

The Country Register®

March - April 2026

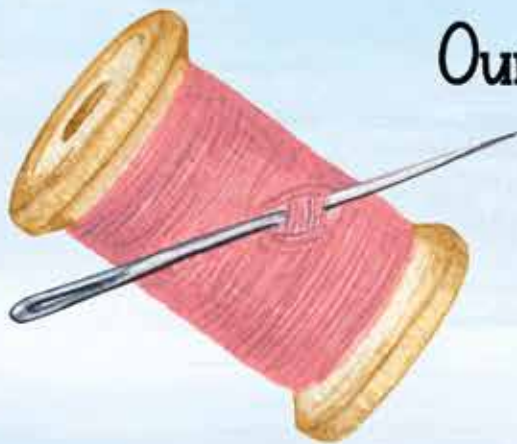
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The Northern Rockies & Great Plain's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Events • Volume 16 • Issue 2

Montana - Wyoming - North Dakota - South Dakota - Idaho

Hello Spring!

Our Quilting & Fiber Arts Issue!
The season of renewal and growth!



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Editor's Notes

A Season Renewal, Seasons of Change

Spring is the season of renewal. And, my days and months are certainly in stride with this theme lately. After several years of shifted focus, I find myself shifting back to some of the projects I've had around my house. The classic spring cleaning, out with the old and in with the new, purging and downsizing, reconfiguring spaces for a better lifestyle fit, upgrading rooms that are ready for a facelift, and over all bringing renewal to my home spaces.

I work from a home office, so these projects have been glaring at me for some time now. So, it feels so good to be working on them and clicking through the list of items that have "set on the shelf" while other tasks get completed.

One of these items, I have especially drug my feet on. My daughter's room. This room was carefully curated 12 years ago to become the cutest little nursery. My best friend, came over and helped me paint while I was round and pregnant. We put beautiful stripes on an accent wall that turned out just stunning. I then, hand painted a white tree mural on another wall. We dotted the gray and white room with soft pink in preparation for our sweet little girl. It was such a pleasant room. I often found myself sitting in there to be calm and take in the sunshine from the big window.

After she came, I spent many days and nights in the room as many new moms do. Over the next few years, the room transitioned into a magical room with fairies, unicorns, princesses and so much sparkle and pink fit for a spunky little girl.

As we've worked on this room lately. We've taken down many things that have hung around through the seasons of childhood. We put in a new loft bed to maximize the space for this little room. A desk for homework, floor pillows for a reading nook, and dresser space for accessories and makeup now take the place of princess pretties and little girl knick knacks. The room has been transformed out of little girl territory and into teenage territory. (Wish me luck).

Just like the season of renewal, so do our seasons of life. The room now has gone through renewal, and will several times after I'm sure. It is such a joy to watch our kids grow. But, big moments of change can come out of no where and sucker punch you a bit from time to time. With all the hustle and bustle of the room redo, it wasn't until I went to say goodnight that night we put up in her new loft bed I came to a realization. I realized it was the first night I wouldn't sit right with her, rub her forehead and kiss her cheeks goodnight. I wouldn't "tuck her in." Boy, after giving my big girl a squeeze, kiss on the cheek and good night farewells, I found myself with tears in my eyes as I walked down the hall.

A true reminder in every day life, how things don't stay the same, seasons come and go, and life is to be treasured in every season. I'm so excited for this new room. She loves it and spends lots of time in there now. She has a space to chill, read, learn, and get creative. So lovely. (Insert sigh). The little girl is gone, and the teenager has entered.

I hope this season finds you well, enjoying the moments of whatever stage of renewal you find yourself in. Happy spring and let the magic of renewal enter in.

-Kelsey

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The Quilting Issue



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Next Deadline: Ads and articles for the
May/June 2026 issue is April 7, 2026.

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 thumb-prints 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.

"You are such a blessing."

"Thank you for adding fun and humor to our retirement community."

"You bring the best treats to our gatherings."

"We love and appreciate you."

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*. All are available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or can be ordered through local bookstores.



FROM LYDIA'S RECIPE FILE:

Lemon Crinkle Cookies *(Delicious, soft and lemony.)*

Ingredients:

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup (1 stick) softened butter
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. lemon extract
- 1 tbsp. lemon zest
- 2 eggs
- 1¾ cups flour
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- ½ 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.

