces, rescuing fruit that kids toss out of their lunches, and playing with her stuffed animals. Taffy has been a registered Therapy Dog since 2015. She volunteers at a nursing home and a healthcare center, and has even been at Denver International Airport. She endears herself to people by "talking" and teasing.

I never planned on having a therapy dog. My husband and I had planned to purchase a modest-sized RV and volunteer with Mennonite Disaster Service by following the aftermath of floods, tornadoes and hurricanes. Then he died.

I never planned on Taffy being a therapy dog. She was the high-spirited, strong-willed pup who flunked Puppy School. But, little by little, she passed her off-leash work, Canine Good Citizen Basic and Advanced, and the evaluation and certification for Pet Partners.

I believe that just as humans are created by their Maker for a purpose, dogs are created by their Maker for a purpose, too: herding, retrieving, guarding, serving, sensing illnesses and distress, alerting, cuddling, hunting, sniffing for bomb threats or avalanche victims. I have a purpose. Taffy has a purpose.

"... on the sixth day, God created animals.....And God saw it was good... (Genesis 1)



Find and purchase Naomi's Prescription for Adventure books, at www.prescriptionforadventure.com or by calling 303.506.6181. In Kansas, available at: Faith & Life (Newton) or Kansas Originals (1-70 at Wilson.)



Gratitude Experiment

By Madeline Lister

About a year ago I received a gift from my dear friend Judy-Ann Neal. Fresh from the printers, it was a copy of her book, *My Gratitude Journal*. A really quick read; one chapter, two pages, *My Gratitude Experiment*. The rest of the book was lined blank pages, with a simple inscription at the bottom of every other page: *Steps to expressing gratitude: Blessing Surprise Absence Expression*.

"Expressing gratitude is a choice we make", she wrote. "The more we express gratitude the more aware we become of God's blessings and presence in our lives. This lesson of expressing gratitude took conscious time and effort but the rewards were life-changing for me". In accepting the gift, I accepted the challenge.

Continued...See Gratitude pg. 17

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Gratitude

If I was to express gratitude, I first needed to understand what gratitude was. A nod of my head? A gracious Thank you? Google told me gratitude was the quality of being thankful; a readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. The more I searched, the clearer the picture became. Gratitude wasn't just take-&-forget. There was a specific response called for, a *to-whom* and *for-what* component.

I found a Gratitude Quiz on greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes, and took it. At the close of the exercise, they shared some practical "exercising" advice. One suggestion I especially liked was this: Write a Gratitude Letter. "Writing—and then delivering—a heartfelt letter of gratitude to someone you've never properly thanked can not only boost your sense of gratefulness but also strengthen your bond with them." Another exercise was to imagine my life without the good things I enjoy, then to write about what the "Absence" of that good would mean. How might my life be different; be less than it was?

I concluded I really would aid to express gratitude. And for those expressions to have that life-changing affect in my life, I would need to remember them. Keeping a Gratitude Journal, like the one Judy had given me, would not only highlight the positives in my life, but would help me stop taking things for granted. And so, I started writing.

At first, I focused on big things -- the successful trip with my 96-year-old Mother and my two sisters to Myrtle Beach, the bumps and mountains caring people got us through, and my understanding husband. I looked for thorns-and-roses times -- our very sick daughter-in-law, the understanding of our son's boss when he needed time off to care for her, and the sweet peace of faith that held us all together. Before long the journal started filling up. The more I wrote, the more I needed to write; daily encounters

that needed to be remembered. It became exciting. The found check and the failed fax, decisions honored and heart cries heard, a dream job and turning six.

The gratitude experiment has been an absolute success. Like a prescribed medicine, I put it out there with a full endorsement backed by practical experience. I'm thinking this Thanksgiving Day will be a good time to review my Gratitude Journal. Then I won't forget how "... expressing gratitude on a regular basis helps us survive the difficult times and be happier in the good times." *My Gratitude Journal*

Happy "gratitude experimenting" to you,

Madeline Lister, Trent Lakes, Ontario, Canada

PS I'd love to know your Gratitude exercises. Please share with me at madelinesmusings@gmail.com. If you would like your own copy of My Gratitude Journal, contact Judy at spending-timewithgod@gmail.com.

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Life on the Farm . . .

Deep In Winter On My Farm

By Donna Jo Copeland, farmeress of Breezy Manor Farm, Morresville IN

A cup of hot cocoa, miniature marshmallows melting on top. It's what the world needs now in deep winter.

Wrapping cold fingers around the toasty warm mug. Inhaling the chocolatey fragrance. Savoring the flavor and the warmth in each sip. Perhaps munching on an oatmeal cookie. Hot cocoa isn't a time for fancy cookies, requires something simple.

And in the midst of winter, a reminder of good simple things is what we need. Too often the outside world invades our inner peace. A mug of hot cocoa can center our minds. It needs constant sipping. It's not a drink to be put down, walked away from. Rather this simple drink and cookie anchors us to one spot, one place in time. Gives us time to think, calling to mind other mugs.

I can remember us kids watching mom stir the Guardian Service pot on her Tappan range in the cold kitchen of our old farmhouse. Waiting for her to say it's done. Back then hot cocoa was made with fresh goat milk -- milked and cooled that morning -- and Hershey's Cocoa powder and a bit of sugar. Big marshmallows (miniature marshmallows weren't invented yet), two in each mug, melted slowly. I remember the mugs being so warm. Sometimes we had oatmeal cookies, often just saltine crackers.

For one instant, we forgot about being poor. The way the wind whistled through that old farmhouse. The ever-freezing pipes. The trek to the outhouse.

We didn't center on the don't haves. Just the blessing of hot cocoa and marshmallows and cookies.

In today's greed-driven world, it's too easy to focus on what we want and forget the blessings we have. The latest, the new and improved fill empty lives. Time-honored treasures wind up in thrift stores and garage sales. Barely played with toys sit curbside waiting for the garbage truck.

