

The Country Register

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

February/March 2026

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Keeping In Touch

Cindy Ashfield <old.stuff@sasktel.net>

By the time you read this, January will be a memory, but as I write mid-January, I would have to say, because of the recent warm spell, it's been just great! I'm looking out the south sunroom window, and there is lots of golden stubble poking out of the snow in the field across the road. I spent a few days over Christmas with family in Kenora, Ontario, and had Christmas dinner surrounded by snow-covered evergreens and looking out over the frozen Lake of the Woods. Quite a change for a "prairie girl". By the way, Lego is still a favourite with the great-grandkids, as it was with their parents. But, back to reality and at home, I think that I shovelled snow every day til our heat wave. That snow should be good for our hay crop come spring.

For me, winter is the time of the year (usually after all the Christmas activities), when I have more time for some of the hobbies I enjoy. So, I am back to audiobooks while I work on a quilt tucked away last spring. I have chosen an old pattern called the card trick. I am part of a group of women who meet at the library on Thursdays twice a month and have an interest in fabric art. There is a wealth of books on quilting and other fabric arts available at our local library or through our Saskatchewan library system. These days, along with gardening magazines and seed catalogues, I am reading "Nomadland" by journalist Jessica Bruder. Published September 2017, it tells of an American subculture of people who, because of circumstances, no longer live in permanent housing. Instead, they live in accommodation that they may move anywhere they may find paid work. This seems to be mostly the over forty years old age group. I think this may apply to the younger generation in Canada.

Do any of you watch VisionTV? This is Canadian t.v. Based in Toronto, I think that their target audience is seniors or Zoomers. They feature a lot of BBC programming as well as some oldies that we may have watched in the 80s, such as "The Waltons" and others. Their program "The Zoomer" is a roundtable discussion on current topics of interest, relevant to anyone, but often with a senior perspective. This is sometimes hosted by Libby Sznaimer. One evening, I watched her story "The Sequel I Never Expected". After a cancer diagnosis, this courageous woman let us walk through her life

virtually from diagnosis to treatment. Thinking about all the creative minds providing us with zest in our lives makes me wonder, with all the talk about AI (artificial intelligence), what will our future generation find to impel them to think forward?

Our Community Centre is a hub of activity again this year. We are a well-known curling town, looking forward to the Farmers and Friends Bonspiel close to the end of the curling season. The skating rink is another popular part of this facility, which is also available as a safe walking space for anyone who is afraid of an icy fall. The Whitewood town website has all the info about available times. If your community doesn't have this opportunity, why not find a place where you could set up a walking program? It is an excellent way to get out with others and keep active when the cold weather isn't cooperating.

My garden magazine features stories of other gardens people have created, and as I read about these other gardens, I start to think about my garden, and ambitious pictures come to mind. Looking outside, though, I see that there has been a light overnight snow, so I will have to get out my leaf blower & chase it away. For now, it will soon be time to prestart some seeds and as soon as all the snow disappears and the ground warms, I'll be watching to see if my fall planting was a success.

Watching our hours of sunlight grow longer, I hope to join you next time in *the Register*.

Saskatoon, SK

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2 Minute Lift

TWO MINUTE READS TO FLIP OUR SCRIPT

BY: KATHY J. SOTAK

Becoming a Keystone Species

Can homo-sapiens be the catalyst for abundance and a thriving ecosystem?



I'm perplexed and pained. We live in a world so beautiful – a planet ultimately designed to enable humans to thrive. Each generation of humans work so hard and do their best for the next generation – yet we find ourselves in a perpetual cycle of despair. We have dirty streets, dilapidated buildings and crime in our cities. The builders of ancient times created structures that are still here for us to enjoy – yet the house we built just three decades ago is in need of repair and remodel. To top things off, the stove we bought just last year has broken down.

We put McDonalds into a community and then the two-generation family pizzeria needs to shut down. Wal-Mart enters a community and devastates even more – from fashion to tire shops to vision centers to local pharmacy. When we decide to stop investing in parks and sidewalks, the community health declines, crime increases and the economy depletes.

Dr. Zach Bush has provided my inspiration for today's contemplation – what will it take for humans to become a keystone species? What will it take for us make life exponentially better, just by us being part of it?

A keystone species is one that has a disproportionately large effect on its natural environment to flourish. The concept was introduced in 1969 by the zoologist Robert T. Paine. Keystone species play a critical role in maintaining an ecological community, affecting many other organisms in an ecosystem. When a keystone species is removed, the entire ecosystem is affected, sometimes ceasing to exist altogether. A profound story of this is the near extinction of the wolf and their intentional return in Yellowstone National Park.

Bison are also considered a keystone species in North America. The American buffalo can weigh more than a ton and stand taller than six feet and ten feet long. Despite this they can run thirty-five miles per hour and can maintain that pace for more than ten miles*. Why are they a keystone

species? We'll start with their output. They urinate gallons of fluid every day, providing important nutrients to the soil, microbes and insects, like nitrogen, phosphorus, sulfur and magnesium. They produce 10-12 quarts of dung per day as well. This fertilizer beneficially impacts the soil and feed insects, which feed small birds, and so on, and so on.

Bison create wallows, which are small rounds in the earth that they create by rolling and digging in the dirt to shed their coats and dust off insects. This supports other life forms by creating shallow pools of water after it rains. An edible plant called lamb's quarters would grow in here, feeding and nurturing Native Americans (leaves are nutrient rich, and the seeds are considered wild quinoa). Finally, bison don't destroy the grasslands; they enrich and rebuild it through grazing, letting it rest from production so it can build its root structure.

Some believe that we are at a critical juncture of humanity's history: Our human species will either perish or go through metamorphosis. If you believe this, then the only question is, can we become a keystone species? Can we live in such a way that makes our land, communities, economies and ecosystems, thrive?

I choose to believe that we can be a keystone species. I see evidence all around us. For example, Judy Wicks started a small restaurant thirty years ago in Philadelphia. She wanted to see her community flourish, so she decided to buy meat from a local pork producer, then produce from a local farmer, and so on, and so forth. She ended up founding the farm-to-table movement all throughout Philadelphia, then built several non-profit organizations to help her community flourish. (Read more about this local legend - <https://www.judywicks.com/about2>)

Jane Golden is showing us more evidence of how to become a keystone species. In the 1980s, Philadelphia was over-taken by crime and graffiti. Out of love for her home city, she decided to launch a mural arts program – with a broad vision to revitalize the city's beauty through art. When gangs started to “tag” her beautiful artwork – she took a bold move and decided to hire the very graffiti artists that were ruining her murals. What resulted is one of the world's most prolific mural arts programs, with hundreds of murals dotting the cityscape. A jaw-dropping coincidence? Both crime and graffiti dramatically declined. (Read about Jane Golden - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Golden, or better yet, come to Philadelphia and take in a mural art tour - <https://muralarts.org>).

You see? This is our metamorphosis. There is already strong evidence that we are becoming a keystone species. What else can you and I do today to join the movement?

*Bison facts taken from the book *Blood Memory: The tragic decline and improbable resurrection of the American buffalo*, by Dayton Duncan and Ken Burns.

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Budget Meals: Stretching Dollars and Waistbands

I know that post-Christmas we always try to cut back on our grocery bill, especially since this is such an expensive time of year—between Christmas bills, higher natural gas and electricity costs, plus the inevitable surprise expense because something breaks (this year, for us, it was a vet bill). January: the month where your wallet goes on a diet whether you like it or not!

I view our budget meals as a bit of a challenge. How do I still make filling, nutritious, and comforting meals in the dead of winter without spending a fortune? The key is embracing the “humble heroes” of budget cooking: dried beans (the ultimate penny-pincher), rice (which stretches further than my grocery budget ever hopes to), eggs (nature’s affordable protein), potatoes (the blank canvas of vegetables), and seasonal root vegetables like carrots, onions, and cabbage. Pasta is another MVP—you could say it’s “im-pasta-ble” to beat the value! Add a few well-chosen spices, and suddenly humble ingredients can feel downright luxurious.

This year especially, grocery prices feel higher across the board, so you won’t find many beef recipes here. The silver lining? Cooking without beef pushes creativity and reminds us how satisfying soups, stews, casseroles, and one-pot meals can be when built on simpler proteins. The worst part of this time of year is making a truly delicious meal and realizing you’ll probably never be able to make it again because it was born from random freezer and pantry odds and ends. My husband still rhapsodizes about a gumbo I made entirely from freezer fixings—it was a masterpiece born of necessity and a deep “what on earth is in this freezer?” excavation.

I don’t know who else started married life absolutely broke, but we certainly did. When we were first married, we had a set grocery amount and went to the store armed with a calculator, making sure we didn’t go over and have to put something back. This was before credit cards were widely accepted at grocery stores—which was probably a blessing in disguise. Those early frugal habits stuck, and even now, we both prefer to eat at home.

Despite my whining about grocery prices, at least we don’t have to contend with ration points like families did during WWII. My husband and I are fans of old radio shows, and it’s fascinating to hear rationing and budget meals casually mentioned. We’ve been binge-watching *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show* (available on Tubi), where early episodes were sponsored by Carnation Milk—save three cents by using it instead of cream! Three cents! Now that’s what I call “udderly” amazing savings. *Fibber McGee & Molly* was sponsored by Pet Milk and Reynolds aluminum foil, and those households truly knew how to stretch a dollar—and a chicken—through casseroles, “mock” recipes, and creative leftovers. We may think we’re clever with our meal planning, but they were the original budget meal masters.

In the end, budget meals aren’t about deprivation—they’re about resourcefulness, comfort, and a little creativity. And honestly, there’s something deeply satisfying about feeding your family well while keeping your grocery bill in check.

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Herb & Garlic Breadsticks

These were made to accompany gumbo one Saturday night. Unfortunately, while the gumbo was delicious, it was made using whatever ingredients I had left in the fridge, so it's unlikely I'll ever replicate the same flavors again.

Time: Approximately 3 hours. Yields 12 breadsticks.

