

The Florida Register

Your Statewide Guide to Premier Shopping and Events

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Annual Quilting, Needlework and Sewing Theme Issue



The Florida Register

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E-mail: ads@TheRegisterWeb.com
Web Site: www.TheRegisterWeb.com
P.O. Box 2419 • Cumming, GA 30028

Publisher Contact Numbers Across the USA & Canada

The Country Register is a network of independently owned and published specialty newspapers for the consumer who enjoys outstanding shopping, events, excursions and specialty classes. Look for the paper in your travels or for the current issue online. For additional information, visit www.countryregister.com

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The Florida Register, January-February, 2024 Vol. 31 – No. 1

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This issue is dedicated to Quilting, Needlework and Sewing!



Just A Note...

Happy New Year from our family to yours!!! Thank you for picking up our Annual Needle Arts themed issue! Start off the new year exploring the needle arts whether you are new to the craft or want to expand your skills. The shops advertising within our publication can certainly help you find the supplies you need to fit your skill level. Join a class to expand your knowledge or even to gain the basic skills of a new craft! The needle arts are rewarding, enjoyable and relaxing too. You'll find projects in this issue and as many articles on the theme as we could squeeze in. Get a project started today!



Amy, Grace, Rachel and David

Are you ready for a redecorating project this winter? Then head out to our advertiser's shops and events to get redecorating ideas/products and new home décor. Within these pages, you'll find furniture, curtains, linens, paint, collectibles, and everything else you need for any redecorating project. Or buy that item you wanted for Christmas, but that Santa forgot to bring you.

Or if you are having an "inside day" --- what a perfect day to grab your copy of our publication, a hot cup of tea and shop online from our website with direct links to our advertiser's websites and/or their facebook page. With the after-the-holiday sales, now is a great time to visit the shops in person or order online!

Would your group or guild like to receive FREE COPIES of each issue? Just send an email to ads@theregisterweb.com or call 1-866-825-9217. Let us know how many copies (25 minimum) and a postal service mailing address.

Can we ask that you add a resolution to your list to help us this year? PLEASE let the shop owners know that you saw their ad in our publication as often as possible - it is extremely important! Also, feel free to pick up extra copies of the paper for your friends...we'd love for you to share it with them.

Grace turns 19 in February! She is loving being at UGA and it is nice having her close by. Each month of 2024, Rachel will be at a different hospital for her Anesthesiologist Assistant program rotations. She's actually at a hospital near our GA home for January so it's wonderful having her here at home. Then she's off to hospitals in OH, AL, NC and several in Colorado area for the rest of the year. Dave and I are proud of our young ladies to say the least!

Enjoy using our publication as your road map and visit some shops you've never been to before. New Year, New Shopping! Best wishes for a healthy and safe 2024.

Amy & David

Upcoming Shows and Events

March/April events due by February 1

Mail a check for \$25 with your event info to the address at the top of page 2.

Facebook Live or App Events

- Mondays 3:30 pm Quilted Twins (pg. 14)
- Mon-Sat 5:30 pm Quilts and Lace (pg. 31)
- Tuesdays 6 pm Inspire Quilting & Sewing (pg. 18)
- Tues-Fri 1 pm A&A White Sewing Center (pg. 19)
- Wednesday 7 pm Crafty Quilters (pg. 17)
- Fridays 9 am Boutique 4 Quilters (pg. 34)
- Fridays 3:30 pm Quilted Twins (pg. 14)
- Fridays 5 pm Sweet Darling Quilts (pg. 19)

January

- 1-31 Bernina Free Gifts with Purchase Sale at Stitcher's Quest in Mary Esther (pg. 3)
- 1-31 Clearance Month Deals at Oceans of Thread in DeLand (pg. 10)
- 11-14 Florida State Button Society Annual Meeting & Show in Daytona Beach Shores (pg. 30)
- 12-13 Long-Arm Classes with Iris Noitalay at Miss D's Quilts in Palatka (pg. 28)
- 13-14 Customer Appreciation Sale at Calico Station in Orange Park (pg. 27)
- 13-20 Visit Bee's Quilt Shop during the North Florida Shop Hop in St Augustine (pg. 27)
- 13-20 North Florida Quilt the Rainbow Shop Hop with 8 participating Shops (pg. 29)
- 13-20 Visit Cut Up & Sew during the North Florida Shop Hop in Palm Coast (pg. 29)
- 13-20 Visit Sew 'N Quilt Co during the North Florida Shop Hop in Holly Hill (pg. 30)
- 16 Kimberbell Hands-On Class January Mini Quilt at Quilts and Lace in Melbourne (pg. 31)
- 19-20 Quilts by the Lake Quilt Show at First Presbyterian Church in Lakeland (pg. 15)
- 19-20 Kimberbell Easter Tier Tray Hands-On or Virtual at Quilts and Lace in Melbourne (pg. 31)
- 19-21 StevenBe Fashion Show, Trunk Show and Classes at A Bit O' Yarn in Englewood (pg. 24)
- 20 Susan Greening Davis Class at Victorian Rose Needlearts in Gainesville (pg. 6)
- 25-27 3 Day Retreat with Brick City Cross Stitch in Ocala (pg. 7)
- 26-27 Marketplace 2024 at Rohan Rec Center in The Villages (pg. 8)
- 26-27 Visit Sweet Darling during Marketplace 2024 at Rohan Rec Center in The Villages (pg. 19)
- 27 Project Linus Charity Sew at Cut Up & Sew in Palm Coast (pg. 29)