On my wee farm, in my realm I call home, treasures abound, both family and reclaimed. I haunt thrift stores and barn sales, nearly always finding something perfect for me. For you see, I am of the old ways. Use it up, mend it, keep going. I darn socks, mend jeans, regrind shovel points, reglaze windows, staple plastic and hang blue tarps.

Perhaps it's the generations of farmeresses in my blood, Perhaps I am out of sync with today's world. Perhaps it's just me.

I like mending. Figuring out how to make do. Making stone soup and simple biscuits. Sipping hot cocoa and reading old books.

One of my reclaimed treasures sits at my spinning wheel. I found her at a local humane society barn sale this summer. A Windsor chair with a \$2 price tag. Okay, so its back was broken in two and spokes were loose. But \$2?? Of course, she came home in my pickup along with other treasures. I showed her to my wood working friend Steve who laughed and said he could turn my \$2 chair into a \$3 stool. But he had this amazing glue and patience. He fixed the back and reset the spokes.

She is wonderful in my home! The old finish is dark and bubbled. I haven't refinished her, only used lemon oil. The paper label is still on the bottom, Hale Company, Arlington, Vermont. I would love to know how she wandered to Indiana. For now she keeps me company in my loom room, a great place to sit and spin yarns from my sheep wool.

For all that I lack, I am content with my hot cocoa, my treasures and my animals..... and Mom's oatmeal cookies.

Mom's Oatmeal Cookies

Cream together 1 cup of shortening and 1 cup of packed brown sugar
Add 1 egg, ¼ cup water, 1 t. vanilla. Mix well.
Add 1 cup flour, 1 t. salt, ½ t. baking soda and 3 cups Quaker Oats
Mix well. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto a greased baking sheet. Bake at 350 for about 15 minutes. Makes about 5 dozen cookies.
These freeze well.

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Love & Marriage

by Lesley R. Nuttall

One Couple's Journey

Love is a universal desire. We all want to be loved! An old song's words are: "Love and marriage, love and marriage, go together like a horse and carriage" and it's true -- you can't have one without the other. "They" also say that opposites attract. In our case, it's true.

My husband, Craig, and I are complete opposites. He is a very outgoing, happy and funny city boy, whereas I have always been a quiet, more reserved farm girl. We began our life-long journey about 58 years ago (and counting) with Craig trying to sell me a used vehicle. He was a handsome young man who lived across the street from my grandparents. My sister, Julie, and I were staying with our grandparents in town so we could have summer jobs, as we lived eight miles out in the country.

Craig offered us a ride to work one morning and told me he had a used vehicle he wanted me to look at. He offered to pick me up after work. Incidentally, I had no driver's license, didn't know how to drive and had no money for a car, but he was a good salesman! He picked me up after work in a cute, little, blue 1956 Plymouth and drove out to a back road with little to no traffic.

I climbed in behind the wheel, and Craig began giving me driving lessons. After about an hour, I think he realized there would be no sale here.

He didn't let that distract him, and he asked me out on a date. He took me to a July 1st celebration in a neighboring town. There were only a few attractions, so Craig decided a boat ride would be fun. Now, you can picture me sitting in the boat in my favorite dress, feeling out of place. In those days, we didn't wear slacks on dates or even to school.

Once we had been on the lake for about an hour, it seemed like we had been circling the same island for quite some time. Dark clouds were rolling in, and the water was becoming choppy. Craig admitted he thought we were lost. He finally seemed to maneuver the boat in the right direction, but by this time we had a gathering of seagulls above that were swooping down at me. Craig was bravely trying to scare them off with the boat oar. I remember thinking to myself, "This will be our first and last date!"

Once we were safely back on shore and becoming a little more comfortable with each other, he asked me if I would give him another chance and have a more traditional date. After all, he was fun to be with and very good looking! So, I said, "yes."

Our courtship went smoothly over the following months. He showered me with trinkets and flowers; and after six months, he gave me a beautiful heart shaped black Alaskan diamond ring for Christmas. The time had come to meet his mother and brother's family. They lived four hours away in Port Arthur, now known as Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Little did we know we would start a tradition that we still do today.

As we drove through a covered bridge, he gently squeezed my hand and said, "I love you!" Of course, by this time I was smitten, and said, "I love you too!" To this day, every time we go under a bridge or underpass, we say I love you, and the other replies, ditto. If there are two under passes in a short distance, it's ditto, ditto. Our fate was sealed on Valentine's Day, 1961, when Craig asked me to marry him as he presented me with a beautiful diamond ring with little hearts cut into the sides. We were both happy and feeling very blessed. My parents were already very fond of Craig, so they were pleased to hear our news and looked forward to hearing about our plans to marry. We planned our wedding date to be August 4, 1961, and so the formal journey began.

For a beginning that started out very rocky—in a boat that was rocking because of the huge waves—I felt life was turning out perfect. As I write this, we have already celebrated our 56th wedding anniversary and looking forward to our 60th.

My how time has flown!

Some may ask, "What makes a good marriage?" There are a lot of different answers to that question, but here are a few of my answers. There must be tender and caring feeling towards each other. They must enjoy each other's company, which eventually leads to becoming best friends. It's important to have a common interest, but it is also important for each to have their own interests fulfilled.

"What does love look like?" Love is accepting that your partner may not be perfect, but you accept him/her anyway and are grateful he/she is in your life! And remember that a marriage relationship is built over time. Nothing happens overnight! Love is so important, so pass on your love to your family and friends and let them know you feel blessed that they are in your life. God Bless you and may you have lots of love in your life! Next issue I will continue with the wedding, the tragedy and what follows for our journey.