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!



Julie's Treasured Quilts

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.

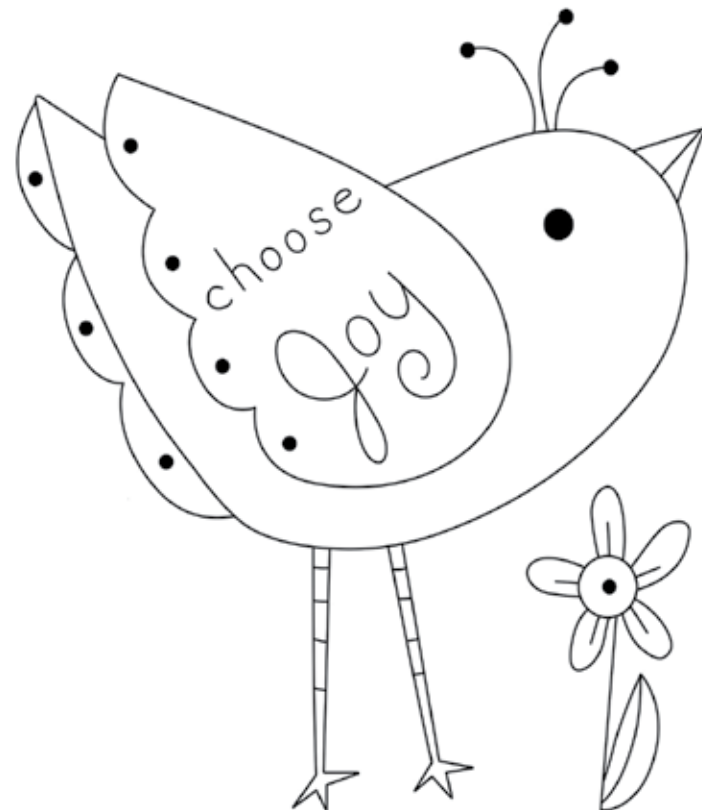
The stitches that connect the pieces of us together as a community are there if we take the time to see it. The seams holding those pieces together bind us as one. We humans all need the warmth of community... and quilts.

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](https://www.facebook.com/clutterhappens) or email her directly: clutterhappens@yahoo.com

Free Pattern

For more fun and creative inspiration visit:
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How to Document Your Quilt

By Rachel Greco

Every quilt has a story. Some we know and some we don't. You may know all about the quilter who made your quilt, but will those who come after you? One of the most valuable parts of a quilt is a written history of provenance, a written record of ownership of a work of art, used as a guide to authenticity or quality.

If you have inherited a family quilt (or made one yourself), you will want to document it. If you have any old family quilts you are keeping in the closet, it is probably time you took them out and documented what you know about them. There's a lot of information to gather, and it won't get any easier as time passes. Before memories fade and you forget what you know about them, here's what you should record. Write down as much as you know using all of the criteria listed.

If the quilter is still alive, talk with her about when and how she made the quilt. If possible, get a picture of her with the quilt and record any memories that you have. (Did you sleep under it as a child?)

If the quilter is no longer living, try to find those who remember her. Make sure you have her full name, where she lived, her birth and death dates (years), and any stories about her that people remember. If there is special information about the quilt, record that as well. Document as much as you possibly can (picture of the quilter, copy of obituary, picture of the quilt from the past, etc.)

Add any history of how you received the quilt. Include names and biographical information of everyone who owned the quilt. Once you have recorded the history, keep a notebook or journal, register it with your local Guild or Historical Society's registry project, and keep it with the quilt.

The following is a list of the information you will want to record when documenting your quilt:

Maker's Name. Write down the maker's name, birth date and death date (if they have passed). Record this person's relation to you, if there is one. Using the rule: who, what, when, where, why and how, write down what you know about this person.

Name of the Pattern. Write down any names you know for the quilt, including the popular references, and the name the quilt was referred to by your family.

Condition. Write down whether the quilt is excellent, good, fair, poor, or deteriorating. Make a note of any stains or holes, what kind they are, and where they are located. Write down any repairs that are made with the date made, if known.

Technique. Is this quilt pieced by hand or machine, embellished, stuffed, painted, or stenciled, signed with ink, embroidered, etc?

