

The Country Register™

Manitoba and Saskatchewan's Complimentary Guide to Specialty Shopping & Attractions

Aug/Sept 2023

Vol. 23, No. 6



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Keeping In Touch

Cindy and Joe Ashfield <old.stuff@sasktel.net>

I am writing this in mid-July, and a heavy pall of dense smoke hangs over our world this morning. I am a gardener, so my morning coffee ritual includes a look on the internet at the weather forecast. It is optimistically saying perhaps it may rain. At this point in the growing season, it is definitely needed. So far, my spring experiments with veggies in flower beds and pots are working. We have enjoyed freshly picked beet greens and zucchini. I have hopes of corn on the cob picked off the back step soon. We used to enjoy an afternoon of berry picking, but creaky old bones are better in the backyard raspberry patch, where there is not much to trip over. Our own few saskatoon bushes are not yet old enough to yield berries, but what a pleasure yesterday when I answered the doorbell to find a friend had picked a pail of saskatoons for us! They were turned into a pie that very same day. We have a community orchard in Whitewood; although there was damage in a flood shortly after it had been established, there are still various berries to pick there for anyone who wants them. Taking a tour around town, you'll find most of our lawns are brown & crunchy when you walk on them due to the very dry weather this year. Still, some gardeners are real artists in their flower displays. It is another one of those simple pleasures of summer.

There is always so much to see and do this time of the year. We are surrounded by grain and cattle farms, so you don't have to look too far to find a rodeo to attend on a weekend. We are also fortunate to be close to the lakes with all their parks and everything they offer. We have had family visiting and have taken some time to explore some of the nearby communities ourselves. I wonder if our car has some sort of GPS that insists we stop at all the local greenhouses or thrift stores, which seem to be popping up everywhere.

We are all looking for ways to be eco-friendly these days. Thrift stores provide one great opportunity to do just that. We donate things that have become "dust collectors" in our lives that someone else might still find useful. They are a real treasure trove of bargains. We were looking for a scoop that would be helpful when filling one of our bird feeders. I checked the various retail stores in town, and someone reminded me to check out the thrift stores. I found what I needed to be tucked away with some other small kitchen items, and it was a bargain! I'm reminded of the old saying, "Everything old is new again." I think that this could be the thrift store motto. How many of you remember the pant stretchers from the '40s or '50s? I still like a crease in my jeans, so they get hung on the line, and the result is a nice crease and one less item in the dryer. On one of our explorations along the Number One lately, I stopped in a shop that sells a little of everything. I found a bowl cover like the one my mom used before covered containers were so common. There was a package of various size soft plastic discs with a soft elastic band around the perimeter. So there is no need to get out another container to put leftovers in the fridge; just cover the bowl as is.

Do you have a library available where you live? We do, and it is open three days a week. What a hub of activity it is! Not the silent hush that

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The recent forest fire smoke rolling over the prairies has made for some very colourful sunsets.

used to be expected. When I stopped in to pick up some books, there was a table set up for kids who might drop in and want to do a craft. If your kids are bored someday, that might be just the place for them. Our librarian will help with a search for a certain book or article, or if you're a computer person, you could go to the Southeast Regional Library website and lose yourself in the choices. There are lots of periodicals on our shelves that have been donated to share with others. You might like to sit and read our local paper or *The Country Register* while you are there. In winter time I like to quilt and sew. We have an unorganized sharing among our little group, and when someone finds a great book of patterns, the rest of us are told about it. We all may have a look before it goes back to the library in Saskatchewan that loaned it to our library. Perhaps you might like to join a book club.

So, this is a quiet day indoors because of air quality and a good day for reflection and looking forward to the rest of a busy summer. We hope you are finding lots to do before the mellow days of fall are upon us. Til next time in *The Register*.

Winnipeg, MB

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138th Edition

The Country Register, Manitoba & Saskatchewan

Kirby & Colleen Gust

Editors, Publishers, Advertising Representatives

ISSN 1700-9340

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You say tomato, I say tomahto

By Colleen Gust

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

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

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

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

fruits available at the time. Not to mention, some toxic and inedible varieties discouraged many from experimenting with different types.

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

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

Now suppose you're looking for a more natural approach to disease and pest control in your tomato garden. In that case, you can rely on plants with strong scents, like alliums such as onions, chives, and garlic, as well as aromatic mints like basil, oregano, and spearmint. Marigolds are another great option. These plants are believed to mask the scent of the tomato plant, making it harder for pests to locate or find an alternative attack point. Another handy tip is to plant asparagus and tomatoes together. Asparagus plants contain Asparagusic acid, which repels nematodes known to attack tomato plants.

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

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

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

Pico de Gallo Recipe:

- 2 large tomatoes, chopped
- ¼ yellow or white onion, chopped
- 1-2 jalapenos, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- 1/3 cup cilantro leaves, finely chopped
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt

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

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



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Tomatoes

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Bush	Grape	Lemon	Vine
Cherry	Green	Orange	Yellow
Cocktail	Heirloom	Plum	Zebra
Early	Hybrid	Purple	



Town and Country Cooking

by Janette Hess

FIRE UP THE GRILL

The grilling season is upon us, so make a plan to head outside with all the makings of an excellent summer meal.

Start your side dish by roasting a batch of marinated zucchini. Combine it with hot, fluffy couscous to create the perfect accompaniment to your grilled meat of choice -- either Pork Kabobs or Savory Skewered Beef.

Savory Skewered Beef gets its salty-sweet vibe from an Asian-influenced marinade. Pork Kabobs gain their depth of flavor from an intense combination of Spanish smoked paprika and minced garlic. Both recipes rely on metal skewers, which speed the grilling process by transferring heat into the cubes of meat. The skewers, of course, must be removed before serving. If metal skewers are not available, wooden skewers may be substituted, but they must be soaked in water for at least an hour to prevent burning.

So, choose a meat, round up some skewers, fire up the grill and enjoy some great seasonal eating!

