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Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island

Happy Spring!

The Country Register

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Your Statewide Guide to Premier Shopping and Events

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Just A Note...

Welcome Spring!!! It's time to go shopping....Our advertisers are ready to share with you all their new products for Spring, whether it's a gift for someone special or something to make your home bright and sunny.

Please remember to support these locally owned businesses. Let the shop owners know that you read about their shop in our publication. This is important because their advertising allows us to bring you this paper. They appreciate knowing the ads are effective and that keeps them advertising with us.



David,
Rachel,
Grace
and
Amy

Did you notice?? Yes, this issue is on larger paper. Without much notice, our printer that we've been using for years for this paper went out of business. We decided to change to the printer we use in Florida for our Florida edition because they do a great job with printing and shipping. We have been using this broadsheet size for Florida for several years. We hope you enjoy the larger, easier to read size.

Keep an extra copy of the current issue of our publication in your car to use as a road map for places to shop. What a fun, relaxing way to ease into Spring. And don't miss the Spring open houses, quilt shop hops and shows that are planned. The shows and events listing summarizes all the events from the ads in this issue so you can easily mark your calendar to attend!

If you know of a great shop that isn't advertising with us, but should be, please email ads@theregisterweb.com with that shop's name, phone number and address so we can send them a copy of the paper.

Have you visited our website at www.TheRegisterWeb.com recently? The current copy of the paper is always on our website as a pdf if you lose your copy. Be sure to sign up for our e-newsletter so we can let you know when each new issue is available.

Grace is having a busy semester between classes, sorority activities, her fellowship and some travel! We had fun celebrating her 21st birthday together with a visit to Nashville for our family. Rachel has been very busy at her job in Raleigh (Anesthesiologist Assistant) with a regular schedule and fitting in some overtime shifts too. Plus she still squeezes in some travel and fun activities.

Thank you for picking up a copy of this issue. And be sure to share your copy or pick up another copy for a friend. Enjoy shopping this Spring and please let our advertisers know you read about them here!

Amy & David



May/June events due by April 1

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

- March**
6-8 Spring Fling at Tessier's Changes of Thyme in Bolton, CT (pg. 10)
17 Spring Re-opening at Personal Touch Country Shoppe in Seekonk, MA (pg. 8)
19-22 Spring Open House at Primitive Goods in Uxbridge, MA (pg. 5)
- April**
1 USA250 Birthday Sale starts at Rustic Country Barn in New Milford, CT (pg. 12)
10 Spring Re-Opening at Primitive Thymes in Spencer, MA (pg. 4)
17-18 Spring Shower of Quilts at St Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange, CT (pg. 12)
- May**
1-3 Pieces of Time Quilt Show at Elk's Lodge #61 in Springfield, MA (pg. 3)
1-3 Brewster in Bloom in Brewster, Cape Cod, MA (pg. 8)
13-17 Celebration of Needlework in Nashua, NH (pg. 7)
16 Southford Falls Quilters' Auction at Immanuel Lutheran Church Hall in Oxford, CT (pg. 12)
- June**
18-20 Vermont Quilt Show at Doubletree Expo Center in S. Burlington, VT (pg. 7)
- August**
8-9 Arts & Crafts Festival at the Plymouth Public Library in Plymouth, MA (pg. 8)

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A Cup of Tea with Lydia

A Milestone Nine-TEA-eth Party by Lydia E. Harris
Colorful streamers, balloons, and tablecloths waited to welcome the senior ladies who met weekly for tea and treats in the community room.

But this time they gathered to celebrate my sister Erna's nine-TEA-eth birthday. The rose and gold floral-print napkins and paper plates said: "90 Fabulous." Her three daughters and grandson had arrived early to prepare the setting.



Tasty Treats
The buffet table held a delicious array of foods, including cranberry brie bites, a variety of crackers, and a charcuterie board loaded with an assortment of cheeses, meats, and colorful dried fruit. But the main feature was a homemade gluten-free three-layer vanilla cake with strawberry cream cheese frosting, topped with two large candles: a nine and a zero.

Other treats included homemade cranberry nut triangles, chocolate chip cookies, jam thumbprints, and lemon crinkle cookies (see recipe). Oh my—what a wonderful tea time with sugar and spice and everything nice.

Big Surprise
Twenty women from the retirement community, plus friends and relatives, came to honor Erna. But the big surprise was that her oldest daughter and grandson had flown from California to Michigan to help celebrate this milestone. How I wish I could have flown in from Washington State.

