

The Country Register™

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

Dec. 2022/Jan. 2023

Vol. 23, No. 2



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10-Cup Cookies

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Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a large bowl, cream butter, peanut butter and the sugars until blended. Beat in eggs. In another bowl, whisk flour, baking soda and baking powder; gradually beat into creamed mixture. Stir in chocolate chips, oats, coconut, pecans and raisins.

Drop dough by tablespoonfuls 3 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake until golden brown, 12-15 minutes. Cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup sweetened shredded coconut
- 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1 cup raisins

Quotes

“My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?” – Bob Hope

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Keeping In Touch

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

Are you prepared for the holiday season? It will be upon you before you know it! We have a few traditions in our family that get us ready for the season. Cindy has some favourite pre-Christmas DVDs that she enjoys, and on the first of December, I hear Christmas music wherever she is busy in the house. I have some favourite treats that will be ready for the day & then for some time afterward. We both like Christmas pudding, the kind that is steamed in glass sealers & fruit cake is another favourite. The darker days will be brightened by our Christmas tree in the living room. It is not the fresh one that graced the house in years past but an artificial one bedecked in ornaments that bring a special memory as we take an evening to decorate it. Some of you will have a house full of guests while others are making plans to travel. I hear that the local merchants are planning a night of shopping for us which often includes some crafters & cooks displaying their wares.....it is a fun night to get out and visit as well. Perhaps we will once again enjoy the Carol Festivals of the pre-covid years. I think that by the time this goes to print we will be into the advent season in our churches and the age-old story is re-told.

Looking back to fall it must have been a good year for forage crops. There seemed to be bales everywhere! While we were on one of our rambles enjoying the lovely weather I noticed that some of the bales were stacked three high! We did have a bit of snow for a day or so but it soon disappeared & the pleasant days returned, albeit rather windy at times. I am writing this just after Hallowe'en. We had about thirty visitors, most being driven or in the company of an adult. There are some very creative costumes in our town and it was fun to see them enjoying the night. We sat in our sunroom eating popcorn while we waited for the next arrivals, so the old folks had a treat too. Shortly after Hallowe'en, we will take time to remember the veterans on November 11th. The Legion poppies are displayed and the beaded poppies of the First Nations are also available to wear.

I try to keep the bird feeders well stocked at this time of the year with

the suet cake being very popular. The peanut ring is visited by bluejays, woodpeckers and white-breasted nuthatches. We have a cylinder feeder stocked with smaller seeds for the many other birds that seem to be waiting for the refill just at sunrise. One morning while we were enjoying our breakfast coffee in the sunroom we had the pleasure of a fox visiting for a while. It was very wary and darted off with the rush of sparrow wings. Sparrows seem to come in a group and just as quickly fly off. We look out over a field across the road so there are often deer or coyotes to see, but on another morning it was a bear ambling along its way to the bush. I wonder if it was the same one that visited the local houses in the earlier part of the fall?



Photo by Joshua J. Cotten on Unsplash

I wonder what 2023 will hold for us. We are hoping for many visitors and a comfortable winter season....soon the daylight hours will start stretching out again. From our household to yours, we wish you a very happy Christmas and a new year full of joy.

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Last issue's winner of **Gerry Wainwright**
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Extracting Honey

Had it been modern times, there was one thing that would have landed my parents in the divorce court, and that was my dad’s extracting honey in my mother’s clean house.

My dad was game to try many things – raising sheep (he knew how because they had flocks in Scotland), hatching a few bantam chick eggs so his kids could see the colours on a bantam rooster, grinding meat and making sausage, making sauerkraut (which he learned from a German neighbour lady) and beekeeping. The neighbour was a beekeeper, and my dad saw how beekeeping was done, and he’d give it a try.

But it wasn’t entirely simple. My dad needed an assistant as he piled “supers” higher on each of the two hives. I was more or less conscripted for the job because every other family member refused, and my brother was too small.

Well, we had veils, the smoker to drive the bees down in the hives on examination, the long knife to decap prospective queen cells and extra “supers” when more space was required in the hive. We got lots of stings, and I even suffered one on the tongue, ostensibly because I talked too much. Stings around the eyes were bad.

But back to the story. Fall came. The extractor was borrowed from the neighbour, the bees were killed and buried and soon, “supers” were wheeled in the wheelbarrow to the back porch.

In the meantime, a roaring fire was created in the cook stove to truly heat up a closed kitchen, the extractor was set on the kitchen table, the large bowl from the cream separator was equipped with several layers of strained cheesecloth and clean jars and cans were assembled, for filling, and the job began.

There also had to be a large bowl to dispose of cappings as the frames were skimmed or decapped prior to entering the extractor, where liquid

honey was drawn from the cells by centrifugal force as the frames were spun around in the extractor.

Liquid honey was transferred to the strainer-clad separator bowl, the tap on the bowl was turned, and jars were filled. If a jar was overfilled, there was a mess.

It might have been the case that my dad, in his enthusiasm, had forgotten to put newspaper or elevator paper on the kitchen floor to prevent stray beeswax and honey from sticking to the floor.

Much as she hated the job, my mother had to be present to prevent my dad from making a bigger mess than he usually did.

There is no doubt that my dad knew how touchy a situation this extracting business was with my mother.

One fall before harvest, when my mother went to the west coast, and I was keeping house for the men, he seized the opportunity! He carefully broached the extraction topic to us, my brother and me.

My brother said, “No way. I’m done. I have summer fallow to do in the east field.” He did bring in a few sticks of wood for the wood box, perhaps to ease his conscience, and he was gone.

So, once again, I was conscripted.

It was the same old story – perspiration running down my jaws, back and legs, stickiness on the door handles, on the phone receiver, the floor, the kitchen table, the cupboard door handles, the oven door and on and on.

At the end of the job, my dad had such a sense of satisfaction. It was over, and my mother would be so relieved!

I had the scrubbing up to do, including removing beeswax from the kitchen floor with steel wool and/or the pairing knife.

Submitted by Audrey I. Duthie of Regina, SK

Letters to the Editors

I’m very appreciative to whoever submitted the instructions for the Double Waffle Stitch Afghan in the Feb/Mar 2021 issue of *The Country Register*. The timing couldn’t have been better as I was wanting to make an afghan for my granddaughter as a wedding gift.

I used *Saskatchewan Roughriders* colours, hunter green, white, and black, as they are great fans. The yarn arrived mid April and fortunately there was a lot of curling on TV making the task ahead of me very enjoyable.

Their reaction upon opening their gift was worth every minute of my “labour of love.” They were thrilled and have a great appreciation for handmade crafts and items.

I look forward to each new issue when it arrives at *Haus of Stitches* in Humboldt, Sk.

Linda T.

Hi, thought I would send a note letting you know how much I am enjoying your magazine. So much in fact that I didn’t notice the typo of my name on my subscription envelope. My friends and I got a giggle out of it. My first name is Glenda, not Alenda. Keep up the great work. Love reading your paper from front to back. Thank you.

Glenda C.

Dear Country Register:

Hi! My Mom (97 yrs old), really enjoys your newspaper! We first found it in Moose Jaw at the Quilters Haven, and now that we live in Saskatoon, at the Wool Emporium!

Thank you for publishing it. (or printing, I should say!)

Thank you sincerely.

Irean & Claire S.



Town and Country Cooking

by Janette Hess

A POTATO MASH-UP

Although mashed potatoes are among the most expected offerings on any holiday table, their piping-hot goodness is welcome any time of the year. Keep the celebration going!

