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March & April 2026



Happy Spring!

The Florida Register

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David, Rachel, Grace and Amy

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.

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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

Shows & Events



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.

Facebook Live or App Events

- Mondays 3:30 pm Quilted Twins (pg. 13)
- Mon-Sat 5:30 pm Quilts and Lace (pg. 23)
- Tuesdays 6 pm Inspire Quilting & Sewing (pg. 17)
- Wednesdays 7 pm Crafty Quilters (pg. 16)
- Fridays 3:30 pm Quilted Twins (pg. 13)

March

- 1-31 Bernina Premier Event at Margie's Sew Much Fun in Crestview (pg. 3)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Margie's Sew Much Fun in Crestview during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 3)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Cookie's Fabrics in Marianna during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 4)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Scrappy Girl Quilts & Fabric in Lake City during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 5)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Village Quilt Shop in Fruitland Park during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 8)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Nana's Quilt Shop in Brooksville during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 8)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Carol's Quilt Shop in Deltona during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 11)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Oceans of Thread in DeLand during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 11)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Black Dog Quilt Shop in Clermont during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 12)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Quilted Twins in Dade City during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 13)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Fabric Warehouse in Lakeland during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 14)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Heartfelt Quilting & Sewing in Winter Haven during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 15)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Inspire! Quilting & Sewing in Plant City during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 17)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Scrap & Sew in Lutz during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 18)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Fabric Smart in St Petersburg during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 19)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Cedar Valley Crafts in Englewood during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 20)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit White Daisy Quilt Shop in Punta Gorda during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 20)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Calico Station in Orange Park during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 21)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Sew N Quilt Co in Holly Hill during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 22)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Sweet Time Quilting in Sebastian during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 23)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Quilts and Lace in Melbourne during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 23)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Quilt a Bit in Greenacres during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 24)
- 1-Apr 30 Visit Pam's Fabric Nook in Port St Lucie during the All Florida Shop Hop (pg. 24)
- 7 Just Add Butter Kimberbell Event at Quilts and Lace in Melbourne (pg. 23)
- 7 LEEZAWORKS Event at Quilts and Lace in Melbourne (pg. 23)
- 10-14 Nashville Needlework Market New Stuff with Common Thread in Ocala (pg. 7)
- 12-13 Spring Fling Sale at Nana's Quilt Shop in Brooksville (pg. 8)
- 14 Oaks Quilters Quilt Show at Red Oaks RV Resort in Bushnell (pg. 8)
- 14 Visit Carolyn's Frame-Up at Spring Obsession in Lakeland (pg. 14)

March, cont.

- 14-15 Sun, Sand, Sea & Quilts Quilt Show at Venice Community Center in Venice (pg. 19)
- 19-21 Original Sewing & Quilt Expo at RP Funding Center in Lakeland (pg. 14)
- 20 Virtual Happy Hour Quilting Block Studio with Sweet Time Quilting/Quilts & Lace (pg. 23)
- 21 Lanark Village Wandering Star Quilters Quilt Show at Chillas Hall in Lanark Village (pg. 4)
- 27-28 Janome Educator Christina Dolinar at Quilts and Lace in Melbourne (pg. 23)
- 28 Suwannee Valley Quilt Fest at the Historic Train Depot in Trenton (pg. 6)

April

- 17-18 Country Road Quilters Quilt Show at Circle Square Cultural Center in Ocala (pg. 7)
- 25 Airing of the Quilts at George Sands Park in Carrabelle (pg. 4)

May

- 7-9 Stitching in Common Retreat with Common Thread in Ocala (pg. 7)
- 16 Georgia JugFest at Old Knoxville Courthouse in Knoxville, GA (pg. 4)

Events, continued

Crestview, Fort Walton Beach, Milton, Pensacola

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Sat., April 25: 4th Annual Airing of the Quilts, George Sands Park in Carrabelle

For more info contact Ronda at 229-221-2706 or rondalove@hotmail.com All Events Free Admission 9-3

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Jug Fest 5k, demonstrators, pottery and pottery Display-Auction with attention to history.

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For the love of mud spend the day in Crawford Co and Roberta.

Your Shop Would Fit Right In!

The Florida Register

Our Readers Love to Discover an Eclectic Mix of Interesting Shops and Events...and they've been looking for Your Shop too!

May-June Deadline: April 1

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Writing From Life
by Jeanette Lukowski

Read More Books

I am an avid book reader. Are you? My go-to genres are always subject to change, but tend to lean towards Fiction more than any other. Sure, I've read a Science Fiction or Fantasy novel from time to time, but when I heard Margaret Atwood describe her novels as being more Speculative Fiction than Science Fiction, I paused.

In a world which doesn't seem to change too quickly—but when the changes come, they feel too sudden and disruptive to me—the increasing numbers of categories by which books are catalogued has felt somewhat overwhelming! As a child, the public libraries I visited in Chicago seemed to have two groups: Fiction on one side, Non-Fiction on the other side, and Plays—I later discovered—were found in a file cabinet near the circulation desk. Three groups.

As I grew older, I started to notice sub-categories: Mystery, which was my teenaged go-to, and Biographies, which helped with school research projects (like my fascination with Amelia Earhart).