As usual, the women could select a teacup and teabag and brew their favorite tea. But today, wearing her crowning tiara, Erna reigned as queen.

As the ladies sipped their tea, they chatted and honored Erna. Erna was all smiles, feeling treasured and blessed.

Special Memories
Later Erna reported by phone, "The party was a lot of fun and very special!" At her apartment, she was surrounded by the party decorations and cherished the memories of a wonderful time.

Young at heart and very talented, my sister Erna has had a memorable life and has blessed many. She wrote a Bible study guide for the book of Acts and coauthored a musical, Who Is My Neighbor? Most recently, in 2025, with the help of her daughter Lois, she published a book, Strong in her faith and wanting to showcase God, He Was Always There: A Book of Stories and Miracles by Erna Craven records events from her life, including our father's miraculous release from a Russian prison years before her birth.

After coming to America in 1929 with their two sons, her parents, Nicolai and Helena Siemens, added six girls to their family. I am blessed to be the youngest. Over the years, I've enjoyed many happy occasions and teatimes with my family and friends.

So how would you celebrate a special event or milestone birthday? However, you make merry, I recommend rejoicing with family and friends over a cup of tea!

— Lydia E. Harris enjoys serving tea to family and friends. Her books include: *Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting, In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together*, and *GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids*

From Lydia's Recipe File:
Lemon Crinkle Cookies

1 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup (1 stick) softened butter
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 tsp. lemon extract
1 tbsp. lemon zest
2 eggs

1-3/4 cups flour
1-1/2 tsp. baking powder
1-1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 cup powdered sugar
1/2 to 1 cup lemon curd, homemade or purchased (optional)

Directions:
1. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and granulated sugar until light and fluffy.
2. Stir in vanilla extract, lemon extract, and lemon zest.
3. Beat in eggs, one at a time.
4. Mix together the flour, baking powder, and salt.
5. Add the dry ingredients to the creamed mixture. Do not overmix.
6. Cover dough and refrigerate for one hour.
7. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
8. Shape dough into 1-inch balls and roll them in powdered sugar. Place them two inches apart on a parchment-lined cookie sheet.
9. Bake for 13–15 minutes until edges are lightly brown and tops do not look wet.
10. Cool on the cookie sheet for 2 minutes. Then transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.
Recipe makes about 3 dozen cookies.
Variation: For a burst of fresh lemon flavor, sandwich two cookies together with a teaspoon of lemon curd just before serving.
Optional variation: Sandwich two cookies together with cream cheese frosting. If using cream cheese frosting, store cookies in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

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Life on My Farm - Breezy Manor Garden Fairies

by Donna Jo Copeland, farmeress

I believe in magic, always have. And a garden is one of the places magic truly happens.

Think about it. We take a seed or a cutting, put them into our garden soil, water and wait. Sometimes beautiful plants emerge giving us fabulous flowers, wonderful fruits and vegetables. Sometimes not. That's where magic comes in, I believe.

The growing of plants, any plant brings us joy. Nurturing a growing entity speaks to our souls. I think it's the same for farmers as well as gardeners. You can do everything right and still fail. But when it all works then there's magic.

Every year in my gardens I plan something new. For instance, new beds, new plant varieties, new methods. And I always ask for the blessings of the fairies. I leave blue bottles (for that is the favorite color of fairies), upturned flower pots, dense foliage for their homes and shelter.

I used to have a lovely stack of blue and green bottles in a corner of the garden but it collapsed. This year I intend to fashion a more permanent bottle tower. Bottles facing east for the morning fairies, west for the evening ones.

Morning fairies have wings glistening with dew drops and are very busy flitting around as they rejoice in the sunshine, blessing plants. Evening fairies are the ones I notice most gracefully floating over plants at eventide, pausing to say their prayers.

Gardens can calm a troubled or stressed mind. Hands in the soil, green growing plants surrounding you, magic fills your aura.

The queen of the garden fairies I think is the beloved dragon fly. With her majestic wings and her playful silhouette, the Queen hovers over your garden spreading magic. Be still and listen you can hear her singing.

Last year due to incessant rain I couldn't get my vegetable garden soil tilled. I grew tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, green beans and potatoes in old feed sacks. Filling them half full of barn compost and sweepings, I punched holes in the bottom for drainage and set them up against the fence. Very little watering required and no weeding. Will be doing this again with more sacks.