February

- 1-29 Sew Many Choices Gifts w/Purchase at Margie's Sew Much Fun in Crestview (pg. 4)
- 1-29 Bernina gift with purchase Specials at Oceans of Thread in DeLand (pg. 10)
- 2-3 Quilting in Paradise Quilt Show at MidFlorida Event Center in Port St Lucie (pg. 32)
- 3 Farm Festival and Quilt Show at Pioneer Florida Museum & Village in Dade City (pg. 13)
- 3 Airing of the Quilts at Maxine Barritt Park in Venice (pg. 23)
- 9-10 Belleview Busy Bee's Quilt Show at Silver Springs Shores Presb Church in Ocala (pg. 7)
- 9-10 StampFest at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Clearwater (pg. 21)
- 9-10 Completely New Embroidery Design - Janine Babich at Miss D's Quilts in Palatka (pg. 28)
- 10 Stitcher's Indoor Yard Sale at Brick City Cross Stitch in Ocala (pg. 7)
- 10 9th Anniversary Open House at Quilt A Bit in Greenacres (pg. 32)
- 12-16 No-Frills Retreat with Sweet Darling Quilts in Lutz (pg. 19)
- 16-17 Visit Sweet Darling Quilts at Seaside Piecemakers' Artistry of Quilts in Melbourne (pg. 19)
- 16-17 Seaside Piecemakers' Artistry of Quilts at Melbourne Auditorium in Melbourne (pg. 31)

More Great Events continued on page 4

Mary Esther, Milton, Pensacola plus Shop Hop

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The All Florida Shop Hop magazine is available on our website at StitchersQuest.com

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The All Florida Shop Hop Magazine will go on sale Mid-January at all participating stores. **IT'S YOUR PASSPORT TO EMBARK ON THE GREAT SEWING ADVENTURE ACROSS FLORIDA!**

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February Events, Continued from page 2

- 16-18 Pocketful of Sunshine Quilt Show at Rec & Aquatic Center in New Port Richey (pg. 18)
- 16-18 .. Visit MK Quilts at West Pasco Quilt Show Rec & Aquatic Center in New Port Richey (pg. 19)
- 16-18 Janome All Ruler No Work Event at Cut Up & Sew in Palm Coast (pg. 29)
- 21-24 Visit MK Quilts at AQS Daytona Beach in Daytona Beach (pg. 19)
- 21-24 Visit Bee's Quilt Shop at AQS Daytona Beach in Daytona Beach (pg. 27)
- 21-24 Visit Cut Up & Sew at AQS Daytona Beach in Daytona Beach (pg. 29)
- 23-24 Gathering of Quilts at Charlotte Harbor Event & Conf Cntr in Punta Gorda (pg. 25)
- 24-25 Gail Yellen Classes & Workshop at Beyond the Stitches in Crystal River (pg. 7)
- 26-28 IQ Designer Boot Camp with Richard Tharp at Miss D's Quilts in Palatka (pg. 28)
- 29 Demo Day at Nana's Quilt Shop in Brooksville (pg. 18)
- 29-Mar 10 Visit Fabric Warehouse during the Florida Strawberry Festival in Plant City (pg. 15)

- March**
- 1-2 Stitches in Time Quilt Show at New Hope Ministries in Naples (pg. 26)
 - 1-April 30 All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 3)
 - 1-April 30 Visit Stitcher's Quest during the All Florida Shop Hop in Mary Esther (pg. 3)
 - 1-April 30 Visit My Sewing Barn during the All Florida Shop Hop in Milton (pg. 3)
 - 1-April 30 Visit Margie's Sew Much Fun during the All Florida Shop Hop in Crestview (pg. 4)
 - 1-April 30 Visit Quilters Anonymous during the All Florida Shop Hop in Clermont (pg. 12)
 - 1-April 30 Visit Country Quilts during the All Florida Shop Hop in Clearwater (pg. 21)
 - 1-April 30 Visit Quilters Haven & More during the All Florida Shop Hop in Palmetto (pg. 21)
 - 1-April 30 Visit Kits by Carla during the All Florida Shop Hop in Labelle (pg. 26)
 - 1-April 30 Visit Sew 'N Quilt Co during the All Florida Shop Hop in Holly Hill (pg. 30)
 - 2-3 Quilting by the Gulf Quilt Show at Venice Community Center in Venice (pg. 23)
 - 8-9 It's A Block Party Quilt Show at Charlotte Harbor Event Center in Punta Gorda (pg. 25)
 - 9 Oaks Quilters Quilt Show at Red Oaks RV Resort in Bushnell (pg. 13)
 - 9 Annual Fabric & Fiber Yard Sale hosted by ASG of Jacksonville in St Augustine (pg. 27)
 - 12-16 Nashville Market Week at Brick City Cross Stitch in Ocala (pg. 7)
 - 14-16 Original Sewing & Quilt Expo at RP Funding Center in Lakeland (pg. 15)
 - 14-16 Visit Fabric Warehouse during Original Sewing & Quilt Expo in Lakeland (pg. 15)
 - 14-16 Visit MK Quilts at Original Sewing & Quilt Expo in Lakeland (pg. 19)
 - 15-16 Quilts from the Heart Quilt Show at Central Panhandle Fairgrounds in Panama City (pg. 5)
 - 15-30 Central Florida Shop Hop (pg. 9)
 - 16 Coastal Quilt Show at Chillas Hall in Lanark Village (pg. 33)
 - 23 Suwannee Valley Quilt Festival by the Historical Train Depot in Trenton (pg. 6)

Free Pattern

Warm Winter Wishes

For more fun and creative inspiration visit:
 www.JacquelynnSteves.com

Free Embroidery Pattern - May not be sold or used for commercial purposes. Use this pattern for embroidery, wool applique, punch needle or rug hooking, painted projects or whatever your imagination can dream up! Reduce or enlarge pattern as desired.

Panama City and Online

Cowgirl Poet, Quilter, Entertainer



Yvonne Hollenbeck

The Quilting Flu

It started innocent enough,
 some fifteen years ago;
 it was well into the winter,
 the ground was white with snow.
 He was laying in his easy chair
 while staring at TV
 as she was reminiscing
 about the way things used to be.

The house looks like a fabric shop,
 there's quilts on every wall
 the basements been converted
 to a fabric storage hall.
 There's projects on the table
 and more on all the beds
 and many that's unfinished
 packed in totes out in the shed.

She looked at hubby laying there
 ...across his lap he'd laid
 an old and faded patchwork quilt
 her Grandma Sarah made.
 The rolling channels bored her,
 the housework was all done,
 so thought she'd try to make a quilt,
 she thought that might be fun.