©2017 Lesley R. Nuttall. Lesley R. Nuttall is the author of "Secrets of Party Planning" and lives in Dryden, Ontario, Canada with her husband. lesleyrose@shaw.ca



Lesley and Craig Nuttall



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How To Make a Two-Color Binding

by Karen Grof

This quick technique gives you a binding that matches the backing on one side and matches the quilt top on the other side. Use it to add contrast to your backing and quilt top. For example, make a placemat with only two fabrics, green and white. On one side you will have a green placemat with white binding. Flip it over and you have a white placemat with a green binding!

Use the same binding method and number of strips that you would normally use to attach a binding made with 2 1/2" strips. But, instead of cutting 2 1/2" strips of one fabric, do the following:

- Cut 2" strips of green fabric
 - Cut 1" strips of white fabric (See top photo.)
1. Stitch all the green strips together lengthwise with a diagonal seam. Repeat with all the white strips.
 2. Trim the seam allowances to 1/4" and press open.
 3. Stitch the green strips and white strips together with 1/4" seam to make one long strip set that is 2 1/2" wide.
 4. Press the seam allowance toward the white fabric.
 5. Fold the strip set in half lengthwise, wrong sides together to make a double folded binding. Press the fold as you go. One side of the binding will be green fabric only but the other side of the binding will be white and green fabric.
 6. Attach the binding with your usual method - be sure to match the narrower (white) strip to the green (contrast) side. Stitch with a 3/8" seam.
 7. After the binding is sewn to the project and the ends are joined, fold the binding to the other side of the project and clip in place. The fold should naturally be at the seam which combined the strips thus making the binding white on one side and green on the other.
 8. Hand stitch or top stitch the binding in place.



Cut strips 1" and 2" & Stitch



Steps #3 and #4



Step #5 & #6



Step #7

Photo to left - Finished placemats



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 205 Pioneer St
 620-534-3551, 800-527-3997

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Patchwork Pillow Hugs

By Cathy Elliott

For my grandgem's tenth birthday, I bought her a sparkly, mermaid pillow at Home Goods. It was covered on both sides with pink, sequined fabric that turned to silver when brushed the other way. Perfect for drawing hearts or writing a message. Or forever doodling in something like silver and pink glitter. She seemed charmed by it, and I gave myself an inner stamp-of-approval. Job well done.

Until my daughter dropped a recent remark on the subject, "Blah-blah...loves it... but she's disappointed. She can't cuddle up with the pillow or lay on it because of the sequins on both sides."

Oh-oh. The comment stuck with me. Why hadn't I thought of that myself? So caught up in its twinkle, I never considered what her pillow was tasked to do. To be a comfort. What tween girl - or anyone - would want to flop in a chair and lean against a prickly pillow?

Then I remembered a hand-made, patchwork pillow, loved from the first day I laid eyes upon it, gifted by my sister-in-law many years ago. Sent for no reason except sisterly-affection, it was (and still is) the perfect pillow. A generous 26" X 26" square, filled with soft down, and covered with quality Ralph Lauren fabrics: the striped material cut from a set of curtains, the backing from a skirt she no longer wore, the rest of the fabrics from a design store's old sample book.

In fact, that pillow is just what it should be -- beautiful in design, skillfully crafted,



and as comforting to lean against as a hug at the end of a hard day. All wrapped into a patchwork masterpiece, always welcoming me home.

Though my grandgem might not appreciate designer fabrics yet, I bet she'd treasure a patchwork pillow out of fun fabrics that make her smile or stir a happy memory. Something huggable -- front and back. That's the goal. Out with the prickle and in with the cozy cuddle!

I better get busy.

 --©Cathy Elliott is a full-time writer living in northern California whose mysteries reflect her personal interests of crafting and collecting. She also leads music at church and cherishes time with her grandchildren. In addition to various articles and anthology contributions, Cathy's written ten children's books for classroom use. Her plot-twisting works include *A Vase of Mistaken Identity*, *Medals in the Attic*, and *A Stitch in Crime*. Website www.cathyelliottbooks.com



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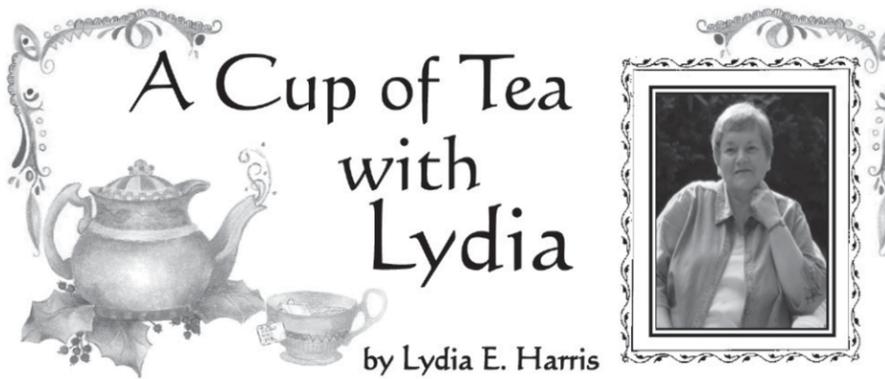
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The new year is the perfect time to try something new. So, I invited my niece Ann Marie Stewart, who writes the column "Ann's Lovin' Ewe," to guest author this column and share a special tea experience.

Celebrate Seniori-TEA

By Ann Marie Stewart

Last spring our church hosted a unique tea. Because high school seniors need a little extra wisdom and retired seniors have lots to offer, we put on a multi-generational Seniori-TEA for graduating high school seniors and their moms as well as women many years their senior.

This tea was extra special for me, because my 80-year-old mom traveled from Washington State to Washington, DC, to join my graduating senior daughter, my college-aged daughter and me. This event brought people together from across the miles, years and decades. Three generations for tea!

Teacup Welcome

We held our tea on a Sunday afternoon in the church social hall. Beforehand, moms of graduating seniors prepared the food and set tables for about 40 guests. Place cards ensured a mix of young and old seniors at each table.