DOUGH

- 1 cup + 2 Tbsp warm water
- 1 ½ tsp instant yeast
- 2 Tbsp white sugar
- 3 Tbsp butter, melted
- 1 ¾ tsp kosher salt
- 3 ½ - 4 cups all-purpose flour

HERB BUTTER

- 3 Tbsp, melted
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp Italian seasoning

In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, combine all ingredients for dough except flour. On low speed, gradually add flour. Increase speed to medium and knead dough for 5 minutes, or until smooth and elastic.

Remove dough to a lightly oiled bowl and cover with a dry towel. Let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 ½ hours.

Divide dough into 12 portions. Roll each piece of dough into a 7-inch log. Place dough logs on parchment-lined baking sheets, cover, and let rise until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Bake for about 12 minutes, or until golden brown. Meanwhile, combine butter, salt, garlic powder and Italian seasoning in a small bowl. Remove breadsticks from oven and immediately brush with butter mixture. Serve warm.

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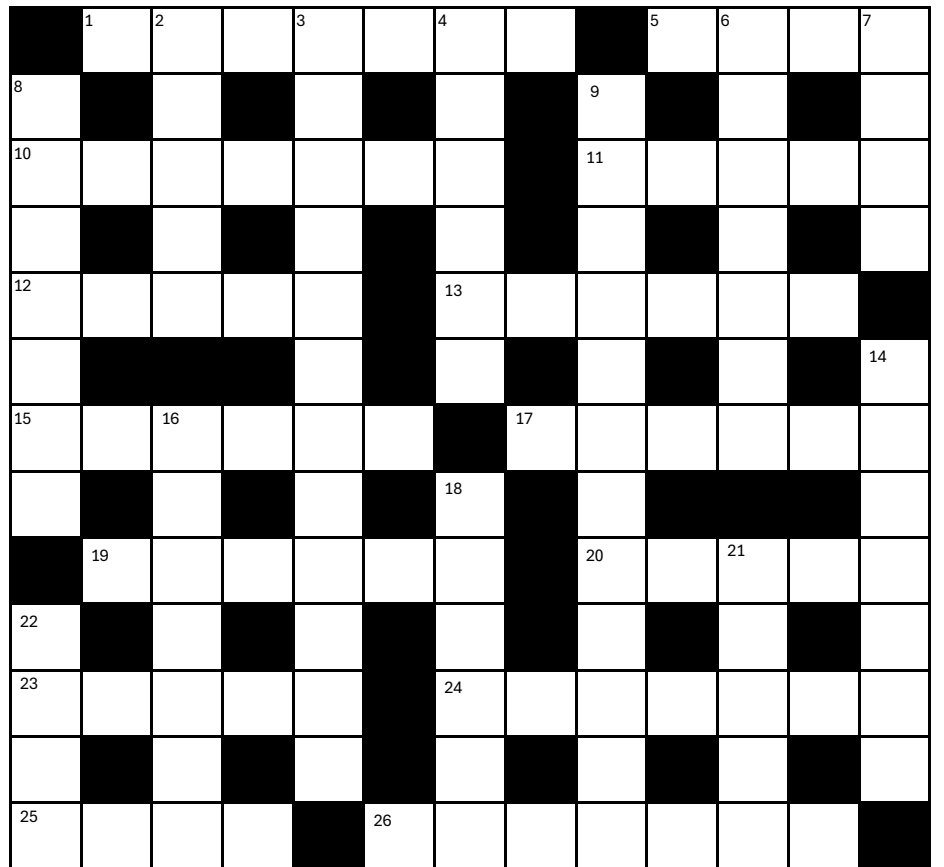
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ACROSS

- 1 Highly strung (7)
- 5 Shoe fastener (4)
- 10 Gaffe (4,3)
- 11 Endangered atmosphere layer (5)
- 12 Japanese cuisine (5)
- 13 Womb resident (6)
- 15 Back-of-mouth passage (6)
- 17 Swiss city (6)
- 19 Positive aspect of a situation (6)
- 20 Alleviated (5)
- 23 Straighten up (5)
- 24 Dipping pot for a quill pen
- 25 Scottish Gaelic (4)
- 26 Outrage (7)

DOWN

- 2 Decants (5)
- 3 Meanings (12)
- 4 Hurry (6)
- 6 Painkiller (7)
- 7 Gazed at (4)
- 8 Balancing amounts (7)
- 9 Two-floored bus (6-6)
- 14 Strapped shoes (7)
- 16 Mends (7)
- 18 Feeling (6)
- 21 Serious and unrelenting (5)
- 22 Secure storage box (4)

~ Answer on Page 17 ~

Humboldt, SK

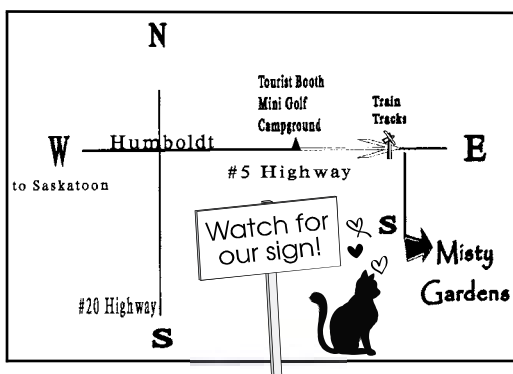
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Try a Round Robin Quilt! - by Judy Sharer

The excitement of making a round robin quilt is creating it with friends and not knowing exactly how it will look once completed. If you are in a quilters guild or have a social group of friends who sew this could be a great project.

There are two ways to create a round robin. First is as a single quilt that begins with a themed center, which is usually made by the owner. The center is passed from person to person each adding another border to the quilt contributing to the theme the original person chose. To complete this add a border quilt, whenever the quilt top is in your possession, you choose what to add to all four sides of the piece. It can be appliqued or pieced. 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.

The second way a round robin can work is each member in the group makes an individual block for the original person to assemble into to a quilt top. Smaller groups may choose to make more than one block per person, but each person makes a block for the other people in the group. The original person chooses the block size and a pattern for the block or they leave the pattern up to the people making the block for a scrappy quilt look.

In both cases often the original person chooses the colors and can even give each member a cut of fabric to use in the border or block they make. The colors and fabric help tie the quilt together as they add to the border or make the block to grow the quilt into a piece of art.

Over the years I've been involved in making several round robin quilts and it's always fun. It can also be a little nerve-wracking at times as you worry whether or not the final owner of the quilt will like what you've made. Then

on reveal day you wait on pins and needles to see what your finished piece or quilt blocks will look like.

One of the members in our small group was pregnant and we 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, who is the author of a sweet historical romance family saga series titled A Plains Life. This four-book series published by The Wild Rose Press is appropriate for the entire family and is available online wherever books and eBooks are sold. Visit Judy's website judysharer.com and follow her on Facebook and LinkedIn. Please leave a book review if you enjoy the writing. Look for Judy's next release titled Secrets in Room Four coming this spring.

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Trivia

INVENTION OF POUTINE - Ferdinand Lachance of Café Ideal (later Le Lutin Qui Rit) in Warwick, Quebec:
In 1957, Lachance reportedly made the first combination of fries and cheese curds after a customer requested it, famously exclaiming "Ça va te faire une maudite poutine!" ("That will make a damned mess!"). He later added gravy to keep the dish warm.

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A Broken Thread - by Wayne M. Bosman

Anyone who has read my recent articles in the *Country Register* will undoubtedly notice one thread running through them. One way or another, my mother has appeared in almost all of them. That thread is soon to be broken. I am writing this at the kitchen table of the house I grew up in, which we are clearing out in the time leading up to her funeral. She was 104.

Clearing out another person's home can be a deeply personal, almost embarrassing, task. Not so much here. She spent these last years preparing to make it easier. Little stickers with names appear on many of the potential keepsakes. She insisted that we take some things home with us after visits to reduce the burden after she was gone. Her army of admirers understood that presents to her were no longer a practical idea. That was her way.

Little handmade items were still welcome, if not too expensive to make. Kerri and I focused on crocheted or woven items that she might actually use because of the love they were made with. Shawls, scarves, lap blankets all worked for her, as did little heart-shaped coasters. She kept some things in her drawers or on display because they were too pretty to use. That also was her way.

Kerri and I are spending our days helping my sister sort through Mom's things, trying to make sure that every

family member has some meaningful keepsake to remind them of Mom every time they see it. Many of these are little ornaments or pictures that were made for her when her grandchildren were very young. Mom lived long enough to have great-great grandchildren who made her little things. Kerri kept Mom's soup ladle. I kept a cake plate that had survived potlucks and large family meals. I also brought home a herringbone scarf I wove for her a few years earlier. She was proud of it and proud of me for adding weaving to my life skills while in my 60s. She never ceased being proud of her children and grandchildren. To some degree, our successes were hers.



My sister has a list that Mom wrote with her of things that she wants different grandchildren to have. She is doing her best to carry out Mom's wishes about keepsakes. Then comes the rest of it all. My sister has a list of charities to best use everything in the house. From clothing to furniture to kitchenware and knickknacks, there is a place for everything. Almost nothing ends up in the landfill. That was how Mom lived.

Mom was a giver by nature and nurture. It made her happy to help my sister prepare things for the Giving Circle, a local project to give tangible help to people who needed it. As she got older and less able to make things herself, her job became to wrap up crocheted washcloths that went into each package. Age slowed her abilities, but not her desire to give.

My sister, Linda, inherited Mom's desire to give back. After the big push every year for the Giving Circle, the cycle starts again. By mid-January, the bin boxes are starting to get filled with scarves, hats, and other necessities for urban areas in the northern US. An active church group contributes year round to keep poverty at bay. For Linda, her friends, and for Kerri, the knitting and crocheting doesn't really stop, the focus just changes. Prayer shawls for the aging and lap blankets for people in Hospice are a never-ending need.

Mom lived a full and long life. Although her thread is broken, the love she wove into so many lives is still strong.

For Mary A. Bosman (December 17, 1920-November 2, 2025)

Wayne M. Bosman is a retired auto mechanic living in Cape Carteret, NC.

