

# *The Florida Register*

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May & June 2024

*Annual  
Gardening  
Edition*



# The Florida Register

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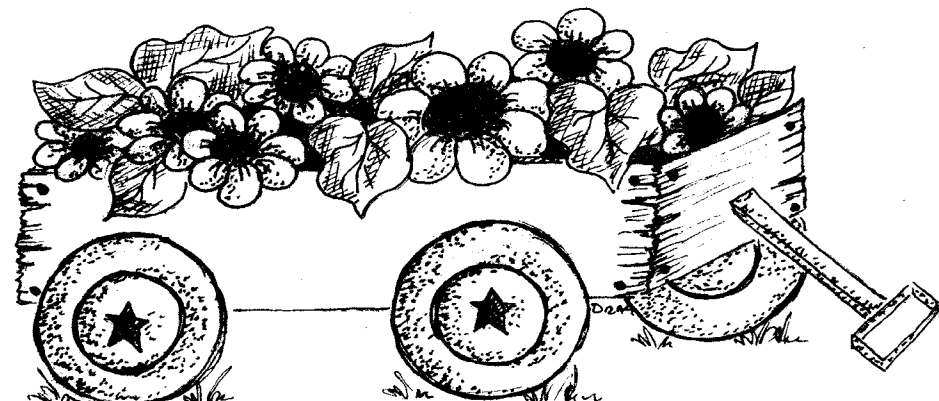
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# The Florida Register

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## Just A Note...

Welcome to sunny May and June. We hope you enjoy getting out to visit the shops advertising in this issue or shop with them online.

The May/June timeframe seems to be full of gift giving events: Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduations, weddings, teacher gifts, and the list goes on. Please remember to visit the shops advertising in this issue so the shop owners can help you find that perfect gift for your special someone (and don't forget a gift for yourself – while you are shopping). Or if you can't decide what to give, most of the advertising shops offer gift certificates. So spread the news of your favorite shop by giving a gift certificate.



Amy, Grace, David and Rachel

Remember that the businesses advertising with us this issue and every issue need your support! Whether it's shopping in person or online ordering – please shop local and let them know you read about them in our publication. Our publication exists because the shop owners have placed ads. We want to thank you, our readers, for well, being loyal readers and shoppers. We also want to thank our advertisers who continue to make this paper possible.

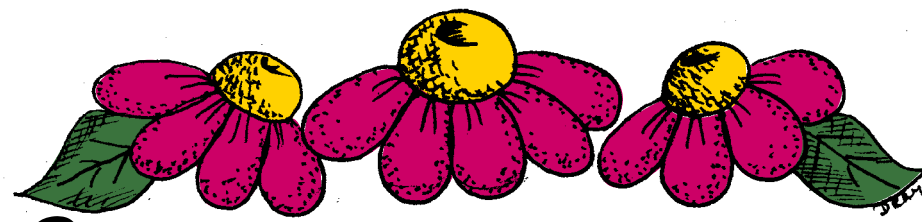
If you know of a great shop that isn't advertising with us, but should be, please email [pauline@theregisterweb.com](mailto:pauline@theregisterweb.com) with that shop's name, phone number and address so we can send them a copy of the paper. Also please visit our Facebook page and become a fan! We frequently post updates on shops and other tidbits of information.

Rachel is back out in Colorado for a couple of months before her next East Coast rotation. She has started her spreadsheet to compare her options for being hired as an Anesthesiologist Assistant after her December graduation. Grace finished her freshman year at UGA (that went by fast!). She really excelled in her classes, made amazing friends and had a lot of fun. She's got a busy summer planned.

Thank you for reading this issue. Feel free to pick up a second copy and share it with a friend. Our July/August issue will be out in late June/early July – just in time for you to take that issue with you visiting shops throughout the summer.

Happy May & June to you and enjoy using our publication as your guide to the best shopping and events. Enjoy Shopping!

Amy & David



## Shows & Events

### July/August events due by June 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. 12)
- Mon-Sat 5:30 pm ..... Quilts and Lace (pg. 25)
- Tuesdays 6 pm ..... Inspire Quilting & Sewing (pg. 16)
- Wednesdays 7 pm ..... Crafty Quilters (pg. 15)
- Fridays 9 am ..... Boutique 4 Quilters (pg. 28)
- Fridays 3:30 pm ..... Quilted Twins (pg. 12)
- Fridays 5 pm ..... Sweet Darling Quilts (pg. 17)

### May

- April 29-11 ..... 53rd Anniversary Celebration at Margie's Sew Much Fun in Crestview (pg. 4)
- 1-18 ..... Mother's Day Specials at Nana's Quilt Shop in Brooksville (pg. 16)
- 1-31 ..... 2nd Anniversary Celebration with Daily Specials at Sweet Time Quilting in Sebastian (pg. 25)
- 2-18 ..... Trunk Show of Atomic Ranch Hand-dyed Fabrics at Brick City Cross Stitch in Ocala (pg. 6)
- 15-31 ..... Bernina Spring Sale at Stitcher's Quest in Mary Esther (pg. 3)
- 18 ..... Georgia JugFest and Old Knoxville Days at Old Knoxville Courthouse in Knoxville, GA (pg. 5)
- 21-25 ..... Fabric Sale at Brick City Cross Stitch in Ocala (pg. 6)
- 24 ..... Studio 180 Design Snowdrop Pattern via Zoom with Quilts and Lace in Melbourne (pg. 25)

### June

- 4-8 ..... Pattern Sale at Brick City Cross Stitch in Ocala (pg. 6)
- 10-12 ..... Batik Bash at Beyond the Stitches in Crystal River (pg. 6)
- 29-30 ..... Stampfest at RP Funding Center in Lakeland (pg. 13)

### July

- 13 ..... Bernina Top-of-Line Lunch & Learn at Stitcher's Quest in Mary Esther (pg. 3)
- 19-Aug 3 ..... Visit the participating shops during the Central Florida Shop Hop (pg. 6)

### September

- 16-20 ..... No-Frills Retreat with Sweet Darling Quilts in Lutz (pg. 17)
- 19-21 ..... QuiltFest at Prime Osborn Convention Center in Jacksonville (pg. 21)

I like think of my family as a big, beautiful patchwork quilt - each of us so different yet stitched together by love and life experiences.

Submitted by Teresa Lange in Davenport, FL

## Mary Esther, Milton, Pensacola

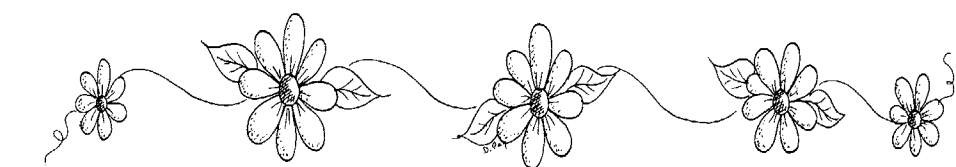
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### GIRLFRIEND WISDOM

**Sloths ...**

I LOVE SLOTHS

Sloths are the world's slowest mammals. They even have algae growing in their fur, yet they are three times stronger than humans making them pull-up world champions. Sloths are often considered lazy, but they are actually very patient and aware of their surroundings. They have an amazing sense of smell to make up for their lack of eyesight. They are completely blind in the daylight hours.

**GIRLFRIEND WISDOM: A few lessons from the Sloth might bring us more joy in our day. Slow does not mean lazy. Rest does not mean weak. Patience does not mean lack of focus. If one of our senses is challenged, highlight another one, we've been given choices.**

"Nature does not hurry, yet everything gets accomplished."

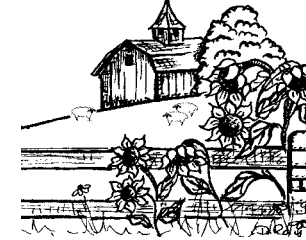
Lao Tzu Joy & Blessings. Jody

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

## Simple Pleasures Down on the Farm

by Janet Young

Growing up, one of the highlights of my childhood was looking forward to the last day of school, coupled with the dream of a summer vacation. Being a city girl from the north, I clearly did not know much about life on a farm until my family and I began to visit my paternal grandparents' farm.



Every summer, we would drive down south for a week-long vacation. Along the highway would be signs advertising Burma Shave, which I found amusing as these were the days before billboards would dot the highways. When we arrived, we were always greeted with open arms. What a week it was! This was a week like no other. It was relaxing, yet fun having new experiences all along the way.

One such experience was milking the cow. While I never got to actually milk the cow, I witnessed it first-hand. One time, as I was running behind the cow, old Daisy decided to swing her tail up-over her back in order to chase a fly away. Unfortunately, the timing couldn't have been worse for me as I was running past, her tail slapped me on the side of the face! Luckily I was ok, but it sure was a surprise.

Some other treats were riding horseback as I never rode a horse before, watching and listening to the pigs as they snorted and grunted, eating their "food" for the day. Another time we were in the field where there were some cows. The next thing we knew, they were running after us, so you better believe we ran on our little legs as fast we could, and over the fence we went.