The recipe for Cottage Mashed Potatoes pairs russets with cottage cheese to create a creamy, herb-laced take on traditional mashed potatoes. The dish has ample, stand-alone flavour, so gravy absolutely is not necessary. Garlic Mashed Potatoes also deserve a spot in any potato rotation. Garlic lovers will flock to this dish not only because it’s packed with garlicky flavour, but also because it’s appealingly flecked with pimiento and green onion.

Some cooks claim that no holiday feast is complete without sweet potatoes, so why not surprise and delight family and friends with a tropical version? Featuring the flavours of coconut and macadamia nuts, the recipe for Tropical Sweet Potatoes tastefully blurs the line between vegetables and desserts. The dish is worthy of being served even into January when everyone is craving a taste of warmer climes.

Cottage Potatoes

- 2 pounds russet potatoes (approximately 4 large or 5 medium)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups small-curd cottage cheese
- ½ cup sour cream
- 6 tablespoons melted butter, divided
- 2 tablespoons fresh, diced parsley
 - OR 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 2 tablespoons freshly snipped, diced chives
 - OR 1 tablespoon dried chives
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon white pepper
- ½ cup panko bread crumbs
- Paprika for garnish

Peel and quarter potatoes. Place in large cooking pot and cover with water. Add 1 teaspoon salt. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium low; cover and simmer until potatoes are fork tender. Drain. While still very hot, mash potatoes completely. Quickly add cottage cheese and continue mashing until combined. Add sour cream, 4 tablespoons melted butter, parsley, chives, garlic salt, onion powder and white pepper; stir to combine. Spoon into buttered or sprayed 9- by 13-inch (or similarly sized) baking dish. Combine remaining 2 tablespoons butter with panko bread crumbs. Spread over potatoes and sprinkle with paprika. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes. Let rest at least 10 minutes before serving. Makes 10 servings.

Tropical Sweet Potatoes

- Potato mixture:**
- 2½ pounds sweet potatoes (4 to 5 large sweet potatoes)
 - 2 eggs
 - ¾ cup canned, unsweetened coconut milk
 - ¼ cup butter, melted
 - 1/3 cup brown sugar
- Tropical topping:**
- ½ cup chopped macadamia nuts (dry roasted with salt)
 - ½ cup sweetened, flaked coconut
 - 2 tablespoons brown sugar
 - 2 tablespoons flour
 - 2 tablespoons melted butter

Peel and quarter potatoes. Place in large cooking pot. Cover with water and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium low; cover and cook until tender. Drain and mash. In large bowl, beat eggs and coconut milk. Add sweet potatoes, butter and brown sugar; beat until smooth. Spoon into buttered or sprayed 9- by 13-inch (or similarly sized) baking dish. Combine topping ingredients and sprinkle over sweet potatoes. Bake at 325 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes. Makes 10 to 12 servings.



Merry
Christmas
and Happy New Year!

from
**the Publishers of
The Country Register**

Garlic Mashed Potatoes

- 2 pounds russet potatoes (approximately 4 large or 5 medium)
- 4 cloves garlic
- 5 cups water
- 3 chicken bouillon cubes
- ½ cup light cream (“half-and-half”)
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 1 2-ounce jar diced pimientos, well drained
- 2 to 3 green onions, tops only, thinly sliced
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Peel and quarter potatoes. Place in large cooking pot. Peel garlic cloves. Add to pot along with water and bouillon cubes. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium low; cover and simmer until potatoes are fork tender. Drain and reserve cooking broth. Mash hot potatoes and garlic. Stir in cream, melted butter, pimientos, sliced green onion tops and freshly ground pepper. If potatoes seem too stiff, add 1 or 2 tablespoons reserved broth. (Discard remaining broth or save for another use.) Add salt to taste. Transfer potatoes to serving dish. Makes 8 servings.

Winnipeg, MB



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Heartstrings
by Audrey

December. That came around quickly...I haven't even put away all the Halloween stuff! I still send Christmas cards, so I think the next couple of weeks will be busy.

One thing about being a person of "advanced years"...that sounds so much more elegant than "old", I spend many hours over the knitting needles, remembering. Happy memories, sad ones, embarrassing ones, thinking I could have, should have, why did I, and I have finally come to the place where I tell myself I did the best I could with the knowledge that I had at the time. It makes me content.

But the memories. Christmas 1938. I don't think I really remember, but my mother told the story so often I feel like I do remember. We were living on the farm, five miles from town in a little two room house. Dad had been to town and picked up groceries and the mail and I must have been in bed by the time he got home. Mom did a bit of decorating while I was sleeping. I got up Christmas morning, came out, looked around and said "oh goodie, a new True Story", picked up the magazine, crawled into the rocking chair and began to "read". I didn't notice my mother's efforts. My mother lived to be 101 and almost to the end, she remembered the year I spoiled Christmas!

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Christmas 1955. I was a new bride, with a new cookbook and a burning wish to show that man in my life's family that I wasn't some lightweight. It was a little house, with a big, black behemoth of a kitchen stove whose main purpose in life was to thwart every effort I made to cook or bake. We fought... some days he won, more often I won.

There were ten people for dinner. Stove behaved and the turkey was roasted beautifully, everyone was enjoying themselves and I was beginning to relax. Now for the "piece de resistance". I had decided to have Baked Alaska for dessert. So, while everyone was finishing up and relaxing, I trotted off to the pantry to put my desserts together. But when I put them into what I expected to be a hot 475°F oven, Stove had gone on strike. He was tired, he had done enough, He was not about to put himself out anymore. The Baked Alaskas slowly browned, but I was having my doubts about how the ice cream was faring.

Finally, they were as done as I could manage, and I whisked them back into the pantry to get them onto plates. The meringue cut like wet tissue, the ice cream was melting, and the sponge cake felt like old rubber mats. And I had nothing to serve as backup. So I swallowed my embarrassment and brought out the dessert. And my wonderful husband, love of my life, my soulmate, looked at the plate I put before him and said, "Is this your boiled Nebraska?" We didn't get a divorce.

Christmas 1967. By this time, we had seven children and life was very busy. Sewing, baking, shopping, decorating... especially the tree, which because we had little ones, the tree was well covered with tinsel halfway up. It didn't look all that great, but to the kids, it was awesome! Christmas Eve we packed up everyone and trundled off to Midnight Mass. It was lovely and for a wonder the kids all behaved beautifully. I was one proud mama. But as we left the church, nine-year-old Michael said "Mom, my neck feels funny." and I looked at our first case of mumps. Of course, they all got mumps. Some were not too sick, but a couple of them suffered more. Nobody wanted to stay in bed...they all wanted to be together in the living room, so the living room became the children's ward Which brought us to New Year's Eve, and a number of friends who were on their way to a party decided they would just drop in for a while. It was a particularly bad night, two of the kids were sick to their stomach, another one was having a bit of a meltdown and I really felt if I heard one more "Mooooom" I was going to run away from home. I left that man to deal with the company... luckily, they quickly realized that it was probably not the best night to drop in and thankfully left. We greeted the New Year with relief. We had survived.

Memories. Lovely, funny, sad, embarrassing...they all make a wonderful story of how it used to be. I love it when our family gets together and the stories fly... the new ones, the old favourites, the "remember the time" ones. Precious memories. Keep them alive. They are your history.

-30-

Why the -30-? It has been traditionally used by journalists to indicate the end of a story or article that is submitted for editing and typesetting.

We are sad to announce that Audrey is retiring after writing columns since 1986.