His email is wbosman1@gmail.com

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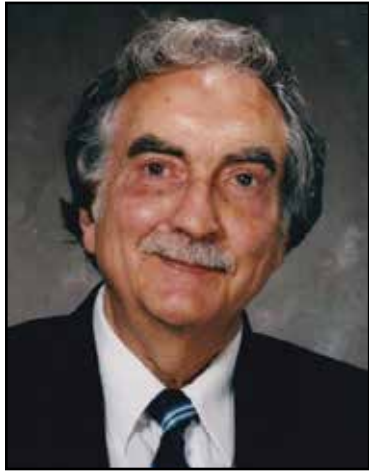




Remembering Joe Ashfield

- by Elaine Ashfield

Joe Ashfield, a towering figure in Whitewood's newspaper and community life for many decades, passed away on December 1, 2025. He was 88. Joe and Cindy are long-time columnists of the *Country Register*.



Ashfield's name is woven deeply into the history of the *Whitewood Herald* - now the *Herald Sun* - a newspaper he helped build into one of Saskatchewan's most respected weeklies. His association with the publication began on Aug. 5, 1955, when, at just 18 years old, he moved to Whitewood to become editor and co-publisher after he and his brothers purchased the business from longtime editor John Scott. It marked the start of a newspaper career that spanned 24 years and earned him national and provincial accolades.

Under his leadership, The Herald became a consistent award winner, including national honours for Best All-Round Newspaper in its circulation class. At one point, Ashfield and his brother, Walter, owned and operated seven weekly newspapers across southeast Saskatchewan, including the *Whitewood Herald*, *Grenfell Sun*, *Broadview Express*, *Windthorst Independent*, *Qu'Appelle Progress*, *Churchbridge Reporter*, and *Stoughton Times*.

Born Feb, 22, 1937, in Grenfell to Walter and Nettie Ashfield, Joe came from a long line of prairie newspapermen. The Ashfield family's association with the industry stretches back more than a century, a legacy that continues today through his great-nephew, Chris Ashfield, publisher of *Grasslands News Group* and the fourth generation of Ashfields to operate community newspapers.

Joe grew up in Grenfell, graduating as class valedictorian in 1961 before joining his brothers in the print trade. When he arrived in Whitewood in 1955, he not only took over the paper but also quickly immersed himself in community life.

Ashfield's contributions extended far beyond journalism. He served on the Whitewood Town Council, School Board, Volunteer Fire Brigade, Whitewood Chamber of Commerce, Whitewood United Church boards, the Canadian Militia (artillery), Regina Big Brothers, Saskatchewan Junior College committees, and the Whitewood Inn Development Committee. His service at the provincial level included leadership roles with the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association and the Canadian Community Newspapers Association, as well as Masonic and community groups.

An accomplished outdoorsman, he wrote about hunting and fishing for newspaper magazines. He also earned the Silver Quill Award for 25 years of service in the industry and became a Life Member of the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association.

In 1978, seeking a new challenge, Ashfield entered the University of Saskatchewan's College of Law at age 41, turning over the reins of the newspaper to his nephew and his wife, Cliff and Elaine Ashfield. After graduating in 1981 and completing his articles with a Regina law firm, he returned to Whitewood to open the Ashfield Law Firm at his longtime home on Lalonde Street.

Joe was also called upon to serve as provincial media coordinator for several Royal visits, including those of Princess Margaret, Princess Anne, and Their Majesties The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh.

Throughout his life, Joe Ashfield remained a steady voice in the community - a mentor, a storyteller, and a dedicated advocate for the role of local journalism in rural Saskatchewan. His impact on Whitewood and the surrounding region is enduring, carried on today by those who learned from him and by the family tradition, and his great-nephew continues.

Joe leaves behind his wife, Cindy, and their families.

- Originally published in *Grassland News*

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You can also use boneless skinless chicken thighs for this recipe. I use whatever is on sale at the store that week. The last time I made this, my husband had a cold and tiring day volunteering at the outdoor rink. He thought it was such a comforting meal to come home to.

- 2 cups white rice
- 8 oz (227 g) button mushrooms, roughly chopped
- 2 cans condensed beef consomme
- 1 can condensed onion soup
- 1/2 cup butter, cut into 8 pieces
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 2 lbs. pork chops
- 1 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt
- 3/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp paprika

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).

Stir rice, mushrooms, beef consomme, and onion soup together in a 9 x 13-inch baking dish. Top with butter pieces and 3/4 cup of the cheese.

Season the pork chops evenly with salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, and paprika and place on top of cheese and butter. Top with remaining cheese and cover dish with foil.

Bake in the preheated oven for 55 minutes. Uncover and bake until top is golden brown, liquid has been absorbed into the rice, and pork chops are cooked through, about 20 to 30 more minutes.

When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure. God speed, Joe. Rest in peace.

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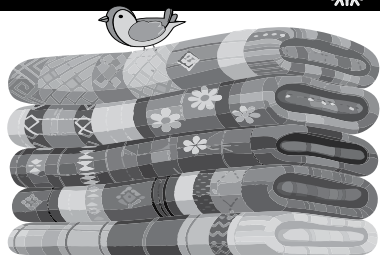
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This is a classic that I brought back into meal planning recently. It's a classic and easy-to-make.

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- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 small onion diced
- 2 ribs celery diced
- 2/3 cup frozen peas thawed
- 1-5 oz. can tuna drained
- 1-10.5 oz. can condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

CRUMB TOPPING

- 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 Tbsp melted butter
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 425°F. Combine topping ingredients and set aside.
 Boil noodles al dente according to package directions. Drain and rinse under cold water.

Cook onion and celery in butter until tender, about 5-7 minutes.

In a large bowl combine noodles, onion mixture, peas, soup, milk, cheese, and tuna. Mix well.

Spread into a 2qt casserole dish and top with crumb topping.

Bake 20-25 minutes or until bubbly.

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Little Things

An old gardener, while laying a stone wall in a country estate, was asked by the owner why he used so many small stones along with the large ones. "It's like this," he said, "these stones are like men. Many small men like me are needed to help keep the big ones in place. If I leave small stones out, the big ones will not stay in place, and the wall will fall."

- S. Kenrick Guernsey



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Kirby's Korner

Good Things Come in Threes



Three's a Crowd, But It Makes for a Good Story.

Did you hear the joke about the two guys who went fishing? Of course, you didn't; the joke is about three guys, and the punch line reels you in hook, line and sinker.

They say that strength is in numbers, but when it comes to strength in storytelling, good things come in threes.

It is not a coincidence that there were Three Blind Mice, Three Little Pigs or Three Musketeers. "The Rule of Three," or "omne trium perfectum," Latin for "everything that comes in threes is perfect," is an ancient and well-known principle in the literary world, often found to be more entertaining to readers or listeners.



If there are only 2 people in a comedy act, one of them has to be the straight man and the other the funny one. However, if you have three, all three of them can be zany. Case in point, George Burns was the straight man to Gracie Allen's nonsensical confusion, whereas the Three Stooges could all act out and add to the humour.

The Beginning:

The rule of three goes back to Greek mythology and the Three Gorgons. The Three Gorgons were mythical creatures with snakes for hair, known for turning anyone who looked at them into stone. Medusa is the best known of the three because she was mortal and therefore slain by Perseus, who later used her head as a protective symbol, which morphed into the Gorgoneion, still used today.

There are many examples of the Rule of Three in the Bible. In the Old Testament, there were three patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and three kings (Saul, David, and Solomon).

The New Testament starts with the Gospel of Matthew and the birth of Jesus. This event is marked by three wise men bringing gifts of frankincense, gold, and myrrh. Later, there were the three temptations, which finally led to Peter's three denials and to the crucifixion of Jesus, which is widely depicted with three crosses on a hill and Jesus hanging on the middle cross. Jesus then rose from the dead on the third day. The most recognized power of three in Christianity is the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Julius Caesar is famously quoted with the line "Veni, vidi, vici." "I came, I saw, I conquered."

The Middle:

Christopher Columbus famously sailed the ocean blue in 1492 aboard three ships: the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria. Remembered later in the Christmas carol, *I Saw Three Ships*. Speaking of Christmas songs, *Jingle Bells*, arguably the most famous of all Christmas songs, uses the rule of three

by using the word Jingle three times at the start of the chorus.

Unsurprisingly, the most famous of Hanukkah's songs uses the rule of three. Even though a dreidel has four sides, the music starts "Dreidel, dreidel, dreidel"

Shakespeare used the rule of three more than once in *Macbeth*; the most famous example is the three witches. In his play *Julius Caesar*, the first line of the speech by Mark Anthony was "Friends, Romans, Countrymen. Lend me your ears."

The End:

Most of us meander through our daily lives without ever thinking of the rule of three, or how it has affected us from childhood on. Kids start off their lives learning about the *Three Bears and Goldilocks*, the *Three Little Pigs*, and the *Three Billy Goats Gruff*. Later, they read *Harry Potter* and follow the school years of three young witches, Harry, Hermione, and Ron.

Thanks to popular advertising campaigns, we start our days with bacon, eggs and toast, or Snap, Crackle and Pop. We cook on devices with low, medium, and high settings.

When it comes to education, we have Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, for some reason known as the Three "Rs". We are taught to stop, drop and roll if we catch on fire.

On television, we had *Charlie's Angels* (three), *Three's Company*, and *Two and a Half Men*. In the movie theatres, we had *Three Men and a Baby*, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, and, of course, *Star Wars*, with its three trilogies, all starting with the original movie and its three lead characters, Luke, Princess Leia, and Han Solo.

Law firms often have three names, or partners in their respective titles.

There is also a term for using three things in speech: hendiatrix, Greek for "one through three," a figure of speech used to emphasize what the speaker is trying to get across. The Royal Military College of Canada uses this in its motto: "Truth, duty and valour." The Olympic motto is "Faster, higher, stronger," and in "no way, shape or form" should we forget about "reduce, reuse and recycle."

I am sure, with AI on the horizon and how it will be used to draw people in for entertainment and advertising, we will see a lot more of the Rule of Three in the future.