These days, I walk into a brick-and-mortar bookstore, and see categorical labels extending into the twenties? Or more? Granted, the bookstore has double (or

continued on page 7

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Pictured in the magnifying glass is a small portion of one of our ads. Can you find the ad that it came from?

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Reader Shares!
Finished Project!

Many years ago my church started a "Prayernet" for members to read on the Internet. The "Prayernet" asks for people to pray or send cards to members and their families for illness, sympathy, good news, or help in situations. I decided to use my fabric scraps to make cards that I would send to those members and families that needed a prayer. The cards are smaller than a postcard so they will fit into a small mailing envelope.

After sewing scraps together I use a template to cut the card. Placing batting on the back of the card I can add different stitches or add small pieces of other fabric. Completing the front of the card, I then add a piece of cardstock to the back and sew around the card. In the lower righthand corner on the back of the card I write my initials JLM and 911 under it. 911 is special to me. It's my birthdate 80 years ago.

The hearts are all made by my longarm quilting friend. One yard of fabric for the front and back and batting in between. I vary the fabric themes throughout the year and make sure the hearts are generic enough to comfort men, women and children.

Over the years I've received thank you cards in the mail and sometimes a person at church will thank me when they see my name badge and say, "I received a card from you!" Or someone asks, "Do you give the church hearts?"

Knowing my cards and hearts help someone in need is "powerful quilting."

Shared by reader J. McVaugh of Pine Ridge; 25 year member of Citrus County Cracker Quilters

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Elevenses
"Elevenses" is the same as Afternoon Tea only you have it around 11 am ~ it's shorter, smaller, less guests, more intimate, & no twine. ♥

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Those Were The Days!
Look What Just Pop-(corned) Up!

by Jay Mark

Who would have thought that a staid publication like the Wall Street Journal would introduce me to a brand-new collectible. That's what happened recently, when the Journal took me by surprise as it reported on a collectible that just "popped" up out of nowhere.

Maybe I am just out-of-touch. Until the article, I didn't know that popcorn was being sold by movie theaters in containers especially branded to the theme of a film on the screen. And at astronomical prices, too.

Before we get into that, it is interesting how popcorn made it into movie theaters. Centuries ago, the peoples of Peru and Mexico learned how to explode their maize kernels. Wherever it was introduced, popped corn was an instant success.

As theaters evolved in the 20th century, theaters began selling snacks that helped add to their bottom line. But they stayed away from popcorn, because of concerns about the noise of patrons rustling bags and crunching on the delight. Plus, they weren't happy about the necessary extra cleaning. Especially in the luxurious movie palaces.

The effect of the Depression was hard on theaters. Finally, they relented and began allowing popcorn sold by vendors outside the theater. But it didn't take long for the operators opting to begin making money for themselves. First in paper bags and cardboard with advertising. Later, tins and plastic were added.

By any measure, popcorn has always been the most popular concession in theaters. That demand led to large tubs – cardboard and later, reusable materials. (Spoiler alert!) \$9.50 is the average profit theaters generally make on a regular \$10 bucket.

Disney, the ultimate in innovation, is generally credited with introducing novelty popcorn buckets in the 1990's at their theme parks. Theaters were slow to catch on to the Disney idea. But when they did, it was with a bang.

R2D2 was the first movie tie-in container that AMC Entertainment introduced for the 2019 release of Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker. The cost? An astronomical \$50! But it took a little more time to create a demand.

Just six years later, AMC was making \$54 million on the sale of "collectible concession vessels," as they are officially named.

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Most are designed and manufactured by the Zinc Group based in Shakespeare's hometown. Produced under license from the movie studios, the themed containers are then sold to theaters in edition numbers ranging from 20,000 to 100,000. It can take as long as a year-and-a-half to go from design to manufacturing to reaching theater's concession stands. Prices range from \$20 to \$50.

Dune 2's 2024's Sandworm bucket is the one that went viral. But for reasons you might not think. In part, it was because of its unintended sexually suggestive appearance. Just a year later, the original \$50 bucket has been offered on eBay for \$805!

How long does it take for a fad to explode? Well, in just a short time, there may be as many as a hundred themed containers already in the market. And more are coming. The Fantastic Four: First Steps, the next Marvel movie, is selling a \$79.99 popcorn container.

National chains like AMC, Cinemark and Regal, along with local theaters like Harkins Theaters are driving the demand.

And of course, if eBay is the barometer for collecting, Bucket Banditz has an eBay store devoted strictly to branded popcorn buckets. A recent look at eBay listed more than 1800 containers. Prices range from less than \$20 to north of \$100. And likely to go up over time.

Not surprising with a burgeoning number of branded theater popcorn buckets, a collector's group would form. You can find the brand-new Theater Popcorn Container & Bucket Collectors on Facebook. Started in August 2024, they now have reached more than 1,000 members.

Before the Internet, it took some time for a fad to take off. Now, with social media, in less than a year themed movie containers have become the hottest collectible today.

And I had to learn about it from the Wall Street Journal. I'll see you at the theater fighting you for the latest on my popcorn "bucket list."