After some of the chores were done, Granddad would load us in the back of the pick-up truck, (yes, without seatbelts,) and down the country road we would go to the country store for a "soda-pop". What a treat on a hot summer day. Our evenings we spent sitting on the front porch eating watermelon, or sometimes eating the home-made ice cream we made from the crank-style ice cream-maker. In the morning, we would be greeted by grandma's home-made biscuits that had been baked in an old-fashioned wood stove. Warm from the oven, and covered with butter, they were the perfect way to start the day.

The memories of yesteryear are very precious for me because that was a time that is long gone...an era of simple pleasures. So, while my grandparents have been gone for quite a while, I still have those memories of my summer vacation on the farm. And even though they were simple pleasures, it was a part of their everyday life that I got to experience and enjoy. And, for that I will be forever grateful.

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

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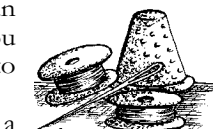
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## Round Robin Quilts

by Judy Sharer

A round robin quilt is made with friends. The quilt is a lot of fun to make never knowing exactly how it will look in the end. If you are in a quilt group or have a social group of friends that meet to sew this could be a great project.



There are two ways to do a round robin. As a single quilt with a theme passed from person to person or as individual quilts. Individual quilts start with each person in the group making a center block of the quilt top. That person chooses the fabric colors, and can even give each member a cut of fabric to use to tie the fabrics and colors together as they add to the block to make it grow into a completed piece of art.

Whenever a quilt top is in your possession, you choose what to add to all four sides of the piece. Each quilt is usually passed within the group one time around the circle of members as the masterpiece grows. A certain time frame for the piece to be passed to the next person is set by the group. As you exchange the quilt top the group decides whether to show the progress that's been made or keep it a secret until the end to show the owner of the original block.

I have been involved in making several round robin quilts and it's always fun and I must admit, a little nerve-wracking. Sometimes I worry if the original owner will like what I've added to their piece and often waited on pins and needles to see what mine will look like in the end.

One of the members in our small group was pregnant and the girls and I decided to make a round robin baby quilt to surprise her. You could also do a round robin quilt with family members as a birthday present, or make one for a family reunion. Clubs can also use this method to make a raffle quilt. Regardless if it's for yourself or to give away, give it a try! This technique is a fun and exciting project to make with friends.

Judy Sharer is the author of a historical family saga sweet 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 [judysharer.com](http://judysharer.com) and follow her on Facebook and Twitter. Please leave a book review if you enjoy the writing.

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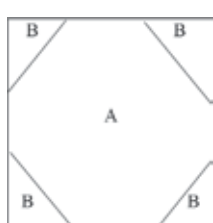
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**Mystery? Quilt**

Part 3 of 3

**Version 2 - Let's Add a Few Things!**  
With this part, we're going to expand upon the above idea and add some movement. We're going to add, essentially, two borders. I'll do each border separately, giving the option of sizes. If, after adding rows and the first border, you decide this is the size you want, then you're done. You can quilt and bind as desired.

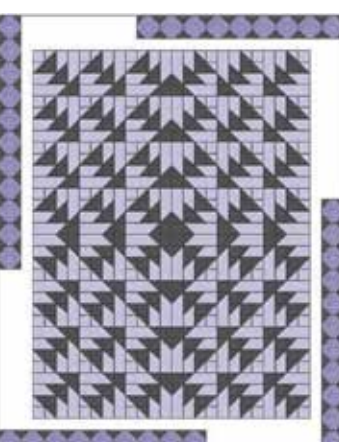
If you want the second border, which gives more movement and a finished size of 60 x 76, then continue with the instructions. Read the instructions carefully before starting the next steps and refer to the Diagram as you need. Are you ready?  
Fabric Requirements for Extra Rows and First Border:  
This was given initially, but just as a reminder...  
**Fabric A** - 2 yards  
**Fabric B** (dark) - 1/2 yard  
**Binding** (dark) - 3/4 yard  
**Making the Block:**  
- Read through these instructions BEFORE doing the next steps. It will make more sense.  
- For this part, make 12 more of the block in Part 1, using the instructions already given.  
- Lay out the already pieced 48 x 48 quilt top and, following the design already in place, add a row of 6 blocks to the top of the quilt top and 6 blocks to the bottom of the quilt top. At this point, your quilt top should be six (6) rows across and eight (8) rows down.  
**First Border Fabric:**  
2 - 2 1/2 x 48 1/2 strip of Fabric A  
2 - 2 1/2 x 68 1/2 strip of Fabric A  
- Right sides together, sew a 2 1/2 x 48 1/2 strip on the top and bottom. Set seams and press open.  
- Right sides together, sew a 2 1/2 x 68 1/2 on each side. Set seams and press open.  
**Second Border - Snowball Blocks & Strips:**  
**Snowball Block** (Make 40 blocks)  
**Cut** (per block):  
1 - 4 1/2 x 4 1/2 inch of Fabric A  
4 - 1 1/2 x 1 1/2 inch of Fabric B  
- On the wrong side of the Fabric B, 1 1/2 x 1 1/2 blocks, draw a diagonal line.  
- Placing right sides together, place a Fabric B block in the corner of the Fabric A, 4 1/2 x 4 1/2, matching the corners. Sew on the diagonal line. Repeat for each corner of the Fabric A block. See Diagram.  
- Set the seams you just made and then press each B back to meet the corner.  
- Make sure the finished blocks measure 4 1/2 x 4 1/2. Make 40 of these blocks.



**Happy Memorial Day!**

**Watch the Magic**  
Mystery Quilt - 2024  
Designed by Ann Jones, Nevada, MO  
If you have any questions contact Erica at Nine Patch Quilt & Fabrics, Nevada, MO  
ericaskouby@gmail.com or 417-667-7100. Miss one of the parts?  
Email Pauline@theregisterweb.com

**Connecting Strips:**  
**Cut:** 2 - 4 1/2 x 24 1/2 inch strips of Fabric A  
2 - 4 1/2 x 28 1/2 inch strips of Fabric A  
- Sew 10 snowball blocks together. Set seams and press open, either side. Set aside. Do the same thing with another 10 snowball blocks.  
- Right sides together, attach a 4 1/2 x 24 1/2 strip of Fabric A to one end of a 10 snowball "chain." Repeat for the second snowball chain. Set seams and press towards the strip of Fabric A.  
- Right sides together, we're going to sew to either side of the quilt top. Pin the snowball chain plus fabric strip to the left side, starting with the snowball block end. It's important that you start here and make sure the snowball block lines up even with the edge of the quilt. Set the seam and press towards the snowball/fabric strip side.  
- Repeat this for the other side, but start with pinning the snowball edge to the bottom edge of the right side. (It will be opposite of what the other side is.) Set the seam and press towards the snowball chain/fabric strip side.  
- Next, we're going to construct the top and bottom borders. Sew 9 snowballs together. Set seams and press either side. To this, right sides together, sew a 4 1/2 x 28 1/2 strip of Fabric A. Set seam and press towards the strip. Lastly, right sides together, sew one snowball to the end of the strip. Set seam and press towards the strip of Fabric A. Repeat this step so you have two sets.  
- To the top of the quilt, right sides together, pin together starting with the single snowball block to the top left side, making sure the snowball blocks match. Set seam. Press towards the snowball chain.  
- To the bottom of the quilt, right sides together, pin together starting with the single snowball block to the bottom right side of the quilt top, making sure the snowball blocks line up. Set seam. Press towards the snowball chain.



This finishes the quilt top. Quilt as desired and bind.  
Hope you enjoyed this Mystery Quilt!

### Chiefland, Keystone Heights, Lake City and Georgia

**Georgia JugFest**  
And  
**OLD KNOXVILLE DAYS**

May 18, 2024  
8:30-4:00 pm  
Old Knoxville Courthouse and more fun  
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### Art in All the Wrong Places

by Barbara Kalkis

It was a cloudy day in Boston when I boarded my flight and took a window seat. Despite dark clouds, I settled in for a smooth trip to the West Coast that would put my arrival in time for a late lunch. The local forecast predicted a rainstorm, but what do weather meteorologists know?

If we boarded on time, I figured we would depart before the rain hit. So much for that theory. A fierce late summer storm arrived with sleet rain, impressive bolts of lightning and booming throbs of thunder. Watching Mother Nature pound everything in her path, I was thankful that the air controllers had prevented our flight from leaving the gate, although it was clear that I wouldn't make my connection in Minneapolis.



Now, as a side note, I will pass along the handy tip that it is always wise to keep an extra change of clothing and necessities in your carry-on luggage. It is excellent advice, which I completely disregarded. I was sure nothing would happen, so four Nancy Drew mysteries that I had purchased at a used bookstore filled my bag. I mean, what could go wrong?

What went wrong is that our full Saturday flight landed in Minneapolis-St. Paul as airlines, shops and restaurants were closing or cleaning up for the night. Even the lighting had been dimmed. So much for lunch in California.

After slogging through the chaos of arranging for a taxi, hotel and dawn flight the next morning, I straggled down the hallway toward luggage claim, only to discover it was closed for the evening – with my suitcase inside. Lesson learned about extra underwear in the carry-on.

### 2 Minute Lift

by Kathy J. Sotak

#### That Time I Didn't Watch TV For a Year

Spoiler: I got grit  
 My first addiction developed at age twelve. Coming home from school, straight when I got off the bus, I'd grab a snack then switch on the heavy knob on the television (if you heard the satisfying "click" of the knob in your head just now, thank you).