I'm not sure if you noticed, but I used the power of three in this column, as I explained the Rule of Three in the past, present, and future, separated into three segments. It took me three tries to write this story and get it "tried, tested, and true", but you know what they say." Third time's the charm."

Oh NO!!! Carl has a screw loose!!!

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

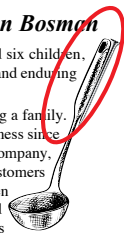
Can you help him find it? It looks like this.



105 Years - by Kerri Habben Bosman

the man Wayne is today. During their marriage they had six children, four still living. December 17th is Mom's 105th birthday and enduring love and steady faith still radiate from her.

Wayne's parents started a company along with building a family. Bosman Monuments has now been in the memorial business since 1957. Mom was a pivotal part in the success of the company, helping the bereaved. She ladled out so much love that customers often became friends. All the while, she fed her children home-cooked meals they will always remember, sewed some of their clothes and canned fruits and vegetables from their garden.



It was on page 10.

Carl must have dropped it when he dropped in for soup with Kerri Habben Bosman's mother-in-law.

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

Not a contest, just a bit of fun for our readers.



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Did you know these names?

That utterly sick feeling you get after eating or drinking too much is called *crapulence*.

The metallic device used to measure your feet at the shoe store is called *Bannock device*.

Illegible handwriting is called *griffonage*.

The armhole in clothes, where the sleeves are sewn, is called an *armscye*.

The condition of finding it difficult to get out of the bed in the morning is called *dysania*

The space between your nostrils is called *columella nasi*.



Egg Roll in a Bowl

I knew I was going to have a late night at work and I needed supper to come together quickly, once I arrived home. The recipe has the flavors of our favorite egg rolls in a simplified bowl. If there are leftovers for the next day, you can wrap the egg roll filling in rice paper wrappers for a different take on the recipe.

- 1 lb. ground chicken or ground pork
- 4 green onions thinly sliced, whites and greens separated
- 2 tsps grated fresh ginger
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 16 oz. coleslaw mix or shredded cabbage
- 3 Tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp sesame oil or to taste
- Sesame seeds for garnish – optional

In a 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat, brown the ground chicken or pork, breaking it up with a wooden spoon. Drain any fat.

Stir in the whites of the green onions, ginger, garlic, and coleslaw mix. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the coleslaw becomes tender, about 5 minutes.

Stir in soy sauce and sesame oil and cook for 1 minute more.

Divide into bowls and garnish with greens of green onions and sesame seeds.

Valentine's Day Trivia

People like to celebrate their pets on Valentine's Day.

In 2024 alone, people planned to spend a whopping \$1.5 billion on their pets for the holiday of love. That means toys, clothes, beds, and more!



When did Valentine's Day become a holiday?

Near the end of the fifth century or around 500 A.D., Pope Gelasius declared February 14 as St. Valentine's Day. As for the origin and reasoning, that's a bit murkier.

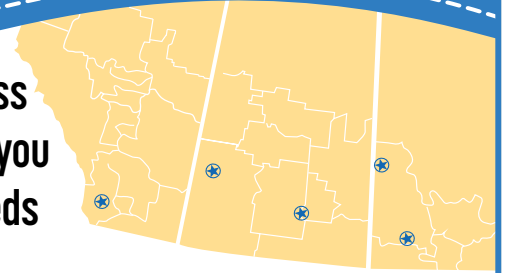
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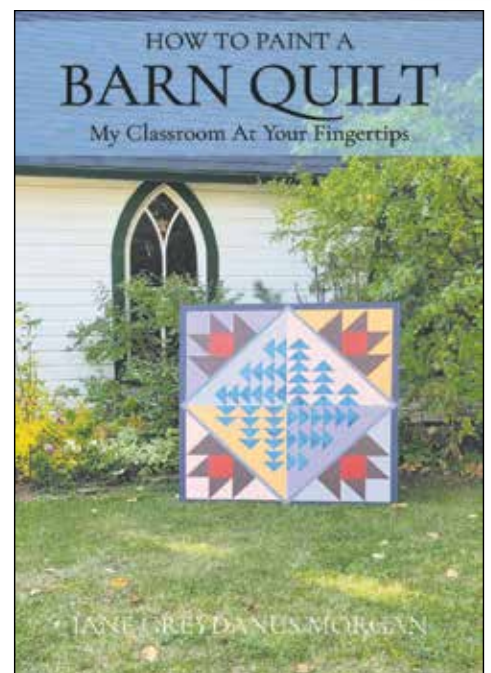


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Located in Priddis, AB

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Pieces From My Heart - by Jan Keller



Last Times

I've always appreciated the mystique and charm created by the mere mention of past Christmases, birthdays, or any other special occasion celebrated together with family and friends. They're times when I seem to reflect on priceless memories.

This past holiday season I found myself reflecting on the bittersweet memories of a Christmas past. It was a wonderful day. Full of feasting, family and festivities. Yet, because of the reality of my mother-in-law's diagnosed cancer, just beneath the surface of conscious awareness lurked her uncertain future.

Following what had been a fun-filled day, Mable gave each of us a hug and a kiss while preparing to leave and head for home. It was then, as Mable collected her dishes from the kitchen, that I saw how hard she was struggling to hold back her tears. I sensed she was wondering if this particular Christmas would prove to be the last time she would have a physical presence at any Christmas celebration.

This particular Christmas also happened to be the last time I saw Mable adorned by her own hair. For, by the time a week had passed and the New Year arrived, chemotherapy had played one of its typical nasty tricks.

When we went to visit on New Year's Day, Mable greeted us at their door wearing her new wig and looking as if she wanted to break down and have a good cry. The tension of the moment was broken when she melted into my arms, saying, "If you want to see my hair, it's in the bathroom wastebasket."

That was the last time I ever saw her cry.

Many of the last times I remember were ordinary and typical. Commonplace. At least they seemed common at the time.

The last time she visited our home. The last time she cooked us a meal.

The last time we talked together on the telephone. The last time we got a note from her in the mail.

The last time I saw her sitting in her recliner, busying herself with her handiwork.

The last times I remember go on and on, and yet, there is one last time I especially like to think about—the last time I saw Mable smile.

Morden, MB

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BIG SELECTION

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It was the Saturday, one week after she walked with help into the hospital for what would be the last time.

It had been a week which brought with it rapid physical deterioration. Her arms had become useless attached appendages. While family and friends took turns being there to lovingly feed her, Mable's own arms and hands lay heavy and motionless at her sides.

Her legs, too, fell victim to cancer's vicious attack. No longer could they stand in support of her weight. Why, they couldn't even change their position under the covers on the bed.

Her vision had dimmed so much that the big schoolroom type clock could no longer tell her the time. Hauntingly it hung on the wall in her hospital room, constantly ticking away the moments we had left to spend together.

The relatives who gathered for one final visit filled her room to overflowing.

Instead of being clear and distinct individuals, they had become shadows—recognizable to Mable only by the voices that accompanied them.

It was into this setting that one of Mable's nephews brought his beautiful baby granddaughter for a get-acquainted visit.

As all of the relatives gathered in the room and around Mable's bed took joy and delight in the baby, someone looked at me and said, "Take the baby close to Mable so she can touch her."

Obliging, I picked up the baby and carried her close to Mable, where I held the infant up and over the rails of the bed. Then, to allow Mable to feel the baby's presence, I firmly grasped her hand and raised it up to the baby's head.

The baby, who wasn't a bit happy about being interrupted in the middle of a bottle, decided to voice a loud protest amid all this commotion by starting to cry.

At that moment, in response to a sound ringing clearly with promise for the future, an unmistakable and memorable smile spread across Mable's face and brightened her countenance.

Recalling how difficult and different life was after Mable's passing still brings tears to my eyes. And yet, through my tears, I catch sight of a rainbow. This rainbow of promise for the future comes in the form of my memory of the last time Mable smiled. By smiling in the midst of her personal pilgrimage through the valley of the shadow of death was as if Mable gave a sweet benediction to life and all it represents.



©2026 Jan Keller No reprint without permission Jan shares other pieces of her life in her books, *Pieces From My Crazy Quilt*, and *The Tie That Binds These* books can be ordered by calling 719-866-8570, or writing: Black Sheep Books, 11250 Glen Canyon Drive, Peyton, CO 80831

Publishers' Note: We realize that many of the articles in this edition center on the loss of loved ones, and we acknowledge the weight of grief that these stories carry. Yet there is wisdom in remembering that to everything there is a season—a time to mourn and a time to heal. In honoring those who have passed, we celebrate lives fully lived and legacies that continue to inspire us. These stories remind us that loss, though painful, is woven into the fabric of life itself, and in sharing these memories, we find connection and the strength to carry forward.

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Stories of Yesteryear



Reader Submitted Stories

The Heart Remembers When - By Sharon Atkinson

The quality of your life will be determined by the quality of people in your life

HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY

It wasn't until Uncle Joe retired from farming and went to sell the land that I learned that those coulees that I so treasured and where the cattle grazed never was owned by my grandfather or Uncle Joe. It was lease land from the government. A neighbour and his son, who inquired about making an offer for the land because of those coulees being suitable for their cattle operation, declined to make an offer because the coulees were not actually part of the land being offered for sale. The land was, of course, then sold to someone else.

NEVER A SLAVE TO FASHION

- grandmother, Auntie Grace & Auntie Doris always had house dresses and aprons produced from an old treadle sewing machine. The house dresses were accentuated with a brooch at the neck

- When I picture Auntie Doris, it is with a blue or pink homemade gingham dress.

- The aprons had a bib front but never any shoulder straps. They used two small gold safety pins to pin the front of the apron to their house dress.

Grandma never changed her style, whether in dress, hair or shoes. Hair always parted in the middle, long, braided and then coiled at the back of her head. Dresses were long, worn with thick stockings, and had one pair of old-fashioned dress shoes that were relegated to their original shoe box once she returned home from a trip to town.