Parslied Couscous with Grilled Zucchini

2 to 3 small, tender zucchini (about 1 pound)

¾ teaspoon salt

Marinade*

2 cups chicken or vegetable broth

1 cup couscous

2 teaspoons olive oil

¼ cup fresh, finely chopped parsley

Freshly ground pepper to taste

¼ cup feta cheese for garnish

Cut unpeeled zucchini into ½-inch slices and toss with ¾ teaspoon salt. Place on paper towels. Set aside for 30 minutes to allow salt to draw out excess moisture. Mix marinade in bag. After 30 minutes, pat zucchini slices dry and place in marinade. Shake to coat. Heat grill. Place grill tray (or grill basket) on hot grill. Using slotted spoon, transfer zucchini onto tray. Grill over medium heat until tender and lightly browned, approximately 10 minutes. Remove from grill and chop into small cubes. Set aside. In medium saucepan, bring broth to boil. Stir in couscous and olive oil. Cover and remove from heat. After 5 minutes, add chopped zucchini and parsley. Fluff with fork to combine ingredients. Add pepper to taste. Sprinkle with feta cheese before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

*In 1-gallon zip-top bag, combine 3 tablespoons olive oil, 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard, 1 teaspoon garlic salt, ¼ teaspoon black pepper, 1/8 teaspoon paprika and juice of 1 lemon (approximately 2 tablespoons).

Savory Skewered Beef

1½ pounds sirloin steak tips or other thick, grill-friendly steak

1/3 cup hoisin sauce

1/3 cup bourbon OR beef broth

2 tablespoons soy sauce

¼ cup peanut oil

2 teaspoons crushed red pepper

1 teaspoon garlic powder

Canola or vegetable oil for preparing grate

Trim steak and cut into 1¼ to 1½ -inch cubes. To make marinade, combine

hoisin sauce, bourbon, soy sauce, peanut oil, crushed red pepper and garlic powder in 1-gallon zip-top bag. Add steak. Working through plastic, massage marinade into steak. Refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours, massaging and turning steak at least once. Pre-heat grill. Drain steak and thread onto 3 or 4 metal skewers; discard marinade. Using paper towel, pat off excess marinade. Wipe hot grill grate with oil-soaked paper towel. Place skewers on grill. Turn after 4 to 5 minutes. Continue grilling and turning until internal temperature of beef registers 125 to 135 degrees (depending on desired doneness), and steak is nicely browned. Transfer skewers to rimmed baking sheet or platter. Cover with foil. Allow to rest for at least 5 minutes before using fork to pull steak from skewers. Drizzle any drippings back over steak cubes. Makes 5 to 6 servings.

Pork and Red Pepper Kabobs

1½ pounds pork loin

2 large cloves garlic, minced

¼ cup canola, grapeseed or other vegetable oil

3 tablespoons Spanish smoked paprika

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 red bell pepper

Trim pork and cut into 1¼- to 1½-inch cubes. Place in 1-gallon zip-top bag. Add garlic, oil, paprika and salt. Working through plastic, massage seasonings into pork. Refrigerate 2 to 3 hours. Cut pepper into 1-inch square pieces. Pre-heat grill. Thread pork and pepper pieces alternately onto 3 or 4 metal skewers. Using paper towel, pat off excess marinade. Wipe hot grill grate with oil-soaked paper towel. Place skewers on grill. Turn after 5 minutes. Continue turning and grilling until pork is just cooked through, about 15 minutes, depending on grill. Transfer kabobs to rimmed baking sheet or platter. Cover with foil. Allow to rest for at least 5 minutes before using fork to pull pork and peppers from skewers. Drizzle any drippings back over pork. Makes 6 servings.

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.



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A Tisket, A Tasket, A Beautiful Basket

by Barbara Kalkis

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

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

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

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

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

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

The dining table basket was a centerpiece on a rattan woven charger. In the living room, every free surface was covered with a mandatory doily and (wait for it) a basket holding a plant. Baskets on the floor held magazines. My seasonal baskets were displayed on a shelf in my office, waiting until the appropriate holiday. Trick-or-treaters could easily grab Halloween candy out of a big round shallow basket.

Christmas cards and letters were stacked in a large square basket. Another held holiday photos. They were all beautiful to look at, but they were all used every single day. A basket even carried baby Moses down the river.



A House Should Be a Home.

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

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

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

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What Connects Us? Recipes!

by Barbara Kalkis

How many cookbooks do you have? I have thirty. That number does not include an ancient recipe box or bulging binders stuffed with, well, recipes. Torn magazine pages sit on the kitchen counter and hide between unopened mail. I scrawl recipes on envelopes while watching a cooking show, thinking I will make them...soon. I especially love regional self-published family and club cookbooks. That's where real recipe gems are found – like gobs, etouffée, chiles rellenos.

Some books were wedding gifts. My mother, who had won many cooking contests, despaired of teaching me to cook because I was “too impatient” and never followed a recipe correctly. (Blame the instructions. It's worse than reading a crochet pattern.) If someone asked what I needed, she answered, “A Cookbook.”

My husband thought it was hilarious to receive such a wedding gift before we got married. Afterwards, he noticed that we had some form of pasta every night. That's when he transcended the romance stage and landed in Realityville. At Christmas, he gave me a microwave oven and a semester of classes (thereby allowing me to transcend romance and enter Realityville.) I can now make a whole chicken in the microwave.

With decades and dollars invested in classes that came with free aprons (remember that article?) and vegetable peelers, I still search for tasty recipes. Exotic herbs and spices expire in the cupboard. Expensive tools wait to be cherished and used. (That's covered. They are listed in my Will.)

Friends come to dinner. They make comments like, “This is interesting.” Or, “I never tasted meatloaf like this. What's your secret?” Or, my sisters' blunt, “Where's the salt shaker?”

My nephew's family was more discrete. They gave me elegant wood salt and pepper shakers that stand 8.5 inches high.

The bottom line is that I am still impatient and believe that removing one or two tiny ingredients is okay. (Tarragon. Cardamom. Huh?)

What Draws Us to Recipes? We need food to survive, but recipes aren't just about food. They are about sharing. They connect us. My mother's handwritten recipes continue her legacy of finding joy in cooking for her family and friends. My family's recipes reveal their favorite cuisines, offer a smart shortcut or refresh childhood memories. My friend, Jackie, sent me recipes for chicken cacciatore and chicken marengo. They are favorite make-ahead company recipes that allow her to relax and visit when friends arrive.

My go-to recipe is the *Ohio Country Register's* Chicken and Wild Rice Chowder. It's easy enough even for me. It has 11 ingredients but it contains only 9 very short instructions. Perfect. And delicious! It joins a collection of *The Country Register* sauces and the *Iowa Country Register's* sweet potato soufflé.

The Country Registers' Reader Request. I was going to donate some of my collection but didn't. Couldn't. I wondered why I cherish them. I went to the ‘web’ for an answer. One site featured “tombstone recipes.” From a spritz cookie recipe in a Brooklyn cemetery to a nut roll recipe in Israel, recipes on headstones are common. Why?