There hasn't been much cleaning done
 since fifteen years ago,
 when she cut those pretty squares out
 and made a little throw.
 But, she is not alone
 as all her friends are quilting too,
 it is like they caught a sickness
 diagnosed, "The Quilting Flu."

She got out grandma's patterns
 that were packed away upstairs
 within a box of pretty scraps,
 then soon was cutting squares.
 This urge that overtook her
 never really went away
 in fact, you'd call it "sickness"
 if you visited her today.

A guild is their support group,
 but there really is no cure
 and the only medication
 is a frequent shop-hop tour.
 Experts call it an addiction,
 there is not much they can do when
 you're overcome with this disease
 that's called "The Quilting Flu!"

Order Yvonne's new book, "A Stitch in Rhyme" at
 www.yvonnehollenbeck.com — just \$15 + \$3.50 postage.

© Yvonne Hollenbeck, 2023
 Yvonne Hollenbeck, from Clearfield, SD, performs her original poetry throughout the United States, captiv-
 ating audiences in her wake. She is one of the most published cowgirl poets in the West and is not only a
 popular banquet and civic entertainer, but also co-writes songs with many western entertainers. Yvonne
 also pens a weekly column in the "Farmer-Rancher Exchange" and writes articles about life in rural America
 in various publications throughout the West. For more information, visit
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Recipe **Crockpot Chicken Spaghetti**
 Courtesy of Lois Haseltine, from Pensacola, FL

Ingredients

- * 1/2 cup yellow onion diced
- * 1/2 red bell pepper diced
- * 1/2 green bell pepper diced
- * 1 small can mild diced green chiles
- * 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- * 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- * salt & pepper to taste
- * 1 lb chicken breasts
- * 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- * 3/4-1 lb cooked spaghetti
- * 3 cups cheddar cheese grated
- * a few splashes chicken broth optional

Directions:
 Place onion, bell peppers, green chiles, cumin, garlic powder, salt, pepper, chicken, mushroom soup and 1 cup cheese together in crockpot. Stir to mix ingredients. Cook on high for 3-4 hours or until chicken is fully cooked. Remove chicken breasts, shred and return to crockpot. Pour in cooked spaghetti and remaining cheese. Toss to coat pasta in sauce and melt cheese, add in a few splashes of chicken stock where necessary to get sauce consistency you want. Cook another 20-30 minutes on low and serve.

St. Andrew Bay Quilter's Guild
"Quilts From the Heart" Quilt Show
March 15 & 16, 2024

Location: Central Panhandle Fairgrounds
2230 15th St, Panama City, FL 32405

9-4 each day Admission \$10

- RIBBONS - RIBBONS - RIBBONS -

This is a Judged Competition with ribbons presented to the winners of each category. These special ribbons are handmade by the guild members.

Annual Quilt Show Includes:

- Quilt Displays
- Silent Auction
- Quilters' Boutique
- Bits & Pieces Snack Shop
- Vendors

SPECIAL AWARDS:

- Judge's Choice
- Viewer's Choice
- Hand Quilting Award
- Machine Quilting Award

2024 Opportunity Quilt (pictured here)
 Drawing will be held Sat., March 16 @ 3PM
 Tickets can be purchased for \$2 each or 3/\$5

Visit our website for information on membership and meeting times
 www.sabqg.org

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Antiques	Food Trucks

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My First Quilt Block

by Judy Sharer

Do you remember the first quilt block you ever attempted? You probably worried about matching the points and sewing over seams just right so everything looked good and matched perfectly.

Not me! My mother wanted me to enjoy quilting. My older sisters hadn't taken to sewing. I think Mom figured she'd started them too late, so she'd start me earlier. After all, I was ten years old.

Being the youngest and her last hope of having a child enjoy the finer things in life, like buying fabric and making it into a thing of beauty, my mother used reverse psychology on me. She could care less if my points matched or if my colors were what she would have chosen. She started me with the flying geese pattern and using scraps. Nothing to line up, just sew and go! I loved it! The geese were different colors and didn't have to be in a certain order. I sewed six panels with six geese in each.

I was hooked! I learned to wind and change my own bobbin, and I could thread the machine needle all by myself. I was allowed to use Mother's machine when she wasn't using it. Three rows of geese flew up and three down. No sashing, no points to worry about. It went together quickly. My sisters were impressed with my design, and Mother showed everyone who came to house what her little protegee had done. Then I decided to add a border to make it a little bigger to fit my bed; a border that didn't need to match points. Mother suggested using the rest of the scraps, so I made a rail fence border. Again, the order of the fabrics and colors didn't matter. The border went together easily and sewing it to the quilt was a breeze.

How can I recall so vividly every step I took to create my first quilt, you ask? It's still a favorite cover-up that's draped over the end of the couch. Although not my most prized quilt, it's certainly one of my most memorable.

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

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The tradition of blessing someone after a sneeze is so old that even Roman scholar Pliny the Elder wrote about it in *Natural History* (77 AD) and puzzled over its origins. When a person sneezed it was to expel evil spirits from their body, and the blessing was given to prevent them from going right back in!

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Joy & Blessings, Jody

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

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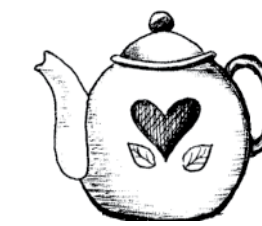
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A Cup of Tea with Lydia Tea Parties That Say, "I Love You" by Lydia E. Harris



"Love Makes the World Go Round" is a song from the 1960s musical Carnival. Sixty years later, the lyrics still inspires me. In this new year, we have many opportunities—including Valentine's Day—to share love with others. Here are a few ideas for tea parties that say, "I love you," which could help us make the world go 'round.

Tea Parties at Home
 Last year, when my extended family celebrated the engagement of my niece Lena and her fiancé, Dylan, the couple requested ideas for dates. I set a "date" for them to come for tea.

On a sunny afternoon, I served Dylan and Lena tea outdoors on our deck. A large red heart, a potted pink Gerbera daisy, and two wedding cake toppers decorated our setting. One came from my sister's wedding cake and featured a bride and a sailor—like the navy man she married. The other bride and groom had graced my cake 56 years earlier.