There was one time when Grandpa was ready to carve the chicken. Auntie Doris said, "Just a minute, and I'll get my flash camera and take a picture". Grandpa said, "Well, I'd better take my pants off." He thought he should change into his dress pants for the picture!

On a farm, binder twine has many uses, but Grandpa was finding his pants a little tight, so he fashioned binder twine from the button hole to his pants button.

Of course, to Uncle Joe, women wore dresses. Certainly never slacks. Heaven forbid summer shorts. Lillian Young, his cousin, tells of the time Uncle Joe visited them at their farm near Stonehenge, Saskatchewan. It was a hot day, and, of course, Lillian had donned a modest pair of shorts. Uncle Joe looked at her and told her, "You'd be a lot cooler with a dress on". Lillian said "NO, I WOULDN'T" and abruptly went into the house. So there!

LESSONS ON BEING FRUGAL

Comes under the category of: Don't believe all you hear, or sleep all you want, and DON'T SPEND ALL YOU HAVE (but sometimes you have to spend a little to gain a lot in terms of comfort and safety)

It was the dead cold of winter, and Uncle Joe kept recharging an old truck battery whenever he came to town from the farm. Must not spend money on a new one when you could recharge the old battery.

Well, he headed back to the farm on this one particular cold night. Being winter, it was already dark. The truck stalled about ten miles out of Assiniboia. Battery had conked out. Someone eventually picked him up and brought him to my parents' house in Assiniboia. He got frostbite on his ears and, in conclusion, had to finally purchase a new (reliable) battery.

I also remember when he had an old pair of shoes that were badly in need of replacing. The top part of the shoes separated from the sole of the shoes. He frugally got wire and 'stitched' them back together. Sometimes things have to be replaced, like it or not!

Part 2 of The Heart Remembers When. More to come over the next editions!

Answer to Crossword on Page 8

U	P	T	I	G	H	T	L	A	C	E
O	O	M	A	D	N	Y				
F	A	U	X	P	A	S	O	Z	O	N
F	R	L	T	U	D	D				
S	U	S	H	I	E	M	B	R	Y	O
E	H	R	O	A	T	G	E	N	E	V
T	H	R	O	A	T	G	E	N	E	V
S	E	T	B	D						
U	P	S	I	D	E	E	A	S	E	D
S	A	O	L	C	T	A				
A	L	I	G	N	I	N	K	W	E	L
F	R	S	E	E	R	S				
E	R	S	E	A	F	F	R	O	N	T

Answer to Sudoku on Page 21

1	3	8	7	5	2	6	9	4
4	7	6	9	3	8	2	1	5
5	2	9	1	6	4	8	7	3
9	8	7	3	2	5	1	4	6
6	4	5	8	1	7	9	3	2
3	1	2	4	9	6	7	5	8
8	6	1	5	4	9	3	2	7
7	9	4	2	8	3	5	6	1
2	5	3	6	7	1	4	8	9

Wacky Definitions:

Subtract from the great man all that he owes to the opportunity, all that he owes to chance, all that he gained by the wisdom of his friends and the folly of his enemies, and the giant will often be seen to be a pygmy.

- Charles C. Colton

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MEASUREMENTS: Approx 48" x 63"

MATERIALS

Bernat® Softee® Chunky (3.5 oz/100 g; 108 yds/99 m)

Contrast A True Gray (28044) **12 balls**

Contrast B Natural (28008) **4 balls**

Contrast C Wine (28532) **1 ball**

Size U.S. N/P (10 mm) crochet hook or size needed to obtain gauge.

CROCHET SKILL LEVEL: Easy

ABBREVIATIONS:

Approx = Approximate(ly)

Beg = Begin(ning)

Ch(s) = Chain(s)

Dc = Double crochet

Dcbp = Back post double crochet. Yoh and draw up a loop around post of next stitch back of work inserting hook from right to left. (Yoh and draw through 2 loops on hook) twice.

Dcfp = Front post double crochet. Yoh and draw up a loop around post of next stitch at front of work inserting hook from right to left. (Yoh and draw through 2 loops on hook) twice.

Pat = Pattern

Rep = Repeat

St(s) = Stitch(es)

Yoh = Yarn over hook

GAUGE

6½ sts and 4½ rows = 4" [10 cm] in pat.

INSTRUCTIONS

Note: To change colour, work to last 2 loops on hook. Draw loop of next colour through 2 loops on hook to complete st and proceed in next color. Ch 2 at beg of row counts as st.

With A, ch 83.

1st row: 1 dc in 4th ch from hook (counts as 2 dc). 1 dc in each ch to end of chain. Turn. 81 dc.

2nd row: Ch 2. 1 dcbp around each of next 3 sts. *1 dcfp around next st. 1 dcbp around each of next 3 sts. Rep from * to last st. 1 dcbp around last st. Turn.

3rd row: Ch 2. *1 dcfp around each of next 3 sts. 1 dcbp around next st. Rep from * to last 4 sts. 1 dcfp around each of next 4 sts. Turn.

4th to 51st rows: Rep 2nd and 3rd rows 24 times more.

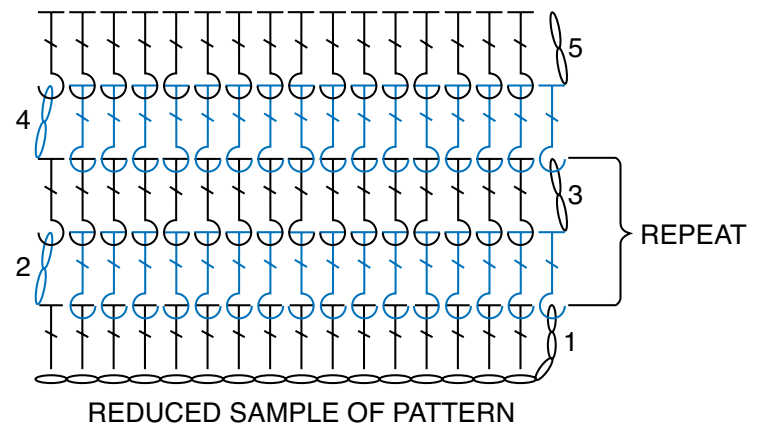
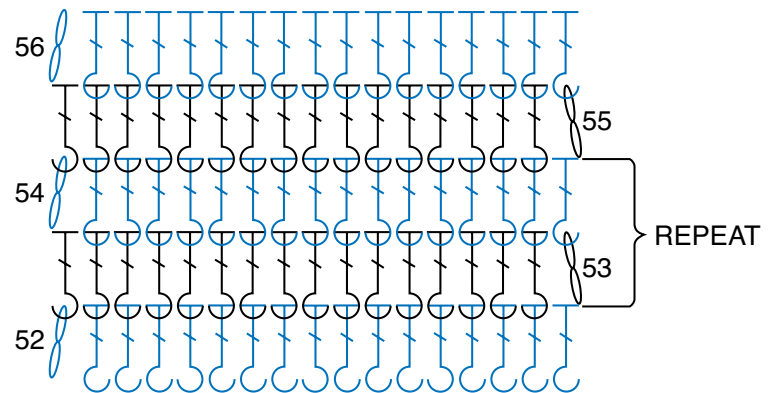
52nd row: As 2nd row. Break A. **53rd row:** With B, ch 2. *1 dcfp around next st. 1 dcbp around next st. Rep from * to last 2 sts. 1 dcfp around each of last 2 sts. Turn.

54th row: Ch 2. 1 dcbp around next st. *1 dcfp around next st. 1 dcbp around next st. Rep from * to last st. 1 dcbp around last st. Turn.

55th to 64th rows: Rep 53rd and 54th rows 5 times more. Break B.

65th to 68th rows: With C, as 53rd and 54th rows twice more. Break C.

69th to 74th rows: With B, as 53rd and 54th rows 3 times more. Fasten off at end of last row. Weave in ends.



STITCH KEY

○ = chain (ch)

┆ = double crochet (dc)

┆ = front post dc (dcfp)

┆ = back post dc (dcbp)

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A Cup of Tea with Lydia

A Recipe for Love

By Lydia E. Harris

“Love makes the world go ‘round,” according to the lyrics of a song from the sixties. And although love is in season year-round, Valentine’s Day begs for special celebrations that brim with love. So, pick a time, a place, a menu and add love to someone’s life. Maybe you’ll plan something special for your Sweet-TEA or for a young grandchild you call Sweet Pea.

Serve a Heart-TEA Breakfast

Any big or little sweetheart would enjoy heart-shaped pancakes. All you need is a heart-shaped cookie cutter and your favorite pancake recipe. After the pancakes are cooked, cut them into hearts with the cutter. Or place a metal heart-shaped cutter (one that’s open on top) on the griddle and add batter. When bubbles form on top of the pancake, use metal tongs to remove the cookie cutter and flip the pancake.

Serve these heart-y pancakes with favorite syrups and toppings. Strawberries and powdered sugar are delicious and pretty. Add bacon or sausage and English breakfast tea to the menu. For a unique twist, add a teaspoon of maple syrup to the brewed tea. If you start someone’s morning with love and a little pancake pizzazz, the rest of the day will be sweeter for both of you.

Savor Sweetheart Scones

Whom could you treat to afternoon tea? Create an inviting ambiance with background music, cloth napkins, and a lovely rose in a vase. Then serve piping hot tea and scones.

To make sweetheart scones, cut scones with a heart-shaped cookie cutter. Before baking, cut a smaller heart or circle from the center of each scone, cutting only part way through. Remove some dough from the center to form an indentation but leave a layer of dough at the bottom. After the scones are baked, dust them with sifted powdered sugar. Fill centers with red jam—strawberry, raspberry, or cherry—and pass the whipped cream. Serve with fresh fruit and fragrant rose-petal tea. A-h-h-h, it smells like love is in the air!

Plan a Romantic Dinner Tea

When my college roommate and I were single, we used to have what we called “ro-tic” dinners. These were dinners without a “man” to make them romantic. Since I’ve been married for 58 years, I’ve enjoyed many roMANtic dinners. It’s still nice to romance my one-and-only. Soft music, glowing candles and a crackling fire add warmth. Of course, the food is important. Sometimes I order takeout from a favorite restaurant and serve the meal on china plates. Other times a three-course, home-cooked meal says, “I love you.”