Virtually an antique himself, or maybe a collectible, Jay Mark, has more than a half-century's experience in the antiques business. He owns Those Were The Days!, an online specialty bookstore. A recognized historian, he also teaches, lectures and writes about antiques and history. Reach him at jaymarkhistorian@gmail.com © 2025

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Read More, cont. from page 4

triple) the square footage of those public libraries of my youth, but still. In libraries from coast to coast, the Fiction novels are universally catalogued alphabetically, while Non-Fiction works are still catalogued according to the Dewey Decimal System.

I credit book clubs and college campus speaker presentations with expanding my reading horizons to now recognizing—and reading—sub-categories such as Historical Fiction (and the aforementioned Speculative Fiction).

If I'm being completely honest with both myself, and you, I was never a fan of history. In school, history classes meant nothing more to me than memorizing names and dates. Sometimes, places. I didn't care about "Charles becomes Henry" in France during the 16th century; I was just irritated that "IX" was followed by "III"? No mnemonic device to help me remember that.

Reading Historical Fiction, surprisingly enough, has changed me. Last month, for instance, I was reading a fictional work about women who served as nurses during the Vietnam war, and this week I am reading a novel presenting the perspective of the daughter of a historical figure from the turn of the century. Never claiming to be based on actual transcripts of conversations, or explaining why a historical figure made any of the particular decisions he or she is recorded as making, the experiences of humans possibly impacted by those decisions are explored.

Thinking back to my earlier comments about Amelia Earhart, for instance, what if there was a book written from the perspective of an imagined neighbor, childhood classmate, or even love-interest of the missing pilot? While the novel wouldn't tell me what happened on that day in July of 1937 when she disappeared, might it not be fun for readers to imagine how flight training exercises with twenty- or thirty-year-olds felt before, during, or after her historic solo flight? Maybe I should write it.

© Jeanette Lukowski 2026. Jeanette is a mother, grandmother, teacher, and author who lives in Alesandria, MN. She is inspired by the lives of strong women. Her email address is:

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Joy & Blessings, Jody

Girlfriend Wisdom is written and illustrated by Jody Houghton. For color files of this writing, contact Jody at: jodyhoughton@msn.com or www.JodyHoughtonDesigns.etsy.com

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Recipe **Chicken Breasts with Strawberries**

Ingredients

- * Four good sized individual chicken breasts
- * 5-6 large strawberries, sliced
- * 2 tablespoons finely diced shallot
- * ¼ cup Creme de Cassis (liqueur flavored with currant berries)
- * 1 ½ cup heavy cream
- * 1 cup chicken stock
- * 2-3 ounces butter
- * Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Melt butter in a 10-12 inch non-stick fry pan. Saute chicken breasts gently (low heat makes them tender, high heat toughens them) until lightly browned on both sides. Remove to plate, lightly cover and keep warm. Saute shallots in remaining liquid over low heat until softened and translucent, do not brown. Add chicken stock, de-glaze the pan and reduce to 1-2 tablespoons. Add heavy cream and cook until it thickens to suit. Add Creme de Cassis and strawberries and heat until just warm. Too much heat softens strawberries and turns the Creme de Cassis to caramel (instant disaster). Pour sauce over chicken breasts and serve. I slice the breasts into ¼ inch slices and fan them out on each plate, they look very attractive—and hold more sauce. Especially elegant with a bright green vegetable such as asparagus. Serves four

Leesburg, Mount Dora

Spring

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid.
 The remaining letters spell a message about Spring.

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 R S T U B E S C D D F O S W A
 I A F I G R N N G L I N R H V
 S E O N N R A E O N I L C C E
 E S S O I D E W W B I R S B S
 S I N X R G E E O A A R M E G
 A Y F L P R O R N M L W P E O
 E T E W S S P I L U T R S S R
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| APRIL | GOLF | RENEWAL |
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| CYCLAMENS | IRISES | SOFTBALL |
| DAFFODILS | LILIES | SPRING BREAK |
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Lessons From a Quilt

By Julie Pirtle

I am a collector of romance. Not hearts. Not Gothic novels. I enjoy the romance of items that show a long life. Do they tell a story? If not, is it easy to imagine a story befitting of their valor for withstanding the test of time?

While thrift finds are always fun, my favorite pieces are those that have been passed down by my family. I love to be the keeper of the history they shared with my ancestors. It's a feeling hard to put into words, but if you know... you know.

My favorite treasures that have been entrusted to me are quilts that were made by my great grandmothers. They hang like proud family crests on the wall of my guest room. They are uneven. The corners don't match up when folded. Some colors have faded and some hand stitching is not as strong as it used to be.

Even with all those irregularities, they are still stunning. One is a wedding ring pattern that was made for my Grandmother by her Mom. It was a gift for their wedding in the early 40's. I remember seeing it on their bed as a young child...well into the 60's.

The other quilt is a carnival of small colored scraps. It is bordered with a bright seafoam green fabric. The pieces came from old shirts, dresses, blouses...anything that could be reused to create a fabric masterpiece. (Looks like upcycling isn't such a new trend after all!)

Over the centuries, quilts have been mainstays in the lives of those who used them. Women made them for their families as a necessity. After all, running to the Department Store for a new blanket wasn't really an option!