Construction Style. Does this quilt have a scalloped edge? Is it square, curved, or cut-out at the corners? What are the borders? What type of binding was used?

Is it a quilt top only? If finished, did the quilter use hand or machine quilting, ties, or tacks? Does it have all three layers? Is it thin or thick? Try to determine what type of batting was used.

What types of quilting designs were used? Were they straight lines, outline, stenciled, or shapes? What color thread was used?

How is the back put together? Is it one piece of fabric or more? What colors or patterns? Is there a label? Is it signed or is there anything quilted into the quilt?

Types of Fabric Used. Is it cotton, silk, wool, or of an unknown mixtures? Do your best to determine the fabric type.



Rachel with a Vintage Crazy Quilt

Overall Quality. Professionals and collectors have personal scales for rating a quilt. You might record whether this quilt is your favorite or most prized quilt, or any other information that would help you.

Estimate the Date. Try to be specific. If you know a date, write it down. If you aren't sure, give any dates for when you have owned the quilt and anything anyone said when they gave it to you, or you purchased it from someone.

Where was the quilt made? How did it come to you?

Does the quilt have any special historic or family significance? Was the quilt made for a particular event or person? Were the fabrics or design chosen for a specific reason?

Does the quilt have any dates or lettering on it? What does it say?

Do you have any documentation about the quilt or quilt maker such as letters, pictures, or diaries? Write down and include as much information as possible about the quilt and quilt maker.

Take Photographs. Take pictures of the whole front and back. Take several close-ups of the details and workmanship. Use natural light if possible. Take more pictures that you think you'll need; then pick the best ones that showcase your quilt.

Memory Pocket. You can make a muslin label for your quilt using a pigma pen to write information on a square or rectangle of muslin. Stitch this carefully to the back of the quilt, sewing only through the backing, not the face of the quilt. You can also make a memory pocket with a front, back and flap to use for storing your documentation papers. Sew to the back of the quilt as you would a label.

Record basic information on the pocket itself, including "Remove Before Cleaning."

And finally, if you believe that this quilt has special significance to you, you might want to find a certified Quilt Historian near you who can help you by appraising the quilt. Most charge a fee; however, the information they give you could prove invaluable.

Remember, you may think your own quilt is significant only for you; however, generations to come may value your thoughts and documentation more than you will ever know.

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

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Stepping into the Season of Renewal

By Anna Engen, Staff Writer

As winter slowly loosens its grip, the world begins to breathe again. Snow melts into soft earth, daylight stretches a little longer, and signs of new life appear in the most unexpected places. A brave tulip from last season on the opposite end of your garden, or the sudden flash of a robin's red breast against a grey fence. Spring arrives not all at once, but gently, inviting us to notice, to pause, and to begin again.

Spring has long been associated with renewal, and for good reason. After months of colder weather and quiet routines, spring offers a natural opportunity to refresh both our surroundings and our outlook. We find ourselves changing with the season through moments as simple as opening a window to let in the cool, crisp air that smells of fresh rain, and leaning into brighter days, seeking out the familiar comfort of sunlight on our skin, embracing the first bit of genuine warmth.

There is something comforting about the rhythm of the seasons. Spring reminds us that change does not need to be rushed, it has its own steady clock. Growth happens gradually, one bud, one morning, one moment at a time. In a world that feels hurried, this slower emergence can be a welcome lesson in patience. It reminds us that, even under the heavy snow, seeds were busy preparing for this renewal, just as we are allowed our own time to bloom.

Many people use this time of year to reflect on the season just passed. What routines served us during winter, and which ones are ready to be released to make room for the new? Spring encourages a thoughtful clearing, not just of closets and kitchen cupboards,

but of mental clutter as well. It's about sweeping out the cobwebs of old worries and making space for fresh intentions. Just as we might clear a garden bed of last year's dried stalks, we clear our minds to prepare for the seeds we want to plant today.

Creativity often stirs during this season as our senses wake up. Colors seem brighter, ideas feel lighter and more attainable, and inspiration appears in the simplest everyday details. We find it in the vibrant green of a new leaf, the chaotic joy of birds returning, or the sight of freshly washed fabric drying in the afternoon sun. It's a time when hands and hearts alike feel drawn to creating, mending, and making something meaningful.