One way to serve a special meal at home is to set up a card table in front of the fireplace. Add a fabric tablecloth as well as your best silver and china and serve foods you both enjoy. Start with an appetizer, soup or salad followed by a main dish. For an added touch, include sparkling cider and end with a decadent dessert such as my truffle recipe.



Of course, you’ll serve tea. Perhaps try a different blend with each course. We enjoy Harney and Sons Wedding Tea and their Valentine’s Day tea with chocolate and rosebuds. Local shops and the internet offer hundreds of teas to sample.

Decorate with Love

Scatter Hershey’s chocolate hugs and kisses on the dining table or tea tray. Also, place printed love sayings on the table or include Bible verses like “Love one another” or “Love is patient, love is kind.” You could even read aloud from 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter in the Bible.

My recipe for a loving teatime includes a beautiful table setting, delicious food and people sharing from their hearts. I’m ready to add love to someone’s life. Won’t you join me?

From Lydia’s Recipe File:

Cookie Dough Truffles

(Sweet confections lead to sweet connections.)

Ingredients:

- ½ cup softened butter
- ¾ cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 cups flour, heated before serving (see note*)
- ¾ cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips
- ½ cup chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)
- 1 (12 oz.) package dark chocolate chips, melted (optional)
- Extra mini chips, sprinkles, and cocoa powder for decorating (optional)

Directions:

1. Cream together butter, brown sugar and vanilla until fluffy.
2. Mix in condensed milk. Add flour a little at a time and mix well (use hands if needed).
3. Mix in chips and nuts. The dough is now ready to eat. Refrigerate in a covered container or roll into balls.
4. For truffles, shape dough into 1-inch balls. Place them on baking sheets lined with wax paper. Refrigerate for 1 or 2 hours to become firm.
5. To dip them, melt the dark chocolate chips in the microwave following the package directions. I melt about 1/3 cup chips at a time in a custard cup.
6. Dip balls into melted chocolate one at a time. Coat them by turning them in the chocolate with a fork. Then use two forks, one in each hand, to remove the balls, letting the excess chocolate drip off before placing the balls on the wax paper-lined cookie sheet.
7. Dust with Hershey’s cocoa powder or top with a few mini chocolate chips, nuts or sprinkles if desired.
7. Chill the truffles in the refrigerator until the chocolate is firm.
8. Place the truffles in a covered container and keep them refrigerated until you are ready to serve them or give them as a gift. Keep leftover truffles refrigerated.

Makes about 3 dozen balls or truffles.

*Note: Eating raw flour can be harmful, so it is recommended to heat the flour first. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Place 2 cups of flour in a 9x13-inch pan and bake it for 5 minutes. Cool completely. Then sift and use.

—Lydia E. Harris enjoys serving tea to her grandchildren and others. Her books for grandparents are: *Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting*, *In the Kitchen with Grandma*, and *GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids*. All are available at amazon.com or can be ordered through local bookstores.

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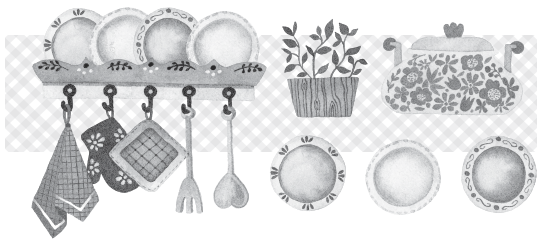
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READER SUBMITTED RECIPES

Chicken & Spinach Casserole

Sal Y, Uxbridge, ON

Preheat oven to 450°F. In a medium bowl, combine 2 cups torn bread with 1 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, season with coarse salt. Set aside. In a medium pot, heat ½ teaspoons oil over medium-high. Add 4 cups packed flat-leaf spinach, washed; season with salt. Cook, stirring, until wilted, let cool, then squeeze out water. Coarsely chop.

Wipe pot clean and heat 1 ½ teaspoons oil over medium heat. Add 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped, and 1 garlic clove, minced; season with salt and ground pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is soft, about 8 minutes.

Add ¼ cup white wine to pot and cook until almost evaporated about 5 minutes. Add 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour and cook, stirring, 30 seconds. Gradually whisk in 1 ½ cups of half-and-half. Add ½ teaspoon fresh lemon juice and bring mixture to a boil over high.

Remove from heat and stir in chopped spinach and 1 cup shredded rotisserie chicken; season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a 2quart baking dish and top with bread pieces. Bake until bread is golden brown and mixture is bubbling, 8 to 10 minutes.

Borscht Soup

Irene L, Regina, SK

Fresh from the garden vegetables. I like to use pork stock for borscht. Cook some hocks until good and tender with salt & pepper and some garlic cloves. Remove the meat and garlic from the stock. Save all the lean bits of meat and eat with sauerkraut. Yum!

Chill the stock and remove the fat. You do not have to use meat stock. Water is ok, and the fresh vegetables give it lots of flavour—about 10 cups of water or stock, beet roots plus some leaves and stalks. Chop up the leaves and slice up the stalks into half pieces. Onion, garlic, potatoes, carrots, peas, peppers, cabbage, tomatoes, green beans. Whatever! Lots of dill weed. And, fresh parsley. Fresh dill is best, also - the little hairy leaves.

A handful of rice, barley, or orzo to give it some body. Bring stock or water to a boil. Add rice, barley or orzo. Keep boiling as you add the vegetables. Add salt and pepper. Add a bit of vinegar - just a bit, as you can add a bit more at the table. Add a dollop of sour cream to your bowl and homemade buns. What could be better?!

Notes: I didn't put amounts of vegetables, because it depends on the size, and some people prefer more or less. You will have to figure it out. If you use rice and you have a large pan, so you can reheat it, the rice becomes very overcooked and starchy. I like barley the best.

Easy Hoisin-Chicken Salad Rolls

Sal Y, Uxbridge, ON

¼ cup hoisin sauce
2 tsp dark sesame oil
2 cups shredded cooked chicken, about half a rotisserie chicken (skin discarded)
1 small red pepper, sliced
8 red-leaf lettuce leaves
4 green onions, cut into 4-in. strips
1 medium cucumber, sliced into 4 in. strips
8 rice-paper wraps.

Stir hoisin with sesame oil in a small bowl. Lay a damp kitchen towel on counter. Fill a pie plate with warm water and place beside towel. Line up ingredients.

Dip 1 rice-paper round in water until pliable, about 30 sec. Lay softened round on damp towel. Place a lettuce leaf near the bottom. Top with about ¼ cup chicken. Drizzle with ½ tsp of hoisin mixture. Layer with 1 piece each of green onion, cucumber, and pepper. Lift rice-paper edge closest to you up and over filling, then roll toward the centre. Fold in sides, then continue rolling to form a log. Set seam-side down on a platter. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Slice rolls in half diagonally.

Make Time for You Recharging and Returning to What Matters

by Kim Caskey of Kim Caskey Quilt & Textile Tours • Host & Educator

There's something magical about flipping the calendar to January first. A brand-new year feels like a fresh start— a blank page, a do-over, an invitation to reset. It's that same feeling I speak about in my Temperature Quilt Lecture: a new year, a new beginning, a moment to choose differently.

It's no surprise that people often feel a surge of motivation and clarity at this time. We set intentions to live healthier, declutter, finish lingering UFOs, start new projects, volunteer, travel or simply be kinder. After the joyful chaos of December, January opens the door to something quieter and more intentional—a season to turn inward and make time for YOU.

For many of us who create—quilt, sew, stitch or make—find the weeks after Christmas often feel like the perfect moment to slip back into the comfort of our craft. The pressure is gone, the deadlines are behind us and the sewing room calls us home in a gentle, familiar way.

This is the season to Make Time for YOU.

Self-care doesn't have to look like a spa day or a vacation (though those are lovely too). Sometimes self-care is as simple as reclaiming a quiet hour with your sewing machine or curling up with a hand-stitching project and a warm cup of tea. These small creative rituals don't just soothe our minds—they refill the well that the holiday rush so quickly drains.

Whether I'm at home or on the road, I've learned that creativity thrives in the spaces where we slow down. When we allow ourselves to pause—to breathe, to reflect, to simply be—inspiration begins to rise again. It's in those gentle moments that ideas start forming, colour palettes appear, and that long-awaited spark returns.

This is a wonderful time of year to set a small intention for yourself and your craft. Nothing overwhelming or grand—just something that brings joy. Perhaps you'll pull out a project that was set aside in December. Perhaps you'll start something new, stitched just for the pleasure of it. Or perhaps you'll take an afternoon to tidy your sewing space, acquaint yourself with your fabrics and rediscover forgotten treasures tucked into drawers.

As quilters and makers, we naturally pour our hearts into others—stitching

gifts for family, welcoming new babies with quilts, offering comfort pieces for friends and contributing generously to community charities. All of this giving is meaningful and deeply fulfilling; it nourishes a beautiful part of who we are. But after a season spent caring outwardly, January invites us to shift that giving spirit inward. This is the moment to refill our own creative tank, to restore the energy that allows us to keep giving with joy. What can you create for you? What brings you comfort, beauty, or peace? What helps you reset?

As the new year begins, let yourself linger in the slower rhythm. Set aside some time for you. Put on music that makes your shoulders drop. Let the hum of the machine or the rhythm of needle and thread guide you back to yourself. And perhaps, somewhere on your horizon, consider a creative escape—a quilt and textile journey in 2026 could be a quiet, joyful experience to look forward to, a little time devoted entirely to your own inspiration and delight.

Here's to a fresh start, a renewed spirit and the gentle reminder that taking care of you is not only allowed—it's essential.

Kim Caskey operates and is Tour Host for Kim Caskey Quilt & Textile Tours, as well as a Professional Longarm Quilter and Educator. If you would like to learn more about Kim and her tours or quilting, please visit Kim's website: www.kimcaskey.ca.