I think the answer is that in sharing recipes we share our personal history, traditions, cultures and memories. We connect with each other.

So here's my request: Don't wait for Christmas. Do a cookie exchange now. Share your recipes for hors d'oeuvres, main dishes, side dishes, family favorites, and old standbys when you're short on time and temper.

You'll spark a new idea. You'll share part of yourself. You'll connect people you don't even know. Start now. My scissors are waiting.

©Barbara Kalkis. Barbara is a high-tech marketer and public relations consultant, but her first loves are teaching and writing. She's author of *Little Ditties for Every Day: A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm*. Contact her at BarbaraKalkis01@gmail.com.

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Saskatoon Quilters' Guild Featured Quilter 2023

Joyce Hansen will be the Featured Quilter at the Saskatoon Quilters' Guild Quilt Show on October 27 and 28, 2023 at Prairieland Park. She will have a booth at the show where you will be able to see her beautiful quilts and speak with her in person about her techniques and projects.

Joyce has been a member of the Saskatoon Quilters' Guild since 1993 and has been an active member during that time, participating in and holding many positions on guild committees. As well as pursuing many learning opportunities herself she has also made many presentations at guild events and is always willing to share her expertise. Her quilts have been exhibited and have received many ribbons and awards.

We hope that you'll come to Saskatoon to meet Joyce and see the many quilts being featured at our show as well as shop in our Merchant Mall and Guild Boutique. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram @saskatoonquilts for all the latest information. Tickets for the show will be available after September 4th from tickets@saskatoonquiltersguild.com.



Do not ask your children to strive for extraordinary lives. Such striving may seem admirable, but it is the way of foolishness. Help them instead to find the wonder and the marvel of an ordinary life. Show them the joy of tasting tomatoes, apples and pears. Show them how to cry when pets and people die. Show them the infinite pleasure in the touch of a hand. And make the ordinary come alive for them. The extraordinary will take care of itself.

William Martin

Edmonton, AB

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Pepper Steak

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

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

Sprinkle the meat with paprika. In a large skillet, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Brown the steak strips. Add the broth and garlic. Simmer, covered, for 30 minutes. Add green peppers and onion. Cover and continue to simmer for 5 minutes.

Combine cornstarch, soy sauce and water; stir into meat mixture. Cook and stir until thickened. Gently stir in tomatoes and heat through. Serve over rice.

Trivia

Charles Lamb once had the misfortune to be seated next to a very garrulous and senseless woman at a dinner party. She chattered incessantly and then discovering that the author was paying no attention whatever to her, rebuked him by saying: "You seem to be none the better for what I am telling you."

"No, madam," he answered, "but this gentleman on the other side of me must be - for all that it went in one ear and out the other."

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TWO MINUTE READS TO FLIP OUR SCRIPT
BY: KATHY J. SOTAK

Are You On The Mend? How To Repair Even Stronger



Most weeks I head down to the discount floral shop and treat myself to a bouquet. Some weeks the choice is traditional carnations, roses or daisies. This week my choice was bursts of fun green puffs intermixed with delicate white flowers that you have to lean in to notice their beauty.

Flowers spark joy for me, like **kayaking** does for my husband and the **ocean** for my son. Why do I love flowers so much? Because of the countless lessons and metaphors that they share with me.

For example, this morning I was telling a friend about my prized echinacea plant in the front yard. Last year it towered at nearly four feet tall, bursting with blooms and served as a pit stop for butterflies, bees and other insects. I would often make a pit stop myself to admire this ecosystem right in the front yard.

This year however, I haven't seen any blooms. The deer keep eating the echinacea down to the ground. There is no bud in sight. My friend and I contemplated, **"How can the plant possibly bloom, when it is in a constant state of repair?"**

Think about a time in your life when you were in a state of repair, either mentally, physically or even spiritually. Were you able to flower at the same time? Perhaps you could, with great effort. Likely, not. As a physical example, I've been mending a back injury for the past several months, with pain shooting through my core at most basic moves. I wasn't flowering. I've gone through many emotional trials, the most significant was the loss of my first son. As grief and sadness surged through me, I wasn't flowering. Spiritually, over time I've swayed closer or further away from source. When I've swung furthest away – I wasn't flowering.

When we are not flowering, we are mending. The beauty of mending, is we end up as stronger plants, with more bold and beautiful flowers.

Each of us likely are mending something right now. Today, these flowers, along with my mending echinacea bush are reminding me to **practice compassion** with every interaction. *Especially with yourself.* **This is the medicine we can offer each other** to result in more strength and more beauty – when we are ready to flower.

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Canadian TV Stars From Eh to Zed

Growing up in the '70s and '80s, we only had 2 choices for tv stations on the farm, CKTV and CBC Regina. Both of which had cable numbers. I had no idea whatsoever at the time what they meant by "Cable" when they said, "Channel 12, Cable 2". Sometimes, we could watch CKOS from Yorkton if the weather was right. That was quite the treat back in the day before video games, iPads and smartphones.

Even though I didn't understand what cable tv was, I did understand that if a show was produced in the United States, it was cast with American actors. Canadian-produced shows were cast with Canadian actors...at least so I thought. I was well into adulthood before learning that John Byner and Bob Einstein were American actors. The CTV-produced show *Bizarre* was not the best show on TV by any means, but in the time of 2 station choices, beggars couldn't be choosers. I think what really got me hooked, line, and sinker to believe that the two actors were Canadian was the "Genuine

Saskatchewan sealskin bindings" that Super Dave Osborne always used on his stunt safety harnesses. I also thought for years that Jerry O'Connell was Canadian because of his work on the CTV program *My Secret Identity*, which co-starred a well-known Canadian actor named Derek McGrath. Best known for playing the reverend on *Little Mosque on the Prairie*.

In the '80s, when *Check It Out!* was on CTV, I somehow knew that Don Adams was an American actor from his work as Maxwell Smart, even though the show *Get Smart* was cancelled the year before I was born.

As for American game shows, it was always common knowledge that Alex Trebek of *Jeopardy* and Monty Hall of *Let's Make a Deal* were Canadian. Trebek was from Sudbury, and Hall was a prairie boy from Winnipeg.

The Wonderful World of Disney was always a Sunday evening favourite in our household, and one of my first memories of watching it was a show called *The Swamp*



Leslie Nielsen in a *Naked Gun* poster 1988

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Fox. I don't recall anything about the multi-episode series, but I remember the theme song. I get it stuck in my head as an earworm still to this day. "swamp fox, swamp fox tail on his hat, nobody knows where the swamp fox at...." Little did I know at the time the actor who played Colonel Francis Marion, aka The Swamp Fox, was not only a Canadian actor, but Leslie Nielsen was born in Saskatchewan.