While we nibbled croissants filled with chicken salad and sampled other treats, I enjoyed getting to know Dylan and hearing about their wedding plans. In honor of their recent engagement, I had baked Royal Rings, a cookie shaped like a ring with sweet candy jewels. (See recipe from my book.) I also served several tea blends and rhubarb punch, a popular family beverage. We sipped tea from my mother's pink floral teacups. Since Lena was named after my mother, Helena, I gave her the set of teacups as a gift. And because this was a "date" for them, I offered them dates to eat.

I sent them home with the flowering centerpiece and a few favorite cookies. They said good-bye with beaming faces, anticipating the joy of their not-too-distant wedding day.

Tea Parties by Mail
 If you can't deliver a tea party in person, you could share love by mailing a tea party. That's what I recently did for my friend Barbara. Now, years after she brought me a tea party to go, her health has declined and she lives in a skilled nursing facility. Since I can't make the long drive to bring her tea, I mailed a tea party in a box. I contacted her daughter in advance and arranged to have her share the tea party box and enjoy teatime with her mother.

The box included two floral china teacups, several tea blends, shortbread cookies, and other treats. I also sent paper plates, napkins, silk flowers, and a few small gifts. Just as Barbara's tea party brightened my day, now I could return the favor via mail and add cheer to her life.

Tea Parties in 2024
 As I recall the song "Love Makes the World Go Round," another song plays in my mind. During my childhood, I learned the song "Brighten the Corner Where You Are." I still embrace those words and seek ways to add love and joy to the lives of others. Teatimes are one way that works for me. And when I bless others, it also adds joy to my life.

Throughout the year, I hope you will join me and look for ways to show love to others. Perhaps we'll serve tea in our homes, deliver a tea party to go, or mail one in a box. Whatever we do, let's make the world go 'round with our love.

Lydia E. Harris is a tea enthusiast, grandmother of five, and the author of three grandparenting books: GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids (2023); In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together; and Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting. All are available online and wherever books are sold.

From Lydia's Recipe File: Royal Rings

Ring-shaped cookies with sweet candy jewels

Ingredients:

1/2 cup soft butter (1 cube)	1 1/2 cups flour
2/3 cup sugar	1/2 teaspoon baking powder
3 egg yolks (save whites for another use)	1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla	Multicolored sprinkles
Candied fruit or small candies that won't melt (such as Boston Baked Beans, Jujy Fruits, or Dots)	

Directions:
 Preheat oven to 375°. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar. Add egg yolks and vanilla to creamed mixture, and beat until light and fluffy. Combine flour, baking powder, and salt. Sift dry ingredients into the sugar mixture, and mix well. Shape into 1-inch balls. Push your finger through each ball to shape it into a ring. Make sure the opening is at least 1/2-inch wide so it doesn't close while baking. Dip the top side of each ring into colored sprinkles. Place on lightly sprayed baking sheet. Add a piece of candied cherry or small candy on each cookie for a jewel. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until golden brown. Remove cookies to a cooling rack. Makes 24 rings.

(Recipe from Lydia's book GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids.)

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The Dropped Stitch
by Sharon Greve

Got Stash?

What a silly question. Right? It's especially true if you are a knitter. Life moves along and then wham! Your yarn stash has grown into a monster inventory. Perhaps the following shopping knitter's logic sounds familiar:

1. It talked to me—called my name.
2. It will go with the yarn I bought last year.
3. It's so pretty; I'm sure I'll use it someday.
4. It's a great price—probably won't be there tomorrow.
5. It's less expensive and more fun than a psychiatrist.
6. It won't break, need dusting, feeding, walking, or watering.
7. It's non-fattening.
8. I can store it in the car trunk and nobody will know.
9. It's allowed on airplanes— my new travel companion.
10. Oh, what the heck! At this age I need all the yardage I can get!

The big question now is how to control your stash. Consider the following tips for de-stashing:

1. If you can actually see your yarn, you are more likely to use it. Out of sight-out of mind!
2. Shopping in your stash saves time and money as well as depleting your inventory.
3. How many UFO's (Unfinished Objects) are hiding in your stash? Which ones do you really want to complete? What is needed for completion? Set a deadline to finish them. Donate the unwanted UFO's.
4. Give yourself permission to reduce yarns you don't like. It might have cost you a fortune or been a gift, but if you don't want to use it, don't! Donate, swap, or sell those unwanted yarns. Finding a home for yarn that's waited years for its moment in the sun is therapeutic—and reduces stash.
5. Use open baskets or pretty bowls to display your favorite yarns. Stash on display can double as home decor. They last longer than flowers.
6. Have leftovers from larger projects? Make up knitting kits of colors and textures in unexpected ways for last-minute gifts to minimize the stash. Include inspirational patterns, if possible.
7. Sort remaining stash by color within each weight range. Color wheels are helpful but arranging dark to light with the eye is less complex. Because knitters are creatures of habit and buy what appeals to them, chances are, your yarns will combine harmoniously.
8. Sort by yarn type. Yarns of the same construction share certain characteristics, but sometimes fiber content has a greater effect on the way the yarn feels and balances after knitted. Nothing is concrete for selecting or substituting yarns, but knowing something about their construction does help.

There is no right or wrong way to sort or organize your yarn stash. Focus on what you have and what you want to use, and be a more conscientious shopper and knitter.

Enjoy De-stashing!

©2020 Sharon Greve...Fiber Artist, Writer/Author, Historian

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A South New Jersey Farmer's Stories
Memories of Grandmom's House

by Ed Cuneo

While sitting and reading in my living room this winter, my mind was diverted by the wind that blew against the house. My first response was to pull the wool blanket up a little tighter to my lap. I did. But then I smiled and reflected back to a time when that sound was comforting to a young boy growing up on a farm.

I know that there are people out there who abhor winter winds. I do not happen to be one of them. It reminds of the days growing up and spending time at my grandparent's house while I was sick and home from school.