When I see a really old quilt, I like to think about who used it. Were they traversing cross-country in a covered wagon? Was it used in a backwoods farmhouse? Did it grace the bed in a Victorian home?

As important as the usage was the way most quilts were made. In the days before any electronic diversions, people actually talked to each other! In this way, the Quilting Bee became the social club of local groups of women.

Together, they spent quality time. I imagine there was a lot of gossip, tears and laughter. All the while, their busy and crafty hands sewed stitch by stitch, making the creation a community effort.

In a time of our lives when life is uncertain and the world is a little crazy, I think we should take some wisdom from those quilts and the artisans that made them. It didn't matter what array of colors were sewn together. It was beautiful. Spending time together allows for a time of support and healing. It was also beautiful.

The stitches that connect the pieces of us together as a community are there if we take the time to see it. The seams holding those pieces together bind us as one. We humans all need the warmth of community ... and quilts.



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Quilts make life softer. Old quilts make us wiser with the stories they tell. Let's make a pact to be softer and listen to those that have stories to share. We've got this. I know we do.

Julie Pirtle lives in Eagle Point, Oregon. She is a Professional Organizer and owner/operator of Clutter Happens. She also works with clients nationally through video consultations. The Clutter Challenged can reach her on Facebook:/clutterhappens or email her directly: clutterhappens@yahoo.com

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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 Faberge 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-stravaganant 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.

Recipe
Tomato & Peach Salsa
Courtesy of Linda Mielczasz from Waynesboro, VA

Ingredients
* 2 medium-large tomatoes or equivalent amount in cherry tomatoes
* 1 ripe peach
* 2 padron peppers
* 2 jalapeno peppers
* 1/2 red onion
* 2-3 cloves garlic
* juice and zest of 1-2 limes
* 1/2 cup cilantro
* 2 T olive oil (maybe more)
* salt and pepper to taste

Directions:
Chop tomatoes and peaches into about 1/4 inch cubes. Cut the peppers in half (padron and Jalapenos) and remove the seeds (leave seeds if you want it spicier!), then finely dice. Finely dice the onion and garlic. Finely chop the cilantro. Add all the ingredients to a large mixing bowl and mix well. Taste and adjust salt, acid (lime), spice (peppers), and oil to taste. Serve with tortilla chips, over a burrito bowl, etc. and ENJOY!

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"Perspective" by Shelby Kottemann

When I was in the fifth grade, Mrs. Wilson assigned our class an assignment to interview with a person who lived at least 50 years ago. I chose my grandpa. Born in 1926, Shelby lived through many times I'd never known yet feel connected to. We sat down one evening and went over the assigned questions, which he answered simply. I learned that Papa grew up on a farm with his four brothers and sister. He recounted that when the boys got into trouble, his Paw would pull a switch off the old willow tree. His mother was sweet till her dying day and a sought-after favorite among all her grandchildren. Papa was a WWII veteran of the Pacific. He met grandma at church and married her right out of high school. He spent his career at a company that makes farm and mining equipment, called Caterpillar, and carpooled with friends, as people did back then. It was a treasure trove of family history. Yet, there was another question in particular that stuck with me. It was clear that my Papa had thought about it before. The question was, "What's a modern convenience that you're grateful to have now?"

In reply, Papa stood up and walked over to the wall, gesturing with the turn of a dial. "That I can walk over to the wall and change the thermostat." He sat down with a look of relief and satisfaction. Papa went on to describe how he and his brothers chopped firewood and all kept warm under layers of heavy wool quilts at night. They didn't dare get out of bed till morning for risk of losing the heat trapped under the covers. He remembered how, as they went to sleep, they could see their breath in the moonlight through their bedroom window. On sweltering summer nights, the family migrated onto the front porch, sleeping in the open air in hopes of a breeze.

What a concept to be so hot that you sleep on the porch or so cold you can see your breath in your own bedroom! And yet, that was now only 100 years ago! Without history and reflection, we can quickly lose touch with all the simple things we have to be grateful for. There are just so many conveniences we have in our lives today that we don't have the lived experience to fully appreciate.

I think about what simple gifts I want to be aware of. At the end of a long day, I get to melt into a warm, steamy shower. When I make dinner for my fiancé, I have a full-sized oven and open counter space to work with. My pickup truck has heat on chilly drives. I never want to lose touch with the countless comforts I have to be grateful for. In that lies a constant sense of abundance.

P.S. Yes, my grandfather is my namesake!

-Shelby Kottemann is an author and started Loves Nature LLC with a mission to help others connect their lives with their hearts. Her email is contact@lovesnature.com. To learn more, visit her website www.lovesnature.com

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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 fitting 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.

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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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Shawl We Dance?

by Wayne M. Bosman

One of the things that first attracted me to Kerri were the old-fashioned shawls that she usually wore in both summer and winter. They were not the sort of thing that everybody wore, but she seemed to have one for every occasion or outfit. Though we met at social dance events where people were routinely playful, Kerri was more reserved than most, which I found intriguing. The shawls, though, that was a thing. I assumed that they were handmade, which also said something to me about her. Quiet but independent. Neither following the crowd nor trying to lead it. She was a more than competent dancer, but somehow whenever we danced together, I would say something that caused her to lose her place. It became an easily achieved challenge for me to cause a misstep in the course of a dance, sometimes remarking how the shawl matched her eyes. She wore a lot of blue. I had been dancing for almost 20 years and she less than one year, so maybe it wasn't so nice of me to break her concentration like that, but it was only a dance after all....