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Merry Christmas



A Cup of Tea with Lydia

By Lydia E. Harris

THE GIFT OF TEA

Christmas and gifts go together like a cup and a saucer. So why not give the gift of tea this holiday season? Your tea gift could be an invitation to come for tea, to share tea in a tearoom, to deliver tea, or to mail a tea party in a box. I enjoy giving and receiving tea in all these ways.

Come for TEA

Sharing hospitali-TEA in my home is my favourite way to give the gift of tea. My recipe for a memorable teatime includes: a pretty setting, tasty tidbits, and a relaxed time to chat.

For easy hosting, sometimes I order the food from a local tearoom. Other times I buy special foods from the market such as mini croissants, chicken salad, and fancy desserts. This gives me more time to set a lovely table and relax with my guests.

No time to invite someone for a festivi-TEA this December? Consider a coupon gift for a cuppa' tea in the New Year. That will extend the holidays for both of you. For a very dear friend, you could even give the coupon in a teacup.

The Gift of Tea

Taking someone to a tearoom for tea makes a sweet and generous gift. My husband and I have enjoyed taking our granddaughters to tea since they were old enough to hold a teacup—and now they're 12 and 19!

During the holidays, my Sweet-TEA and I gift each other with a jaunt to one of our favourite tearooms. Their festive settings, special menus, and our time together create warm, lingering memories. Plus, I gather ideas for serving tea at home, such as the recipe included for Tree-mendous Treats made with pretzel sticks and melted mint baking chips.

Par-TEA to Go

Brighten the life of someone who is unable to get out by delivering a par-TEA. Make arrangements with them, and pack everything you need in a basket or box. I use a soft cooler with straps and fill it with teacups, delicious foods, tea, and a tablecloth or placemats. Sometimes I bring a small gift or flowers. Then we enjoy tea together.

I've delivered and served tea to friends in their homes, in hospitals, and in retirement communities. It cheers their day and mine.

Mail a Par-TEA

This fun idea works well for out-of-town friends or relatives. Last Christmas I mailed my Arizona pen pal a tea party in a box. It included a few decorations, holiday paper plates and napkins, assorted teas, hot chocolate mix and candy-cane stirrers, her favourite cookies (see recipe for Everyone's Favorite Cookies), a scone mix and jam, and a book of Christmas stories, which included one of mine. The note inside said: "Wish I could serve you tea in person. Since I can't, here's a tea party in a box." I added my teatime blessing: "Dear God, as we fill our teacups, fill our hearts with love, joy, and peace. As the tea warms our bodies, may Your presence warm our hearts and friendship."

Would you like to gift someone with tea—in person, in a tearoom, to

go, or by mail? Or give a coupon to share one or more of these tea gifts in the future? Whenever you give a gift to someone, you're also giving yourself a gift, because "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). God bless us everyone!

From Lydia's Recipe File:

Tree-mendous Treats

These pretzel Christmas trees taste yummy and make cute toppers on mini-cupcakes, muffins, tarts, or even a birthday cake for Jesus! Fun, festive, and easy to make.

Ingredients

- small pretzel sticks (about 3 inches long)
- mint baking chips or green candy melts
- sprinkles or crushed candy canes for decorations



Directions

1. Line a baking sheet with waxed paper. Lay pretzel sticks on sheet at least four inches apart.
2. Melt mint chips in a small microwave-safe bowl for 30 seconds, then stir. Continue to heat, 15 seconds at a time, until chips are completely melted.
3. Place a small plastic bag in an empty coffee mug and fold the top of the bag over the side to hold it in place.
4. Carefully spoon melted chips into the plastic bag.
5. Remove the bag and twist-tie it closed.
6. Cut off the tip of a bottom corner of the bag to make a very small hole.
7. Gently squeeze melted chips onto a pretzel to create Christmas tree branches. Start halfway up, leaving 1½ inches for the tree trunk.
8. Use a back-and-forth motion to make a triangle shaped tree.
9. Immediately add sprinkles or other decorations. Refrigerate pretzels until firm, then peel off the paper.
10. Repeat the process to make more trees. Use trees for cupcake toppers or eat them as a treat.
11. If you frost cupcakes white and add grated coconut and stand the trees in them, it looks like the trees are standing in snow.

Yield: 1/4 cup baking chips makes about 5 trees. 18 candy melts make 8 trees.
Lydia E. Harris is a tea enthusiast, grandmother of five, and author of *In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together* and *Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting*. Her books are available at Amazon.

Don't forget to enter the draw for Lydia's book on Page 22!

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Meet Our Newest Columnist



Kathy J. Sotak was born and raised on a family North Dakota farm, 23 kilometres south of where the Saskatchewan and Manitoba boundaries meet the Canadian border. Although resistant at the time, she learned the value of the hard work that comes with farm life, such as feeding cattle, hauling grain and enduring the midnight hours of winter calving season. Inside, she couldn't wait to grow up and leave. A "better" life was out there, wasn't it?

Decades later and half a country away, she finally discovered the answer: inner peace. It was there all along. She just needed to flip the box and look at things from a different angle. She needed to zoom out a bit. She needed to remember the beauty of her childhood and the strong web of the community that raised her. Kathy believes that we all want the same things in life: healthy minds and bodies, strong economies and communities, clean air, water and dirt, and peace in our hearts. We may just see things through different lenses.

Rest here in her writing – where readers will reflect, restore, and renew the way we see ourselves, our communities and the world that supports us. On the surface, Kathy is a proud mother of two sons with a corporate professional career residing near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. To navigate through this tricky, tumultuous world, Kathy is an explorer and invites you to come along with her, right here, to find a piece of peace we can thread together. Why Not?

You can follow more of her work at www.2MinuteLift.com, short reads to flip our script.

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2 Minute Lift

TWO MINUTE READS TO FLIP OUR SCRIPT

BY: KATHY J. SOTAK

Why Write, Draw or Do Anything in Life?

I started painting my fingernails in the 6th grade. Not just any ordinary painting, you see. It was my canvas. With the tiniest of paintbrushes my mother dug up from her art set, I drew designs. This included polka dots, stripes, or sometimes "GO ORIOLES!" our school mascot. (Conveniently one letter per fingernail, plus the exclamation mark.)

On Sunday evenings, I'd grab my plastic bin of supplies. It was the first ritual I'd ever created. My heart was palpitating to see what emerged. I worked at the dining room table, while something like *Wheel of Fortune*, *Matlock* or *Murder She Wrote* played on the tiny TV. By the time the 10 o'clock news came on, my nails were dry. It was complete.

The second part of the ritual was Monday morning. My classmates would run over to grab my fingers, wanting to see this week's creation. I'm not sure if they thought I was weird or cool. It didn't matter because it brought me joy.

I didn't do this to start an artist career. I did it because it stirred something inside of me.

What stirs you, inside of you? Sometimes I catch a glimpse. It may be your catchy earrings, your knitting or your gardening. It may be in your meticulous landscaping or your social media photography. I see it in your carpentry and your caregiving. I see it in your quilting and your cooking.

Kurt Vonnegut, an important voice in the 1960s+, later responded to a high schooler's letter by saying, "Starting right now, do art and do it for the rest of your lives." He challenged the kid who sent the letter to "Write a six-lined poem, about anything, but rhymed. Make it as good as you possibly can. But don't tell anyone what you're doing. Don't show it or recite it to anybody, OK? Tear it up into teeny-weeny pieces, and discard them into widely separated trash receptacles. You will find that you have already been gloriously rewarded for your poem. You have experienced becoming, learned a lot more about what's inside you, and you have made your soul grow."