My grandparents' house is situated on a rise in the front of their property so naturally it is subject to windy conditions. The bedroom in the front of the house where I convalesced was in the direct path of the westerly blows that found their way across the farm.

There were no TVs in the bedrooms at my grandparents' house because the rule was that TV was to be used only on certain occasions such as watching the news or sports. My grandfather made the call on those programming choices. (Later in life he relaxed his iron fisted attitude as he and Grandmom watched game shows after dinner for entertainment).

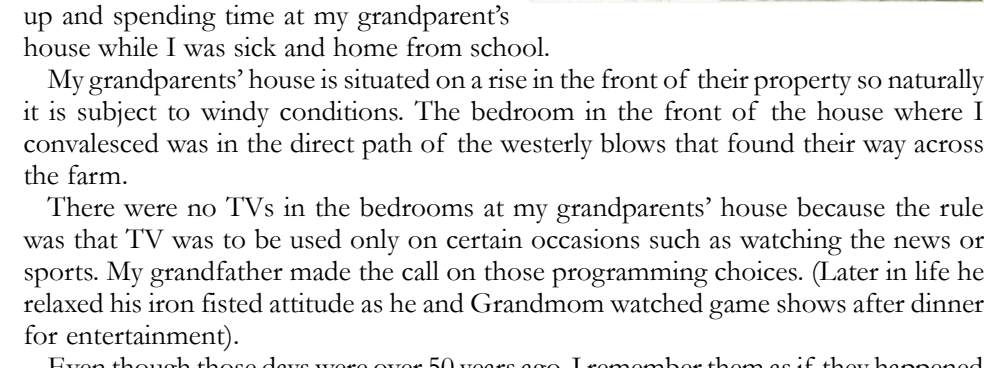
Even though those days were over 50 years ago, I remember them as if they happened yesterday. Grandmom would tuck me into bed and bring me some tea. Sometimes she would read scripture from the Bible or a story from a children's story book. Then I was expected to rest by either reading a book or sleeping.

Reading a book lasted only so long so I spent a lot of time listening to the sounds of the farm. One of those was the wind blowing, a beautiful combination of pulsating currents that blew against the storm windows, gently rattling it back and forth which caused it to whistle. It may seem to some as ominous but to me it was as gentle as a mother rocking me to sleep.

Between the homemade quilt and sheets on the bed, there was no better sleeping pill. And when I awoke the sickness most of the time was gone or on its way to making me feel better.

The rhythm of the weather has always been a welcoming occurrence to me. Whether it was the wind that blows against the house, sleet banging off the siding or rain pelting the roof in the middle of the night, these sounds provide a sound track that is comforting.

I've read where it has been suggested that this is a primal reaction to a time when our ancestors had to live with the natural causes of the Earth. Maybe one of my ancestors found it to be a time of great reflection like I do. So, it may be it is in the genes. But I like to think that a combination of a grandmother's love, a warm bed and secure home make those natural sounds more alluring.



—Ed Cuneo is a "Jersey Farm Boy" born and raised and still residing in Southern New Jersey with his wife, Teresa, daughter Anna and her rescue dog Henry. A retired school teacher, he owns the last 14 acres of his grandparents' farm where he has a market garden which serves as much as a place of quiet reflection as it does for its bountiful food supply.



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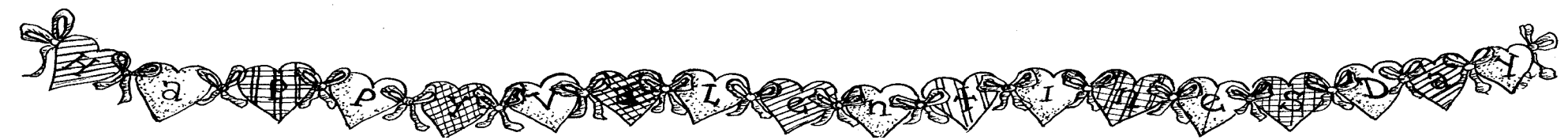
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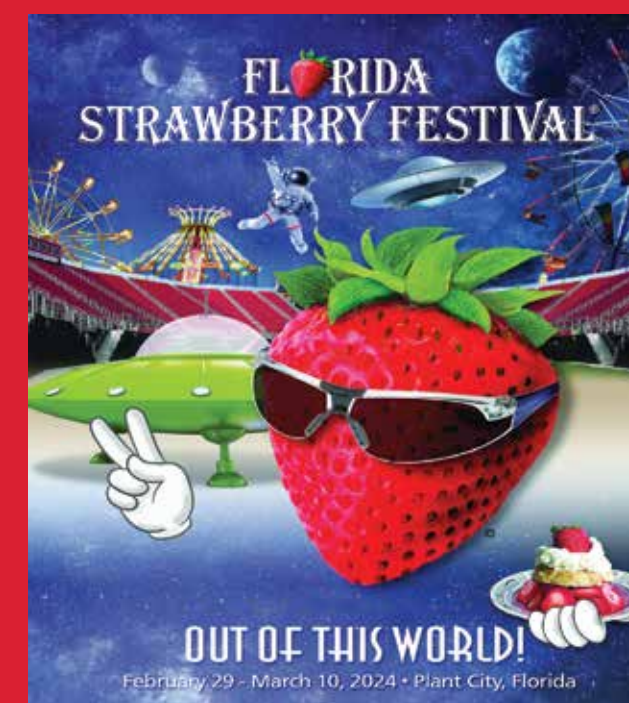


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Life in Skunk Hollow

by Julie A. Druck

The Journey & Joys of Journaling

Recently I was reading through an old magazine and came across an article the author had written about her journey of journaling through the years. As I read the article, many similar thoughts and experiences came to mind. Journaling has been a journey for me as well.