My eyes were glued for the rest of the day. I usually watched two PBS kids shows then turned to sitcoms. I begrudged that 60-minute period when only news was on (national and local). Then game shows, sitcoms and prime time shows until homework and bed. I had memorized what was on every channel (we only had four) and had every day of the week planned out.

As a parent today, I now know my parents felt hopeless as they watched my curiosities and outer world dissolve. I had been stolen by another world.

My parents became desperate and creative. Out of the blue, my parents gave me a challenge: stop watching television for one whole year, then we'll reward you with \$500 cash.

FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS? As a twelve-year-old in the 1980s, I had no choice but to say a wholehearted yes!

I don't even think it was that hard – or if it was, I forgot. Each day with the knob turned off, I stepped back into this world and back into a kid. I read books, colored, played, walked, explored, then played some more. I laughed, I talked and I smiled.

When that 365-day mark came around, my parents gladly gave me five hundred dollars in exchange for my full-color life. What did I do with the cash? I contemplated buying a television as a poor prank to my parents, however I was smart and bought my first computer. It was the late 1980s, and having a computer was instrumental for me, at a time when they were just getting into homes, schools and businesses.

Have you ever done something bold, scary and a little uncomfortable? I bet you have. How did it transform you?

The success I had at age twelve gifted me with grit. Ah, you know it too.

This grit makes itself known when we need to tap into it. Grit is like a pebble stuck in your shoe but you ran the race anyway. Grit is like that coarse sandpaper that hurts as I type that sentence. Grit is not wanting to be proven wrong. Grit is not wanting to fail.

Grit is you wanting to prove it to yourself above anything else. For an inspiring display of grit, watch the movie "Nyad" on Netflix, the true story of Diana Nyad and her historic swim at age 60 from Cuba to Florida. Then let that inspire you to be the star in your own movie of grit.

Grit is why humans haven't gone extinct. (Well, grit and love. Please reach out to me if you think something else deserves a spot on this list.)

Thank you, grit. You're right there in the bottom of my shoe when I need you the most.

-Need another lift? Check out 60+ other stories at <https://2minutelif.com/>. Kathy J. Sotak, founder and writer of 2 Minute Lift, Seattle, WA 98104-2205

### Reader Shares!

### Finished Project!

The 2023 challenge had to feature something other than a love of quilting. My quilt features travels in the US, the Caribbean and Europe.

It is a 12 block art quilt. Both my husband and I used cameras and naturally we had many photos to compare as we most often did not photograph the same objects.

The quilt was presented at the annual holiday party. Members of the Citrus County Cracker Quilters voted on the challenge quilts.

Shared by J. McVaugh of Beverly Hills, FL



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### Mother's Day Trivia

by Rachel Greco

- During the 1600s, England celebrated "Mothering Sunday." Servants would visit their families and bring cakes to their mothers. This custom was called "going a mothering." Each mother received a "simmel" (fine flour) cake. Mothers would then give a blessing to their children.
- Chinese family names are often formed with a sign that means "mother" as a way of honoring their maternal ancestors.
- George Washington has been quoted as saying, "My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her."
- Native American women have been honored with the name "Life of the Nation" for their gift of motherhood to tribes.
- Eve is credited in the Bible with being the "Mother of All the Living."
- Ancient Egyptians believed that "Bast" was the mother of all cats on earth and that cats were sacred animals.
- Buddha said, "As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, loves and protects her child, so let a man cultivate love without measure toward the whole world."
- Mother Goose is one of the most popular of all authors for children. Her books and stories have been loved for several generations.
- Some African tribes call themselves "Maharis," which means "Mother-hoods."
- Nine years after Mother's Day was made an official holiday, Anna Jarvis, who had campaigned so hard to make it possible, filed a lawsuit to try to stop the over-commercialization of Mother's Day. She lost her case. Today, cards, letters, candy, and dinners out mark Mother's Day for most families. It had been Anna's hope that the day was one of reflection and quiet prayer by families thanking God for all that mothers had done.

-Rachel Greco owns Grandma's Attic, a traditional quilt shop in Dallas, Oregon. A quilt historian, she gives talks on needlework, the role of women in American history, and their connection to fabric. She has written several books and patterns and runs Grandma's Quilt Club, a monthly quilt class where participants collection blocks, learn about quilt history and make new friends. Learn more at <http://grandmasatticquilting.co>.

**RAY and BUBBA**

Ray & Bubba (Arkansas mechanical engineers) were standing at the base of a flagpole, looking up. A woman walked by and asked what they were doing.

"We're supposed to find the height of the flagpole," said Bubba, "but we don't have a ladder."

The woman took a wrench from her purse, loosened a few bolts, and laid the pole down. Then she took a tape measure from her pocket, took a measurement, announced, "Eighteen feet, six inches," and walked away.

Ray shook his head and laughed. "Ain't that just like a woman! We asked for the height and she gives us the length!"

Source Unknown  
 Courtesy of the Country Register of Michigan

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*Recipe* **Lemon Vinaigrette Dressing**  
Courtesy of Unknown Reader

**Ingredients**  
\* 2 Tbsp Olive Oil \* Pinch of Salt  
\* 2 Tbsp Lemon infused Olive Oil \* Pepper to taste  
\* 1 Tbsp Rice Vinegar  
\* 2 Tbsp White Wine Vinegar  
\* 1 Tbsp Honey  
\* Several Drops Pure Lemon Oil  
\* Juice from 1 Normal Size Lemon Wedge  
\* Several scrapes of Lemon Zest  
\* 1-2 Tbsp Water (adjust to your taste)

**Directions:**  
Whisk well & Serve

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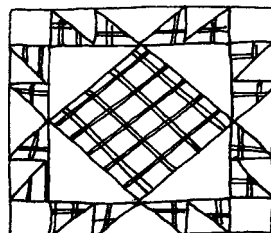



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*Quilting With Barbara* By Barbara Conquest

**The UFO**

Several years ago, I bestowed a small wall quilt upon a friend. I thought it the perfect gift for her as it featured yellow roses, her favorite flower. She liked the quilt and hung it in her home. Recently, she moved. Through a somewhat mysterious chain of events, I discovered that the quilt was lost to her. She felt badly, as did I.



What to do? Good thing that quilters have UFOs (Unfinished Objects). You might wonder how this happens. Why is a project, started with interest and enthusiasm, languishing unfinished? The reasons are many. An occasion like a wedding or birth demands the creation of a different project on a particular timeline. The quilter has learned what she wanted from starting the project and has lost interest. Encountering a new "shiny thing" has the quilter dropping everything else to answer the call of the new sparkle.

I have more than one UFO waiting for a time when it might interest me again. My oldest has been patiently waiting for, maybe, ten years. Periodically, I sort through all those projects. Those that no longer hold interest are broken down. Fabric goes back into my collection. Finished bits are donated, recycled or disposed of. Those that still speak strongly to me are stored away again waiting for the right time to be called forth and finished.

My current quandary—a new quilt gift for my friend—was resolved by using a UFO. She loves the outdoors! An avid hiker, she has completed weeklong hiking experiences, carrying everything needed and sleeping under the stars. In my UFO collection, I had a small landscape piece depicting mountains and a peaceful lake surrounded by a stand of aspen trees. I completed this piece and presented it as her holiday gift. It now hangs in her library room.

"When I look at it," she says, "I feel centered and calm. It's like looking out of a window into another place that makes me happy."

I believe that all those UFOs will, one day, find their time and purpose. I hope all of your Unfinished Objects meet with the same happy end!

—© Barbara Conquest writes her column from Blue Sky Quilting in Tofield, AB.



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*How to Make Plant Hangers with Leather*

To give your hanging garden variety, we created two different styles of DIY plant hangers: one with a cuff-style wrap (left and bottom) and another with vertical straps (top center and right). Both are simple to make with a few supplies. We cut these strips of colored leather out of items we found at a thrift store. (You can also check the scrap bin at your local fabric shop or try [districtleathers.com](http://districtleathers.com).) We even invented a trick to help you cut out the cuff-style pattern.

To make a cuff holder for any size pot, lay down your leather wrong-side up. Place the top of the pot on its side atop the leather - and roll it across. The top and bottom edges will score the hide with an arc that has just the right curve to wrap neatly around it. Trim the leather to the width you want.

After you create the leather template for the holder, you'll need leather or cotton cord in a matching color, a craft punch, scissors, and, depending on the style you pick, some brass brads, a ruler and epoxy.

**WHAT YOU WILL NEED**  
**Wrapped Leather Plant Hanger**

- Plant pot
- Pencil
- Leather sheet, wide and tall enough to wrap your pot
- Ruler
- Leather or cotton cord
- 2 brass brads
- Japanese hole punch

Lay down the leather wrong-side up. Put the pot on top on its side and roll it across. The top and bottom edges of the pot will score the leather with a rainbow-shaped arc that has just the right curve to wrap neatly around it. Trim it to the width you want for your cuff.

Cut out the arc shape, making sure it is long enough for the ends to overlap by an inch. Use a Japanese hole punch to make four evenly spaced holes along the top of the arc. Feed cord through holes.