The real beauty in this method is when harvest is over you just dump the bags out on the garden, enriching the soil. Some of the feed sacks I will reuse, some I will burn.

As the world is a scary, stressful place right now I urge you all to plant a garden, large or small. Size doesn't matter, it's the fresh air, the growing, the tending. Watch for garden fairies, give them a safe place. Let their magic unfold you.

Peace and love,

Donna Jo

From Breezy Manor Recipe File

Sandy's Lime Jello Salad

Heat 2 cups of unsweetened applesauce until very hot, not boiling. Add one 3-ounce package of lime Jello. Stir well. Let cool then stir in 8 ounces of 7UP, mix well. Pour into an 8x8 pan, refrigerate for at least 4 hours. .

*Submitted by Donna Jo Copeland, Farmeress at Breezy Manor Farm.
See her article in this edition to read what's happening on her wee farm.

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Letters Worth Writing Home About

by Kerri Habben Bosman

Since I could write, I have loved writing letters. One of my favorite gifts as a child was new stationery, the kind that came in a pretty box with matching paper and envelopes all bound together by a ribbon. I was the kid that couldn't wait to write "thank you" letters.

It helped that I saw family writing letters. Dad often used his clipboard with watermarked paper on top of a ruled guide so that each line he wrote would be properly spaced. His handwriting was exceptional, having grown up when penmanship was an indicator of character. Uncle Henry, who lived across the street from us, always had his old Royal typewriter on their dining room table except for family dinners. I loved using his typewriter. I'd leave him a note if he wasn't in the room and then the next time, I came over one was waiting for me. When he died in 1992, I placed a typed note in his suit pocket. It read: "I came by to see you today. I pray that I shall live well enough to see you again."

Ten years later by coincidence, I became pen pals with the son of someone Uncle Henry knew in the 1930's. I never met Harold in person, but we were both writers. We sent works-in progress for the other's suggestions. We wrote for 12 years.

When I was 20, my dad suggested I write to the widow of a captain he'd worked with before retiring after 40 years as a ship dispatcher. He thought we'd have a lot in common. We did, and we telephoned and wrote letters for over 20 years. When Dad died in 2001, I called Jane, ready with the prepared speech I'd used in the "letting people know" calls. Except that when I tried to talk to Jane, my throat suddenly became a glob of wet marbles. Her response to my garbled words has stayed with me. "Old shipmates are always old shipmates."

Perhaps the most important letters I have ever written are the over 700 letters sent to my mother-in-law. I wrote to her at least two times a week from when I first met her in 2019 to her passing in late 2025 at the age of 104. She lived 1,021 miles from us in Kenosha, Wisconsin. My letters shared all that was happening for us and all of our family here. Most of us rely on emails and texts now, but Mom didn't. She needed letters to be read and reread with a cup of tea and a cookie or two.

In person I called her "Mom," but in my letters I addressed her as "Mary," her given name. By the time Wayne and I married in 2020, she was 100 years old and had long been "Mom," and "Grandma Mary." With most of her peers no longer with us, I wanted her to see herself as she'd been her whole life.

Her letters were written on handmade cards with pictures and details of the kids, namely her grown grandchildren, their spouses and ever-growing great-grandchildren. She knew when laundry was in the dryer and what was for dinner. She knew how the garden was growing and how each of us was evolving too. Most importantly, she knew she was a part of each of us all the time. Each letter ended with: "Wayne sends his love, as do I. We think of you every day."

Selfishly perhaps, I miss writing to Mom. At 104 she had earned a peace beyond our temporal and limited world. But I am also comforted because old shipmates in our sea of life will always be old shipmates. And I pray that I shall live well enough to see her again.

-- © 2025 Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer living in Cape Carteret, NC.
Her email is 913jeves@gmail.com.

Reader Shares! Shared by reader D. Carnes of Onset, MA.

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Slow Cooker No-Peek Chicken

Start Sunday morning. By the time you go to church and back, your lunch will be ready.

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1 1/2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts, or 1 cut-up chicken	1/2 tsp garlic powder
1 can cream of celery soup	1/4 tsp pepper
1 can cream of mushroom soup	2 cups rice
10.5 oz water	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.

Submitted by Colleen Gust, The Country Register - SK & MB

Lunenburg, Sudbury - MA




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BOOK REVIEW

THREADS OF THE PAST:

Stories of Pioneer Women and Their Quilts

by Lanie Tiffenbach

Lanie Tiffenbach has been both an avid genealogist and an avid quilter for many years. She has combined her two passions in the writing of her historical fiction novel, *Threads of the Past*, allowing her immigrant ancestors to tell their stories in their own "voices" in the form of letters or diaries.