Perhaps this is the pathway to happiness. This is why we choose to create art. It is why we create YouTube channels or TikTok videos. It is why we have obscure hobbies or collections.

On the surface, I may not understand your choice of expression. But on the inside, I see that your expression is your doorway to happiness.

This is why I write. I may not be a David Whyte or an Oscar Wilde. I may not be a Stephen King or a Jodi Picoult. That is not my goal. I write because words are my way to find deeper meaning in this turbulent human journey. As a bonus, I also connect with you.

How are you expressing your creative self? If you aren't sure – just pay attention to when your heart ignites.

Then do more of it. I dare you.

For more of Kathy's work go to www.2MinuteLift.com



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ASPEN GROVE Quilting Stories with Sam

By Sam Hilhorst

Community. I think Helen Keller said it best: “Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much”. And what a great season to take a glimpse at what this represents to each of us.

Growing up in a farming community of southern Manitoba I was surrounded by generous neighbours, family and friends who exposed me to acts of service within the community. Our small town of Snowflake, Manitoba relied heavily on each other due to our rather isolating location and population size. Lacking in numbers, the individuals made up for it in generosity.

Our community gathered many times a year. Whether it be for curling bonspiels, fall suppers, skating nights at the rink, or even block parties (where blocks turned into miles). My siblings and I got to witness the importance of community firsthand. Every individual would bring something to the event, table or party and contribute to each other. Together, events were successful and brought the members of Snowflake together.

Although I wasn’t born yet, I know there was a time when some ladies of Snowflake would get together to hand quilt – like a quilting bee I’m told. A quilt would be placed on a frame and the ladies would sit around the frame, each hand stitching a segment of the quilt. Together they would finish off the quilt while catching up. It was a time to share and laugh, reminisce and plan. Such a sense of involvement, community and encouragement. Together, these members of the area were able to create a beautiful quilt. Each stitch not only holding together some fabric but also attaching a memory for those involved.

As we approach this holiday season it is a great time to reflect and consider how we can enrich the lives around us and build that sense of community. Following a difficult few years where a sense of community felt impossible,

we now have the opportunity to rebuild. It’s time to reach out, reconnect and remember that these are our people who are there to support us through life. Our communities are there to get us through the ebbs and flows of life, ease the struggles we may face, and celebrate the successes.

Our communities might be local (like my small town of Snowflake) or they may be a random selection of individuals throughout the world. Wherever you find your people, build that community. Maybe it's time to start a quilting bee, host a game night, or cookie exchange. Let’s reconnect.

I wish you a happy holiday season. Find the joy around you and reach out to those who bring it. I would love to hear how you carried out a sense of community throughout the holidays, so please share with me through our email, website, or social media. It might even become a new tradition. See you next edition – chat soon!



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Carrot Slaw with Cranberries & Walnuts

I was looking for something a little different to go with our roast beef and Yorkshires and this fit the bill. It has a nice crunch and a bonus; the leftovers keep well in the fridge. In fact, you could make this a day ahead of time.

- 1/2 cup walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1 1/3 lbs. carrots, peeled and shredded
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp lemon zest and 2 Tbsp lemon juice, from 1 lemon
- 3 Tbsp freshly squeezed orange juice, from 1 orange
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced, or about a third of a white onion, very thinly sliced
- 3 Tbsp chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1/4 tsp salt, heaping
- 1/4 tsp pepper

Set oven rack to middle position and preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place walnuts on baking sheet and bake until toasted and fragrant, approx. 10 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Combine all remaining ingredients in a large bowl and toss well. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow the flavours to blend. Season to taste with salt, pepper, honey or more citrus. Toss in walnuts and serve.

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Sour Cream Coffee Cake with Cinnamon Walnut Swirl

It's hard to go wrong with a coffee cake. Having a coffee cake on the counter is common in our house, as they keep well at room temperature, and it's easy to slice a piece for a snack and eat on the go.

Cinnamon Walnut Swirl

- 1 heaping cup walnut halves, roughly chopped
- 3 Tbsps. packed light brown sugar
- 2 tsps. cinnamon

Cake

- 2½ cups flour
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1½ tsps. vanilla extract
- ½ cup sour cream or plain yogurt.

Make the Cinnamon-Walnut Swirl: Preheat the oven to 325°F and set an oven rack in the middle position. Toast the walnuts on a baking sheet until they're golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer the walnuts to small bowl to cool. Once cool, mix together the walnuts, brown sugar, and cinnamon. Set aside.

Cake: Reduce the oven temperature to 300°F. Spray a 9" Bundt pan with cooking spray and dust with flour. Tap out any excess flour.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, combine the sugar and butter. Beat on medium speed until pale and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition until well mixed in. On low speed, mix in the sour cream and vanilla making sure everything is well mixed in. Gradually add the flour mixture and mix on low speed until the batter is smooth.

Scoop ⅓ of the batter into the prepared pan. Sprinkle half of the cinnamon-walnut mixture evenly over the batter. Cover with another ⅓ of the remaining batter, using a spoon or spatula to spread the batter evenly over the pan and to the edges. Sprinkle the remaining nut mixture evenly over the batter and cover with the remaining batter, spreading it evenly over the nut mixture.

Bake for 65 to 75 minutes, until the cake is golden and a cake tester comes out clean. Cool the cake in the pan for 15 minutes, then invert the Bundt pan to release the cake. Cool.

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Will Inflation Bring Back an Old Time Christmas?

When I was a kid in the ‘70s, Christmas was quite different than I know it today. Christmas on our farm didn’t start until the bus dropped us off from the last day of school for the holiday break, which was usually less than a full week away from the big day itself. Our first Christmas treat was given to us by our bus driver, in my case, it was from my Uncle Andrew who, was my school bus driver for the first half of my school years. On the last day of school for the calendar year, he would present us with a brown lunch bag that, as I remember, had a Christmas orange and some loose candy in it. It was very meagre by today’s standards but appreciated greatly. When I think back now it would have been no small task to head to town early on that day, stop at the local grocery store, pick up what he needed and then sit in a cold bus to fill brown paper bags with oranges and candy for what would have been many kids in the days when most all farms still had families on them.

Once we got off the school bus and ran for the house, we would find Mom busy cleaning and baking. We could, depending on the weather, usually pick up the scent in the air of what was either on the stove or in the oven. Mom would have picked up a real Christmas tree either that day or a few days before. When we arrived home from school a small fir tree would be leaning up against the porch waiting for the trunk to be

trimmed before being taken into the house and placed in its stand in the living room. Once the branches had a chance to fall the decorating could begin. This had to wait until the house was cleaned from top to bottom, the laundry was all caught up and supper dishes were washed and put away. This was also the day that the Christmas record collection, two records, Merle Haggard's *Christmas Present*, and *First Christmas Album for Children*, would be pulled out and the LPs stacked on the turntable. This meagre collection of Christmas music is still some of my favourites to listen to over the holidays to this day.

After the tree and house were decorated, the next thing to do was to shop for presents. I can’t quite recall when we would head to the big city to shop, but I do know it was only a couple days before Christmas itself. By big city, I mean the closest town that had a few choices for shopping, including a hardware store. We were a family of six and would draw names from a hat to see who would buy for whom and we would have never thought to buy more than that one gift.

On the first Saturday after school was let out for the holidays the local Lions Club would hold what they called Santa Claus Day. There was usually a skit at the local hall followed by a visit from Santa. Then there were games and a turkey shoot at the curling rink.