Perhaps the greatest gift of spring is the quiet, persistent presence of hope. No matter how long winter feels, renewal always follows, as faithful as the rising sun. Each year, nature quietly reassures us that beginnings are not limited to January, they arrive whenever we are ready to welcome them. As March and April unfold, may this season be an invitation to slow down, notice the small beauties around you, and step gently into whatever comes next.



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Robin's Nest DIY Blog

RAG FABRIC CROSS

Spring is about ready to bloom! Thank goodness! This season is the season of rebirth and regrowth as is the Easter season. This project is a rag fabric cross that is very simple (but is a little time consuming) and can be done in any color to suit your décor.

YOU WILL NEED:

You will need a yard to a yard and a quarter of fabric (I used 3 different monochromatic colors). Feel free to use any color, scraps of fabric would work great for this. I used a cutting mat and a rotary cutter; you can use scissors also. You will also need a ruler and marker or pen, twine, hot glue gun and glue, and a wooden cross. I made mine but you can purchase them. Mine is 18in X 7in using a 1/4-inch wooden dowel stick.



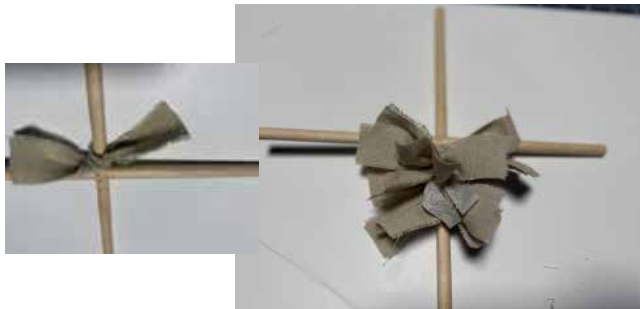
STEP ONE

Cut your fabric into one-inch-wide strips that are about 7 inches long. I am guessing I cut about 60 strips.



STEP TWO

Next you will tie on the strips to the wooden dowel stick and push them together tightly. If you have more than one color create a pattern that you like.



STEP THREE

I hot glued the last strip to the wooden dowel to hold them in place.



STEP FOUR

I tied a piece of twine around the cross as a hanger.



STEP FIVE

Lastly I tied a bow and glued it onto the front of the cross.



And there it is! A Rag fabric cross!
Happy Easter!

FINISHED!



9th Annual Wyoming Cowboy Yarn Crawl! 7 Shops Across Wyoming and the Wool Mill Participating. Memorial Day Weekend to Labor Day Weekend!

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Spring Vegetable Soup

Based on a recipe by Happy Foods Tube

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, medium, finely minced (about 1 cup)
- 1 celery stalk, large, diced (about 1 cup)
- 2 carrots, medium, sliced (about 1 cup heaped)
- 3 potatoes, medium, diced (about 2 cups)
- 4 cups vegetable stock (1 liter)
- ½ tsp dried thyme
- Black pepper, to taste
- 5 ounces frozen peas
- Small pasta or noodles (optional)

Instructions

Warm the olive oil in a large pot over medium-low heat. Toss in the minced onion and celery, cooking for about 3 minutes or until the onions are soft and see-through.

Add the carrots, potatoes, vegetable stock, and dried thyme. Season with a pinch of pepper. Turn the heat up to bring the liquid to a rolling boil, then immediately turn it down to low. Cover the pot and let it simmer gently for 15 minutes.

Stir in the frozen peas and pasta (if using). Continue to cook for another 5 minutes. Before removing from the heat, test a piece of pasta and a potato to ensure they are perfectly tender.

Serve warm, and enjoy!

Prep Time: 5 minutes Cook Time: 20 minutes



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 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 Kalkis ©2026. Barbara divides her time between writing, teaching, and the world of high tech. She's author of Little Ditties for Every Day... A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm.

Contact her at BarbaraKalkis01@gmail.com.



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Best Herbs to Plant for your Recipes



BASIL- A staple for soups, sauces, and salads. Start indoors in a sunny spot(6+ hours of sunlight). Move outdoors only after final frost. Plant seed ¼ inch deep in well-draining soil.