As the ladies arrived, a table filled with a variety of teacups delighted them. We purchased some from thrift stores, and others were donated, so we had enough for each guest to keep one. Some teacups were expensive and ornate, while others were simple. Some were new and still in their boxes, while others were very old. The variety of colors and sizes fascinated both young and old alike. It was so cute to watch the ladies consider which teacup suited them and why. Teacups in hand, they found their places.

Twenty Questions to Get Acquainted

A program rested on each plate, featuring the order of events and a discussion tool of Twenty Questions. (You'll find the Twenty Questions in the idea file that follows.) After we shared answers at our tables, the hostess asked each table group to share their most interesting answers so we could all learn and laugh together.

My fondest memory was when guests at our tea table answered the question, "What is your favorite decade?" A feisty redhead, (a senior citizen in name only!) with her colors coordinated from earrings to shoes, burst out, "I like my life right now!" Other older women nodded in agreement. My college-aged daughter, Christine, smiled in relief. "So often we're told that the college years are the best years of our lives, and I'm halfway through now. It's encouraging to know we have much more to look forward to."

Cracked Teacup Beauty

The ladies also shared their high school graduation photos. We all gasped at the classic vintage beauty of the older women's photos. Later, as part of the program, I read "The Cracked Cup's Beauty" -- a poem about a teacup that survived the bumps of life and remained beautiful even with chips and cracks.

By the end of the tea, the 18-year-olds had marveled at graduation photos from the 1950s, experienced their first tea party, and gleaned wisdom from the JOY seniors (just older youth). The older women enjoyed sharing their memories and getting to know the young ladies over a delicious tea. The senior citizens also addressed envelopes they gave to high school seniors so the collegians could write to them and stay connected. As seniors of all ages left with smiles, new friends and a treasured teacup, I knew we all made memories that would linger.

Your Seniori-TEA

Would you like to plan ahead and organize a Seniori-TEA? Whether it's for neighborhood seniors or a large group in your community, there's much to look forward to as seniors of all ages gather for a communi-TEA special-TEA with personali-TEA. The

event can be small: graduating seniors and older seniors in the neighborhood who gather in your home. Or maybe host it at a school, church or community center. Select a date in May before graduation. Determine your younger and older guests, and then send out pretty invitations asking guests to bring a graduation picture.

You could play this simple tea game: Think of as many words as possible that end with "tea." Or use these words as the names for the events in the program: serendipi-tea, spontanei-tea, generosi-tea, personali-tea, capabili-tea, festivi-tea, identi-tea, hones-tea, and many more.

Planning a teatime this winter will give you a special teatime to look forward to this spring. I hope you have as much fun as we did.

Ann Marie Stewart, an award-winning author, received the 2017 Christy Award for her debut novel, Stars in the Grass. Lydia E. Harris, known as "Grandma Tea" and "Aunt-tea Lydia," wrote the book Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting.

From Lydia's Recipe File: Mini Tea Quiches

Easy to make. The ham is the "crust."

Ingredients:

- 6 or more slices of thin-sliced deli ham
- 24 frozen tater tots, thawed (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 6 large or extra-large eggs, beaten
- 2 tablespoons cream
- 3/4 cup grated cheese, divided (cheddar or mixture of cheddar and jack)
- 1 cup diced mushrooms or vegetables of your choice (broccoli, spinach, peppers, green onions, or a mixture)
- 1 tablespoon oil
- ground pepper to taste
- parsley and cherry tomatoes for garnish



Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray standard-size muffin tin with no-stick spray. Sauté vegetables in oil until soft. In a medium-sized bowl, combine eggs, cream, 1/2 cup cheese, and vegetables. Cut ham slices in half. Line each muffin cup with one-half slice of ham to make a "shell." Press one tater tot into the bottom of each. Divide egg mixture between 12 muffin cups. Start by adding a large spoonful of the mixture to each. Add more to each until all the mixture is used. Top each quiche with a crumbled tater tot and about one tablespoon of cheese (from remaining 1/4 cup). Bake 15 minutes or until eggs are firm and mini quiches are lightly browned. Cool slightly. Loosen edges with a table knife. Place in paper liners if desired. Garnish each with a sprig of parsley and half a cherry tomato. Serve immediately. Refrigerate or freeze leftovers. Makes 12

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Ann's Lovin' Ewe... by Ann Stewart "What's for Dinner?" or Souper Hospitality

What's for dinner? How about a big pot of soup? When is a good night to share it? Who's the first person who comes to mind to invite? Why not ask them to bring a salad, and you've got a meal!

Think about it. What would happen if in the next 15 minutes someone called *you* and said they were ordering out Chinese. Or Pizza. Or _____ fill in the blank. Would you want to join them? In a heartbeat. I'd venture out even for leftovers. Why? Because it means no cooking, and you'll have conversation with friends. Face to face instead of on Facebook. So, what stops us from inviting others over?

- My house is a mess.
- I'm not a great cook.
- I'm too busy.
- They're too busy.
- I don't know what they like.
- It's too short of notice.
- I have too much work.
- They might think an invitation is strange.
- Our table is too small/not enough plates

Consider a different list: What would our family gain by sharing a meal?

- Conversation skills
- Etiquette skills
- Hospitality
- Spontaneity
- Culinary Skills
- Growing friendships and relationships

Our house feels homey when everyone is around the table sharing food and friendship. I love it when the conversations linger. I hesitate to clear the dishes, because I'm afraid I'll interrupt the atmosphere.

Warm up with two soups I've recently enjoyed: Taco Soup and Sweet Potato and Kale. Each recipe would feed eight. Invite your neighbors, your friends or family. Have a potluck. Or perhaps ask guests to bring the toppings for this taco soup. Simply enjoy the evening. If your hospitality is too grand, your guests may feel uncomfortable about reciprocating.