Based on extensive genealogical and historical research, seven courageous pioneer women detail their families' immigration to the New World and the dangers, hardships, isolation and terrible losses they found on the raw frontier of Minnesota, as well as their simple joys and successes. Their stories span a time period from the 1850s through the 1930s, and are at the same time heartbreaking and heartwarming, but always grounded in love of family. The book is illustrated with over 100 wonderful vintage photos.

The evolution of quilting in America from the 1850s through the 1930s is woven throughout the stories, with each woman having a special quilt representing her particular era. The women's love of quilting is the "thread" that ties the stories together. In earlier times quilting was a blessing and a joy for women, as it gave them a creative outlet and produced something of beauty in the midst their hard lives. Equally important, their quilting bees relieved their isolation and loneliness and brought them together in friendship with other women. And these things are still true of quilters today!

While this novel will be of special interest to quilters and genealogists, the pioneer women's stories of bravery, faith and endurance will touch the hearts of all women.

Threads of the Past can be ordered on Amazon.com or you can email Lanie at tiffenbach@gmail.com.

To register to win a copy of *THREADS OF THE PAST*, email your name, address, and title of the book to win@theregisterweb.com.



The Beauty of Rainy Days

by Janet Young

Light rain has begun to fall, and here we are on the first week of April, preparing ourselves, to experience what traditionally has been one of the rainiest months of the year. As you watch the raindrops slide slowly down the window, have you ever stopped to think about the beauty that rain brings forth - especially in the springtime. Could it be because everything is painted beautiful...the trees look brighter, the flowers are more colorful, and rain sends a signal to the grass that it is time to wake up and start growing.

Have you ever heard the rhythmic sounds of raindrops cascading on your roof? Before long that sound, much like White Noise creates a sound so soothing, before you know it you are fast asleep.

Even in literature, rain symbolizes life, purity, being born, and cleansing. Even songs have been sung about rain. For example, A Rainy Night in Georgia, may not be a happy representation of rain, however there is the Pop song, I Love a Rainy Night. This is a catchy tune as the title implies extolling the virtues of rain. In the movies, Gene Kelly was famous for that dance scene in Singing in the Rain. And last but not least, children's nursery rhymes talked about rain in Rain, Rain Go Away, and It's raining, It's Pouring. There are many celebrations of rain.

Perhaps the next time it rains, you will have an attitude of gratitude. Because rain also supplies us with our much-needed water, that basically sustains life. I'd say that is a very important reason to embrace rainy days. So, don't let those raindrops get you down.

Instead, the next time it rains why not become like a child again. Grab your raincoat (if it is a cool day), an umbrella, and your boots. Then go for a walk in the rain. While you're at it, why not stomp your feet in a puddle or two, or if you are in a secluded area, why not dance in the rain. It will lift your spirits, and put a smile on your face.

And perhaps one of the most rewarding aspects of rain is when we get that occasional glimpse of the rainbow. I leave you with this quote from Gilbert K. Chesterton: "If you want a rainbow, you have to put up with the rain."

HAPPY SPRING!

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

Reader Shares! Finished Project!

I made these for my great grandchildren this past Christmas. I am working on 3 more for new great grandchild, granddaughter and her husband.

Shared by reader C. Pellegrino of Uxbridge, MA



Become Inspired Decorating, Entertaining and Living in the Early American Style

by Annice Rockwell

Awakenings of Glorious Spring

When the winter snow has finally melted away, our country yards take on a weathered and worn appearance. With our days getting noticeably longer, we are drawn outside to observe the quiet changes that abound. Slowly but surely as the days advance, we begin to see the subtle awakenings of glorious spring. After a long winter of relentless cold and unpredictable storms, we are no doubt grateful for the blessings all around us. The amiable sound of our robins' return, paired with the soft scent of warm earth give us a feeling of being in harmony with nature as we too notice a similar shift within ourselves. Cleaning our yards on one of the first warmer days feels remarkably rewarding as we look at our now-tidy landscape as a blank canvas for the rejuvenating season to come.