This went on for most of a year before I got a chance to ask her out. After an initial hesitation, she consented and the rest is history. But this is about the shawls really.

Kerri learned to crochet when she was 9 years old. Her mother and her grandmother were both avid handcrafters; it was natural for her to follow in their footsteps, or handsteps as it were. Kerri's mother had passed before we met. I soon discovered the inspiration behind the shawls that I had seen. The patterns went from very simple to extremely elaborate, with colors that covered the entire 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



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St. Petersburg, Venice

Shady Lawn Antique *by Dave Emigh* Restoring Antique Furniture And 'Listening' to Their Stories

It is hard to have a dialogue with a piece of furniture. Even though wood is an organic material, it does not have much of a vocabulary. However that does not mean a piece of furniture can't tell a story, especially if you are open to 'listening' for it.

There is really no chance of that happening on a project that only takes a couple of hours to complete. But on larger projects, which stretch out over several days, there is a good chance that a dialogue will begin to take place. When that happens, a 'relationship' gradually develops.

During our restoration projects, we often find things that perplex us. Recently I restored a farm table/desk. There were two boards nailed underneath the ends of the tabletop. Those boards fell exactly into the category of things that perplex us.

It seems to me that there were at least three possible reasons for those boards. They may have been added to stabilize the loose legs (but they were still loose). They may have been added because the tabletop had a crack in it (which it did). The third possibility is that they were added so that 1880's to 1900's hand-cranked kitchen tools, such as apple peelers or cherry pitters, could be clamped to the top. Thus the dialogue begins.

The thing is, unfortunately, we will never know exactly what prompted the addition of the boards. Whatever the reason for that repair/adaptation, it tells an additional story. It speaks to rural life a hundred years ago and even much earlier.

Those were the times when many farms barely produced enough to feed a family. The production of enough excess food to sell (to make money) was problematic if not impossible. Money was scarce to non-existent and everything was used well beyond the point of usefulness.

The table that I restored is emblematic of pieces that failed, were repaired/repurposed and then were used some more. That story is greater to our understanding of society/history than is the story of what specifically happened to the table itself.

In the case of the farm table, the additional boards posed the question that started 'my dialogue with the table,' and thus a relationship with the piece. Sometimes I pose the questions myself. This is particularly true with pieces of furniture that were handcrafted.

It is generally accepted that the transition from hand-built furniture to machine manufactured furniture began somewhere in the 1850s. Obviously some craftsmen continued to work with hand tools even as others began to use machinery.

I am always honored to have the opportunity to own, let alone, restore a handcrafted piece of furniture. I do not take this opportunity and/or responsibility lightly. The fact that a handcrafted piece of furniture has survived for over 170 years is amazing! Thus the dialogue begins as I ask myself what I could do today that would still be in existence 170 years from now?

I approach the restoration of a handcrafted piece of furniture with a very light hand. I strive to make my restoration efforts essentially invisible. There will be no stripping or sanding of their finish.

These pieces were fabricated with hand tools such as saws, planes and chisels. Their construction featured hand-cut joints, further strengthened with (animal) hide glue and perhaps a few screws and/or square nails. They were often finished with shellac, wax or a combination of both.

My restoration job begins with re-gluing loose pieces and replacing missing internal pieces such as drawer runners or stops. Then I enhance the original shellac finishes with techniques that are well short of 'refinishing' the piece. A coat of wax is applied and the piece is finished.

During these processes, I am standing in front of a workbench, working on the piece, just as the original craftsman was 170 years ago. When I am feeling the hand-planing marks that he left behind, I am 'in touch with him.'

A craftsman of the era would plane a board and then feel the surface. I know (without a doubt) that he would have asked himself if this felt true, level and smooth enough. At some point, he decided that it was good enough and moved on to the next step.

Now I run my hand over that board and agree with his assessment. How amazing it is that I can 'hear' a craftsman's (170 year old) question, which was undoubtedly never verbalized. Further, that I agree with his (internal) answer all of these years later?

I am just like everyone else who wanders through an antiques shop. I will look at pieces of furniture and think that I like this piece but I do not care for that piece. Depending on the day, my judgment might be based upon the styles, the functions or the appearances of the pieces.

It is only when a piece is in my workshop that the dialogue and, yes, the relationship begins to build. As noted, that relationship might be with the piece itself or with the craftsman who built the piece.

There are two parts to the antiques business that I find extremely rewarding. The first is the opportunity to restore a piece of furniture to give it a second life. The other reward happens in those fleeting moments when a dialogue begins and a relationship is developed.