It's lambing season at Skye Moor Farm, and so it's busy. There may be baby lambs in the barn to show off, baby bottles and lamb formula on my kitchen counter, and my husband may just have come in from the barn with a newborn to warm by the fire! But it all adds to an opportunity to share with others.

Share your home, hearth and your heart soon with somebody who could use fellowship and a warm meal. Here are a few ideas to get started:

Sausage Kale Bean Soup

- ½ pound Jimmy Dean sausage
- ½ medium sweet onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 32 oz. chicken broth
- 2 cups heavy cream (I use 2% milk or half and half)
- 2 - 14 ounce can white beans
- 3 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 bunch kale, coarsely chopped

In a large Dutch oven or soup pot, cook the sausage, onion and garlic until the sausage is browned and onion is softened. Remove any excess fat drippings.

2. Add the chicken broth, cream, beans and sweet potatoes. Cover the pot and bring the soup to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer 15 minutes.

3. Stir in the kale and cook for 5 more minutes, covered.

Taco Soup

- 1 lb. Hamburger
- 1 4 oz. can green chilies
- 1 packet Ranch dressing (powder)
- 1 can corn (not creamed)
- 1 can hominy
- 1 can pinto beans or black beans
- 1 can kidney beans
- 1 large can stewed tomatoes
- 1 packet taco seasoning
- 1 yellow onion
- *cilantro (optional)
- *sour cream (optional)

Brown hamburger and add taco-seasoning packet In stew pot, add remaining ingredients (do not drain any of the cans) and add browned hamburger
Simmer for 35 minutes

Serve cilantro, sour cream, chips and cheese on the side. You can even have noodles or rice and top with the taco soup.

If dessert sounds good – then pick up some ice cream, scoop it into pretty bowls and top with fudge sauce, a cookie, or fresh fruit.

Prepare, share, and enjoy time with friends. You may even find this becomes a weekly event. Perhaps your specialty is spaghetti and you serve that every Friday for lucky friends. Or maybe a taco topping party! Whatever you serve, your house will be a home where you invest into friendships that will last a lifetime.

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In Honor of Presidents' Day...

"I would rather belong to a poor nation that was free than to a rich nation that had ceased to be in love with liberty -- Woodrow Wilson

"Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and, under a just God, cannot long retain it." -- Abraham Lincoln

"We must dare to be great; and we must realize that greatness is the fruit of toil and sacrifice and high courage." -- Teddy Roosevelt

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." -- John Quincy Adams



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The Country Register of Kansas Quilting Project

Once again, The Country Register of Kansas is pleased to bring our readers an original design quilt from the talented quilt designers of Kansas. Our new quilt is designed by Maria McKenzie of First City Quilts in Leavenworth. Consider this a mystery-style quilt as we will reveal one block each issue, with the final completed quilt revealed when it is time to set the quilt together. According to Maria, it is designed to be a scrappy quilt -- so dig through that fabric stash to find your materials. Or visit one of our advertising shops to purchase fabric. Let's get started! (Note: to see the instruction blocks in color; go to our website www.countryregister.com/kansas and selected the quilt project tab.)

Skill Building Kansas Sampler

Dear Quilter,
Thank you for joining us in this Skill Building Kansas Sampler designed and written by Maria McKenzie. This particular quilt features skill building blocks to build confi-

dence in the beginning quilter as well as brush up some quilting skills for you more seasoned quilters joining us.

The blocks can be made using scraps from your stash. I have included in each block the size of the scrap you will need.

We will begin our program with a very traditional Courthouse Steps block. As many quilters know, it is important to put a label on our quilts, but many of us fail to do so. This block can be used as a signature block or label by using the center rectangle to write or embroider the quilt's information.

If you have any problems with any of the blocks in this program, please feel free to call the shop at 913-682-8000 or stop by and we will be happy to help you.

Thank you again for joining us and we look forward to serving you and your creativity. Happy Quilting!



First City Quilts

Block One – Courthouse Steps

Cutting Instructions:

Cream 3" x 7"

Cut (1) - 2½" x 6½" rectangle

Red 7" x 7"

Cut (2) - 1½" x 6½" rectangles

Cut (2) - 1½" x 4½" rectangles

Rust 3" x 9"

Cut (1) - 2½" x 8½" rectangle

Blue 6" x 13"

Cut (1) - 2½" x 12½" rectangle

Cut (1) - 2½" x 8½" rectangle

Green 3" x 9"

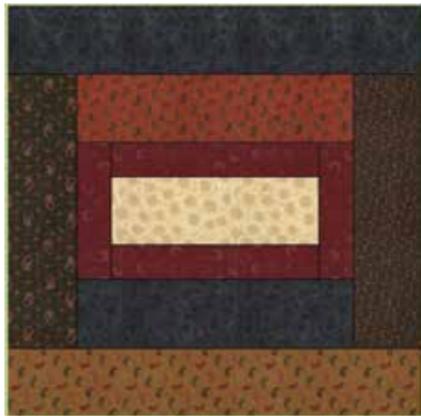
Cut (1) - 2½" x 8½" rectangle

Brown 3" x 9"

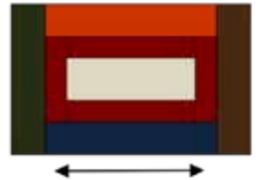
Cut (1) - 2½" x 8½" rectangle

Tan 3" x 13"

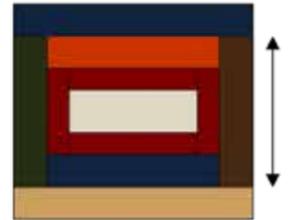
Cut (1) - 2½" x 12½" rectangle



Sew a 2½" x 8½" green rectangle to the left side and a 2½" x 8½" brown rectangle to the right side of the block. Press seams away from center.



Sew a 2½" x 12½" blue rectangle to the top and a 2½" x 12½" tan rectangle to the bottom of the block. Press seams away from center. Square to 12½" x 12½".