Regina, SK



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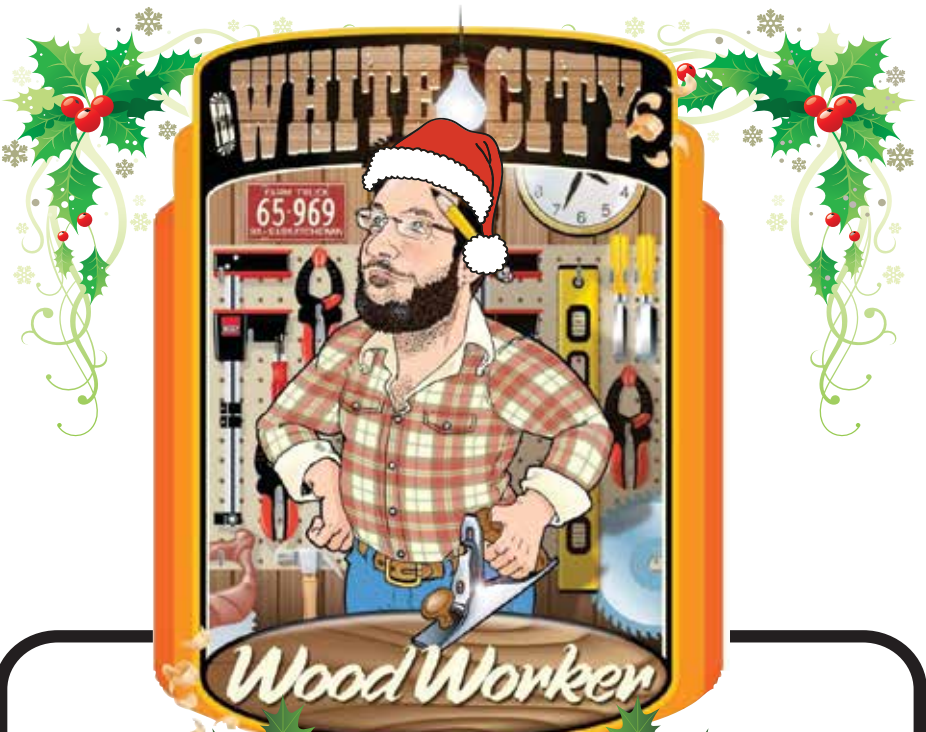
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had 3 church services to oversee in 3 different towns that night. The parishes would take turns having Christmas Eve Mass at 7 p.m. one year, 9:30 p.m. the next and then finally midnight mass on the third year. In the fourth year, they would rotate back to 7 p.m. and start over again.

Christmas morning, we would find a few treats in our stockings, usually a Christmas orange, some candy and always a pack of Thrills gum. To this day a piece of Thrills gum transports me back to Christmas morning of yore at the first chew of the soapy flavour. Santa would bring us one present each. We would get one present each from mom and dad and the one that was determined by the draw of the hat. I only knew two of my four Grandparents, and never once did any of us receive a Christmas present from them.

Fast forward 40 years or more and we will be putting up our fake fir tree in mid-November. The Christmas music and movies start playing a few

weeks before that. I have already had more than a few Christmas oranges before writing this. Costco has had its Christmas decorations on display since mid-August and I know more than a few grandparents that have already bought more than one gift for each of their grandchildren.

In our household, even though we normally have a very low-key Christmas to begin with, we still plan on cutting back on the normal luxuries that we afford ourselves this time of year. We will still have the homemade Christmas cookies, a turkey if the avian flu outbreak allows, and of course, I will have my Thrills gum.

Hopefully, your holidays won't be affected too much by the rising cost of everything. But if they are, just remember, your ancestors, and most likely you yourself once got along just fine and had a very happy Christmas season with very little in years past.

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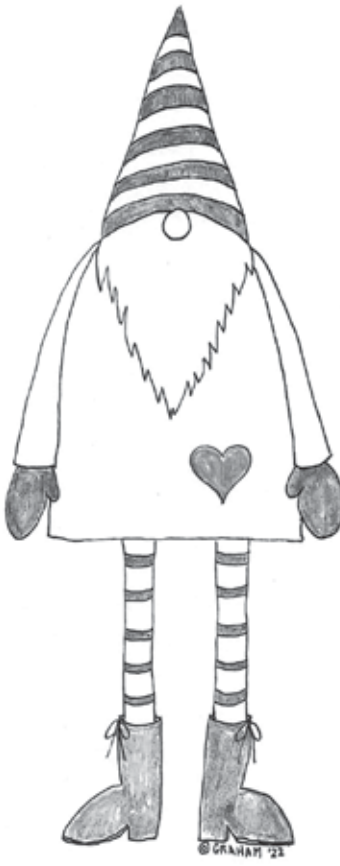
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Oh, Nuts!

Nuts are an energy-dense and nutrient-rich food, plus they are also a favourite in Christmas baking. Nuts are used in many facets of our daily lives – everything from cosmetics to stains.

Nuts supply many nutrients for both humans and wildlife. Because nuts generally have a high oil content, they are a significant source of energy and are popular with vegetarians and vegans. Additionally, nut oils are popular in cosmetics, and their shells are used as an exfoliant. Moderate nut consumption – about 5 ounces (140 g) per week – may benefit weight control and contribute to lowering body weight in humans. The Mayo Clinic has found that eating nuts may be good for the heart. What they think may contribute to nut’s heart healthiness:

- **Unsaturated fats.** It’s thought that the fats in nuts — both monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats — help to lower bad cholesterol levels.
- **Omega-3 fatty acids.** Many nuts are rich in healthy omega-3 fatty acids. They may reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes.
- **Fibre.** All nuts contain fibre, which helps lower cholesterol. Fibre also makes you feel full, so you eat less.
- **Plant sterols.** Some nuts contain plant sterols, a substance that can help lower cholesterol.
- **L-arginine.** Nuts are also a source of L-arginine. Some research suggests that L-arginine may lower blood pressure, improves cholesterol, and improves overall blood vessel health.

So, I guess the nut that is the worst for our diet is the donut.

Some of the commonly used baking nuts:

Almonds

California produces over half of the world’s almond supply. Due to high acreage and water demand for almond cultivation and the need for pesticides, droughts in California have caused some producers to leave the industry, leading to lower supply and increased prices.

It is from the bitter almond that we get one of Agatha Christie’s favourite poisons – cyanide. It contains the enzyme which, in the presence of water, yields glucose, cyanide and the essential oil of bitter almonds.

Pecans

The pecan nut comes from a species of hickory tree native to the southern States and northern Mexico, primarily around the Mississippi River. Georgia, New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico produce nearly half of the world’s total output of pecans. Pecans are one of the most recently domesticated major crops. Although wild pecans were well known among native and colonial Americans as a delicacy, the commercial growing of pecans in the United States did not begin until the 1880s.

Pecans are used extensively in sweet desserts such as pecan pie, as well as being a common flavour in cookies, cakes, ice creams and candy. Pecan wood is used in the manufacture of furniture and wood flooring. It is also used in smoking meats, giving grilled food a sweet and nutty flavour stronger than many fruit woods.

Walnuts

We planted a black walnut tree in our backyard a decade ago as we wanted to experiment with using the nuts as a natural stain. It’s been a slow grower. We were aware at the time of planting that they aren’t a tree that enjoys neighbours as they leach a chemical into the ground to prevent competing vegetation from growing. So, our tree is in the back corner without too much around it. If our

dye experiment doesn’t work, maybe we can use the wood from the tree in wood furniture as it has a lovely, fine straight grain. Did you know that walnuts were traditionally used to make an ink for writing and drawing? This is the ink thought to have been used by Leonardo da Vinci and Rembrandt.