Leslie Nielsen's father was a member of the newly formed Royal Canadian Mounted Police and was stationed in Regina at the time of Leslie's birth in 1926. The family later moved to Fort Norman (now Tulita), Northwest Territories. Leslie left school at the age of 17 and joined the Royal Canadian Air Force to get away from his abusive father. After the Second World War, Leslie was discharged, and he moved to Calgary, where he was a radio DJ for a short while before heading to Toronto to enroll in the Lorne Greene Academy of Radio Arts. Eventually ending up in New York, Leslie started to pick up parts as an actor, which led to a rather astonishing career. He played over 260 roles and guest starred on almost every popular TV show at the time, including *Gunsmoke*, *Bonanza*, *Rawhide*, *Hawaii 5-0*, *Murder She Wrote*, *Highway to Heaven*, *Fantasy Island*, *The Love Boat*, *Columbo*, *M*A*S*H* and many more.

In 1982, after his box-office success with the movie *Airplane!* He starred in his own TV show as Detective Frank Drebin in *Police Squad!* Though the series was short-lived at only 6 episodes, he would later reprise the role of Frank Drebin in the hit movies *Naked Gun: From the Files of Police Squad!*, *Naked Gun 2 ½: The Smell of Fear* and *Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult*. The trilogy grossed over \$477 million at the box office, which would still be considered a hit movie today.

Another Canadian-produced TV program I used to watch as a young adult was *Lonesome Dove: The Outlaw Years*. The series was filmed in Alberta, and guests starred a relatively unknown Canadian actor, Eric McCormack. You might remember him from a show called *Will & Grace*. This top-rated American sitcom had 8 original successful seasons and 3 seasons after the series was rebooted.

After his hit daily talk show in Canada, Alan Thicke moved to the States to star in a late-night talk show called *Thicke of the Night*. The show was short-lived, and Thicke probably thought his career was over. Then a show called *Growing Pains* came along, and

Thicke became a household name.

You may think of many of his movies when you hear the name, Michael J Fox. But he was also the reason *Family Ties* had such a successful run on television. The show rated near the top for most of its 7 seasons.



Lorne Greene reads the news in 1943 for CBC Radio

Mathew Perry, an Ottawa native, had a successful run in another hit tv series called *Friends*. *Friends* was on the air for 10 seasons and is still regarded as one of the best sitcoms ever.

How I Met Your Mother was another long-lasting and popular sitcom. It was on the air for 9 seasons. One of its stars was Vancouver native Cobie Smulders. One thing different about this sitcom was that the writers did not try to hide the fact that Cobie was Canadian. In fact, they wrote her character Robin Scherbatsky as an ex-pat Canadian. They even went as far as having quite a few fellow Canadian actors guest star on the show to connect her to her character's previous life in Canada. One of those guest stars was Alan Thicke.

Even on the silly side of things, the long-running show *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*, had a leading Canadian lady in the cast. Quebec-born actor Caroline Rhea played Aunt Hilda. Her popularity allowed almost every crossword creator to use her last name in places no other words would work.

Getting away from the TV sitcoms, we come to shows like *Party of Five*, a hit drama on the air for 6 seasons and starred Guelph, Ontario, native Neve Campbell.

Everyone who was around in the '90s knows that the zip code for Beverly Hills is 90210. Thanks mostly in part to another Vancouver native, Jason Priestley. Jason has since moved on to become a very successful actor and director.

Another popular show from the '90s that was a stepping stone for a few young actors was *Dawson's Creek*. The show starred a young actor from Vancouver named

Joshua Jackson. Jackson would later star in a hit sci-fi series called *Fringe*.

Kiefer Sutherland was not actually born in Canada but rather in London, England. However, his parents, Donald Southerland and Shirley Douglas, were very much

out of Europe seem even worse to the listeners.

Lorne Greene would later play Ben "Pa" Cartwright in the long-running western *Bonanza*. *Bonanza* was on the air for 430 episodes and 14 seasons. *Bonanza* still sits tied in 9th place on the list of longest-running scripted prime-time shows of all time.

Last but not least, we come to one of the largest, most loved and most successful franchises ever. It has spawned 11 spin-off tv series and 13 motion pictures, with more to come. The show's creator pitched *Star Trek* to the network as *Gunsmoke* in space to help get it in the air along with the plethora of other Westerns that were the theme of time in the mid-'60s. The original series was short-lived at only 3 seasons, but it has lived on to be almost a religion. The one thing about the show that stands out for this column is that it not only had one leading Canadian actor but 2. William Shatner as Captain Kirk and James Doohan as Scotty. I'm not even that big of a *Star Trek* fan, but I have made 2 scale models for the original NCC 1701 USS Enterprise. I do not have enough room in this column to list all Canadians who have ruled prime time. The list also includes names such as Kim Cattrall, Pamala Anderson, Victor Garber, Martin Short, Eugene Levy, Raymond Burr, Sarah Chalke, Norm Macdonald, Rick Moranis, and Dave Thomas.

I would have no idea how to create or write a hit TV show, but one thing I do know, if I did, I would cast at least one Canadian actor to make sure it was a hit.

How many of these stars did you recognize as Canadians? Please tune in next issue as I list off a powerhouse of Canadian talent that has shined brightly on the big screen.

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SAUSAGE & TOMATO BAKE

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

- 4 lbs. tomatoes
- 2 sprigs each of fresh thyme, rosemary
- 4 bay leaves
- 1 Tbsp dried oregano
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1-500 g pkg of Johnsonville sausages or similar
- Olive oil, balsamic vinegar
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 375°F in a roasting pan large enough to take the tomatoes in 1 snug-fitting layer. Put in all your tomatoes, herb sprigs, oregano, garlic and sausages. Drizzle generously with the olive oil and balsamic vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Toss together, place the sausages on top and pop the pan into the oven for half an hour. Give the pan a quick stir and turn the sausages over. Put back into the oven for 25-30 minutes. *This creates an intense tomato sauce. If you prefer a thicker sauce, lift out the sausages and place the pan on the stove to cook down. Season with additional salt and pepper to taste.

Thermometer Evolution:

The concept of thermometers began with Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), who crafted one of the earliest versions. It featured a small glass bulb connected to a tube filled with colored liquid. As the bulb's temperature changed, the liquid level in the tube fluctuated. Eventually, alcohol replaced the colored liquid.