Now you have made a signature block to personalize your quilt. This block is also known as a Log Cabin block or Courthouse Steps block.

You can embroider by hand or machine or use a permanent fabric marker to write the year, your name, etc. on this block in lieu of having to make a quilt label.

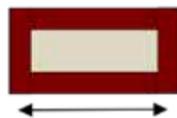
Sewing Instructions:

Use ¼" seam allowance unless otherwise noted.

Sew a 1½" x 6½" red rectangle to the long sides of the cream rectangle. Press seams toward the red.



Sew a 1" x 4½" red rectangle to the left and right sides of the block. Press seams away from center.



Sew a 2½" x 8½" rust rectangle to the top and a 2½" x 8½" blue rectangle to the bottom of the block. Press seams away from center.



Next Month's Block – Geese in the Round



Skill Building Kansas Sampler 2018© First City Quilts LLC

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Town and Country Cooking . . .

By Janette Hess

Inspiration to go

Need an exceptional dessert to impress friends or family? Look no further than your favorite eatery for inspiration.

We all have been dazzled by restaurant desserts but, for one reason or another, have not indulged. Or perhaps we've indulged but still want more! The solution is to take the idea, not the dessert, home. Then mimic the dessert on your own time and serve it on an occasion when you and your dinner guests can afford the extra calories.

The ideas for this month's recipes originated in boutique restaurants. All started as basic recipes, but then the chef-inspired additions, wrappings and sauces took them over the top.

Phyllo-Wrapped Brownies

- 1 package brownie mix, prepared according to package instructions
- Fudge sauce (homemade or purchased)
- 1 16-ounce package phyllo dough, thawed according to package instructions
- ½ cup melted butter, plus more as needed
- Vanilla ice cream for garnish

Bake brownies in greased, 8- by 8-inch, parchment-lined baking dish. When slightly cool, invert onto large cutting board. Cut in half, and then cut each half into 6, 7 or 8 oblong pieces, depending on size of brownie desired. To assemble, carefully place 2 sheets of dough on flat surface. Brush top layer with melted butter. Place one brownie lengthwise near narrow end of dough and spread top of brownie with fudge sauce. (Two generous teaspoons is an appropriate amount.) Roll and wrap brownie in dough, ending fudge-side-up. Brush exposed surfaces of dough with butter and carefully tuck open ends underneath, using butter as adhesive. Quickly repeat process until all brownies have been wrapped in dough. Keep dough covered with plastic wrap until all brownies have been wrapped. Place brownies on parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes, or until browned. Serve with ice cream and additional warm fudge sauce.

Note: Depending on the number of brownies used, you may have some leftover phyllo dough. Most packages contain two sleeves of dough. One sleeve is enough to wrap approximately 10 oblong brownies.

Blondies with Butterscotch Cream Sauce**Blondies:**

- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ¾ cup flour
- ½ cup oatmeal, lightly processed
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup coarsely chopped walnuts or pecans
- Ice cream for serving

In mixing bowl, combine melted butter with sugar. Beat in egg and vanilla extract. Add dry ingredients and combine thoroughly. Stir in nuts. Spread batter in greased 8- by 8-inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Cut into bars while warm. To serve, top with ice cream and warm Butterscotch Cream Sauce.

Butterscotch Cream Sauce:

- 1 cup butterscotch topping (homemade or purchased)
- ½ cup soft cream cheese

Lightly heat butterscotch topping in microwave oven. Add cream cheese and stir to combine. Serve warm over blondies and ice cream.

Vanilla Bean Panna Cotta

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 vanilla bean
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons unflavored gelatin
- ½ cup milk
- 1 5.3-ounce container (approximately ½ cup) plain Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Sweetened berries of choice for serving

Split vanilla bean lengthwise and scrape seeds into small bowl. Add small amount of cream; stir to separate seeds. Combine with remaining cream and sugar in medium saucepan. Bring to simmer over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Do not boil. While cream mixture is heating, measure milk into separate dish and sprinkle with gelatin. Allow gelatin to soften for 5 minutes. Thoroughly combine hot cream mixture with milk/gelatin mixture, yogurt and vanilla extract. Divide among eight 4-ounce ramekins. Cover and chill overnight.

Panna Cotta may be served in ramekins or unmolded onto individual plates. To unmold, loosen edges with thin knife and briefly dip each ramekin into shallow dish of very hot water, taking care not to allow water into ramekin. Invert onto plate. Top with sweetened berries.



A trained journalist, Janette Hess focuses her writing on interesting people and interesting foods. She is a Master Food Volunteer with her local Extension service and enjoys collecting, testing and sharing recipes.

Quilting with Barbara . . .

By Barbara Conquest

Another new year! May 2018 prove to be a happy, productive year for all of us. Quilters don't have a monopoly on happiness or productivity, but the nature of our passion leads to both – happiness is cutting, piecing, quilting and working with beautiful fabrics to create something new. Productivity is the result.

Are happiness (contentment) and productivity enough? What about appreciation of our skill and effort from others? A recent event comes to mind. A few weeks ago, I gave a lap quilt to a friend who was recently ill so she could cuddle in it while watching television, one of her diversions as she recovers. Sometime later our paths crossed, and she updated me as follows: "Oh, I just love that quilt, but the minute I walked in the door with it Fido [a pseudonym] sniffed it, pulled it from my hands and ran to his bedroom. He won't go anywhere without it. He carries it everywhere. It's definitely his quilt." What could I say? Any quilter will know my instantaneous internal reaction, but I kept quiet. I like dogs, and far be it from me to spoil their fun.

Upon reflection, I think that my decision to say nothing was the right one. After all, I had had the pleasure of cutting, piecing, quilting and finishing. What more did I need? Nothing. Yes, I know I spent considerable time and money on that quilt, and it would have been nice to receive human, rather than canine, appreciation. But I also know that it gave me pleasure to give it to my friend, and what she (or Fido) did with it was not my decision. A gift is not a gift if strings are attached. Life is too short – and there are too many quilts to make – to stew over this.