Proud Proclamations of Spring

Soon, as if right on cue, our bright yellow daffodils will make their presence proudly known as the perfect proclamation of spring. They are a symbol of a promise kept and their beauty brightens our days. Somehow the shift in the season helps us to gain momentum in creating new splendor in our yards and homes. Taking a full day to clean our country porch is a day well-spent. And creating a display around a spring theme can hearten our efforts. Our country door can be adorned with a handcrafted birdhouse in robin's egg blue and our porch windows become the perfect place for petite twig wreaths decorated with everlasting florals to enhance the welcoming scene. Our weathered porch barrel can be topped with an antique lantern that comes on right at dusk to create country ambiance.

In our yards, our dogwood and magnolia trees can be put to good use as a place to hang our country birdfeeders. We might even try our hand at fashioning our own sculpted birdseed and suet designs to hang outside as well for our feathered friends who are always appreciative.

Inspiring Reflective Scenes

The interior of our homes can be enlivened by some simple, yet artful vignettes to inspire. Our antique redware storage crocks can be filled with tulips and placed on a hooked runner with a floral design next to our fireside wingback chair. Handcrafted rabbits purchased at our favorite country shop can be placed beside an antique treen trencher filled with primitive grass and painted and aged eggs. Hand-poured candles in scents like Lemon Butter and Lavender Cream are an ideal accompaniment to our country spring surroundings.

This season, take time to appreciate the beautiful return of spring. Feel the strength that comes with coming through the season of winter. And reward yourself by creating spaces that reflect the symbolic power of the promise that Nature always keeps.

— © Annice Bradley Rockwell is an educator and owner of Pomfret Antiques. She is currently working on her book, *New England Girl*. NewEnglandGirl2012@hotmail.com



New Hampshire and Vermont

Building Harmony

by Jeff Cappis

Spring Thaw

Through the winter months, we tend to forget the sensations of the other seasons. Can you truly recall the sensations of soft, warm air, or the fragrance of a freshly mowed lawn if you aren't there? Bits and pieces maybe, but we really need to be there to experience the whole thing at once. Some cultures refer to this as "Silent Witnessing".

Well, out here on Harmony Acres, after "Silent Witnessing" 5 months of cold snow and winter, we were ready for a change alright. When winter came at first, it was beautiful.

We'd gotten used to the usual summer sensations that let into a warm fall. So, when the first snow came, it was faintly familiar. The trees, the yard and the forest were all covered in a virgin blanket of white. Even the freshly plowed driveway added charm to the place. Every year Cathy exclaims, "We live in a postcard," and vows to take lots of pictures. Of course, this is just Winter's first shot and we all know it.

What followed next in this winter wonderland is a long series of routines that lead to cabin fever. We didn't go out much because it was too cold. Winter had made our property a forbidden territory somewhere outside our window. I spent a lot of time moving firewood and building fires. It is amazing how much time we spend outside in the cold, so we can be warm inside. We watched almost all of the 800 movies in our collection and after a while, even snuggling by the fireplace got to be cliché. At this point, we keep our hopes up by making plans for next summer.

The hot tub is more enjoyable in the winter months, but it's a cold effort getting in and out. Once my hand froze to the doorknob going back in. It was minus a billion degrees outside and I stood there steaming, then, turning to ice. I blew on that @!#\$%&! metal doorknob for 10 minutes until I got free! By then, my feet were frozen to the deck.

O.K., so much for the charm. Winter blows. By February, we just wanted it to be over.

Seasons being what they are, Spring did begin showing its face in March. At first the temperature started to rise. My hands quit freezing to the doorknob. The dog tended to stay out longer on his bathroom breaks and went further from the house. Then the air lost its bite and became somehow softer. So did the snow. We can always smell it in the air. The humidity rises, the trees breath out as they awake, and the frozen wild animal poop all over the property starts to thaw. Put this together with the sound of birds singing and the occasional cattle drive down our road, and you have the perfect cocktail for that time between winter and summer.

In the spring, a young person's fancy turns to romance. Now, I'm not saying we're old, but our fancies turn to landscaping and gardening. (Besides, that romance thing was getting old by the end of last December). The plans we made to keep our hopes up, would now become a reality. We brought out the lawn furniture. Cathy started planting her flowers for the deer's summer long salad bar. This also meant moving lots of rocks and digging lots of dirt. As spring lets into full bloom, this means working under a hot sun. I find myself wishing for a little snow and cooler temperatures.

I suppose somewhere around June we'll begin collecting firewood for next winter, but what's the rush? Everything is green, and how bad can winter be?