Wrap the arc shape around the pot, punch holes into the overlapping section at ends, and secure together with brads. Knot the cord ends and hang.

**Strapped Leather Plant Hanger**

- Plant pot
- Pencil
- Leather sheet, wide and tall enough to wrap your pot
- Ruler
- Epoxy
- Leather or cotton cord

Place the pot in the center of the leather. Trace a circle around the bottom of the pot with a pencil. Put one end of the ruler in the center of the circle. Trace edges of ruler outside circle, drawing two parallel lines the length of your pot's height. (For instance, if your pot is 4 inches tall, the lines you trace outside the circle should be 4 inches long—and 4 inches past the circumference of the circle.) Repeat on the opposite side, then perpendicular to the lines you created. When you finish, you will have what looks like a circle with a cross shape behind it.

Cut the shape you've drawn out of the leather. Fold down the end of each strap and secure it with epoxy to create a loop you can thread your cord through. Let dry completely. Cut cord to desired length, thread through loops, knot, and hang.

—Article by Martha Stewart, as part of the *Growing with Martha Stewart* partnership and courtesy of <https://miraclegro.com/en-us>



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Lakeland

### Writing From Life

by Jeanette Lukowski

#### Color Theory



As I round out the last of the five Disappearing 9-Patch table runners I am making for family and friends with the same anchor fabric, I realize it's time for me to really learn some quilting Color Theory lessons.

Not suggesting that my color choices for the five different runners have been bad! I've just been really surprised by the dramatic differences between them.

My quilting practice was something I embarked on kind of by accident. As a youth, I had made most of my own clothes; my foundations began, then, with the leftovers from those projects. Sort of.

Actually, I first jumped into the pool of quilting when I purchased a quilt from a quilt store: a wall hanging with animals that still graces my living room. (Three years ago, I discovered a quilting friend in another part of the country had purchased the same kit—made with different background fabric colors—at the same time. All those years of thinking I had an "original," this was the first time I really started thinking about kits and pre-cuts.)

Anyway, although my journey began with a pre-assembled kit, I was later encouraged to use the leftovers from my garment-making days as my grandmother had—and here's the box with those practical pieces, my mother said.

Self-taught as I was, I applied my clothes-making color matching-and-coordinating skills to my quilts. Looking at just one tree at a time, I created a very colorful forest! Yep, most of the quilts I make are deemed "busy," or "vibrant," or whatever other nice euphemism kind people select. I point out how the piece next to each carries through some common color, but when you step back to look at it as a whole...the term "scrappy" quilt is often the defining label.

Sigh. My defense of being practical and using from what I have is often deemed to be great for quilts being donated to kids, or other charities, but.

I never liked the "but," because I never really understood what I was doing "wrong" in the assessor's opinion. Until I finished the fourth of the five table runners—and realized that I could not see the design when I stood a few feet back. The previous three table runners had "popped" from that same distance, because the contrast between fabrics had been greater. This, then, was my "ah HA" moment, at last.

Color theory is different between garment making and quilting. I'm sure there are lots of books, online videos, and even classes which teach these principles. (My email box might even get flooded with suggestions of sources or classes from wonderful readers once this article gets published.)

I guess I didn't realize there was so much to learn about quilting. I've heard about Blenders; I've heard about balancing out yellow in quilts. While I've heard a lot, I never understood the value [ha ha, punny] of these comments.

In the meantime, I must use up more scrappy leftovers!

© Jeanette Lukowski 2024. Jeanette is a mother, grandmother, teacher, and author who lives in Mankato, MN. She is inspired by the lives of strong women. Her email address is: [writingfromlife@yahoo.com](mailto:writingfromlife@yahoo.com)

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See the white spec on the blue paper – that's a piece of the sticky label on the bottom of a spool of thread. If a little piece like that gets stuck in the tension assembly, it holds the tension assembly open and your stitches won't be correct. The photo shows the mess of thread before the little piece was removed from the tension assembly and then the better stitching after the problem was fixed.

Great tip to clean the spool holder: use Williams Letricr Shave to clean your spool holder to eliminate any sticky residue. Electric shave is also good to use for cleaning your embroidery hoops. Just be sure to explain to your husband why your sewing room "smells so good" after using the electric shave; he may check to see who you have in your sewing closet. 😊

  
 Shared by Phyllis Wilson

**Sewing Room**

by Judy Ann Stupak

**Nice to See You Again!**

I walk into my sewing room and sit down. It's been years. Once this was my sanctuary, my place of escape. When the children went to bed, I retreated to the sewing room for an hour or two of peace. No questions. No begging. No crying. No arguments.

Each piece of fabric called my name. Even organizing it was fun. What would it become? Was it enough? Could I mix this with that? Would it look better with the body of this pattern and the sleeves of another? Should it have buttons instead of a zipper? What about beads or lace?

Most days our kitten would join me. He had his own basket. Even after he outgrew his basket and I had abandoned my precious sewing room, it continued to be his retreat. Somehow, he managed to fit his massive body into a little basket, with fur hanging over all the edges.

As a kitten though, he added joy and humor to the room. One of his favorite tricks was to grab the head of a pin, pull it out of the pincushion with his teeth and throw it as far as he could with the flick of his head. Pin by pin he would continue until there were no pins in the pincushion and a pile of pins laying on the floor.

Another favorite past time of his was to play with ribbon. My industrial-sized spools of ribbon were threaded on a rod close to the ceiling. From his perch on the table he would reach up and grab an end with his teeth. He would then jump down, run out of the room and unravel as much of the spool as he could. The work of rewinding and cleaning up was worth the humor. It was our special place.

Once this was a place of dreams. I took classes. I learned everything I could. New techniques. New equipment. Could I sell what I made? If I made 1, could I make 10? If I made 10, could I make 100? People complimented my work. Major craft shows solicited my business. Could I make an income doing what I loved?

Now everything is coated with dust. The sewing machines have turned yellow with age. Most of the things I made were given away or donated. Tools, books, and supplies line the shelves in the storage room. Paint, glass, fabric, cement, ornaments. Do I really want to do this again? Can I still create magic? My cat is now a senior. He crawls out of his basket with a dazed look and comes to sit beside me purring. Yes, I remember when this was our room.

Purge. Yes, that is what I need to do. Good-bye to the fabric and lace from the 90's. Good-bye buttons and zippers. Good-bye doll making supplies. Good-bye silk ribbon embroidery. Goodbye beads and jewelry making supplies.

But wait. Here are some quilting patterns my mom gave me. The winter before her stroke she made a quilt for each grandchild – 13 in total. My 2 children were fortunate recipients. The quilts were well used and loved. Could I duplicate her quilts? Should I try?

There is a quilt store down the street that I haven't visited for years. Maybe tomorrow, I will see if there are classes coming up. There might be a sale on fabric. Maybe even on machines. Oh boy I can't wait!

-C.J. Stupak of Winnipeg, MB, Canada

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**Stories of a Farm Wife**

by Tammy Page

**Cool Beans**

I grew up in a time "1960's and 70's" when growing a big garden was not out of the ordinary. Even city dwellers had small gardens in the corner of their yard. A lot of my mom's friends, and moms of friends were stay at home moms or off in the summer months and could dedicate time to gardening. My mom grew up during the depression and with 6 kids in her family, my grandma had to grow a garden or go hungry.



Mom and Dad planted a large garden until they were in their 70's. She would can everything from green beans to potatoes to pickles. The kitchen would be a mad house on days of canning. First the veggies had to be picked, and then broken up. The corn had to be picked and shucked and the cucumbers washed and peeled and sliced. My sisters and I were assigned each a job. I think the most back breaking job was bending over to pick the bush beans. I was never so happy than to pick that last of the season bunch and be able to pull up the entire vines.

It always seemed like it was the hottest day of the summer when we were picking vegetables out of the garden. It showed by the sweat dripping down our faces and the sting of it as it dripped into our eyes. My mom could be out in that sun for hours in the heat and it didn't seem to bother her. My husband laughs today thinking of her out in the garden in a halter top, shorts and flip flops with her rear up in the air. She was one of the hardest working people I have ever known and took very good care of us. My dad ran the tiller especially after he let mom try to run it once and it took off with her in tow down a row. She didn't try again after that. My dad worked long hours on the 3-11 shift at GM and would be up early the next morning out in the garden weeding.

Mom canned everything in the garden that was not eaten fresh. She canned green beans, corn, potatoes and even made sauerkraut once from her fresh cabbage. That process was long and it smelled awful. She rarely complained but diligently worked her way eliminating weeds from row by row of home-grown vegetables. I've seen my mom and dad toil and sweat for hours to get all the weeds chopped down and the entire garden watered, sometimes carrying heavy five-gallon buckets of water to each row.

Growing up I had never eaten store-bought green beans, pickles or frozen corn on the cob because we always had plenty from our garden to last us through the winter until the next garden was planted and we ate the new crop.

As a young mom myself, I gardened and canned too. It was just something you were expected to do. As I got older and the kids had grown, I gave it up. The last time I used my huge Presto canner in 1999, I ended up canning 45 quarts of green beans and 45 quarts of tomato juice. The next spring at my annual garage sale, I sold my canner and said hello to Del Monte green beans. I still can't get them to taste as good as the home-grown blue lakes.