In addition to the pleasure derived from making and giving quilts, another theme emerges: the desire to help others. Here in Alberta victims of two recent disasters, the High River floods and the Fort MacMurray fires, welcomed quilts from all over North America to help re-establish households. Over 1,000 quilts for Ronald McDonald Houses were made and donated by Canadian quilters in 2017 to honour our sesquicentennial. Quilters all over North America donate quilts every day to veterans through the Quilts of Valour organization, which was started by a quilter. Innumerable charity or comfort quilts are given to innumerable causes, charities and individuals. All these donations are made with no expectation of appreciation or acknowledgement, although it is often received. Knowing that someone has been helped or cheered is our reward – and that's enough.

Happy New Year!

P.S. Altruistic as the above may appear, neither my friend nor her dog will be getting another quilt from me in this century. Lesson learned.

Barbara Conquest writes her column from Blue Sky Quilting in Tofield, Alberta, Canada. © Barbara Conquest.

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Stories of a Farm Wife...

by Tammy Page

The Ole JC Penney Sewing Machine

Sewing, I love to sew! Or, should I say, I loved to sew. My poor, dusty and dry sewing machine is sitting on my old, enamel top table in my office, where it has sat for many years. I used to sew cute little sundresses, shorts and even those country jumpers complete with ceramic buttons for my girls. They had matching blue and white gingham jumpers with homemade red bows for their hair for one of their Christmas programs. I also made sweet lavender jumpers with petite flowers on them for Easter one year. They looked so cute! One of my favorite things to make, and sometimes the hardest, were the Barbie and Cabbage Patch clothes. Those little seams were so hard to maneuver sometimes.

I made the girls flannel gowns one year and a matching one for their baby dolls. And, of course, their baby dolls always had warm flannel blankets for their cradles. I would sit for hours after the children had gone to bed, and many hours after I should have, to complete several outfits for each baby doll. When my husband and I were young and money was tight, I made aprons for Christmas gifts for all the women in the family. I still have mine



and use it occasionally. These days the only time I use my sewing machine is to mend a seam or sew a hem. I've not made anything from a pattern for many years. Oh, how I loved to go back to the material section, climb up on a stool and look through those huge pattern books. Is McCalls still in business?

I learned to sew from my mom, who made many beautiful outfits for my sisters and me. She made matching shorts outfits for us for vacations along with coordinating headbands. One particular outfit that I remember is a cream and brown dotted swiss outfit we wore on our trip to St. Augustine, Fla. In case one of us got lost, all you'd have to do is look for the matching outfit and be able to tell we were from the same family for sure. My mom also made all four of my prom dresses. They were so pretty, and it was a given that I would not run into anyone on prom night with the same dress. When I was engaged to be married, my mom, my bridesmaids and I picked out patterns and my mom made the bridesmaids sundresses, like she didn't have anything else to do?

I still would like to uncover the "old gal," dust her off and get her to running smooth again. I have some ideas of what I'd like to make, but then again, I'd probably also have to replace my spools of dry-rotten thread!

Maybe this would be a project for the new year, when the snow keeps me inside. Speaking of the new year, please consider adding our Hopping John, a traditional recipe for a New Year celebration, but a good cold-weather dish anytime. Our family favorite recipe can be found in this paper.

-Tammy lives on a working farm with her family.

Page Family "Hopping John"

- 1 cup sliced celery
- 1 medium onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon oil, bacon drippings or 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 cans chicken broth (or 2 1/2 cups)
- 16 oz black-eyed peas (fresh or frozen, thawed)
- 1/2 lb cooked ham, cubed
- 1/4 teaspoon dry crushed red pepper
- 3 bay leaves
- 3 cups cooked long-grain rice
- 4 cups water

Saute the first three ingredients in a large Dutch oven in hot oil, bacon drippings, or butter until tender. Add water and other five ingredients. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat, and simmer 40 minutes or until peas are tender. Remove and discard bay leaf.

Serve over cooked rice.

*Submitted by Tammy Page, whose "Stories of a Farm Wife" appears in this edition of The Country Register

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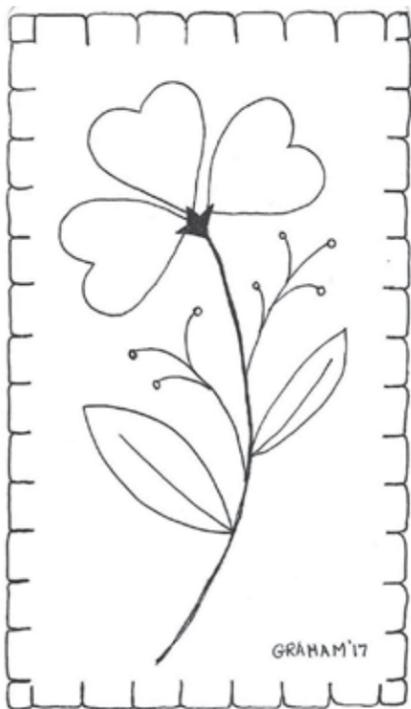
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Designed by Kathy Graham