—Dave Emigh and his wife Jill are the owners of Shady Lawn Antiques in Walla Walla, WA, perfectly located in the 1870s wood frame creamery buildings that Dave's great-grandfather purchased in 1897. A professionally trained woodworker, Dave and his son, Nick, specialize in the restoration of oak furniture. Shady Lawn, in its 25th year, has become a regional destination for oak furniture but is also known for a well-curated display of country, rustic, and rare and unique "small" antiques. Glimpses of the ever-changing Shady Lawn inventory can be seen on Facebook and at www.shadylawnantiques.com.



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Did I Do That?

By Deb Heatherly

Some of us may be old enough to remember that question coming from the mouth of Steve Urkel, played by Jameel White, on the television show Family Matters. In 1889 he was slated for a single appearance, but the character was so well received that it became a break out role for him that lasted until 1998. You could not help but laugh at this line and the many others that became his trademark.

When I had my quilt shop, I often heard this question in another context. Time and time again it was said by customers picking up their sewing machines after they had been serviced. They were referring to the Ziploc bag of lint that our repairman always attached to their machines. The bags were a gentle reminder that their machines needed a little more love between projects.

When I saw some of these bags, I wondered to myself how the machine was still running. Many times, I heard, "It was running just fine and all of a sudden it refused to sew correctly." After seeing those bags, it was easy to figure out why.

Sadly, this happens to all of us. We are so excited about starting the next project that we forget about the lint that gets trapped inside the machine from our fabric and threads. It really is a good idea to clean out the bobbin area after each quilt and take the machine in for a professional cleaning once a year. Doing so helps the machine run smoothly and helps us continue to create for years to come.

Think of it like owning a car. The car needs oil changes, new wiper blades, new tires, etc. from time to time so that it can continue to get us from one place to the next. (Like your local quilt shop or the next shop hop!) Proper maintenance can help ward off costly repairs. (Money we could have spent on fabric at the local quilt shop.)

Knowing all of this, I was recently the one who was surprised at the amount of lint I cleaned out of my machine. I was on a deadline for several new patterns and had simply moved from one quilt to the next without stopping to clean. In fact, if I had not spotted lint trying to escape from the nether regions of the machine when I had to change my bobbin, I would probably still be stitching along.

"Ok, fine, I'll clean you out!" I said.
 Timmy, my furry studio helper sat quietly watching as I pulled out clump after clump and a few times a little paw tried to help.

"This is not good!" I told him. "Mom has got to do better and I vow to clean after every quilt from now on."

He just looked at me and purred.
 Funny, so did my machine after its little bit of pampering.

Deb is a designer for Creative Grids® rulers and the author of eight popular pattern books. Creative Grids® fans are invited to join her Facebook group, "Grids Girls", for tips and inspiration, and two free mysteries each year: www.facebook.com/groups/770429649800457/. Shop Owners are invited to join her group just for you, "Grids Girls for Quilt Shop Owners Only" www.facebook.com/groups/273593657256524/. Visit Deb's website at www.Debcatsquilts.com.

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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

Jacksonville, Orange Park

De-Clutter, Design or Ditch It? Spring Cleaning's New Rules

by Barbara Kalkis

For many of us winter means snow, sleet, blizzards, frost, fierce winds, gray days and black nights that make the stars beam like searchlights. We know that one warm sunny January day doesn't mean spring has sprung. Whether the groundhog sees his shadow or not, we know spring doesn't arrive on February 2nd. Frivolous March may come in like a Lamb but will breathe Lion-like cold before it ends. Growing up, we also knew when Spring truly arrived. It was the day we spent "Spring Cleaning" every inch of the house.

Times have changed. I am now influenced by Influencers and Authorities whose number exceeds weed varieties. These experts inform us that there's more to spring cleaning than cleaning. They encourage us to "style," "design," "organize," "de-clutter" or "edit" our homes. Suddenly, cleaning has become secondary to examining our entire living space for defects. The more zealous connoisseurs command us to dispassionately "Purge" our homes of things we foolishly thought were necessary to our comfort and contentment. One purging style is "Japandi," the blended Japanese/Scandinavian minimalist design concept. Furniture seems to float in mostly empty spaces. It's a look to love if you don't have kids or someone who loves his 200-pound recliner and side table perfectly aligned with the TV screen.

"Purging" requires us to set aside emotions and be coldly logical. (No, you do not need 10 vases of various sizes. Save two and toss the rest. After all, how many times do you fill your house with bouquets anyway? Or buy one green plant and water it, then you won't even need one vase. Voila!) Choose a theme and discard anything that doesn't fit into it. Do lots of sofa pillows comfort you? Or are they clutter? The answer we're looking for here is "clutter." Let your visitors dangle their too-short legs from the sofa. They'll be impressed by your design skills, while keeping their visit brief.

One authority defines cleaning as "tidying." I like the term but am uncomfortable that it means I'm sloppy. Instead of urging us to haul out brooms, mops, cloths and spray cans, we must first "commit" to tidying up. I disagree. When you can scribble notes with your finger on surfaces, it's cleaning time. News that company's coming is also great incentive.

"Editing" allows us to select what to keep and what to toss. Eliminate one thing and replace it with something else. But isn't having more things better? Editing may result in buying something new and keeping the old item too. Evaluating every item in the house indicates considering pros and cons. No dice. It requires too much analysis and emotion making decisions.