MINT- Perfect for cocktails, salads, or teas. Try it on steamed carrots or peas for a sweet, bright side dish. Mint has a reputation for being a fast spreader, so be sure to give it plenty of space or keep it in a pot to contain it. You can start a seed indoors 8-10 weeks before the last frost, and transplant to a sunny area.

THYME- Excellent for savory dishes and known for its immunity-boosting properties. Thyme thrives in direct sunlight. Whether on a windowsill or in the garden, ensure it receives 6-8 hours of sunlight a day.

ROSEMARY- Fragrant and hearty, rosemary is a must for stews and artisan breads. Because it grows quickly from seed, start at least 10 weeks before the last frost. Space cuttings 2-3 feet apart in a sunny, well-drained spot.

CILANTRO-The finishing touch for tacos, noodles and soups. Unlike our previous herbs, cilantro prefers partial shade. It re-seeds naturally, so dedicate a permanent bed to let it return naturally year after year.

Recipes Garden to Table Vinaigrette

- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup apple cider
- 1 tbsp dijon mustard
- ½ cup fresh herbs, finely chopped
- Salt & pepper to taste

*Whisk all ingredients in a small bowl or shake them in a mason jar

- Basil/Cilantro- great for taco salads or tomatoes.
- Mint/Thyme- amazing over spring peas or a fruit salad.
- Rosemary- use as a marinade for chicken.

Recipes Herb Butter

- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 2-3 tbsp fresh herbs, finely minces
- 1 tsp lemon zest (optional)
- ¼ tsp salt

In a small bowl, mash the herbs and salt into the softened butter with a fork until well combined.

- Rosemary/Thyme- perfect for melting over steaks, roasted potatoes, or chicken.
- Basil- incredible spread on warm sourdough or stirred into hot pasta.
- Mint- try it on steamed carrots or peas for a sweet, bright side dish.



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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. ♥ **Twine!**

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. ♥ Khalil Gibran

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. ♥

With Love from Susan Branch ("Twine," from my new Summer Book, available at www.susanbranch.com)




Come.
Sit.
Stay.

SPRING INSPIRED AND FIBER ART INFUSED CRAFT IDEAS

- Flower Scrap-Quilt Potholders - instead of traditional patterns, use foundation paper piecing to create abstract floral shapes. These are perfect for using up leftover fabric scraps from winter projects!
- Watercolor-Dyed Quilted Coasters - start with a plain white cotton fabric and use a "wet-on-wet" watercolor technique with fabric paints to create an abstract wash of color. Once dry, quilt simple geometric lines over the colors. The result is a modern painterly take on traditional quilting.
- "Floating" Pressed Flower Embroidery - instead of stitching onto opaque fabric, use a sheer tulle or organza as the base. By embroidering delicate botanical shapes onto transparent fabric and framing it in a wooden hoop, the design looks like it's floating in mid-air!
- Macrame Lantern - instead of hanging a plant, you weave a decorative 'sleeve' around a glass cylinder or a large mason jar. When a candle or LED light is placed inside, the knot patterns cast dramatic shadows across the room. It's a fun way to play with light and shadow!
- Crochet 'Beanie' Hat - a classic beanie is worked in a simple rectangle and then seamed up the side and gathered at the top. This removes the stress of working in circles or 'increasing' stitches, making it a perfect first project for a new crafter.
- Needle-Felted Sculptures - using a special barbed needle, you can transform loose wool into 3D art! By repeatedly poking the fibers, they interlock and become dense, allowing you to 'model' miniature woodland animals or realistic fruit.
- Woven Branch Wall Hanging - instead of using a formal loom, find a sturdy 'Y' shaped branch from the yard to act as your frame. Warp the yarn directly across the fork of the branch and weave in thick unspun roving and forest finds (like feathers) for a rugged, lovely piece of art.
- Tufted Yarn Pom-Pom Rug - tie dozens of oversized, multi-colored yarn pom-poms onto a non-slip rug grid. The result is a plush, bubble textured floor mat that looks like a field of wildflowers and feels incredible under our feet.