My first journal had a lock on it – you know the kind, the quintessential little diary for girls. It was pale yellow with, I believe, a chipmunk on the front. I probably began recording my days in that diary about sixth grade or so. Thinking back, I can't remember what the inspiration was for me to begin recording thoughts and events. I do know that being someone who, "with much fear and trembling," refers to herself as a writer, I probably began because I can't NOT write. Unfortunately, that diary no longer exists. Many years ago, before I was somewhat comfortable in my own skin, I got rid of most of the journals I kept during my school years. I regret that now, but at the time, they were just too painful to read. That's one thing I now see as an advantage to journaling: you can watch, or rather read, the progression of a human being growing into themselves. But I've found that it is easier to look at the progression after having lived long enough to know who I am and being content with who I am becoming.

I did keep one journal from my growing-up years. It's a small black journal with a flowered cover that my high school French teacher gave me as a bon voyage gift. At 15, I was given the tremendous opportunity of touring Europe, playing concerts in an orchestra. I recorded the sights and sounds of London, Paris, and Salzburg, though little of my actual impressions and reflections of what I experienced. One not only deepens as a human, but one's journaling deepens as well.

The bulk of my journals are from the last two decades – recording the memories of raising three little boys and now my experiences of mid-life and grandmothing. I'm always amazed how pulling out an old journal and losing myself in the entries can transport me back in time to the feelings of those days – yet another joy of journaling.

As I contemplated all these things, I decided to make a little list of all the different benefits that I've found in recording my experiences. I'm sure there are more but here are just a few: obviously, to remember and re-live moments; to cultivate thankfulness; to learn and process lessons and experiences; to make sense of one's world; to vent and release difficult feelings; to serve as a resource to look to for future inspiration and to substantiate when events took place; to keep dear ones "alive" by being reminded of their influence; and simply, to pay attention.

A time or two in the past, I have stopped journaling for a while. I doubted if there was purpose in it, if it was worth my time. As you may infer from the previous paragraph, I no longer doubt the value of recording my days. Instead, I look forward to discovering more joys of journaling along the way . . .

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



Sebring

The Mariner's Compass Quilt Pattern

by Rachel Greco

During the early to mid-1800s, Mariner's Compass quilt patterns were very popular. According to Quilt Historian Barbara Brackman, they were among the earliest named quilting designs in America. These quilt blocks are quite intricate and require skill in setting them together so that they lay flat. Other names for this type of quilt block include Rising Sun, Sunburst, Chips and Whetstones, and Sunrise.



Instead of originating from a square design, Mariner's Compass quilts are created from a circle with radiating points. The number of radiating points and designs vary, but they usually contain from sixteen to thirty-two radiating points or rays. This quilt pattern may have originated in 18th Century England, with the earliest documented Mariner's Compass style of quilt found in Britain. It is not known whether this quilt was actually called a Mariner's Compass, as documentation accompanying it showed a date of 1726, but did not include a name.

Although the exact design source is not currently known, it is highly possible that these types of quilts have their origins in the wind rose, a meteorological and nautical design element that is often found on compasses, maps, and monuments.

Maps and nautical charts often included a compass rose for displaying the orientation of cardinal directions, as well as their intermediate points. Sometimes called wind rose or Rose of the Winds, the compass rose is found in almost all navigational systems, including nautical charts, non-directional beacons, omnidirectional range systems, and global positioning systems.

The wind rose, along with the similarly designed compass star, was very ornate. At a time when sailors heavily depended on the wind for navigation, the wind rose was used to show cardinal directions—east, west, south and north—as well as intermediate directions. They contained from four to thirty-two points and were featured on charts and maps from as early as the 1300s.

Early American quilts with the mariner's compass style of design were most often found near the Atlantic Coast where the shipping and fishing industries were centered, thus giving credence to the idea that the nautical wind rose was used as inspiration for the quilt block.

The skill level required to create a quilt block resembling a wind rose increases depending on how many points the block contains. The more points a block has, the harder it becomes to piece each sharp point.

Today, the Mariner's Compass style of quilt block can be created using paper piecing methods, making it much easier to construct than those made by hand in the 19th Century.

-Rachel Greco owns Grandma's Attic, a traditional quilt shop and a large on-line store in Dallas, Oregon. She has written several books and patterns and runs Grandma's Quilt Club, a monthly quilt class where participants collect quilt blocks, learn about quilt history, and make new friends. Learn more at https://grandmasatticquilting.com.

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Building Harmony Working From Home
by Jeff Cappis

Writer's block. This is the worst thing a writer can experience. I'm lucky enough to be able to work from home on our acreage. I have hills and trees outside my office window to inspire me, which is good, because life out here is what I write about. Our experiences out here give me a wealth of material, but lately I've been having trouble getting started. I can't seem to get the ideas to flow. I actually lose sleep over it.

This morning, after only 3 hours sleep, I was awakened by the sound of a jackhammer. At first, I thought it was a city crew doing road work, but then it occurred to me; we live on a gravel road, nobody uses jackhammers out here and we haven't seen a road crew for years. I got up and went to look around. The sound led me outside.

As it turns out, there was a woodpecker trying to peck a hole into our house! Tired and grumpy, I tossed some gravel at him and he flew off. Now I couldn't sleep, so I poured a coffee and went back to my computer. Still the ideas weren't coming. After 30 minutes of staring at a blank screen (and

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getting more depressed), the jackhammer came back.

I went outside and tossed some more gravel at the bird on the roof. He took off. With a low grumble I stomped back inside to my blank screen to get more depressed. Not for long though, soon Jack was back and I wound up going outside again, tossing more gravel.

This went on all morning. We were beginning to have more gravel on the roof than in the driveway. Every time I went back to the computer, I was madder and more determined to get some kind of story written.