To this day, my 87-year-old mother in law still cans tomatoes, pickles and harvests a small garden of lettuce, radishes, beans and potatoes. Everything fresh from a garden tastes so much better, don't you think?

-C. 2024. Tammy Page writes from her family farm. She enjoys collecting, spending time with family and writing about her experiences.

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### Feeling Lucky?

by Barbara Polston

Do you frequent thrift stores, estate sales, antique shops, and the like? I have been known to visit a variety of places where goods are resold. Generally, I am in search of vintage linens. I am drawn to chemical lace doilies, linens with well-wrought embroidery and anything textile I can envision upcycling. My linen closet contains a large box chock full of lovely things that I consult when planning a new sewing project.

Most thrift shops, at least in my geography, are run to support the work of a charity. The items found for sale are generally donated by the public and resold to support the work of the charity running the shop. In addition to buying, I am also a donor. A couple of times a year, I purge clothing and housewares, gather up the things that no longer fit or I will no longer use and deliver them to the charity shop.

My social media feed shows me lots of videos with a "Go Thrifting with Me" theme. In the videos, some shoppers show you what they found and how they styled it. Some are resellers, showing you what they paid, and how much it fetched upon resale. Some folks are just happy to have found their "white whale."

It is fascinating to me that some of these shoppers make a full-time living visiting thrifts and reselling their finds. While that might sound like fun, I believe that anything done with daily repetition for income stops being fun and becomes work. I would worry that the "good stuff" would run out, or items I chose would not sell and I would be staring starvation in the face! But I am envious of some of the things people find, whether it's to resell or for their own use. Is it just a matter of luck or dedicated pursuit? Whatever it is, I have been feeling a pull to go thrifting.

My son-in-law works for a nonprofit organization that runs a thrift store as a social enterprise. Their clients staff the shop to gain recent work experience. He asked me if I would make this shop the recipient of our donations. This week, on my first-time visit, I dropped off a trunk full of things. While there, I thought I would see what the shop had for sale.

I spotted a lovely, white porcelain trinket box with cherubs in bas relief. Markings identified it as made by Limoges in France. It was in pristine condition and priced at just \$4. I snatched it up thinking that, if nothing else, it would make a lovely gift.

I thought this item might be worth quite a bit more than the \$4 I paid. At home, we snapped a photo and used item identifier software to discover the same boxes were selling for between \$150 and \$200! I think this was just incredible luck, especially on a first-time visit. How lucky do you feel? Go thrifting with me!

©Barbara Polston, Tucson, Arizona, March 2024. Barbara Polston, the author of *Quilting With Doilies: Inspiration, Techniques, and Projects* (Schiffer Press, 2015) and *Meet Puppy Brian, Puppy Brian and the Grey Cat*, and *Puppy Brian and Brother Vinny* ([www.puppybrian.com](http://www.puppybrian.com)), lives in Tucson, Arizona where she has failed at retirement, but getting more time to stitch in a variety of forms. Contact Barbara at [barbarapolstonquilter@gmail.com](mailto:barbarapolstonquilter@gmail.com).

## A South New Jersey Farmer's Stories

### Love of Tomatoes

by Ed Cuneo

My grandfather fell in love with tomatoes when he was a child.

His first plantings were around his mother's clothesline pole, just a few plants to keep a young boy busy and learning.

It was not unusual for people to have gardens in our area. Most of the local commercial operations today had their beginnings in a garden. It was an immigrant ancestor who got their hands dirty in a small patch of land and each successive generation built on that.

Our family was no different. It was that little plot that Grandpop first started that eventually grew into a 40-acre farm full of plum tomatoes.

Grandpop loved plum tomatoes. He always said that he felt privileged to grow plums right here in South Jersey because our acidic soil made them taste so full and sweet.

Picking the tomatoes ranked higher than growing them. He loved to pick the ripe pear-shaped fruit so much he took to calling them "my babies". I can still see this little Italian man in his white tee shirt, khaki work pants and Brogan shoes slightly bent over from a summer's worth of picking.

He was so dedicated to picking tomatoes that there were times that he didn't stop for breakfast. Grandmom brought him a cup of coffee in a glass peanut butter jar and a pepper-and-egg sandwich wrapped in wax paper as he sat on a basket and quickly devoured his meal.

Even serious injury could not stop Grandpop. Once after badly injuring his back he had my uncles lay a plank out on the row and he picked tomatoes while laying on his back!

No one seriously wanted to upend Grandpop in his role as King Tomato Picker. Once a neighbor boy was determined to outpick Grandpop, even for just one day. He and Grandpop put their heads down first thing in the morning and by the time we quit at 4 p.m., the boy had beaten Grandpop by two baskets. You would have thought the boy won the lottery as he jumped for joy and yelled, "I beat the old man! I beat the old man!" Grandpop had a slight smile on his face. Did he let him win?

Not only did Grandpop love to pick and grow his tomatoes he also loved to eat them. His favorite was a thick slice of round tomato on a piece of toasted white bread with a slice or two of American cheese on top that Grandmom then stuck in the broiler to brown slightly. She then added salt and pepper.

Interestingly, Grandpop did not like to eat his pizza with tomato sauce (some call it gravy; we called it sauce). Instead Grandmom would make a crust like a deep dish and then add anchovies with grated Parmesan cheese and slices of onion on top with oregano to cover it. I've never seen this combination outside of Grandmom's kitchen so I guess it was something that Grandpop specially requested.

Before we went commercial with our tomatoes, Grandpop had a good sized flock of chickens that he used for an egg run into South Philadelphia. Grandpop's secret tomato growing ingredient was his chicken manure which he spread and disked in.

Grandpop always went by the saying that you plant tomatoes on Mother's Day. Most of the time the weather cooperated. One spring, however, it was cold with some snowflakes. Nonetheless we gathered in the back of the 1948 GMC panel truck and sorted plants while other members of the family were busy planting.

The day he died, I brought the first tomato of the season to the hospital for him to hold. I thought it was a fitting tribute to his love for tomatoes. He clutched the fruit and smiled.

As a tribute to my grandfather, I have a small row of tomatoes every year. I guess you could say that it is truly in the blood.

—Copyright 2024 by Ed Cuneo who hails from South Jersey. He is the fourth generation on his family's farm. A retired school teacher, he spends the summers growing fruits and vegetables and daydreaming with a cold glass of lemonade enjoying the bounty of Nature's handiwork.



## Lutz, Tampa

## Overcoming Creative Blocks: A Guide for Quilters

by Steve Baker

Quilting is a creative and therapeutic activity requiring much imagination and skill. However, quilters can sometimes experience a creative block like any other creative endeavor. Writers have writer's block; similarly, quilters can also hit creative obstructions. This can be frustrating, especially when you're eager to start a new project but need help finding inspiration. So, we've pulled together some tips to help you overcome this hurdle and get back to creating beautiful quilts.

1. **Take a Break:**  
Sometimes, the best thing to do when experiencing a creative block is to step away from your project. This can help clear your mind and relieve stress. You might find that you have a fresh perspective and new ideas when you return to your project.

2. **Find Inspiration:**  
Look for inspiration in the world around you. This could be in nature, architecture, fashion, or even everyday objects' patterns. You can also find inspiration in quilting books, magazines, and online platforms like Pinterest and Instagram.

3. **Experiment with New Techniques:**  
Trying out new quilting techniques can help spark your creativity. This could be a new stitching method, a different type of fabric, or a unique pattern. Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone.

4. **Join a Quilting Group:**  
Joining a quilting group or community can provide a wealth of inspiration. You can share ideas, get feedback, and learn from other quilters. Plus, it's a great way to make friends who share your passion.

5. **Attend Quilting Workshops:**  
Workshops can provide new skills and techniques to help you overcome your creative block. Plus, they offer the opportunity to meet and learn from experienced quilters.

6. **Keep a Quilt Journal:**  
Keeping a journal of your quilting projects can help you track your progress and identify patterns in your creative blocks. You can jot down ideas, sketches, and notes about each project.

7. **Practice Mindfulness:**  
Practicing mindfulness can help clear your mind and boost your creativity. This could be through meditation, yoga, or simply taking a few minutes each day to relax and focus on your breathing.

Creative blocks can be frustrating, but they're a normal part of the creative process - any creative process! With these tips, you can overcome your creative blocks and create beautiful quilts and patterns again.

Remember, the most important thing is to enjoy the process and not put too much pressure on yourself. So put on your craziest comfy clothing, pop in your favorite music, get your favorite drink and snacks handy, and get creative! It's all about your mindset, and sometimes, the simple act of doing something different, or doing the same thing differently, might be all you need to break out of the creative rut and stitch your way back to visionary status!

—Steve Baker is the Director of Marketing at SewEndipitous located at 1093A Albright Road in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Visit [www.SewEndipitous.com](http://www.SewEndipitous.com) for more information.