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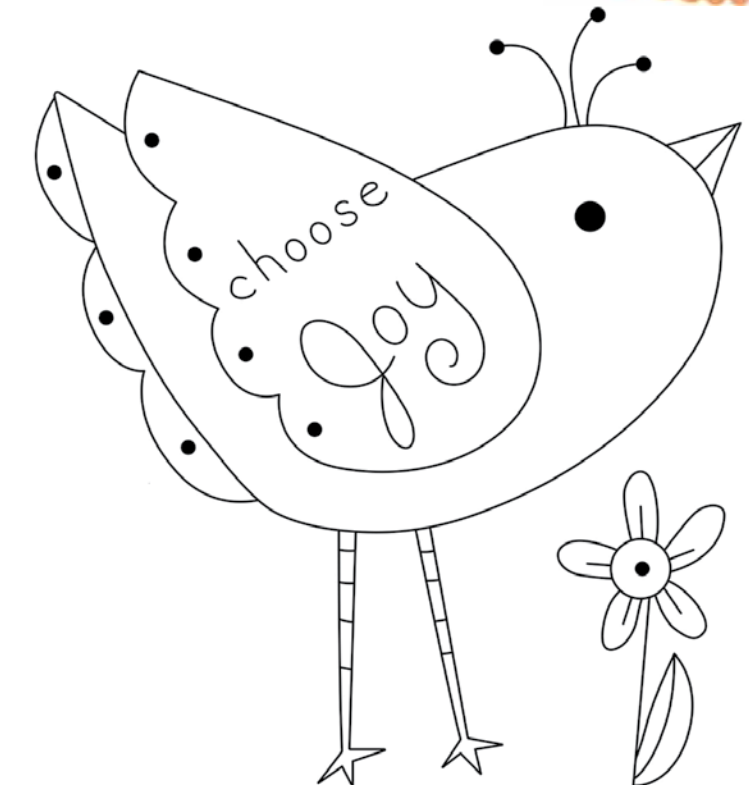
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Hoppy Spring

by Janet M Bair

It's always fun to look at new spring fabrics. Soft yellows, greens and pinks set my imagination going. What can I make with this? If it's too cute to leave in the store, I will often splurge and just buy half a yard. I can always make a doll dress for my granddaughter or cloth napkins for our dinner table.

By far, the hardest spring patterns to walk away from are the bunny prints. If they are lop-eared bunnies, the ones with the long floppy ears, I am sold.

I grew up a cat lover but my husband and daughter are allergic to cats. However, they are not allergic to rabbits. Thus, began my long love affair with bunnies. Their soft droopy ears, their cute constantly wiggling noses and their overall fluffiness make them a good petting substitute for a cat.

Bunnies are silent. They never talk back or offer critical comments. They are a peaceful pet to have. I took care of three different bunnies over the course of twenty years. Cupcake lived eleven years, Blackie three, and our littlest dwarf lop, Snickers or Snicky five years.

Although they often sit very still, they are surprisingly swift. When we let Snicky out of his cage, he would race down the hall and zoom under our bed right to the middle. No matter how far I stretched my arm under the bed, he always evaded me. Defeated by five pound of sneaky black and white fluff, I would walk away. Eventually he would come out from his hiding place.

To commemorate my bunny chasing days, this spring I am going to put a backing to a panel of bunnies and ducklings romping through the grass. It will be a good reminder that even though the snows have been deep this winter, spring always comes. The seasons flow onward.

Although it seems that all the bunny decorations in the stores have little to do with the real message of Easter, they are still fun to look at. I guess bunnies are used because they literally hop for joy. And isn't that what the season is all about? Not only do the days get longer and warmer, but we can rejoice in that Jesus is risen and the tomb is empty.

After His resurrection, "Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them!...They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord!" John 20:19,20 (TLB—The Living Bible)

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Back Porch Break

by Nancy Brummett

Are You Feeling Egg-centric?

Memories of Easters past always include fond recollections of the annual egg dying experience. We remember watching our mom spreading out yesterday's newspaper on the kitchen table and getting out the egg dying kit from the grocery store. Today's kits have fancy add-ons like stickers and such, but we just recall the package of tablets in different colors, the one copper wire egg dipper we took turns with, the wax crayon for writing our names on the eggs we chose, and the box with the punch-out holes for displaying our finished designs.

For many of us it was the first time we inhaled the pungent smell of vinegar as we watched intently for the different colored tablets to dissolve in the cups of hot water. It didn't take long to discover, once the white hard-boiled eggs had cooled enough to be carefully dipped in the dye, that the blue, green and purple dyes would work their magic first while the orange and yellow dyes took much longer. And red always turned out pink, right?