"Declutter" is the kind way of saying you have too much stuff. Determine what you don't need and get rid of it. Some experts apply the strictly logical 80/20 rule: Keep the 20% of clothes you wear all the time and donate the 80% languishing in your closet. This rule does not appreciate that I would wear those 80% skirts and pants if I had not gained weight. I like a one-two-three approach best. "One" means "throw it out." "Two" means bag it, put it in the garage and if I don't rescue it before the season is over, out it goes. "Three" means keep it - at least for now.

It seems the best approach to spring cleaning, decluttering or organizing is to fill



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your home with the things you love and will care for. It also pays to keep giant garbage bags handy for when the cleaning mood does strike you.

-Barbara Ditties for Every Day...A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm. Contact her at BarbaraKalkis01@gmail.com Kalkis ©2026. Barbara divides her time between writing, teaching, and the world of high tech.



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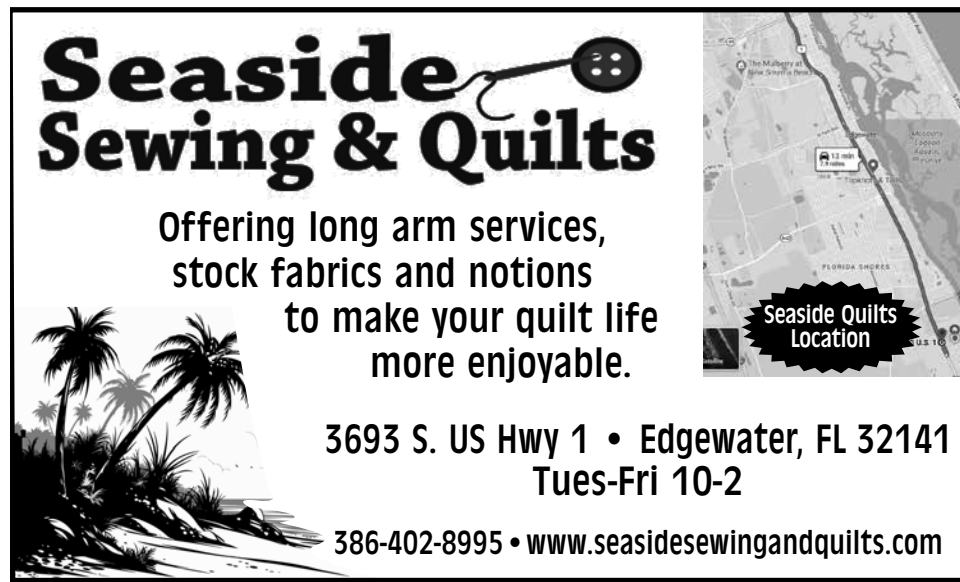


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Hoppy Spring

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.

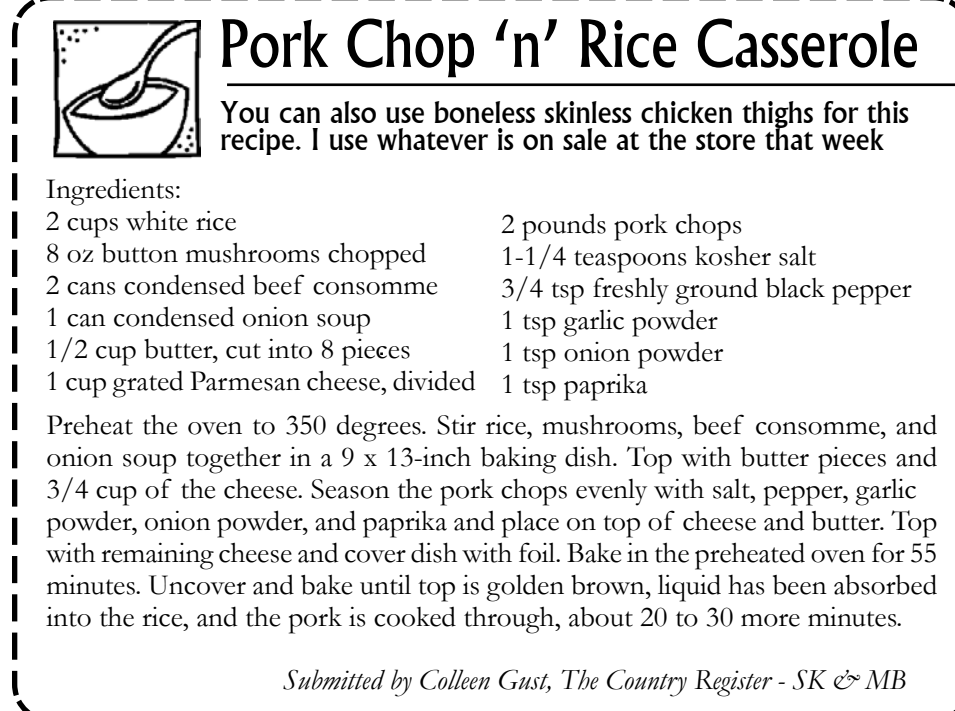
To commemorate my bunny chasing days, this spring I am going to put a backing to a panel of bunnies and ducklings romping through the grass. It will be a good reminder that even though the snows have been deep this winter, spring always comes. The seasons flow onward.