Valentine's Day Trivia

Lace has a romantic meaning.

Lace can be seen all around on Valentine's Day, from ribbons to gift boxes. Well, the word itself has an origin befitting the holiday: the English word "lace" comes from the Latin word for "snare", as in you ensnare someone's heart. Put that in your next Valentine's Day card!

Who invented conversation hearts, the candy?

Pharmacist Oliver Chase initially cut medicinal lozenges by hand but eventually started making versions without medicine because candy was becoming popular. In the mid 1800s, he invented a lozenge-cutting machine to speed up the process and later a lozenge-printing machine to print words onto candy.



Humble Life Acres

Inspired by Nature, Gratitude & Living in the Moment

By: RESHA & TIM from HUMBLE LIFE ACRES

Little Luxuries and Sacred Self Care



As we welcome in the New Year. We wish you a beautiful year ahead. Taking time to enjoy the small things. The little luxuries that make today special. In a world where there is so much noise and not enough time. Sometimes, the moments we give ourselves to just be can feel small. Sometimes, we easily give up that time for something else. Abandoning self for something else.

Self-care and time to just be are very important. It allows us to be still enough to hear ourselves. Or to do the things you want to do versus the things you have to do. It was a weekend a few weeks ago where I wanted to go ice fishing with Tim and our son. I was also very tired, just craving a Saturday where I can just slow down and rest. I also wanted to do both things at the same time. So, I went through this internal, "What should I do? I knew in my heart that staying home and taking time to recharge was the priority. As I look back, I am glad I did, as I was able to be still enough to listen to myself and get some rest. I also thought that 'I'll get the bathroom cleaned and vacuumed. Or get caught up on chores.' This was a hard no to doing any of that! It was clear to me that this time was my sacred time. It has nothing to do with chore catch up that sometimes weighs heavy on my mind, rather, to be free in doing what I want to do. This is much different than the what I 'think' I should do or 'needs to' be done. Those are never-ending lists that eat up spare time. While it feels good to get them done. It still is abandoning self for something else.

When is the last time you had sacred self-care time? Sitting in quiet without the noise of devices. To rest, be creative, or just pause and embrace the stillness?

Being mindful is key to making that time, and to also not let it be a stress point. The more you make the moments of this time. The more you will create the boundaries so that you maintain that time you commit to yourself. It is what recharges our batteries. Replenishes our life force.

You can include little luxuries in your day-to-day. Even something as simple as a shower can be elevated to give you that time. I recently tried

this, and it was amazing. Get some fresh eucalyptus from your local florist. Hang some by your shower head. The rest can go in a vase on the bathroom counter for beautiful décor and a beautiful scent. Find a few mini cordless lamps, light a candle. There is enough light to see, but it's much softer and calm. Almost spa-like, especially if your preference is evening showers. It gives that extra calmness. Aftercare is vital to the experience, like our skin nourishing whipped tallow that hydrates skin. It just feels amazing, especially after a shower or bath. Or rose oil. If you're more into baths, then you can do the same and include a luxury bath tea.

Little luxuries make all the difference. A spritz of rose toner that awakens you mid-day. Your favorite tea or coffee, where each sip you're just in that moment. They are the tiny add-ons that sit quietly at the edges of our routines.

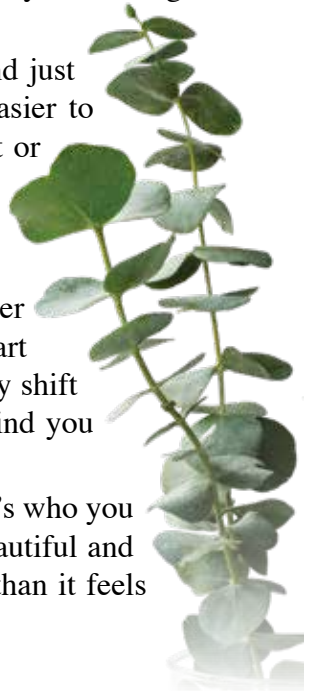
It can help shift a mood. Remind us to pause and just be here, even for a breath. They work and are easier to fit in busy life routine as they do not require effort or much planning. When we incorporate something beautiful, it nourishes the time we take for sacred self-care.

When repeated daily, these moments layer themselves into your life. They change how you start your mornings and how you close your nights. They shift your mindset from rushing to receiving. They remind you that you're worthy, even on the busiest days.

In the end, the big shift isn't the product itself—it's who you become when you let yourself enjoy something beautiful and add the magic to the moment for no other reason than it feels good.

Much Love,
Resha

Editor's Note: Please check out Resha's ad on Page 10 - Humble Life Acres



St. Patrick's Day History and Origins

Real Name:
Saint Patrick's name was Maewyn Succat, not Patrick.

Abduction:
He was kidnapped at age 16 and brought to Northern Ireland, later becoming a priest.

The First Parade:
The first St. Patrick's Day parade took place in America, not Ireland, in St. Augustine, Florida, in 1601.

No Snakes
Ireland has no snakes, and it is scientifically proven they never inhabited the country.

Original Color:
Blue was the original color associated with St. Patrick.

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S U D O K U

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Answer on Page 17

Bread Pudding

This is a dessert that my husband requests every few months. It's simple and easy to make. The origin of this recipe was my home economics cookbook, but it's had a few modifications over the years. It's funny that even though I've always enjoyed cooking, baking and sewing, that home ec. wasn't a class for me!

- 1 cup dry bread cubes (about 3 slices)
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1-1 ½ cups hot milk
- ½ tsp vanilla
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- ½ cup raisins or craisins
- 1 Tbsp butter

Place the bread in a buttered baking dish.

Mix egg, sugar and salt; add hot milk, vanilla and nutmeg and pour this mixture over the bread.

Add the raisins and dot with butter.

Bake at 350°F until firm and lightly browned, about 30-45 minutes.

The pudding is cooked when a knife blade comes out clean.

Serve with cream.



Borderline Hurry... Hurry Hard

Carl's phone rang one early January day. It was a cold, miserable day, and when Carl recognized the number, his first thought was, "Oh no, the day is about to get worse."

Carl's Father had never adapted to cellphones, let alone smartphones, and thus still used a landline, and not even his own at that.

Carl's Father had moved into a condo last summer, finally admitting that the house had become too big for him to maintain at age 85. Carl was greatly surprised by this, seeing that his Father had never maintained or cleaned anything in the house.

As far back into childhood as Carl can remember, all the maintenance the house ever needed was handled by contractors or a handyman service, and the house's overall cleanliness was credited to Joice, the cleaner who came twice a week, so when Carl's father said the house was too much for him to take care of, Carl knew it wasn't the house; it was just part of the house. The part of the house that held the staircase, the same staircase leading up to the second floor, where the bedroom and, most importantly, the house's only bathroom were located.

After some time, Carl and Mary convinced him to move closer to them so they could keep an eye on him. They found him a condo an hour away, which was a might better than the five-hour drive to Saskatoon they were currently making for their wellness checks.

The apartment had a public phone in the front lobby for emergencies. This was the phone Carl's father used after deeming that he had no use for one of his own. "I'm already paying condo fees, why should I pay to have a phone as well when there is a perfectly good one in the lobby?" He said to Carl and Mary when they were helping him move and get set up. So every time the number displayed on Carl's incoming call, he didn't know if it was his Father calling to say he was ok, or another tenant in the building calling to say that he wasn't. Thankfully, this time it was Father.

"Hello!" Carl said tentatively. "Carl, it's your father! Walter." Came the voice on the other side of the phone. "I just wanted to let you know that I am getting married," Carl's Father said matter-of-factly. "Oh no," thought Carl. "This is how it starts, he thinks he is 20 years old again." "Wait a second." Carl said to himself in his head, "If he thinks he is 20 years old again, why would he be phoning his son to tell him he is getting married? He wouldn't have a son yet."

"Are you still there, Carl?" "It's your father, I'm getting married...did I already say that?"

"I'm still here, Dad," said Carl. "Who is the lucky lady?" Carl said after a short pause, where he could think of nothing else to say.

"You don't know her." Carl's father said, "We met at the curling rink."

"The curling rink?" Carl said it like a question. "What were you doing at the curling rink?" he asked.

"Curling!" said Walter, "what else would I be doing at the curling rink? Carl, I'm starting to worry about you, you seem a bit absent-minded, are you ok?" Carl wasn't sure how to take this; should he be flattered that his Father cared about his well-being or insulted that an 85-year-old man, who seemed, to Carl

anyway, as uttering complete nonsense, was questioning his sobriety?

"Dad, you have never curled a day in your life, or played any other sport for that matter. How do you read and curl at the same time?" Carl asked, knowing that Fatherther would sooner read than do just about anything else.

"There is more to life than reading, you know, Carl," said his Father.

"I know that," said Carl. "I just didn't know that you knew that."

Carl's mother had passed away some 50 years ago. After her passing, Carl's Father had used her absence as an excuse to spend more time alone reading. "Maybe he has read everything there is to read," thought Carl.

"What's her name?" asked Carl

"What's whose name?" Father asked right back.

"Your bride-to-be." Said Carl.

"How did you know I was getting married?" Father said.

Carl was about to get worried about this question until he heard the strangest thing he had ever heard come out of his Father's mouth; laughter.

Carl could honestly never remember Father ever laughing. Ever...

"I'm just joshing with you, kid," said Walter. "Her name is Marjorie, but everyone calls her Maggie."

"Just 'joshing' with me," he had the phone tucked under his chin so he could use air quotes when telling the story to Mary, shortly after he had hung up and quickly redialed. Carl had finished his conversation with his father and instantly called Mary to tell her. Something like this couldn't wait until he or she got home.

"Well, I'm happy for him, them, I can't wait to meet her. I wonder what she's like?" Mary said.

"She must be quite the pistol," Carl said, trying to use a turn of phrase from his Dad's era. "He's curling...he couldn't even manage a set of stairs 6 months ago."

"I know, and he is going out," said Mary in a tone of disbelief.

"It's all a shock to me." Carl said, "But the laughing. I've never heard him laugh in my whole life."