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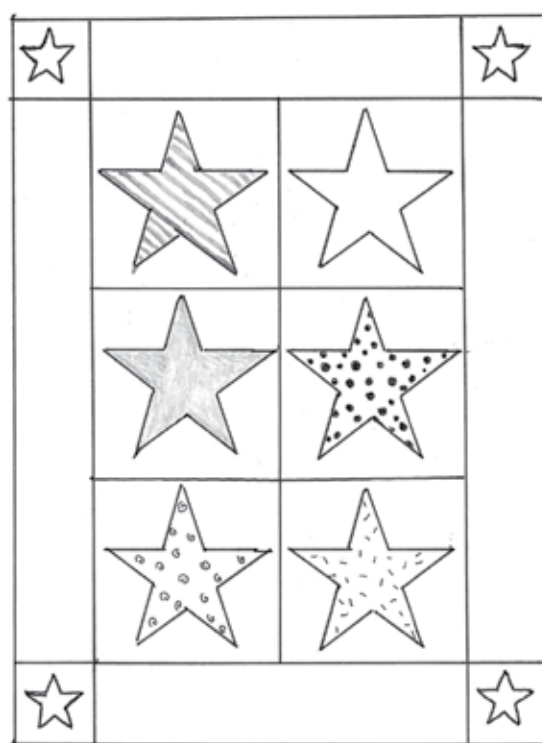
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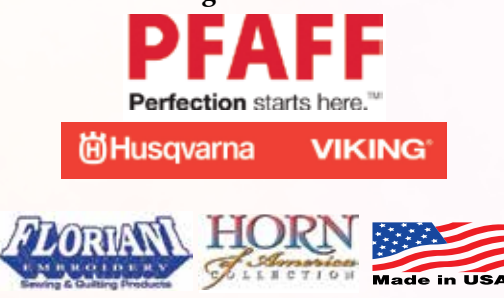
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## Plan a Visit to Fabric Smart!

As some of the familiar big-box fabric store chains face an uncertain future, locally-owned, independent fabric shops may have a golden opportunity for growth. Fabric Smart, in St. Petersburg Florida, is already planning for just that opportunity.

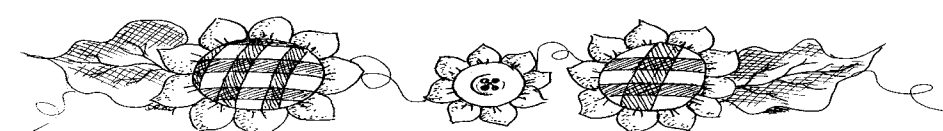
Fabric Smart is hitting its stride as it enters its 10th year in business. Owner Karen Donnelly has made it a priority to stock the highest-quality fabrics that reflect not only her local customers' lives and interests, but also the interests and curiosity of guests to the state. "Our northern and international customers say that we in Florida stock a much brighter color palette of fabrics from which to choose," said Donnelly.

Color and design ultimately guide Donnelly's fabric choices. "We sell wonderful art on high-quality fabrics and I love both," said Donnelly. "The most frequent comment from customers is that they have never seen many of the fabrics we stock before. That is music to my ears," said Donnelly. "Surprising and delighting customers with fabric choices, along with caring and professional customer service, has created so many happy-customer stories and fantastic fabric creations for us," said Donnelly. Fabric Smart stocks an eclectic variety of first-rate cotton quilting fabrics and blenders. They also are building a stock of garment-making fabrics appropriate to the Florida climate.

Fabric Smart's store at 6798 Crosswinds Drive N, Suite C101 in St. Petersburg is open 7 days a week: Monday through Friday, 10 am to 5 pm and Sunday, Noon to 5 pm. Donnelly said she and her professional staff (Natty, Michael and Christine) are ready to serve and educate fabric and quilting enthusiasts of any skill level. "We take time with our customers," said Donnelly, "making sure they know we support and encourage their creativity."

Fabric Smart also sells online at Etsy.com/shop/fabricsmart for those at a distance. There really is something for everyone at Fabric Smart.

When you visit Fabric Smart, please let them know you read about the shop in The Florida Register.



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## Introducing Our Younger Generation to Quilting

by Patty Legg Duncan

I recently had the opportunity to take my nine-year-old granddaughter, Peyton, to one of the many quilts shows happening this Spring in Arizona. Although attending a quilt show was not on top of Peyton's list of things to do that Saturday, she agreed and off we headed to the show. At the check-in desk, she was given a ballot to vote for her favorite quilt of the show.

I was so proud of her as she took her voting duty very seriously. As we walked down the aisles looking at all the different quilts, I asked Peyton to write notes for me on the ones I liked. She did the same for the quilts she liked. This particular show had a great variety of quilts with many different techniques that I appreciated. Surprisingly, Peyton seemed interested in the different techniques as I explained them and why I liked each one.

As we were walking down row 5 or 6, Peyton ran down the aisle and said, very enthusiastically, "This is my favorite!" As she pointed at her "favorite," I realized why she liked it so much. It was a perfect artist interpretation of her dog, an American Bullie named Trout. This quilted wall hanging is a fabric collage made by Barbara Green, Palo Verde Patchers in Sun City West. The pattern is "Dazzling Dogs" by Jane Haworth.

We continued to enjoy the show while she made notes for me and each time, we saw a different quilt that stood out to me, she would ask, "Is this the one you're going to vote for?" Finally, I selected my favorite and we took our ballots to the desk to put our votes in the ballot box.

As we were driving home, Peyton said "I had fun. Can I go with you to another show?" I was probably smiling ear to ear as I loved hearing she wanted to go again.

Peyton has always been very artistic and interested in all forms of crafts. Often when she is spending time at my house, she will ask if we can work on a craft. I would be so thrilled if someday she asked me if she could try quilting. If she did that would mean, we would have four generations of quilters on my maternal side of the family. You see, even though I do not quilt now, I did quilt when Peyton's mom was her age and even served as the President of the Cabin Branch Quilters in Burke, Virginia. My mom quilted and crafted most of her adult life. Her expertise was applique and hand quilting. The last quilt she made is a beautiful Baltimore Album styled applique using "Hawaiian" quilt block patterns. I proudly display it in my home. Her mom, my grandmother, quilted more for utilitarian purposes rather than a creative project. One of my grandmother's scrap quilts is displayed in the fall as it matches my décor at that time of the year.

So, remember, the next time you are headed off to a quilt show, or perhaps even a quilt shop, think about inviting someone of the younger generation to accompany you. You never know, you might be introducing a young person to the treasured art form of quilting.

*Patty Duncan enjoys family history and genealogy as a hobby. She also enjoys small town history, photography and is an avid scrapbooker, digital storybook maker and quilter on hiatus. She lives in Glendale, Arizona, where she spends a lot of time spoiling her grandchildren. Patty works in the sales department of The Country Registers of Arizona, California, Carolinas, Nebraska, Oregon, Washington and Idaho.*



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## KISSed Quilts

by Marlene Oddie

### Super Honey Beehive

The new "Honey and Clover" bee themed collection from Northcott appealed to my design aesthetic. After doing some research, I was excited to learn that the word Super is short of Superstructure, referring to the boxes placed together to form a beehive and store honey.

This includes a border print, panel and nine other coordinates plus two Colorworks solids and three Toscana complimentary colors.


In this design, I developed a half hexagon shape that maximizes the use of a 10" square. So this is a 10" stack friendly design. I chose to use just the fabrics in the collection - including 1 panel and the border stripe/print.

By folding the panel squares in half you can still use the same template to cut a complete hexagon. This means there are a few Y seams to keep those panels intact. These are quite large hexagons so it is definitely doable by hand or by machine to sew all of them as complete hexagons. The border stripe is fussy cut and I'm excited about how the hexagons appear to float into the border.

The pattern includes mitering details.

You can find this pattern on my website or ask at a local quilt shop near you. Be sure to tag us if you make this up in these fabrics or something else. Happy Stitching!

Marlene Oddie (marlene@kissedquilts.com) is an engineer by education, project manager by profession and now a quilter by passion in Grand Coulee, WA at her quilt shop, KISSed Quilts. She quilts for hire on a Gammill Optimum Plus, but especially enjoys designing quilts and assisting in the creation of a meaningful treasure for the recipient. Fabric, patterns, kits and templates are available at <http://www.kissedquilts.com>. Follow Marlene's adventures via <http://www.facebook.com/kissedquilts> and <https://www.instagram.com/marlene.kissedquilts>



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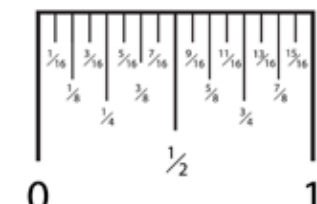
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Tip from a Reader!  
Mary Ann Leonard in Atlantic Beach, FL



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## Ann's Lovin' Ewe The Wedding Planner

by Ann Stewart

After planning a trip from Seattle, Washington, to Washington, DC, my Virginia uncle asked if he could set me up with a former student named Will Stewart while I visited. I got off the phone with Uncle Abe and declared to my mom, "I'm going to Virginia, meet Will Stewart, fall in love, get married, and move to the other coast."

My comment was purely in jest. But, two years later, I did marry Will Stewart. Now we've lived in Virginia for thirty years and raised two daughters 2500 miles away from my Seattle extended family. Our vacations are spent traveling to see them at Christmas and summer reunions, making Washington state feel like a second home to my daughters, husband, and me.