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)

- © Janet M. Bair of Ansonia, CT. You may contact her at librarybair@hotmail.com



Pork Chop 'n' Rice Casserole
You can also use boneless skinless chicken thighs for this recipe. I use whatever is on sale at the store that week

Ingredients:
2 cups white rice
8 oz button mushrooms chopped
2 cans condensed beef consommé
1 can condensed onion soup
1/2 cup butter, cut into 8 pieces
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided

2 pounds 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. Stir rice, mushrooms, beef consommé, 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 the pork is cooked through, about 20 to 30 more minutes.

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

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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.

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 1930s. 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 913jeeves@gmail.com.

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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.

Ingredients:
 1 1/2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts, or 1 cut-up chicken
 1 can cream of celery soup
 1 can cream of mushroom soup
 10.5 oz water

1/2 tsp garlic powder
 1/4 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.

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

KATHRYN MYKEL AUTHOR
 QUILT. SLEUTH. SOLVE. REPEAT!

CORNER BOOKMARK PATTERN

Supplies:

- Three scraps - chosen fabric: cut to 3.5" squares
- One scrap - fusible stabilizer cut: to 2.5" (ex. SF101) (optional - cut 2 for a stiffer finished piece)
- Coordinating thread(s)
- Iron and pressing mat
- Point turner, scissors or snips, and pins or wonder clips

Wrong Side

FOLDED

• Press the fusible stabilizer to the **wrong side**, centering it on one of the sq.'s

• **Fold** one sq. in half diagonally corner to corner, **wrong sides together** & press

- Optional: Add an extra 2.5" sq. of stabilizer to this fabric for an even stiffer finished piece

• **Layer:**

- One sq. (without the stabilizer) **right side up**
- Then lay down the folded in half diagonally fabric, on top matching the raw edges
- Should have two **right sides** facing out
- Layer the third sq. (with stabilizer), **right side down**
- Pin or clip the layers *Top & bottom should be wrong side facing out

• **Stitch** around the stabilizer (should be roughly a **1/2" seam allowance**)

• Leave approx. 2" opening to **turn the piece** right side out

• Start on one of the sides that does **not** have the folded square between it and **back stitch** at the start finish.

Final Step - Top stitch the two sides that do not have the folded fabric.

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<https://authorkathrynmykel.com>

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 Yasty Memories Together*, and *GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids*

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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:
- In a large bowl, cream together the butter and granulated sugar until light and fluffy.
 - Stir in vanilla extract, lemon extract, and lemon zest.
 - Beat in eggs, one at a time.
 - Mix together the flour, baking powder, and salt.
 - Add the dry ingredients to the creamed mixture. Do not overmix.
 - Cover dough and refrigerate for one hour.
 - Preheat the oven to 350° F.
 - Shape dough into 1-inch balls and roll them in powdered sugar. Place them two inches apart on a parchment-lined cookie sheet.
 - Bake for 13-15 minutes until edges are lightly brown and tops do not look wet.
 - 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.

City Index & Map

Ozark, AL ★

Alabama Page 4
 Georgia..... Page 4

Brooksville Page 8
 Bushnell..... Page 8
 Carrabelle Page 4
 Chielfland Page 6
 Marianna..... Page 12
 Crestview..... Page 3
 Crystal River Page 7
 Dade City..... Page 13
 Daytona Beach Page 22
 DeFuniak Springs Page 4
 DeLand..... Page 11
 Deltona Page 11
 Edgewater..... Page 22
 Englewood..... Page 20
 Fort Meade Page 15
 Fort Walton Beach Page 3
 Fruitland Park Page 8
 Greenacres Page 24
 Havana Page 4
 Holly Hill..... Page 22
 Jacksonville Page 21
 Keystone Heights..... Page 5
 Lady Lake Pgs. 8, 10
 Lake City Page 5
 Lake Wales Page 15
 Lakeland Page 14
 Lanark Village..... Page 4
 Leesburg..... Page 9

Live Oak Page 5
 Lutz..... Page 18
 Maitland..... Page 10
 Marianna..... Page 4
 Melbourne..... Page 23
 Milton..... Page 3
 Mount Dora Page 9
 North Fort Myers..... Page 20
 Ocala Page 7
 Orange Park Page 21
 Oxford..... Page 8
 Pensacola..... Page 11
 Plant City Page 17
 Port Charlotte Page 20
 Port St. Lucie Page 24
 Punta Gorda Page 20
 Sebastian..... Page 23
 Sebring Page 16
 St. Peterburg..... Page 19
 Tamarac..... Page 24
 Trenton..... Page 6
 Venice Page 19
 West Melbourne..... Page 26
 West Palm Beach Page 24
 Williston Page 7
 Winter Haven..... Page 15

Jacksonville
 Orange Park
 Live Oak
 Lake City
 Keystone Heights
 Trenton
 Chielfland
 Crystal River
 Williston
 Ocala
 Oxford
 Brooksville
 Clermont
 Dade City
 Plant City
 Lutz
 Lake Wales
 West Melbourne
 Melbourne
 Sebastian
 St. Peterburg
 Ft. Meade
 Sebring
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