In 1701, Sir Isaac Newton devised a calibration method for alcohol thermometers, establishing a range between water's freezing point and the human body temperature.

Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit (1686-1736) introduced the Fahrenheit scale, using a mixture of salt and ice to establish his lowest temperature point. The interval between this lowest point (zero) and the human body temperature was divided into 96 equal parts. The human body temperature was set as 96 degrees, while the freezing point of water was set at 32 degrees. Following Fahrenheit's passing, the upper limit was fixed at 212 degrees, representing the boiling point of water. The interval between these two points was divided into 180 equal parts or degrees.

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Alarm Clock

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Gazpacho

This is a more “me thing” than my husband’s. I’m quite content with a big bowl of gazpacho for supper, but he finds it a little on the light side. Since usually tomatoes and zucchini are ripe at the same time, I serve it with the rosemary focaccia from our Aug/Sept ’22 edition.



- 2 pounds ripe tomatoes, halved and cored
- 1 small (1/2 lb) cucumber, peeled and seeded
- 1 medium green bell pepper, cored
- 1/2 small red onion, peeled
- 2 small garlic cloves (or 1 large clove), peeled
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 thick slice of white bread, run under water so that it's wet
- Optional garnishes: homemade croutons, chopped fresh herbs, a drizzle of olive oil, or any leftover chopped gazpacho ingredients

Combine all ingredients together in a blender or food processor. Puree for 1-2 minutes, or until the soup reaches your desired consistency.

Taste and season with extra salt, pepper and/or cumin if needed.

Refrigerate in a sealed container for 3 to 4 hours, or until completely chilled.

Serve cold, topped with your desired garnishes.

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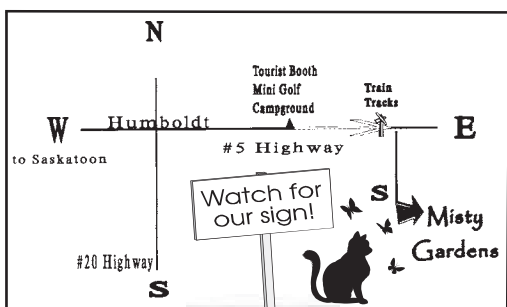
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Borderline Entertainment

by: Kirby Gust

Earlier this spring, with the long winter behind them, Carl and Mary were glad to enjoy the outdoors again. Neither of them participated in outdoor winter activities, including walking, and they were both tired of watching television in the evenings. On the first nice spring day, they sat outside with their morning coffee, watching a pair of robins swoop to and from the yard as they built a new nest on a perch of what used to be the old clothesline post. They thought it must be a young set of robins because the nest site was too open to the elements and too close to the ground for safe nesting for the eggs.

Carl and Mary, who both prefer to read or listen to the radio or podcasts, have never subscribed to any TV streaming services now available, so they have relied on whatever the networks choose to pass off as entertainment. Neither Carl nor Mary has any interest in reality TV whatsoever. Mary used to love The Food Network before it became all "challenge" shows. Carl felt the same about the Home and Garden Channel and now only watches *This Old House* and *Ask This Old House* on PBS. There are still skills to be learned on those shows without the need for a competition or over-dramatized lead-ins to commercial breaks. In fact, Carl is a *This Old House Insider*. A paid membership that allows him to watch all of the old shows, including his favourite, *The New Yankee Workshop* with Norm Abram.

One particularly cold, snowy day this spring, Carl closed their Borderline Goods store early to make sure he could make it home safely. Not used to being home at 2:00 p.m. in the afternoon with nothing to do, Carl found himself in front of the television, flipping through what seemed like an endless rotation of channels. Carl noticed that many of the same daytime programs were on multiple channels simultaneously. Unfortunately, none of these programs piqued his interest in the slightest.

Carl was about to turn off the television when something caught his eye that he had not noticed before. Let me back up just for a moment and explain. In the fall, the cable provider that Carl and Mary use switched their community over to digital cable services. This meant replacing their old coax cable straight to the TV with a new digital cable box with built-in PVR, whatever that meant. No longer could they just turn on the television and start watching. Now they had to choose one of the icons on the screen. With arrows on the remote control, they could navigate a cursor on the screen to choose from "GUIDE, LIVE TV OR RECORDED TV."

The guide, when prompted, would tell the cable box to show a scrolling list of all the available channels, most of which they did not subscribe to.

Live TV would take them back to the channel they were watching when the television was last turned off. Recorded TV would prompt a blank list of "Your Recordings" that confused them, as neither understood that PVR stood for Personal Video Recorder.

On this particular day, though, Carl noticed another icon on the bottom of the screen that simply said "STREAMING." Carl, who is known for being slightly dyslexic, had, in fact, noticed this icon when they first started using the new cable box. Still, he had misread it as "SCREAMING" and

just assumed it was a tool to make the volume even louder than usual for people like his friend Darrel who refuses to wear their hearing aids. Carl put his left hand over his left ear, and with the remote in his right hand, he hunched his right shoulder over his right ear, just to be safe, and clicked on the "STREAMING" icon. There was no sudden dramatic increase in volume, but what did happen changed his and Mary's life.

Scrolling through the images on the screen with the remote, Carl quickly found some old TV shows he loved as a young man. Some shows he had actually forgotten

about until he saw their names on the screen.

When Mary walked into the living room from the kitchen after putting a roast in the oven for supper, she found Carl engrossed in an episode of *Bonanza*. On the screen, Little Joe was talking to a young woman he seemed to like.

"Oh, she's gonna die," said Mary.

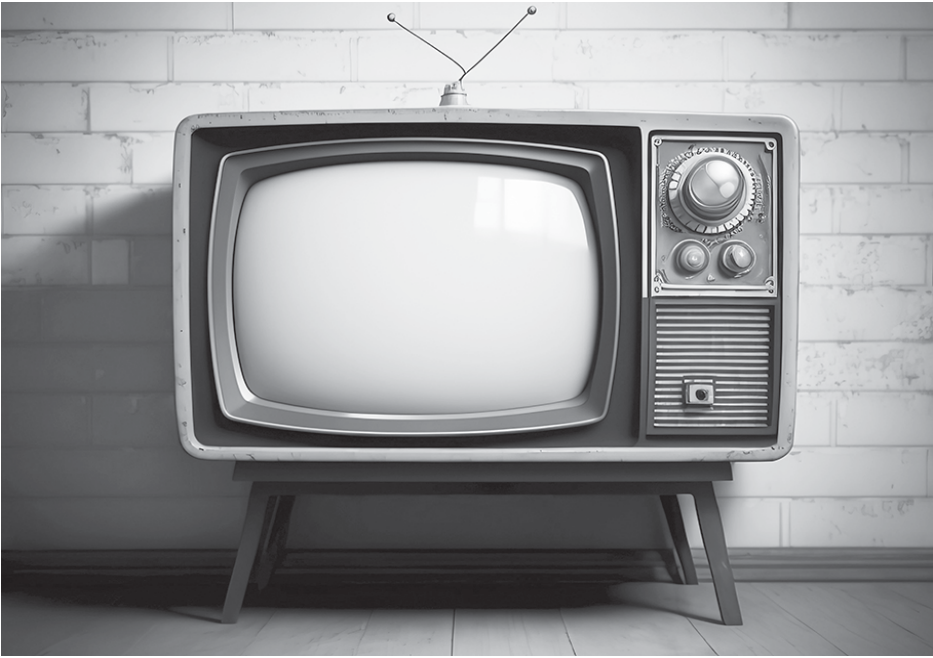
"What?" said Carl.