Walnuts are commonly either eaten on their own or as an ingredient in many desserts. You can even pickle them! I don’t think many of us have had the opportunity to try pickled walnuts as they are a traditional English pickle made from green walnuts. They are usually served with cold turkey or ham as well as blue cheese.

And remember, what happens to a nervous nut? It cracks!

Pecan Pie Bars

This recipe is a little unusual in that it calls for molasses, which we found cuts down on what can be an overwhelming sweetness with pecan pie. I'd recommend starting this recipe early in the day if you want it for supper as it needs to cool down and then be refrigerated to firm up.

Base Layer

- 1¾ cups flour
- ½ cup sugar
- ¾ cup cold butter

Top Layer

- ⅔ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ⅓ cup +1 Tbsp flour
- 4 large eggs
- 1 Tbsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup molasses
- 1 cup corn syrup
- 2 cups roughly chopped pecans, no need to toast the pecans

Grease a 9x13 baking pan and line it with parchment paper so that you can lift the entire batch out of the pan after they have cooled for easier cutting.

Preheat oven to 350°F for aluminum bakeware and 325°F for glass bakeware.

BASE:

Mix together 1 ¾ cups flour and ½ cup sugar. Mix the butter through the flour mixture until it is well incorporated and resembles a dry coarse meal.

Press the crumb mixture firmly and evenly into the bottom of the prepared baking pan and bake for 25 minutes. The edges should just be starting to brown. Remove from oven and pour on the topping while still hot.

TOPPING:

Mix together the flour and brown sugar well. Whisk in the eggs, vanilla extract, salt, molasses, and corn syrup.

Let the mixture stand for about 15 minutes while the bottom layer pre-bakes, stirring it occasionally. This gives the flour time to soften and help thicken the top layer.

Mix in the chopped pecans and pour the topping over the partially baked bottom crust as soon as it comes out of the oven.

Return the pan to the oven and bake for an additional 40-50 minutes until the filling is set. Shake the pan a little. The center can wobble a little like set jelly but it should not be runny.

Cool the pan to room temperature before chilling the cookie bars in the fridge for several hours or overnight before attempting to cut them.

Mistatim, SK

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Thank you so much to Alma from Saskatoon for contributing this recipe!
We love reader submitted recipes; it means a lot to us that you took the time to send us a recipe.

- 1 cup butter, melted
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 4 cups oatmeal
- 2 tsp baking soda

Mix well and press into a 9x12 pan.
Bake at 350°F for 20-25 minutes. Cut while warm.

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Trivia

The first Salvation Army collection kettle took place in San Francisco's Oakland Ferry at the foot of Market St. It was a large crab pot with a sign that read "Keep The Pot Boiling."

Moose Jaw, SK

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**SLOW COOKER
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I made these as a topping for pumpkin pie at Thanksgiving. They were a huge hit. They taste very seasonal with the spices, and yet it isn't too sweet. It makes 6 cups, so there are lots for snacking on too. You can use any combination of nuts, we personally like a variety, so that everyone gets their favourite.

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp allspice
- 1/8 tsp cloves
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 2 egg whites
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 Tbsp water
- Cooking spray, for slow cooker
- 6 cups mixed unsalted nuts (pecans, walnuts, almonds, filberts, etc.)


In a medium bowl, whisk together sugars, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, cloves and salt. Set aside.

In another medium bowl, combine egg whites and vanilla. Whisk until frothy.

Spray the slow cooker with non-stick cooking spray. Add pecans to the slow-cooker. Pour egg white mixture over pecans and stir until coated. Pour the sugar mixture over and stir again, until the nuts are fully coated. Add 1 Tbsp of water.

Cook on low for 3-4 hours, stirring every half hour. If sugar isn't dissolving, add water 1 tablespoon at a time. When finished, remove the nuts from the slow-cooker and cool in a single layer.

Humboldt, SK

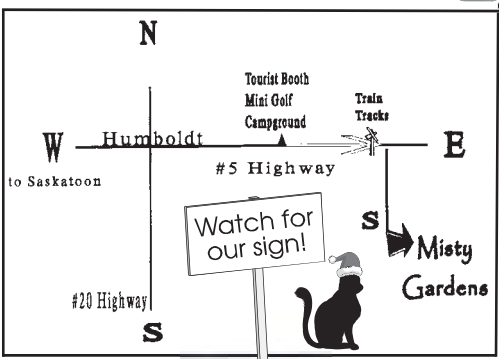


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Borderline Vocabulary

by: Kirby Gust

As far as inherited DNA and family trees go, Carl was an only child. However, this did not prevent Carl from dealing with what other families with more than one child had to deal with - sibling rivalry. You see, both of Carl’s parents were avid readers and highbrow literary scholars. His father, a business and regulatory lawyer, and his mother, a professor at the U of S College of Medicine. Carl’s childhood home was full of books, not only Law books, medical journals, and manuscripts that his parents needed, but also foreign literature, historical nonfiction, and a vast collection of the world’s literary classics. These books were a constant distraction for his parents and Carl found himself always in need to interrupt their reading if he wanted or needed something, like say for instance...their attention.

Most children with a brother or sister, no matter how close they are in age or friendship, spend some of their time getting on each other’s nerves, and thus a rivalry ensues. As most childhood rivalries go, you often learn something from them. You can learn many things about your rival if you take the time to observe. Like what little things trigger your rival, what your rival uses to try and trigger you, and most importantly you learn what unlikeable traits you see in your rival that you can also see in yourself. If you’re truly observant, you will also notice the little things you don’t like about yourself and are willing to change for the better. Childhood rivalries can prepare you for the art of debate and negotiation as well as how not to look bad to outside observers while doing so. Outside observers such as our parents.

Carl’s only childhood rival was that collection of darned books. Throughout Carl’s childhood and into adult life, Carl was constantly competing with these books for his parents’ attention. Many a time, Carl would rush home from school with good news about a test grade, a funny story he couldn’t wait to retell, or just to relay something interesting that happened that day. He was always met with “not right now Carl, I’m reading. You can tell us at dinner.” Hours would often pass after his father said, “ok, I’ll be with you as soon as I finish this chapter!” Most weekdays Carl never saw his mother because she was still at the university by the time he went to bed, and she was just getting up when he was heading out the door to start his day.

It was hard for Carl to have a proper rivalry with inanimate objects, but he did the best he could under the circumstances. He would often “accidentally misplace” the books his father was reading so he could pretend to help him look for and find them. During the search, Carl would tell his father all the things he never had time to otherwise, and somehow miraculously, they would stumble onto the sought-after book shortly after Carl was caught up with his storytelling.

His mother on the other hand was able to spend small snippets of time with Carl most weekends. She however also thirsted for the written word, and weekends were her only window to the books she longed to read. She was the one that kept the classic novels in the house. To Carl’s amazement and his father’s bemusement, his mother also kept the odd paperback romance around the house. Thankfully though, she left most of her work at work. On the weekends he was able to spend small junctures of time with her between her volunteering and household chores, chores he often helped with. He did however know that during examination time at the university his mother was off limits for his attention. That was the only time of year her work followed her home and Carl was ok with that

because he knew in her heart, she would much sooner spend time with him than with a stack of papers that needed grading.