"Maybe he had never truly been happy before," said Mary. "Had you thought of that?"

"Yes," said Carl, "that's what upsets me the most."

That Sunday, Carl and Mary drove down to see Walter, meet Maggie and take the two of them out for lunch. They picked them up at Walter's condo, which turns out to be Maggie's condo as well. Carl and Mary gave each other the "look" when they both came out of the building at the same time.

"She lives in the apartment right beside mine. Isn't that crazy?" said Walter.

"What's so crazy about that?" asked Carl.

"That we never met," said Maggie.

"I'm already getting a headache," Carl whispered to Mary. Which was quickly followed by a sharp elbow to the ribs.

"Be nice." Mary snapped.

"If you didn't meet, how do you know each other?" said Carl sarcastically.

"We never met in the building," Carl's Father said, like an annoyed teenager. "It wasn't until I started curling that we met."

"I have so many questions," said Carl. "It's going to be a long lunch just to fit them all in," he whispered to Mary.

Carl and Mary were no spring chickens, as they say. Still, they were definitely the youngest patrons at the restaurant Walter had chosen. They shouldn't have been surprised, as the town had twenty or more of the same condo complexes as Walter and Maggie lived in, scattered about town, seemingly placed in any space they would fit, and this was the only restaurant in town that served a Sunday lunch buffet, and just happened to be located close to all of the condos.

They had to wait for a table as the place was packed. "We should have come sooner," said Maggie. "We are a bit late for lunch!"

Carl looked at his watch; it was 10:45.

Once they had a table, they talked about how Walter had started curling. It turns out the public library and the curling rink with two sheets of ice are in the same community complex. The curling rink has a small booth that sells burgers,





soft drinks, coffee and popcorn. Walter would pick up a book, head over to the curling rink, get a coffee, and then sit in the very comfortable padded bleacher seats and read. Each seat had a cup holder for his coffee. His chair at home didn't have that, and he liked it.

One day, while reading a particularly uninteresting book, Walter looked up and saw to his surprise that there were curlers on the ice, something he had failed to notice for the first month or so of going there. He had read about curling many times but had never seen it played. Carl was not surprised that his father could sit there and be so caught up in his reading that the clanking of stones and the "hurry, hurry hard!" yelling coming from the ice never made him pause and look up.

"Once I started to watch, I was fascinated by the game," said Walter. "It's more of a strategic geometry puzzle than a sport." I started to show up a bit earlier on Tuesdays and Fridays so I could finish reading my book of the day before the curlers took to the ice."

"Took to the ice?" Carl said this as both a question and a statement.

"That's curler talk," Maggie piped in.

"Curler talk.." Carl started to say sarcastically, but was interrupted by the toe of Mary's shoe smashing into his shin.

Walter continued, "The seniors' league is on Tuesdays and Fridays. One day, I had just finished my book and looked up to see curlers on the ice, but only one game was being played. The other sheet of ice had only 7 would-be players, and they were all looking my way. One of them was pointing. That was Maggie."

"I drew the short straw," Maggie said with a laugh. "They made me go ask him if he wanted to join us on the ice and be the eighth player. None of us expected that he had never played the game. He's from Saskatchewan, for God's sake!"

"If it hadn't been Maggie that came to ask, I don't know if I would have agreed," said Walter. "How could I say no to those dimples?"

"Oh, Walter!" Maggie swooned as she playfully slapped Walter on the forearm.

"So there you have it," said Walter. "Maggie is the skip, and I have been her lead man ever since."

The curling pun was totally lost on Carl. He was still trying to absorb all the information about his Father's new life.

It was one of the strangest lunches Carl had ever had with his father. It wasn't even the shock of the whole story of how he and Maggie had met that surprised Carl. It was the people who interrupted them during lunch just to stop by and say hello on their way out of the restaurant. Carl had never known his father to have any friends; now there were guys stopping by the table and slapping him on the shoulder. Carl would need some time to get used to this.

On the drive home, not knowing what Carl was thinking or quite what to say, Mary came up with "Maggie seems nice."

"She is nice." Carl agreed. "And she seems to be good for my father. I have never seen him so outgoing."

"I've never seen the resemblance in the two of you before today." Said Mary.

"Good or bad?" asked Carl.

"You decide," Mary said with a smile. "I can hardly wait to go to the wedding."

There was almost complete silence in the vehicle for the rest of their drive home. There was only the slight hint of sound coming from Carl as he sang the Frank Sinatra classic under his breath. "Out of the tree of life, I just picked me a plum. You came along, and everything started to hum....best is yet to come, and won't that be fine..."

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Don't miss this opportunity to share your voice and connect with others through the power of storytelling. We can't wait to read your stories!

Slow Cooker No-Peek Chicken

I first was introduced to this recipe in the '80s. I think it was also called Church Chicken in that you could place it in the oven in a covered casserole at 300°F for a couple of hours, and by the time you went to church and back, your lunch was ready. I usually make this on a fall day when we're outside cleaning up the yard.

So nice to not have to fuss about supper!

- 1 ½ lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts, or 1 cut-up chicken
- 10.5 oz. cream of celery soup (1 can)
- 10.5 oz. cream of mushroom soup (1 can)
- 1 can water measured from one of the cans above
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 2 cups rice
- 1 oz. packet onion soup mix

Use a 4 qt. or larger slow cooker.

Spray the slow cooker with non-stick spray.

Add the cans of soup, one can of water, garlic powder, pepper and rice. Stir. Lay over the chicken breasts.

Sprinkle over the soup mix.

Cover and cook on high for 3.5 hours. Or 6-8 hours on low.

Valentine's Day Trivia

Conversation hearts take the cake in terms of production numbers, though. Every day—yes, day—approximately 100,000 pounds of conversation hearts are produced. That's about eight billion conversation hearts per year. And nearly all of those are sold during a brief, six-week period between January 1 and Valentine's Day. It's no wonder they're the top-selling Valentine's Day confection after chocolate.

We have Richard Cadbury to thank for Valentine's Day chocolate. The tradition of eating chocolate on Valentine's Day is mostly due to the efforts of one man, Richard Cadbury, the son of the Cadbury Chocolate manufacturer. Simply to encourage more sales, he started packaging his chocolates in heart-shaped boxes—and, well, the rest is history.

People really did used to "wear their hearts on their sleeves." During a Middle Ages festival that celebrated the goddess Juno, Roman men were known to have drawn the names of potential partners on their arms.

Morden, MB

Barnswallow Quilt Show

May 1-3, 2026

Morden Access Event Centre

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Feature Quilter: Joyce Dubreuil

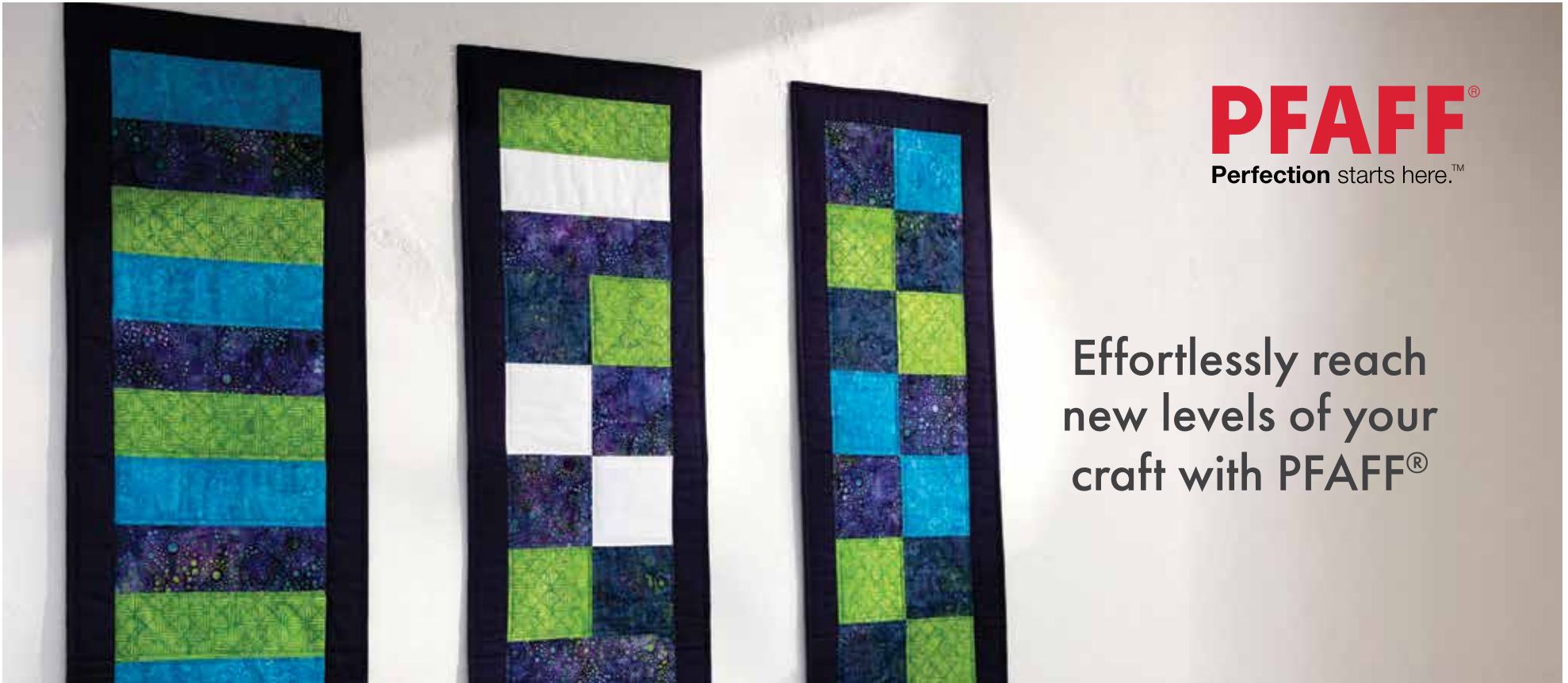
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