"Little Joe's love interests always died. Didn't you know that?" said Mary.

"No, I didn't know that," said Carl. "But now that I do, there is no use watching the rest of this episode."

"Sorry," said Mary, "I thought everyone knew that."

Carl flipped the TV back to the menu screen. "Sit down," he said, "Let's pick something to watch together." For the rest of the afternoon, as the roast Mary had put in the oven earlier filled the house with warmth and a tantalizing smell, they watched a show neither of them had seen before, *The Dick Van Dyke Show*. They marvelled at how civilized the Petrie's, Rob and Laura, played by Dick Van Dyke and Mary Tyler Moore, respectively, lives were compared to the Canadian prairies. The Petrie's had more home comforts in the early 1960s than most people living on the prairies had in the 1980s. They did, however, enjoy the show immensely and soon learned to guess at the beginning whether Dick Van Dyke would



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trip over the ottoman or not as he entered a room full of cast members during the opening credits.

During supper, which they ate in front of the tv, something they seldom do, they watched the *The Bob Newhart Show*, not *Newhart* with Larry Darryl and Darryl, but the original Bob Newhart Show, where he played a psychologist. Again they marvelled at the luxuries that the fictional family of Bob and Emily Hartley enjoyed in the early 1970s. After finishing the dishes, they returned to the living room with tea and dessert. They soon discovered *Hart to Hart* and watched two episodes before retiring to bed. As they fell asleep, Mary commented on how nice it was to see Freeway again; Freeway was Hart's dog, but Max, the butler, was his real keeper and companion.

A few days passed before Carl and Mary had time to watch TV together again. After a brief discussion on what to watch, Carl, not knowing how

to start watching Hart to Hart from where they had left off, simply hit play, and an episode they had watched a few nights before started to play.

"This is a repeat," said Mary.

"Really?" said Carl with a grin. "A repeat? Are you sure?!?! It's only a show from 1979... how could it be a repeat already?!?!"

"A repeat to us," Mary said sternly, "a repeat to us."

Carl and Mary haven't been watching much TV now that summer is here and the daylight hours last so far into the evenings. In fact, it's still light out most nights at the time they go to bed. But when it's raining or a night when the mosquitoes are just too thick to fend off, they will return inside and turn the TV on. They are still enjoying their newfound wealth of old shows, and each time they turn one on, Carl utters the same phrase with a grin on his face... "Aww, this one's a repeat!"

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TOMATO PIE

5 roma tomatoes, sliced
2 stems of fresh basil leaves (approx. 10-12), chopped
½ cup green onion, chopped
9-inch pre-baked pie crust
1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
1 cup freshly shredded cheddar cheese, shredded
¾ cup mayonnaise
2 Tbsps parmesan cheese, grated
Salt & pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Place the tomatoes in a colander in the sink in a single layer. Sprinkle with salt and allow them to rest for 10 minutes. Use a paper towel to pat-dry the tomatoes and make sure most of the excess juice is out. If there is too much moisture in the pie, it will be soggy.

Layer the tomato slices, basil, and onion in pre-baked pie shell. Season with salt and pepper.

Combine the grated cheeses and mayonnaise together. Spread mixture on top of the tomatoes and sprinkle parmesan cheese on top.

Bake for 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Allow to rest for at least 15 minutes before cutting and serving.

Wacky Definitions:

Idleness

*A condition enjoyed most
when there is plenty of
work to do.*

Supermarket

*A place where you travel
farther than your money.*

Tact

*The ability to make your
guests feel at home where
you wish they were.*

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Pizza Ring

This back-to-school recipe is perfect for involving the kids in preparing supper, allowing you to reconnect and establish a routine of spending quality time together. Probably a better Friday night supper, as with any dough recipe you have a bit of a wait.

For the dough:

- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 Tbsp instant yeast
- 1 cup warm water
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

For the pizza ring filling:

- ¾ cup pizza sauce
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- Your favorite pizza toppings (e.g., pepperoni, peppers, jalapenos, etc.)
- 1 egg, beaten (for egg wash)
- Dried oregano and grated Parmesan cheese (for garnish)
- Additional pizza sauce (for dipping)



In the bowl of your stand mixer, combine the sugar, salt, water and instant yeast. Let stand to proof yeast. Add in the flour and the oil. Attach the dough hook to your mixer and turn it on low speed. Knead the dough for about 5 minutes, or until the dough becomes smooth and elastic.

Once the dough is kneaded, remove it from the mixer and shape it into a ball. Place the dough in a greased bowl, cover it with a clean kitchen towel, and let it rise in a warm place for about 1 hour or until doubled in size.

Punch down the risen dough. On a floured surface, roll out the dough into a large rectangle, approximately ¼ inch thick. Spread the pizza sauce evenly over the dough, leaving a small border around the edges. Sprinkle the shredded mozzarella cheese over the sauce. Add your desired pizza toppings evenly over the cheese layer.

Starting from one long side, carefully roll the dough into a tight log, sealing the edges as you go. Pinch the ends to secure the filling.

Transfer the rolled dough onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, shaping it into a circle by joining the ends together. Brush the surface of the dough with the beaten egg. Sprinkle dried oregano and grated Parmesan cheese on top for added flavor. Let rise 20-30 minutes. Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C).

Bake for 45-55 minutes or until the pizza ring turns golden brown.

Remove the pizza ring from the oven and let it cool for a few minutes. Serve with additional pizza sauce for dipping.