Notwithstanding Carl’s childhood rivalry with his parent’s books, he became to be quite fond of books himself. Often when he was alone and bored, he would pick up one of the many classics that filled the bookshelves and start to thumb through it. Sometimes he would read as little as a sentence or paragraph before putting the chosen book back, but other times he would expose his family resemblance to his father and be swept away in the words laid out before him. Unlike his father, Carl was not a very good reader. When Carl read, he would slowly and carefully go over each and every word, sometimes reading a paragraph twice because he was sure he had either missed something or that one word meant something totally different than he thought it had the first time through.

Sometimes when Carl had been reading for a long period, the words suddenly seemed to flow off the page into his eyes with an ease that Carl couldn’t understand. He would drift off into a zen-like state as his eyes effortlessly zipped back and forth over the lines on the page. When this effortless reading happened, it reminded him of how happy he was when other things in his life would just turn out better than expected, like those times when that pretty redhead from third class would sit beside him, even though there were lots of other desks still available, or that time he had to fix the lawn mower but only had one 13mm wrench to his wrench collection, and as luck would have it, every bolt and nut on the mower just happened to be...and that was when he would realize he had not been reading at all, but daydreaming as he looked at the page.

Carl would go on to spend his entire childhood, and adult life for that matter, trying to one-up his parents’ precious books in an attempt to gain their attention. His reading skills only improved slightly over the years. He had always suspected he had a form of dyslexia but has never been tested. He still reads when he has time and enjoys it greatly. He even finds himself craving a good book now and again. But as I said before, you can’t have a childhood rivalry without learning at least a little something about yourself and or your rival. Carl learned this about himself. Carl is unable to read fast and still understand the meaning of the words laid out before him, no matter how hard he has tried to improve his reading skills. This slow and methodical approach to his one and only rival inadvertently taught Carl the proper usage of the English Language.

Carl has always just somehow known the proper use of words, such as “a” and “an” in a sentence. The difference between “too” and “to”, “who” and “whom” and so on. This didn’t fully come to light for Carl until social media came along. Before social media most, if not all, of what Carl read was professionally written, novels, newspapers, textbooks and the like.



Once every pair of hands seemingly had a keyboard and a way to spew out the English language, Carl found reading even slower and harder to understand. Carl truly believes that social media has ruined the English language. Carl loves the platform for keeping up with what his friends and family are doing, but when he sees posts on Facebook that read something like “We got are new car

today”, he dies inside a little. It’s even worse if someone else comments on the post with “your crazy to spend that much on a new car, to much”. And so, when the local kids that frequent the Borderline Good store came up with a new hip trend, illeism, Carl was in a new form of hell. Illeism is the act of referring to oneself in the third person instead of the first person. Carl was unsure if this was a new full-on worldwide colloquialism or, as he hoped, just a local one that would soon be forgotten.

It was getting close to Christmas, and Carl, as usual, had been waiting until the good Christmas oranges from Japan were available from his suppliers. He had learned quickly after moving to Jonathon and taking over the store from Mary’s father that he could not compete with the big box stores when it came to early-season flavourless Christmas oranges from China. Not only could the larger stores sell these oranges at a much lower price, but they also didn’t seem to care if they sold a box half full of oranges that had begun to mould. The one and only year Carl did bring in a few boxes of these lower-quality oranges he ended up going through the boxes every morning and picking out the bad ones. In the end, he threw away more oranges than he sold.

By waiting and getting the good Japanese oranges, the ones most of the locals knew from their childhood, closer to Christmas, Carl was able to offer something the big box stores could not. You see big box stores and



Borderline Vocabulary

~ Continued ~

most grocery chains will not take the chance on bringing in perishable Christmas inventory that close to the big day in fear of not being able to sell them. Whereas Carl knows that even if he has a few boxes left, they will sell the week of Christmas. The one thing Carl’s customers don’t know is when they may come in, and thus they keep popping into the store “just to check”.

This ritual always reminds Carl of his and his father’s hunt for his father’s “lost” books. When the customers stop in looking for the oranges and they are not there, they take the time to stop and chat with Carl, but once they find the oranges in the store, they quickly dash off home to enjoy them. Much like Carl’s father who would forget all about Carl once his book was safely back in his hand, and would dash off to his reading chair to enjoy it once again.

Young David Flannigan gets dropped off by the school bus every school day in front of Borderline Goods. He then waits in the store for his father to pick him up on his way home from work and thus is one of Carl’s most frequent after-school visitors. Carl has only ever met David’s father once but feels like he knows him. David seems to be a lonely sort of kid and Carl lets him help around the store while he waits. Every day as they clean shelves or put out new stock David tells Carl about what he and his dad talked about on their drive home the day before. Carl can easily tell that that drive home with his father is David’s favourite part of his day.

This year David started asking about Christmas oranges in late September. Every day he would come in and go over to the fruit cooler and say “Hey Carl! When are the Christmas oranges coming in? Davy here would sure like himself a Christmas orange!” to which Carl would respond “tell Davy when you see him that they will be here in December just like every other year” and every day David responds to Carl with a confused “huh.”

David wasn’t the only kid or teenager to talk about himself in the third

person. It had caught on to be quite a fad. Carl, who was normally out of touch with the younger generation, wasn’t sure where the fad had originated, if it was just a local slang or if “all the kids are doing it” as they used to say when he was a kid himself. Either way, Carl found it only a little annoying. Carl thought of himself as quite lucky after all. He knew most of these kids that would come into the store while their parents were working or commuting were not only looking for a sweet or salty snack, but they were also looking for adult companionship. The same thing he had craved as a child.

On a cold Friday in December, the oranges finally came in, Carl made sure to meet young David Flannigan at the front door when he saw the school bus pull up in front. “Good news!” he said over the sound of the shopkeeper’s bell as David was coming in out of the cold. “You can tell your friend Davy that you talk about so much that his oranges have arrived.” Carl had a satisfying grin on his face as he looked down at young David “in fact you are the third person to come in since they arrived.” Carl had put extra emphasis on “third person” but he could tell David missed the reference completely. David took his eyes off the stack of boxed oranges only long enough to look up at Carl and say “huh.” Carl said, “Never mind. How is your dad?”

Just before David’s father pulled up out front, Carl handed David a box of oranges to thank him for all his help in the store over the past few months. “Carl wants to say thank you,” he said with a grin as he dropped the box into David’s waiting hands. David looked a bit shocked but accepted the gift without hesitation. “Thank you,” he said as he ran out the door into the dark cold afternoon with the box of oranges wrapped up in his winter coat so they wouldn’t freeze. Once he was in the truck with his dad, they both gave Carl a friendly wave, David’s dad also gave a knowing nod to Carl before driving away. Carl turned around and walked back to the counter thinking to himself that he could hardly wait until Monday afternoon to hear what David and his dad had talked about on their way home.