I'm glad I also have memories of dying Easter eggs with my boys and with several of our grandchildren over the years. Inevitably some child would turn over a cup of dye and it would flow over the newspaper on to the floor, someone would drop an egg and crack it, or a grandchild would complain that a sibling was hogging the best colors, the dipper, or the crayon. But when all was said and done and the mess was cleaned up, we had a beautiful array of colored eggs nestled in fake green grass in a basket—all ready for an Easter morning egg hunt. There might have even been some slightly multi-colored egg salad to enjoy after Easter in the days before we knew about salmonella!

Whereas kids can have just as much fun hunting for plastic eggs as real ones, especially if there's a piece of candy or other surprise inside each one, much fancier eggs from different cultures have been a part of the art world for centuries and are often displayed under glass in golden egg cups in museums. Whether it's the delicately painted Ukrainian pysanky egg or the jewel-encrusted Fabergé one, they are truly works of art.

The eggs displayed on my coffee table each Easter are the multi-colored marble ones I collected on travels in Germany and Italy in the early seventies. But I'm thinking this year I may just toss one of those egg dying kits in my grocery basket and have an egg-stravagant dying experience again. While I'm waiting for the fizzy tablets to reach their potential, I'll turn in my Bible to Isaiah 43:19 and be reminded of God's promise: **See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?** For the symbolism of the Easter egg, of any variety, should not be missed even by the youngest of us. New life, new birth, the promise of spring and of resurrection. That's Easter in an egg shell.



Nancy Parker Brummett is an author and freelance writer in Colorado Springs, CO. Follow her on Facebook, Instagram and Linked In or subscribe to her blog posts at www.nancyparkerbrummett.com.

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The Country Register. Visit www.facebook.com/TheCountryRegisterofCTMARI. spectrum. The yarns were of all varieties, chosen for each project by function, form and whimsy. Wools from all over the world were included, along with cottons and occasional acrylics. As time went on, I developed an appreciation for the textures of the finer ones, getting subtle satisfaction from the softness and slight oiliness that came from the lanolin. How something could be gauzy and warm at the same time was a minor revelation. Then came the giving. Kerri had often made shawls, blankets, hats without any idea who they would ultimately be for. Whether they ended up with a waitress or a young mother or child was a mystery to be solved at the correct moment, when gift and receiver appeared together. Those moments were and are met with the feeling that a certain grace exists and she gets to have a part in it. Her mother taught her that. But back to the shawls. At a certain point, it was time to clear out her mother's house. Hundreds of handmade items. Many, many shawls. Serendipity stepped in. My sister, Linda, is very active in her church groups in southeast Wisconsin. One of the groups provides prayer shawls for elderly or homebound people in the parish. Kerri's mother's shawls, made with love and care, found new destinations where they were needed and appreciated. Since then, a steady stream of prayer shawls and lap robes, handmade with love, have found their way to new owners. God willing, they will continue to do so. But don't be concerned that Kerri is going to run out of shawls soon. We recently were waiting at a favorite restaurant when another patron admired the shawl Kerri was wearing. I joked that she had 40 more like it at home. A day or so later, Kerri took inventory. 56 shawls in the closet at that time with a few more destined for a Civil War exhibit at the History Museum. The blue ones match her eyes. -Wayne is a retired auto mechanic living in Cape Carteret, NC. His email is wbosman1@gmail.com

IT'S A GIVING THING... Tea + wine = TWINE. I invite my girlfriends for "Twine" at 4pm - tea & cake & cucumber sandwiches & then, when we are fat & happy, out come the glasses & a bottle of wine. In the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing pleasures. For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed. Come. Sit. Stay. With Love from Susan Branch ("Twine," from my new Summer Book, available at www.susanbranch.com)

Rachel and her boyfriend Matthew. David and Amy visiting Grace in Athens, GA.

March is National Craft Month

City Index and Map. CONNECTICUT: Bolton, Essex, Glastonbury, New Milford, North Franklin, Orange, Oxford, Uncasville, Wallingford. MASSACHUSETTS: Bellingham, Blackstone, Brewster, Dudley, Harwich Port, Lunenburg, Palmer, Plymouth, Sandwich, Seekonk, Southampton, Spencer, Springfield, Sudbury, Swansea, Uxbridge, Webster, West Brookfield, West Springfield. RHODE ISLAND: Coventry, Greenville, Mapleville, North Scituate. New Hampshire, Online, Vermont.