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February

- 1-?...Retirement Sale @ Yarns, Salina, p. 12
- 1-3...Super Bowl Sale @ Prairie Flower Crafts, Alden, p. 13
- 2-3...Football Frenzy Sale @ Stitches Quilt Shop, McPherson, p. 12
- 3...Annual Super Bolt Sale @ Field to Fabric, Winfield, p. 6
- 3...7th Birthday Celebration @ The Quilter's Patch, Edna, p. 26
- 7-10...Red, White, and Pink Sale @ Sew What Quilt Shop, Marion, p. 16
- 10... Saturday Sampler begins at Kechi Quilt Impressions, call for info
- 12-17...Valentine's Sale @ Silver Threads & Golden Needles, Burlington, p. 25
- 16-17...Scott City Shop Hop, p. 7
- 16-18...Flinthills Aromatherapy Booth @ Wichita Women's Fair, Atlanta, p. 6
- 17...Foof-da-rah Quilt Show/Sale @ Sew Country, Belleville, p. 10
- 17-19...Hyatt Sewing Retreat @ Charlotte's Sew Natural, Newton, p. 5
- 17-19...Quick Curve Ruler Workshop @ Charlotte's Sew Natural, p. 5
- 24...Dresden Star Quilt or Pillow Class @ Needle in a Haystack, Severy, p. 5

March

- 9-10...Embroidery Garden @ Bill's Sewing Center, Pleasantview, p. 13
- 12-17...St. Pattie's Sale @ Silver Threads & Golden Needles, Burlington, p. 25
- 16-17...Spring Open House @ Elsie Grace's, Frankfort, p. 19
- 16-17...Quilter's Schoolhouse, Various, p. 5
- 17...Bunny Hop, Various, p. 6
- 23-24...Great Plains Shop Hop, Various
- 24...NEK Junkin' Trail Shop Hop, Various
- 24...Spring Celebration @ Pleasantview, p. 13
- 24-25...Portrait Applique with Lea McComas @ Stitch and Chatter Quilt Shop, Stockton, p. 9
- 24-25...A Sunflower Journey Quilt Show, Abilene, p. 17

April

- 4-7...Ad Astra Adventures Presents "A Kansas Quilt Shop Hop," Various, p. 15
- 6-7 & 9-14...14th Annual Prairie Stars Quilt Shop Hop, Various, p. 8
- 7-8...Quilting is my Superpower Quilt Show Presented by Kaw Valley Quilter's Guild, Lawrence, p. 22
- 14-15...Steam Engine School, Concordia, p. 11
- 17-21...Quilter's Motor Coach Trip to Paducah Quilt Show, Pack & Go Tours, p. 27
- 18-28...Country Quilt Stroll, Kechi Quilt Impressions, Kechi, p. 5
- 21... Community breakfast at Kechi Country Quilt Stroll
- 21-28... Various classes Country Quilt Stroll, Kechi, more info from Kechi Quilt Impressions
- 19-21 & 26-28...Kansas Prairie Shop Hop, Various,
- 21-22...Wamego Kaw Valley Quilter's Quilt Show, Wamego, p. 18

June

- 1-2...Orphan Train Celebration, Concordia, p. 11

Houses of Memory

by Kerri Habben

A year seems to evolve slowly. One second becomes more until a minute has passed. Then another minute until an hour has elapsed. Suddenly, time compounds upon itself. One moment it is January, and then it is April, which quickly becomes August. Then, somehow, years slip by and, unless I deliberately pause and take stock, I wonder where they went.

However, at least we were given that precious time. It could have stopped, but it did not. Rather than lament its passing I celebrate that it was ours for its duration. Though perhaps it was never actually ours at all. Maybe time was just being itself, and we simply used it while it was here.

So it is as we live our way into a new year. It is all too easy to fall under the illusion that this year time won't flee so fast. Winter's dormancy is a lullaby as if being soothed by Mother Nature herself.

"All will be well, my child," she assures.

And somehow, some way it will be. Especially if there is beauty and grace before our eyes that we have failed to see. There may be blessings ahead we cannot even imagine on a winter's day.

Pondering time leads me to consider the memories we carry. A single second or sound can cause them to vividly emerge. My mother, now approaching 80, sometimes describes to me the home of my great-grandmother, great-aunt and great-uncle as she was growing up. Mom is just old enough to remember the blackouts and rationing during World War II, and also confetti swirling through the air when peace was declared.

I can see Nanna baking yeast cakes and efficiently peeling potatoes with little waste. I can see Uncle Henry's typewriter on the dining room table. I can hear Mom playing hymns on the piano on Sabbath afternoon.

I watch her eyes when she shares these stories with me. As I absorb her words and their accompanying energy, I sense she is traveling to a landscape long gone, all of these beloved people she remembers now passed on. But in those moments, I watch the world of my mother's childhood reawaken. I feel this home that I have never seen. Through her I treasure this house of memory.

Never mind that Nanna passed away in 1958, fifteen years before I was born. For it is within our houses of memory, that people live forever.

It is with this wistful, blessed gift that time loses its sting. Within these walls and windows of our recollections, we breathe a bit of the past as we live in the present. Yet we still journey one second at a time towards the future. Within us is the resilience to draw strength from our memories and foster gratitude for a new minute -- a new minute of a young, new year with hours to learn, to give and to love.

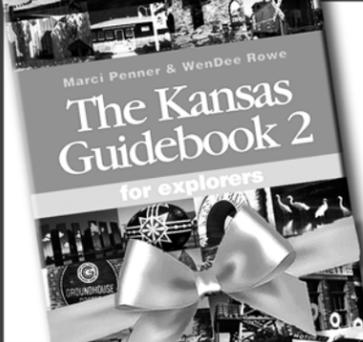
I wrote the following in my journal a summer ago. Often I sit quietly each season recording a moment for my own house of memory:

"But this I want to remember. The curve of the land around the azaleas, edged by the rocks my daddy set there decades ago now. That and the slope of green flowing gently around the cedar tree that just volunteered itself. And towards the crepe myrtle with my grandparents' bench beside it. It is today and all is well."

The precious time didn't fully leave us. It simply lives on now in our hearts where many houses-and spirits-of memory reside.

Kerri Habben is a writer, photographer, and crochet instructor living in Raleigh, NC. An avid crocheter and knitter, she learned these skills from her grandmother and mother. She donates many of her yarn creations to those in need. Kerry has gathered a decade of essays she is working to publish and can be reached at 913jeeves@gmail.com.

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