The humor is not lost in the fact that my oldest daughter, Christine, though born, raised, educated in Virginia, went travel-nursing to Seattle and met Todd, the love of her life. This summer she will marry on the West Coast and live 2500 miles from her immediate family. The cycle repeats.

As we near their July nuptials, let's look at some fun facts. After all, what is the most popular wedding season? 1. October, 2. September, 3. June, 4. May, 5. August

Least favorite? December, January and February! Las Vegas, the top wedding destination, experiences its busiest days on Valentine's and New Year's Eve.

Average cost of a wedding in 2023? \$30,119. The most expensive wedding took place in Dubai in 1981 with a 44-million-dollar price tag. Obviously a few million-dollar weddings can skew that figure. Some couples choose an expensive wedding and pay the bills in their marriage. Some spend less for the day and save more for their marriage.

A wedding cake can cost \$500. The largest cake was made in Connecticut in 2004 and weighed 15,032 pounds. The cake tradition came from party goers in ancient Rome, who, for fertility's sake, broke bread over the bride's head. Now the poor bride gets a face full of frosting.

The wedding rings. Each year in the US 17 tons of gold are formed into wedding rings. Lab grown diamonds are becoming increasingly popular because of the savings. Did you know that the rings are worn on the left hand, and specifically the fourth finger, because people thought a vein in that finger led straight to the heart?

The wedding dress. Until Queen Victoria, in 1840, brides wore their best dress to be wed. Now the white bridal gown adds an additional \$2,000

The Honeymoon? How would you like someone in your family to bring a cup of honey wine for 30 days? That's what Norse bridal couples called a "honeymoon" as they went into seclusion and were served this special drink. Sounds less expensive than the average \$5,000 price tag of the 21st century.

The Reception. As a child, I was chosen to be a flower girl. Ceremonies back then took place in church, and we went downstairs to the social hall for cake, Jordan almonds, nuts, and mints. Weddings were big occasions with lots of extended family and friends, most of whom were acquaintances of the parents.

That marks a change as brides and grooms invite their own friends. The guest list is closer to 100, with a meal instead of a reception at \$50 to \$100 per head.

If these figures stun parents with daughters, note that the ancient custom based on a dowry system to make girls more desirable, is changing. As couples marry later, they have saved more money and share in the wedding costs; plus, the groom's parents often contribute.

Whatever the arrangements, the best way to make the celebration more memorable is to simply remember the wedding is for a day and the marriage is the celebration of a lifetime. Here are a few quotes to remind you of just that!

- A happy marriage is a long conversation which always seems too short. —André Maurois
- The secret to a good marriage is to be a little deaf. —Ruth Bader Ginsburg
- To keep your marriage brimming, with love in the loving cup, whenever you're wrong, admit it; whenever you're right, shut up. —Ogden Nash
- A successful marriage requires falling in love many times—always with the same person. —Mignon McLaughlin
- Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, half shut afterwards. —Benjamin Franklin
- A happy marriage is the union of two good forgivers. —Ruth Bell Graham

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## By the Yard

by Jennifer Lopez

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**From Laura's Recipe File:**  
**Open-Face Tomato-Bacon-Bit Tea Sandwiches**

Ingredients:  
 10 slices bread (white or wheat)  
 1 cup mayonnaise  
 1/3 cup fully cooked real bacon bits  
 2 T. chopped green onions (include onion and greens - optional)  
 1 cup grape tomatoes, sliced  
 sprigs of fresh parsley or basil

Directions:  
 1. Combine mayonnaise, bacon bits, and green onions. Chill to blend flavors.  
 2. Cut bread slices into desired shapes with cookie cutters, such as hearts, flowers, or circles. Make two sandwiches from each slice.  
 3. When ready to make the sandwiches, generously spread filling on the bread. Place tomatoes on each open-face sandwich. Garnish with a sprig of parsley or fresh basil leaf. Serve immediately.  
 Serves about 6 to 8: Two or more tea sandwiches per person.

--Laura Lee Leathers is a freelance writer, speaker, and the founder of Tea Time Treasures, a ministry and a business. Visit her website: [www.lauraleeleathers.com](http://www.lauraleeleathers.com).

Lydia E. Harris has written "A Cup of Tea with Lydia" for more than 20 years. She is the author of three books for grandparents: GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids; In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together; and Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting. All are available on wherever books are sold.

**Tip from a Reader!**  
 Kathleen McDaniel in Roeky Mount, VA

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**A Cup of Tea with Lydia**

A Bridal Blessing Tea  
 Guest Columnist: Laura Lee Leathers  
 by Lydia E. Harris



When I learned my friend and fellow tea enthusiast Laura Leathers was planning a spring blessing tea for her granddaughter's wedding, I asked her to be a guest columnist and share her plans. Here's Laura, sharing about her event:  
 My only granddaughter, Abby Kate, was engaged to be married, and I wanted to do something special for this momentous occasion. So, I planned and hosted a Bridal Blessing Tea

**Invite Your Guests**  
 I wrote the invitation as a poem and included instructions for the teatime. You can change the names and adapt the poem for your tea party.  
 On November 10, 2023, Morgan Hutton got down on bended knee and asked Abby Kate Leathers, "Will you marry me?"  
 To celebrate their upcoming wedding, a Bridal Blessing Tea is planned. To make it extra memorable, come with a treasure in hand.

A personalized wooden box will be gifted to place inside their home to hold mementos and keepsakes for all the years to come.  
 Your advice, letters, cards, or books will be lovingly placed inside.  
 When joys and challenges come their way, your wisdom can be their guide.

The hostesses created invitations (time, date, and place) using a download from Etsy and printed them professionally. We mailed the invitations and poem card three weeks in advance. The guest list included the bridesmaids and the bride's and groom's mothers and grandmothers.

**Bless the Bride**  
 At the tea party, guests who brought cards and letters with advice for Abby read them aloud. She placed them in the unique walnut keepsake box with the bride's and groom's names and wedding date engraved on the top.

Then the ladies stood, making a circle around Abby, who sat in the middle. Those who desired, prayed blessings for Abby, the groom, and their marriage. Guests wiped tears from their eyes and shared hugs after this meaningful time.

**Time for Tea!**  
 Antique white and off-white linen tablecloths graced the tables. We used floral teacups, saucers, and plates from my tea collection. Each place setting included silverware, cloth napkins, and napkin rings.

A three-course tea menu followed. We served assorted dainty tea sandwiches: cucumber-and-cream cheese; strawberry-and-cream-cheese; ham-and-Bousin-cheese pinwheels; chicken salad in croissants; and tomato-bacon-bit tea sandwiches (recipe included).

Next, came warm scones with lemon curd, Devonshire cream, and raspberry jam. The final course followed with fresh fruit and decadent homemade desserts: buttery wedding cookies, toffee squares, mini brownies, and lemon squares.

Several weeks in advance, I ordered a caffeinated tea blend from Harney & Sons called Wedding, A Tea for Marriage. It's a pleasing blend of white tea, lemon and vanilla flavors, and a touch of pink rosebuds and petals.

As a gift, the bride received a personalized tin of 30 sachets of wedding tea. The mothers and grandmothers each received a personalized tagalong tin with five sachets. I made a gift bag for each bridesmaid using a blue teapot and teacup printed fabric, tucked three sachets inside, and tied it with a blue ribbon.

**A Thank-You Note**  
 Later, Abby sent me a thank-you note saying, "I loved the bridal tea party. The letters and the keepsake box were extra special. My bridesmaids are still talking about the lovely event."

I am thrilled that I could bless my granddaughter with a Bridal Blessing Tea. It's an experience we will both remember and treasure.

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Please also include a favorite recipe, quote, tip or a craft project you want to share with other readers.

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## Do You Garden?

by Wayne M. Bosman

I met my wife, Kerri, dancing. Not at a dance performance, or competition, but at a social event, not unlike an old fashioned barn dance, where one might dance with a dozen different partners in an evening. We both remember the first thing that I asked her as the dance started. "Do you garden?"



Her hands were the tip-off. Hands that worked. You can wash the dirt off for an evening of dancing, but the evidence remains. I imagine that it is possible to spend enough time and money to disguise them as the extremely manicured hands of a socialite, but certainly not in the springtime. It was time to get the garden in. Anyway, why disguise what you love?

That was the beginning. The seed you might say. Spring and gardening are intertwined to me going back to my youth 70 years ago. My family lived on ten acres outside of Kenosha, Wisconsin. My dad had a job in town, but in his heart he was a farmer, having spent part of the Great Depression living on his brother's farm. They always had plenty of food and he carried that ideal with him as his own family grew. His favorite daily recreation was tending to the garden after supper during the summer months. His garden thrived and his family thrived with it. All five of us children helped in the half acre garden which supplied us with a full range of vegetables from sweet corn and tomatoes to onions, carrots and lettuce. Mom canned enough to last us through the winter. I loved running the rototiller and watching the black soil turn from clumps to fine grains of dirt, wanting to make the plants' job of growing as easy as possible. We ate well.