Improvising!

by Barbara Polston

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

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

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

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

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

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

©Barbara Polston, Tucson, Arizona, June, 23, 2023. Barbara Polston, the author of *Quilting With Doilies: Inspiration, Techniques, and Projects* (Schiffer Press, 2015) and *Meet Puppy Brian and Puppy Brian and the Grey Cat* (www.puppybrian.com), lives in Tucson where she has failed at retirement, but is getting more time to stitch in a variety of forms. Contact Barbara at barbarapolstonquilter@gmail.com.

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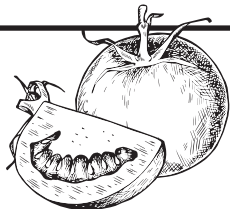
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A Cup of Tea with Lydia

Making Memories with a Simplici-TEA

By Lydia E. Harris

Sometimes the simplest get-togethers create the sweetest memories, especially if you share a cup of tea.

We hadn’t seen our friends Ron and Tami for many years. Now they were coming to Seattle to visit relatives, hear a world-renowned singer, and visit Milt and me. It would be a treat to connect with them again. Tami and I both love all things tea, so I asked, “Would you like to join us for tea and scones?”

“I’m not eating flour or sugar,” Tami replied. “But a cup of tea would be perfect.”

With lots of tea choices and numerous individual teapots, we could sample several blends. Since I was baking custard for my grandkids the day before our guests were coming, I also made custard without sugar for them—just milk, eggs, salt, vanilla, and a dusting of nutmeg on top. Quick and easy.

Then, to my delight, the mailman delivered a large tray of dried fruit and nuts from my pen pal. The label didn’t include processed sugar, so I could share my gift with Ron and Tami.

As I prepared for our teatime, the sun shone and a lilac-scented breeze blew—perfect for afternoon tea on our upper-level deck. The shade of the canopy and the surrounding trees gave our deck the feel of a treehouse. For a friendly welcome, I set the table with linens, silver tableware, fresh lilacs, and floral china plates, cups, and teapots.

We began our teatime by smelling different teas and selecting flavors to try. Paris tea and green Earl Grey tea with lavender won the first round. Ron and Tami enjoyed sipping new flavors and thought the tea assortment was the entire menu. But surprise! I brought out a large platter with dried fruit and nuts. I also served the custard in colorful egg-shaped ramekins and offered fresh blueberries to sweeten the pudding. They savored it all.

One of the best parts of sipping tea with friends is catching up on each other’s lives—taking time to listen, care, share our hearts, and pray. In a sense, time seems to stand still as you linger over tea. But at the same time, it seems short and flies by. All too soon our simplici-TEA was over, and it was time for photos, hugs, and fond farewells.

Later, to my delight, Tami emailed, “Time together with you and Milt over tea was the highlight of our trip.”

“How could that be?” I replied.

“You made everything so special for us, and the day was absolutely perfect,” she answered.

My surprised response was, “But you spent time with relatives and heard Andrea Bocelli. Right?”

Tami clarified, “Yes, everything was amazing. But your tea was a pleasant surprise. Ron and I thoroughly enjoyed it.”

Of course, we enjoyed the sweet teatime with them as well.

***From their appreciative response, here are my tips:
1, 2, 3 for a simplici—TEA.***

1. Set a pretty table.
2. Offer a fragrant tea assortment.
3. Surprise guests with easy-to-prepare nibbles.

Sometimes the simplest teatimes create the sweetest memories.

Until our next teatime—adios, aufwiedersehen, goodbye, and adieu. May God bless you!

From Lydia’s Recipe File:

Grandma’s Yum-Delicious Baked Custard

*From In the Kitchen with Grandma, page 160. Healthy and easy to make.
A favorite of Grandma Tea’s grandchildren.*



Gather:

- 2 cups milk, scalded
- 2 large eggs
- 1/3 cup sugar (omit for sugar-free)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- nutmeg to sprinkle on top

Cook:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- 1. Microwave milk on high about 3 minutes to scald it.
- 2. In medium-sized bowl, beat eggs slightly.
- 3. Mix in sugar, salt, and vanilla. Then stir in milk.
- 4. Pour into a 1 1/2-quart baking dish or 5 or 6 custard cups.
- 5. Set custard dish(es) in a pan and fill pan with 1 inch of water.
- 6. Lightly sprinkle nutmeg on top of custard.
- 7. Bake for 45 minutes if made in a baking dish, until a table knife inserted 1 inch from the edge comes out clean. If made in custard cups, test for doneness after 35 minutes.
- 8. Serve warm or chilled. Refrigerate leftovers.

Makes 6 servings

Lydia E. Harris is a tea enthusiast, grandmother of five (Grandma Tea), and author of In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together and Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting. Watch for her new devotional book for grandparents scheduled to release in September for Grandparents Day. Her books are available through bookstores and online.

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Regular readers of the Country Register will know that Carl runs a small town store that sits smack dab on the Manitoba and Saskatchewan border, and that Carl fancies himself as a bit of a handyman, but his eyesight is not what it used to be.

Can you help him find it?

It looks like this:  This is not a contest, just some fun for you, our readers.

Did you find Carl’s loose screw in our last issue?



It was on Page 12.

**Carl must have been
settling in to read
Two Minute Lift
when he dropped it.**



Reader Submitted Recipes

Cream Cheese Snicker Doodles

Marilyn K., Moosomin, SK

- 1 cup softened butter
- 4 oz. softened cream cheese

Then add:

- 1 ¾ cups sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla

Mix together and add:

- 3 ¼ cup flour
- 1 tsp cornstarch
- 1 ½ tsp cream of tartar
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ¾ tsp salt
- ½ tsp cinnamon

Topping: 1/3 cup icing sugar, 1 tsp cinnamon.

Cover bowl with plastic wrap and put in fridge to chill for 30 minutes.
Preheat oven to 350°F and line baking sheet with parchment paper.
Prepare topping by stirring together sugar and cinnamon.
Remove chilled dough and scoop 1 ½ Tbsp. size portions (size of walnuts).
Roll into smooth ball between palm and roll through cinnamon/sugar topping until well coated.
Place 2” apart and bake at 350°F for 10 to 13 minutes. Press a bit with a fork. Cookies may still seem very soft in the centre when finished baking, allow to cool completely on cookie sheet where they will finish baking without becoming overdone and dry

Asian Salad

Lorraine T, Weyburn

- 1 (16 oz.) bag of coleslaw mix
- 1 cup of shelled sunflower seeds
- 1 cup sliced almonds
- 2 bags ramen noodles
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup vinegar
- 3 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp soya sauce

Mix first 3 ingredients in a bowl

Mix liquid ingredients in a measuring cup and add to the salad mixture. Stir to combine.