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PAPER PIECED SNOWFLAKE

Materials Needed;
1" pieces of blue fabric measuring at 2" - 6" in length (at least 3 different colours)
16" square of backing fabric
1 1/2" X 20" strip for binding
16" square of batting

Finished Size; 13.25" wide

SEWING TIPS;
When paper piecing use a small wooden roller for pressing after each seam is sewn. Photocopy and color many different snowflake options
You can find full instructions for making this snowflake on my YouTube Channel - BerryBirdy.
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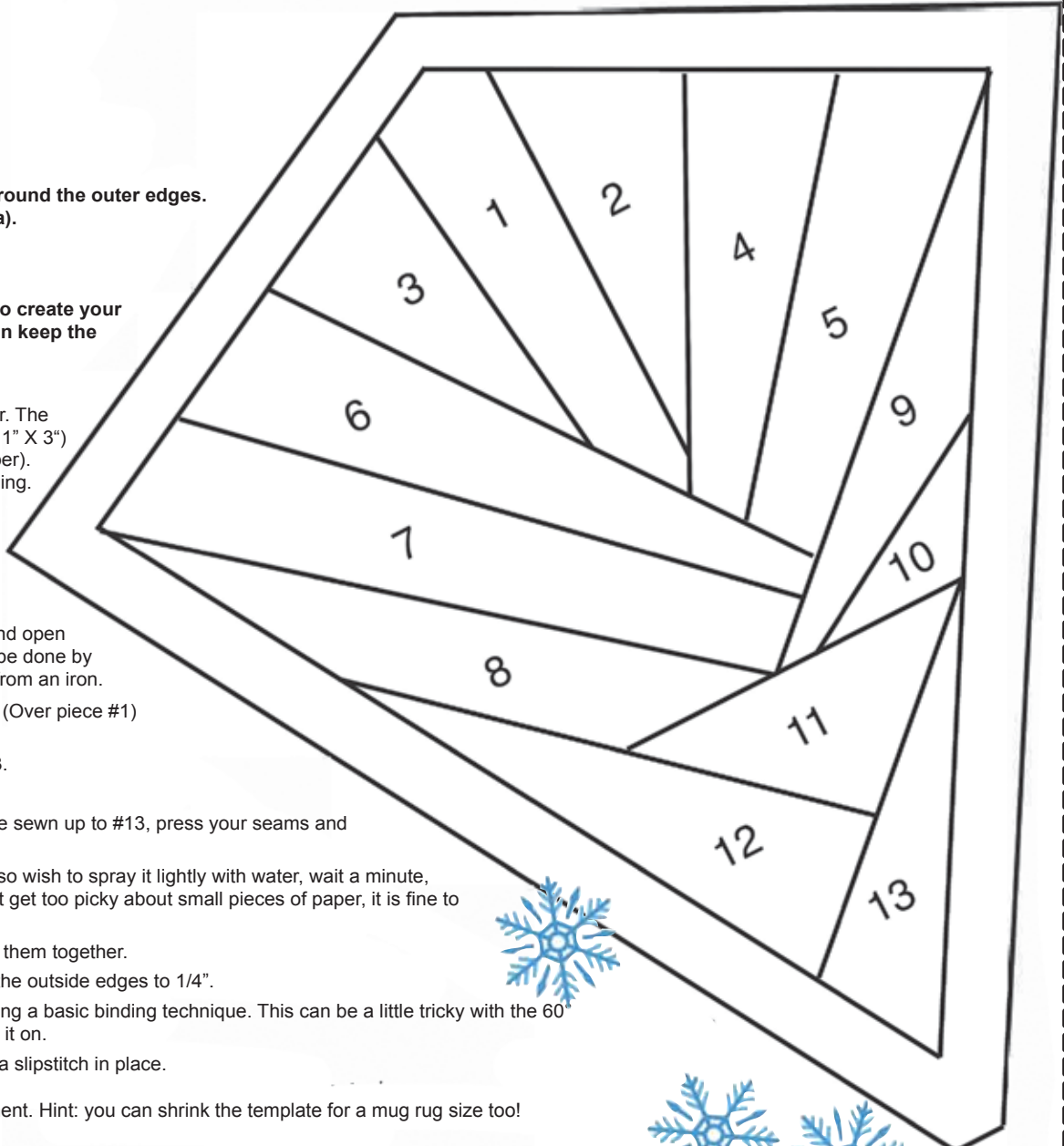
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Instructions:
Photocopy the template 6 times and cut it out leaving at least 1" around the outer edges. (You can also find the template on my blog; berrybirdy.blogspot.ca).

Please note; the diagrams are showing only one section. You will need to repeat this 6 times. It can be helpful to lay the templates on a table and color them in to create your desired snowflake look. Then label each color #1, #2 etc so you can keep the pattern the same for each section.

1. Shorten your stitch length to 1.5 - 1.8mm.
2. Gather two pieces of fabric and place them with right sides together. The pieces need to be slightly larger than the centre areas - #1 & #2 (about 1" X 3") Place the pieces on the wrong side of the template (the back of the paper). Pin in place. Hint; It can be helpful to hold it up into the light for positioning.
3. Flip the template over and sew along the line in between the centre squares extending at least 1/8" beyond the line on either end -this is your seam allowance. Make sure your fabric is at least as large as the section next to it that it will be covering. Trim any excess fabric along the seam to about 1/8".
4. Turn the template to the fabric side (the wrong side of the paper) and open the seams. A wooden seam roller can be helpful for this. This can also be done by finger pressing and saves time from constantly running back and forth from an iron.
5. Place on your next fabric right side down onto the previous pieces. (Over piece #1) This one will need to be slightly bigger as it is covering #3. Pin in place.
6. Flip the template over and sew along the line in between #1 and #3.
7. Trim any excess fabric along the seam to 1/8".
8. Repeat this process following the numbers in order. When you have sewn up to #13, press your seams and set it aside. Repeat for the other 5 templates.
9. Remove the paper. The tight stitches help with this, but you may also wish to spray it lightly with water, wait a minute, then remove the papers. You may find it helpful to use tweezers. Do not get too picky about small pieces of paper, it is fine to leave some.
10. Pin each section together matching up the side seams and pinning them together.
11. Sew them together along the line. Trim any excess fabric and trim the outside edges to 1/4".
12. Cut a binding strip 1 1/2" X 20" long. Sew it on with a 1/4" seam using a basic binding technique. This can be a little tricky with the 60° corners, so you can check out my You Tube Channel for tips on sewing it on.
13. Fold the binding over and under to the back and hand stitch it with a slipstitch in place.

You may want to sew a ribbon to the top so it can be hung as an ornament. Hint: you can shrink the template for a mug rug size too!



Change
by Lesley Chaisson of Berry Birdy Designs

Lately I have been thinking alot about change. How it can affect us, make us grow, challenge us, scare us, and even be exciting! My parents moved a lot while I was growing up, so change was always something happening in my little world. I was always the new kid in school, making new friends, and adjusting to new surroundings. Occasionally it felt like a fun adventure, but I didn't always like it, mind you, and as a teenager, I felt a little frustrated during my grade 9 year when we moved two months before the end of school. This forced me to attend a new school for the last few weeks of my middle years. It was rough. I disliked everything about my new school and couldn't seem to fit in. During those times of struggle, I always had my sewing. Looking back, it was the only constant thing in my life that I enjoyed doing. It was soul healing for me, and didn't realize it then, but now I know that it is so important for younger people to find their "niche" - the thing that makes them find joy, whatever it might be. We all need it, and any age. Change is coming and we can see it all around us every day. The news; social media; facebook; we can see it all around us. I hope that in some way we can share the love that we find quilting and sewing with others so that we can support each other during all the many new things ahead!

Lesley Chaisson is a designer and author. She has had many of her creations published in magazines around the world, and is now offering her patterns to be purchased wholesale. With over 53,000 followers on Instagram she is well known for her creative and modern dresden patterns and "Micro Mini" Quilting. During the month of May she is the host of the #microminial (Micro Mini Sew Along) which challenges quilters to scale down and make small projects that are 8" or less. You can check out her Instagram page @Berry_Birdy, BerryBirdy on Facebook, www.etsy.com/ shop /berrybirdy, and wholesale orders www.berrybirdy.com.





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