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OPEN YEAR ROUND

Raucous Wildlife and Slimy Salamanders: What's So Great About Spring?

by Nancy J. Nash

Spring peepers send forth their high-pitched bell-like calls in March in my part of New England. Their constant repetition of "peep in, peep out" is both cheery and soothing, as the male chorus frogs (a type of tree frog) inflate the vocal sacs in their throats to attract females. They may begin in February but then have to interrupt their nightly chorus until warmer weather becomes more consistent. Occasionally they are deafeningly loud and raucous.

Growing up, we had a pasture behind our house with a marshy area dubbed "the swamp," where I joined my young neighbors in "expeditions" and sometimes went by myself. I had heard hordes of spring peepers on March evenings although not earlier in the day. But once I was lured by the calls of a few daytime peepers and had traipsed down to the swamp to investigate when suddenly the sound stopped. Evidently the tiny frogs were frightened. What should I do? It seemed like my eavesdropping expedition was doomed to failure - until I kept still for moment. Guess I'd better just crouch on a tussock and quietly peer into the grasses and shallow water for any sign of life.

I heard a peep here and a peep there from a few stray frogs, but none made an appearance. Where were they? If I moved in the direction of the sound, it would immediately cease. Careful, though - bogs are slippery, and boots fill quickly with cold water. Ugh! I had to content myself with actually having heard a few peepers close up.

Frogs continued to fascinate, and my friends and I decided to scout for frogs' eggs and the tadpoles that hatched from them.

We found lots of eggs encased in jelly-like sacs among the marsh grasses. After a few weeks, polliwogs, as we called the tadpoles, emerged and swam around our little "swamp." We weren't sure what type of frog they were, but what did it matter? We excitedly observed as they grew limbs and lost their tails, part of the process of maturing into full-fledged frogs. Peering into murky waters, we had front-row bogs to view them! I'll bet our schoolteachers were impressed by our brush with metamorphosis.

A number of years later, I was working in the town of Amherst, Massachusetts when yellow-spotted salamanders attracted attention. In winter, members of this declining species lived on a hillside overlooking Henry Street. Every spring they would clamber down the hill and cross this small country road to find a vernal pool where they could mate and lay eggs.

However, they had fallen on hard times. Traffic had increased on Henry Street to the point where it was hazardous for them to cross the road. Some local residents decided to place a couple tunnels under the road to help the small amphibians find their way to the spring wetlands.

I was among those humans who ventured forth in the rain on a chilly April night to help guide the salamanders to the entrances of the tunnels. My companions and I were ecstatic when a number of salamanders entered and emerged safely on the other side of the road. Success! But why were some of them still reluctant to enter the underground pathway? The obstinate, ungrateful little critters!! The night was rainy and cold and dark, and we volunteers were thinking how nice it would be to go home and have a cup of tea.

In time, a few of the human helpers came up with a solution. They decided to modify the tunnels' original design to allow in more moisture and natural light. Contrary to public perception, salamanders are not slimy but require moisture to keep them from drying out. The natural light may help them navigate. These days they show their appreciation by using the tunnels more freely. Whew!

Recently, I have been reading Sheila Carroll's Nature Study Companion: Simple Ways to Discover Wonders Near and Far. She makes a case for allowing children to wander about the landscape, discovering and observing and developing curiosity. She also suggests that nature study helps them develop wholeness, character, and life skills. Looking back, I'm not sure exactly what I gained from my encounters with frogs and salamanders, but my friends and I are still enchanted whenever we hear a chorus of spring peepers calling in a meadow or spot a migrating yellow-spotted salamander on a rainy spring night.

Vermonters call springtime "mud season," when the snow finally melts and bare ground becomes visible. As messy as spring can be, there is something about the milder air that frees us and reaches our souls. Owlets are born, skunks have their babies, and mother possums show up with little ones. It is a time of emerging life and a time of contentment. I hope the spring peepers are raucous this spring, and may the yellow-spotted salamanders make it safely across Henry Street!

- © 2026 Nancy J. Nash. Nancy J. Nash is the author of *Mama's Books: An Oregon Trail Story*, and *Little Rooster's Christmas Eve*, each available on amazon.com. She has a B.A. in English composition from Mount Holyoke College and an M.F.A. in Writing for Children from Simmons College. She can be reached at nancynash341@gmail.com



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