By noon my blood was boiling, still no story on the computer. I'd had 4 cups of coffee (and had to go to the bathroom), and that @#%\$ bird was

continued on page 21



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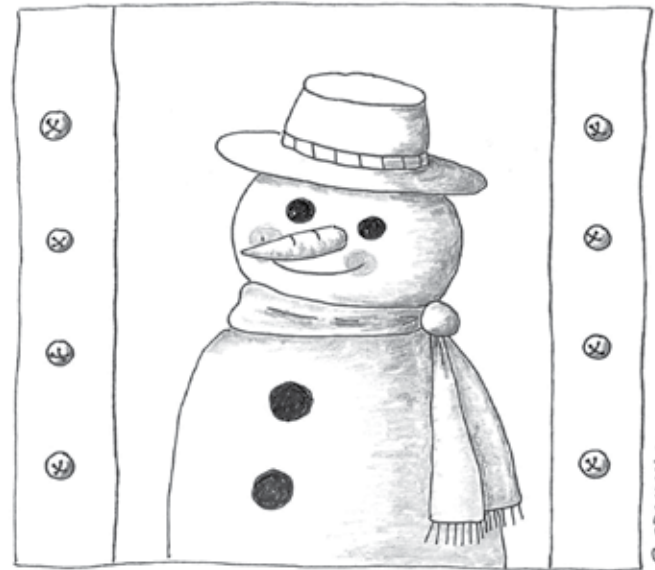
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Building Harmony, cont. from page 19

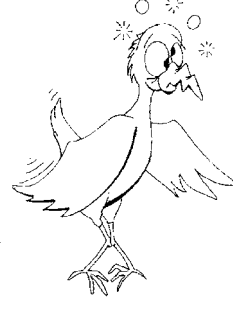
hammering on my house again. I snapped! Going outside once more, I was determined to blast that bird back to the stone age once and for all! I picked up a good size rock and swung back... then I had to stop.

Taking aim, my eyes locked on him and I noticed something for the first time that morning. What I saw was a beautiful red, black and yellow little bird. I hadn't really looked at him before. Perched on the very edge of the house he just looked at me innocently. I dropped the rock. A calm came over me when I realized that this fragile little creature was just trying to make a home for his family or maybe the constant knocking was a mating call. If it was, he must have been very desperate. He had no idea this was my house, the poor devil was probably just trying to get by. Just like me. I finally felt at peace with the world around me. It was nice.

I guess Jack felt differently. He kicked down some gravel, squawked real loud, and pointed his butt at me. Then he went back to hammering with a vengeance. All I could do was watch. As he slammed away, his head was a blur. He wacked at that house with his beak for 20 minutes. Then he stopped, staggered around the roof and fell off into a bush. Last time I saw him, he was wobbling down the driveway trying to get his bearings.

The steel gutter he'd been banging on was undamaged.

Now I find myself back staring at a blank screen on the computer and banging my head on the desk. I sure hope I can come up with something to write about.



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ROAD SIGNS—Flipping the Page to 2024

As we wind down the 2023 clock and look to the 2024 calendar, visual reminders can help us on the journey ahead. I need road signs to help me slow down, stop, or turn around on the road of life. Maybe as you literally drive down streets, you can use these signs to prompt just that.

SPEED LIMIT. What if every speed sign cautioned us to pace ourselves. We often have to change our speed. This is a great reminder to evaluate if we're going at the wrong pace. Too many times I take life as well as the road a little faster than what is good for me. The pace is harmful and dangerous to those around me and to myself. Shifting over to the slow lane might be the best action I could take.

SLOW. Some signs are just that obvious. This sign demands immediate action. Evaluate why you need to put on the brakes and how you can do that. Then take a deep breath and exhale slowly. Appreciate the passing moments and smile at those around.

U TURN. Sometimes we need a helpful do-over. We've probably all gone the wrong way once or twice in our lives. It's encouraging to realize next year can prompt us to turn around and begin again. What things didn't work for you? Turn away from them and try another tactic or direction. You can always have another chance! Take the challenge, make a U turn, and appreciate your trip from another angle.

DETOUR. The detour sign can bring frustration. It means adding time and distance to our route. If we're already in a hurry, we can agonize over lost minutes. But what if the detour was the best and most valuable leg of our journey? What if we looked at it as an opportunity to experience new scenery? What we learn on a detour is often the best information. Celebrate the changes in your life next time you see a detour sign.

YIELD. My husband and I have a sign on our bathroom cabinet door: Value Relationship Over Winning the Argument. There are times that a YIELD is necessary. What is won by jockeying with the driver in the next lane for the front position? Nothing, really. What is won by proving another person wrong with links and statistics if the person isn't going to change their mind and it's over something trivial? Let them stay in their lane and leave them alone.

NO PARKING. There are times to rest or slow down and times to move ahead. Are you in PARK without motivation to pull out into traffic? Are you afraid to try something new? The New Year might be the perfect time to consider putting your life in gear and moving ahead.

ROAD WORK AHEAD. You can expect road work in your life. These experiences will shape you into who you are tomorrow. It isn't always the beautifully joyful moments that crystallize your personality and values. Sometimes it's mistakes and waiting. Ruth Bell Graham, wife of Billy Graham, was driving along a highway through a construction sight with detours and cautionary signs. The last sign read: END OF CONSTRUCTION. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE. Arriving home, she told her family, "When I die, I want that engraved on my stone."

2023 is not a DEAD END. It's not even a hard stop. It's merely turning the corner to a new year, flipping a page to 2024, and considering what road signs will impact your future journey in life.

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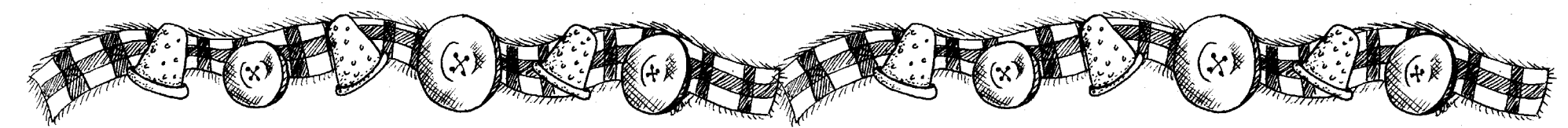
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

































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



























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How Quilting Can Promote Relaxation and Mindfulness

By Steve Baker

We all know what quilting is, but let's explore how quilting can promote relaxation and mindfulness and share tips for incorporating these practices into your quilting routine.

The Benefits of Mindfulness in Quilting

In today's circles where mental and physical health are so important, we hear a great deal about mindfulness. It is the conscious practice of being thoroughly present and engaged in the current moment. It involves non-judgmental awareness of your thoughts, feelings and physical sensations. When you practice mindfulness, you're able to let go of distractions and focus on the task at hand. This can lead to a range of benefits, including reduced stress and anxiety, improved emotional regulation and increased coping skills.