Kerri's thoughts turn to the garden when the first buds start appearing on winter's survivors. We smile and shake our heads when the first daffodils make their too early arrival, often getting covered by snow. Before long she is planning what will go where, taking into account last year's successes and failures. Starting from seeds, some of which were saved from previous years, this year's crop takes shape. When we bought our current home, one of the main selling points was the amount and direction of sunlight for the garden. Kerri blossoms with the garden.

My mom is 103 years old now. She is a bit saddened that she has been relegated to a supervisory role in the garden that she has tended for over 75 years, but she still takes satisfaction when my sister has time to put things in order. When we are able to come back and visit, she always points out what has been done. She holds my arm and directs Kerri on what is still to do.

Later on, as they sit in the kitchen solving the world's problems, Mom talks about her mother's garden. Her large family ate well during the difficult times nearly 100 years ago. The hobos of the time must have had her house marked. Mom remembers a steady stream of people being fed at the back door. Then she tells about the small farm in Ireland where Grandma grew up and the garden there that gave Grandma's hands that familiar feel.

I don't have the same direct link to the garden that Kerri does. My hands have grease in the cracks. I fix things and do the tilling, then step back and let her have the joy and satisfaction of getting her hands dirty. I take full advantage of the harvest and feel completely that food from your own garden is automatically better for you.

*-Wayne Bosman is a retired auto mechanic living in Cape Carteret, NC. He has the good fortune to be married to Kerri Habben Bosman, who is a regular contributor to The Country Register publications. His email is [wbosman1@gmail.com](mailto:wbosman1@gmail.com).*



### Feature Recipe: Basil Parsley Pesto

Together, this dream duo creates a vibrant, well-balanced pesto that can be used in a variety of ways: spread it on a sandwich, marinate meats and veggies with it, or make a pasta sauce.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Ingredients                                       | ¾ teaspoon sea salt                                  |
| ¼ cup raw walnuts                                 | Couple of grinds of black pepper                     |
| ¼ cup raw pine nuts                               | 1 cup unrefined, cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil |
| 1 ½ - 2 tablespoons chopped garlic                | ½ cup grated pecorino-romano or parmesan cheese**    |
| 2 ½ cups basil leaves, lightly packed             |  |
| 2 ½ cups flat-leaf parsley leaves, lightly packed | (Makes 2 cups)                                       |

- Instructions
- Place the walnuts, pine nuts, and garlic in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Process until finely chopped.
  - Add the basil and parsley leaves, salt and pepper. Start the food processor and slowly pour the olive oil into the bowl through the feed tube and process until the pesto is finely pureed. Add the parmesan cheese and puree until well blended. Pesto freezes beautifully.
- Notes  
\*\*To make a dairy-free/vegan version, eliminate the salt and cheese and substitute 1/4 cup brown rice miso or other hearty miso. Taste for salt.

## Happy Mothers Day

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**DIRECTIONS:** Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

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## Building Harmony

by Jeff Cappis

### The Lady of the forest

I'm a night person. My wife Cathy is a morning person. I love her anyway. What is it about morning people that they have to jump out of bed at the crack of dawn and do more before 9 a.m. than most of us do all year? She likes to get the housework out of the way early so she has more time to relax and do things like, well, house work. She never stops. Me, on the other hand, I like to get up when the sun is warm and spread my work out over the day. Cathy loves me anyway.

One sunny summer morning—after she'd done all the laundry, cleaned the house (twice) and baked enough for the next two Christmases—Kathy went outside to clean the forest. I'm not kidding. We clean the forest! There isn't a twig to be found within 300 feet of the house. I'm never sure where to empty the vacuum cleaner.

The soft, warm, sunlight filtered through the trees around her. Our small dog named Pudge was at her side. She softly hummed a song to herself. As she carefully picked up small branches, butterflies began to collect around her. Curious squirrels came out on their branches to watch and deer grazing nearby lifted their heads, moving in closer. A couple of cats that had been quietly hunting mice wandered in, followed by a mother moose and her young. The robins in the trees quietly joined in her song. It must have been something when the squirrels began chattering along. The moose sang bass and an owl kept tempo. Soon the whole forest sounded like a well-tuned church choir, complete with angels, singing in four part harmony as they followed Cathy softly humming her gentle song.

The next part of this story is hard to believe. A spider (that I believe was playing the strings) slipped off a branch and dangled on its thread right in front of Cathy's face. Cathy doesn't really like spiders too much so she began to scream. Not for long though. She was taken out by a robin going after the spider. The cats then went after the other birds that flew into the squirrels. One terrified squirrel (with its nails out) was knocked out of a tree onto the mother moose. This startled the moose and she took off into the mess followed by her young. Deer were running everywhere. Even the mice were scattering. Pudge thought this was all a great game and he ran around

barking. The owl couldn't decide between the mice or that stupid barking dog. There was big carnage going on inside the forest. Cathy came running out with a panicked robin on her head and a spider stuck to her nose. She was only passed by Pudge and an owl that didn't quite fit Pudge's doggy door. By the time she got to the front step, Cathy was a mess. It was all she could do to crawl up the last few steps to the deck by the front door. There she sat. The sun was warm. It was about that time I came out in my robe with a cup of coffee in my hand.

"What a peaceful day," I said, taking a sip. "It's so calm, I can see why you get up early for this. Man, Cathy, you're a mess. What did you get up to this morning?"

It's hard to drink your coffee with the whole mug in your mouth. This morning people are sure grumpy.

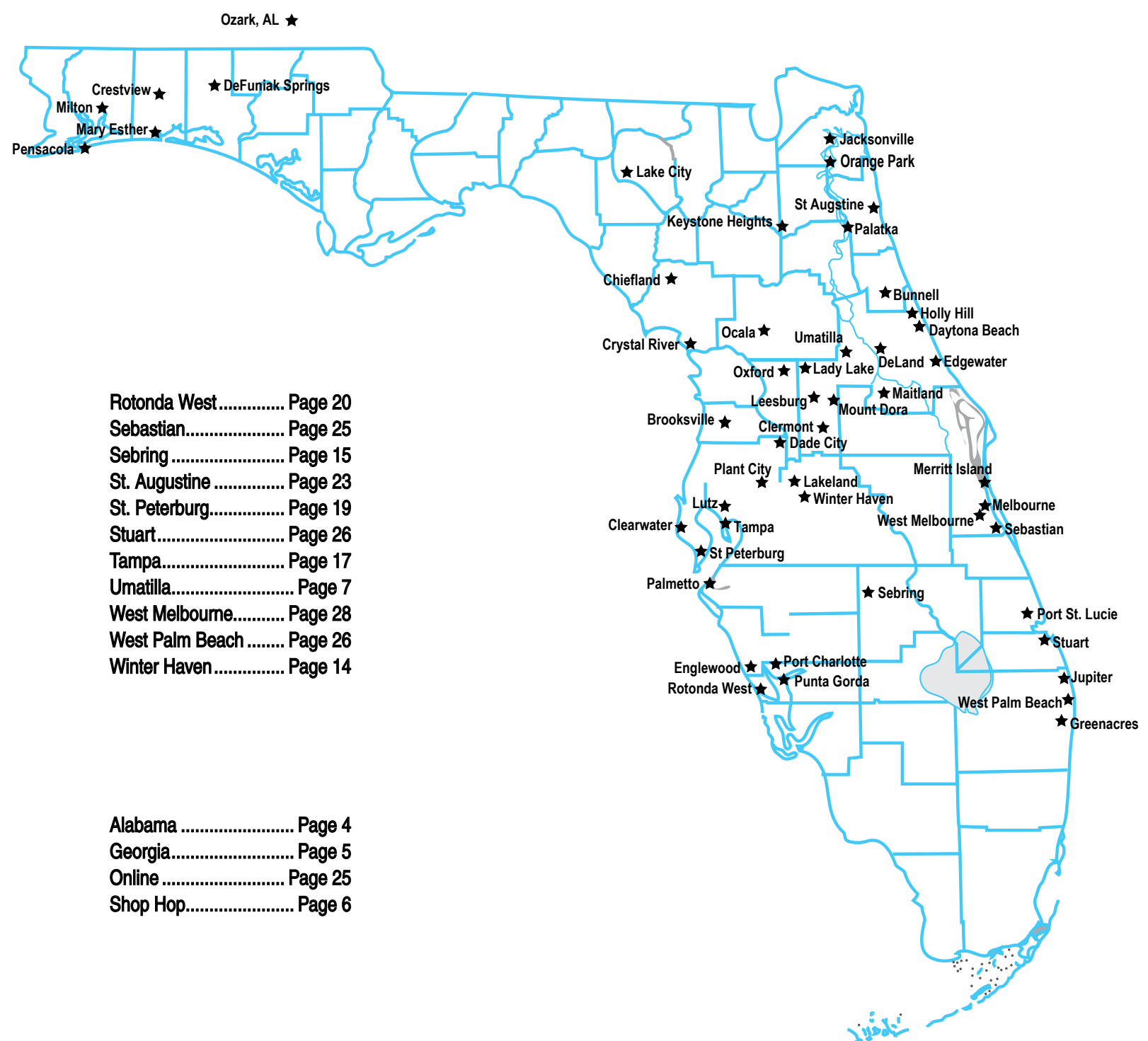
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