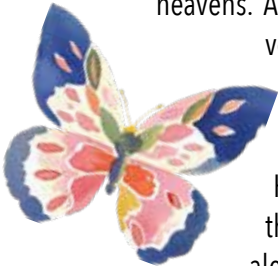


The Garden

by Juleann Lattimer



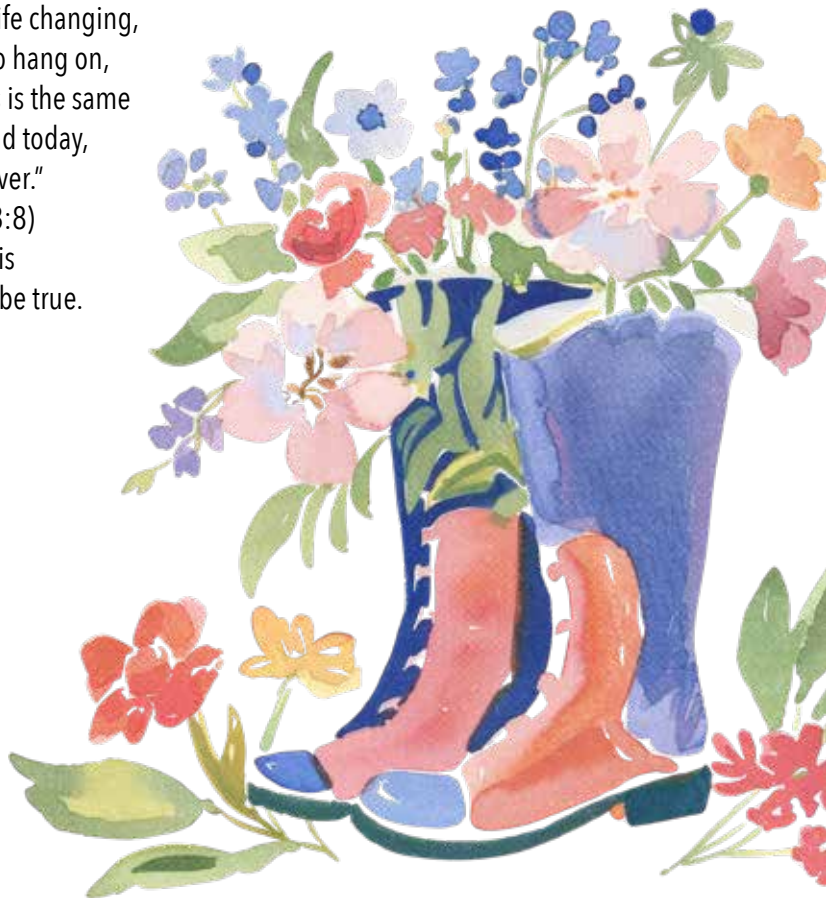
Tree branches rustled at the touch of the soft breeze. Stars dotted the night sky as the moon's glow shined like a spotlight, illuminating the figure of a man stooped over on his knees. Hands clenched at his chest, his face searching the heavens. A thick silence filled the air, except for the lone cry of an anguished voice, pleading upwards towards the sky. Just beyond the shaded walk lay three men, fast asleep. It was a strange picture - one struggling in deep despair, three sleeping in silent serenity.



Have you ever struggled in that shadowy garden - facing something that will not be resolved? Can't be fixed? No way out? All alone? You're not.

The One who anguished on His knees that night in the garden didn't stay there. A few hours later He went to the cross, from the cross to the grave, but He didn't stay there either. He arose on the third day, and has secured a place for us with Him in heaven. Because of this, even though we sometimes find ourselves in a dark shadowy garden, we're never alone. He is with us and has promised, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5)

I know. I've been in that abandoned garden. The world collapsing, life changing, struggling to hang on, but ... "Jesus is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever." (Hebrews 13:8) I've found His promises to be true.



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The Weavers - it's amazing to see how orioles and sparrows 'stitch' together mud, spiderwebs, and moss to create a structure that holds

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Tim Velder presents Running Antelope: The Chief on the \$5 bill. Brunch at 10 is \$5 per person or free with membership; presentation is free to all. Reservations required: 605-723-1200.

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Family Fun Day Sunday - April 19 - 2-4pm

The Science and Beauty of Crystals. Find out how they form and their significance. \$2 per person or free w/ membership.

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- ~ Craft Supplies
- ~ Fabric

Mon. - Fri. 9-6 | Sat. 9-4 | Sun. Closed