The Comfort of Repetition

One of the key ways that quilting promotes mindfulness is through the repetition of simple, familiar motions. When you quilt, you may find yourself repeating the same stitch pattern or motion over and over again. At first, this may seem tedious or monotonous, but over time, it becomes a soothing, comforting process. Repetition is comforting because it creates a predictable rhythm that you can rely on. It can be particularly helpful when you're feeling stressed or anxious, as it provides a sense of stability and routine.

Practical Tips for Practicing Mindfulness While Quilting

If you're looking to incorporate more mindfulness into your quilting practice, here are a few practical tips to keep in mind.

1. Create a Comfortable Space: The environment you quilt in can have a big impact on how relaxed and present you feel. Create a comfortable, inviting space that feels safe and soothing to you. You may want to add soft lighting, calming music, or other elements that help you to feel relaxed and focused.

2. Choose Simple Projects: When you're first starting out with mindful quilting, it can be helpful to choose simple, repetitive projects that allow you to settle into a meditative rhythm. A straight-forward patchwork quilt or simple block pattern can be a great starting point.

3. Breathe: Breathing exercises can be a helpful way to relax and center yourself before and during your quilting practice. Start with a few deep, slow breaths before you begin to center your thoughts and continue to focus on your breath throughout the process. This takes practice so be forgiving and understanding with yourself when you lose focus.

4. Take Breaks: While quilting can be a soothing and meditative practice, it's also important to take breaks when you need them. If you're feeling tired or overwhelmed, step away from your project for a few minutes and do something else. Take a walk, read a book, or simply sit quietly and breathe. Returning to your quilting project with a fresh mind can help you to feel more engaged and energized.

Quilting is a wonderful way to promote mindfulness and relaxation but like all new skills, it takes practice. Give yourself grace during the process. It doesn't matter if you're a long-time quilter or a beginner, adding mindfulness to your quilting practice can help you to achieve greater emotional balance and wellbeing.

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

By the Yard by Jennifer Lopez
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 *Submitted by Jennifer S. of Hobart, IN

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Sometimes the Sweetness of Life Bends You in Half

by Kerri Habben Bosman

Late last year, I began a special project. My husband, Wayne, and I were driving home from Wisconsin after a visit with his 102-year-old mother. He asked me how many essays I had written over the years and suggested that Mom would love to read all of them.

And just like that, I was finally inspired to put together a book of twenty years of essays. I have thought of doing this many times before, but as happens with me, bringing happiness to someone I love galvanizes me into action.



In 2003 I began writing what I called "Compass Points." My dad would have turned 90 that year. In my rereading, I discovered a somewhat inept attempt at creative nonfiction. I winced a bit at the sheer sentimentality of it, but I was also affirmed reading my tribute to him. I felt a flash of grief so intense it revitalized me because for a moment, I could feel the entire journey.

Thankfully, over the next ten years, each of the ensuing forty essays steadily improved. And a style developed. Although each piece is different, common themes emerged. Every one carries layers of joy, gratitude and love.

I used some of these essays as a portfolio, which brought further writing assignments, including becoming a part of The Country Register publications in 2012. Along the way, the style of these articles grew both more concise and cohesive.

As I prepared the book, it took extensive restraint not to change very much. For this version, I wanted each piece to be an authentic representation of who I was when it was written. If I made everything perfect, Mom wouldn't feel the whole story. And neither would I.

The specific details carried me back to a time when both my own mother and grandmother were living. I could fully feel the moments, yet it was also like watching a movie. On the surface each essay appears to be about me, but they are also about people I treasured. Their precious presences linger softly between the lines.

"Sometimes the sweetness of life bends you in half. In those moments you are utterly and fully alive. When you stand up again, you are stronger, breathe more deeply, and experience the world with kinder eyes." I've felt this with many emotions and experiences since, even though I originally wrote those words in the second article after my mother died.

And in the ensuing 28 articles the next chapters of my life pour forth. Described in them is how I lived on my own and then the life that Wayne and I share together. I write about him and the family I love like my own. Including grandchildren who become frequent "characters." Most of them are teenagers now, and as I reread the articles I realize anew how quickly and how much they've grown.

And, of course, the Mom that inspired me putting a book together is vibrantly there as well. Presently this book is in the works as a surprise for her. She embraces me and everyone with so much love, which brings me to what I've discovered during my project.

I've learned that the details of my life may have changed over the course of twenty years, but that the root of who I am is the same. I still count my blessings every day. I still believe life doesn't have to be perfect to be ideal.

Mostly I have learned that I love exactly the same way. Only with a deeper sense of how huge love truly is. With an open, grateful heart it only grows more. It expands with a redeeming sweetness that sometimes bends me in half.

-Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer living in Chapel Hill, NC. Her email is 913jeves@gmail.com.

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 recipe by Patti Lee Bock of New Ulm, MN

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 1 tsp salt 10.5 oz can cheddar cheese soup
 16 oz elbow macaroni 1 cup colby cheese - shredded
 3 cups milk 2 cups cheddar cheese - shredded and divided

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease 9x13 baking dish with 1 tablespoon butter. Cook macaroni according to box directions. Let drain while you cook the sauce. Combine milk, remaining butter, velveeta and cheese soup. Cook about 10 minutes on medium heat to make sure everything is melted. Stir often. Pour cheese sauce over macaroni. Add colby cheese and 1 cup of cheddar cheese. Stir to combine. Put in casserole bowl and top with remaining cheese. Bake 20-30 minutes.

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Making Choices Brings Change For The New Year

Sometimes it seems as if all the wise sayings in the world have already been said by those old standbys: the Bible, Einstein (Did the man ever say anything useless?), Confucius, various Greeks who all seemed to be philosophers, and the wisest people known universally as "Mom" and "Anonymous".
As one year ends and another enters, I realize that Mom and "Anonymous" have given me some of the best guidance.

-©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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