Add ramen noodles right before you are ready to serve.

Trivia

The expected life span of cotton fabric is about 100 years. If you're making an heirloom quilt, this makes cotton the way to go!

The first cotton prints in America were called calicoes and were made around 1780. They were named after calico, which comes from Calcutta, India, where these hand-woven printed fabrics were made.

Kipling, SK

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Chocolate Chip Pistachio Cookies

Lorraine T, Weyburn

- 3 ¼ cups flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup butter or margarine (softened)
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ¼ cup walnuts
- 1 package (3 13/4 oz.) pistachio flavour instant pudding and pie filling
- 1 package (6 oz.) semi-sweet chocolate pieces

Preheat the oven to 375°F and lightly grease cookie sheets.

Sift the flour, baking powder and salt. Beat the butter and sugar until well blended.

Add in the eggs, milk and vanilla. Beat until creamy.

Add the flour mixture.

Remove ¼ of the dough to a small bowl. Add the nuts. Add the pudding mix and chocolate pieces. Reserve ¼ of the chocolate pieces.

Shape rounded teaspoons of pistachio dough into balls. Press down on cookie sheet with a glass. Shape nut dough mixture into marble pieces; place on top of the flatted pistachio cookies. Decorate each with one reserved chocolate pieces.

Bake at 375°F for 8-10 minutes. Yield: 5 dozen

Rhubarb Cake

Marilyn K., Moosomin, SK

Marilyn sent along this recipe which she originally saw in the *Western Producer*. "This is a family favourite. You can modify by substituting oil for butter or margarine. It's such a seasonal treat."

- 1/3 cup oil or ½ cup butter
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup sour milk, buttermilk or cream
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 cups fresh rhubarb, cut fine

Crumb Topping:

- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Mix oil and sugar, add egg, vanilla, and sour milk. In another mixing bowl, combine the flour and the soda. Add to sugar mixture and stir until combined. Fold in rhubarb and pour into a 9x13 pan. Mix topping and sprinkle over the top of the batter.

Bake in a heated oven for 35 to 50 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool and store in the refrigerator.

Serves 12 with large pieces, but use smaller pieces on a board. The perfect tart meets sweet.

Indian Head, SK



Summer & The Specter of Holiday “Bots”

by Barbara Kalkis

Aah... summer! The glorious days we spend frolicking in July. The languid, lazy August nights that refresh us like no other time of year: Picnics, BBQs, family vacations, reunions, days at the beach, camping under the stars. It’s in these deliciously long hot days that a crafter’s mind turns to Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Yes, the kids need clothes and shoes for school, but let’s keep our priorities straight. Summer is the perfect moment to think about new designs for quilts, wall hangings, decorations, greeting cards, handmade gifts in handmade packaging. Holiday crafts and tasks require focus, concentration, preparation, planning. There’s even a competitive element: spotting trends, comparing notes with friends, grabbing the perfect fabric—or paper—and patterns in stores, as well as getting everything done on time. Compared to this challenge, the kids can dress themselves. (Just kidding . . sort of.)

The festive days from October through December used to be known by their colors: orange, gold and black for Halloween; burnished browns, haystack hues, and pumpkin-pie colors for Thanksgiving; and red and green, silver, white, and gold for Christmas. No longer. New colors have invaded traditional color palettes. White and green pumpkins decorate front porches; angels herald Christmas in bubble-gum pink; and beady-eyed elves sport aqua uniforms.

The bottom line? Days in July and August may seem luscious and long, but they’re not. June had the longest day and it’s gone. Time’s a wastin’ and so’s daylight. It’s enough to boost blood pressure readings and require mantras and yoga breathing.

Welcome the New World of “Bots.” But wait! Not to worry! New technology has arrived to simplify your life. Crafting will soon become easy and carefree, thanks to a team of high-technology geniuses. Men. (Did you need me to tell you that?)

A computer software application (“app”) in development aims to become your personal robot—or “bot” for short. The bot can perform many

tasks: write, research, analyze, synthesize, personalize information, and much more. (Sort of like the butler I’ve always wanted, but without the British accent.)

Bots can search and find massive quantities of information—called “data”—stored in computer databases around the world, analyze it, and deliver it on your computer screen.

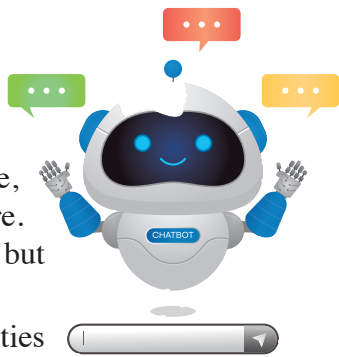
You’re a crafter, an artist—what’s in it for you? More than you think. Let’s say you want a quilt with a rose pattern. Type the words, “Show quilts with rose patterns.” The bot will scan databases of designs, select ones with roses and display them on screen. You can select one design or combine designs to create a new look. You can change roses to sunflowers or daisies, add birds or trees, and elect your own color palette or quilt size. You can tell the bot to perform changes until your ideas come to ‘life’ on your computer screen.

Technology fans believe bots simplify design processes, save time and research, offer ideas we wouldn’t have had, and even inspire creativity.

What Bots Don’t Do. Bots are a type of technology known as “artificial intelligence.” It’s important to remember that term because bots are not intelligent. Their intelligence is man-made; artificial. They gather data from various sources and spew out what has already been thought of and shared in some form with the world. We humans just pick and choose what we want. Bots cannot discern, so they may provide information that is incorrect, incomplete, biased, or misleading.

Creativity is a human talent. True art communicates emotion. Thinking and brainstorming are uniquely human gifts. Crafting in all its forms demonstrates intelligence that cannot be machine made. Bot or butler? I’ll take the butler.

©BarbaraKalkis. Barbara follows her heart writing, teaching, and consulting with high-tech clients. She’s author of *Little Ditties for Every Day; A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm*. Contact her at BarbaraKalkis01@gmail.com.



Reader Submitted Stories

At *The Country Register*, we are embarking on a journey down memory lane, and we would love for you to be a part of it!

Do you have captivating and heartwarming stories about the joys, heartbreaks, and adventures of growing up in small towns, on farms, or in rural areas? Whether you spent your days exploring wide-open fields, lending a hand on the family farm, or building lifelong friendships with neighbours, we want to hear all about it!

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The Country Register, Box 801, White City, SK, S4L 5B1.

We welcome experienced writers and those new to sharing their stories.

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