

The Country Register®

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The Northern Rockies & Great Plain's Guide to Specialty Shopping & Events • Volume 16 • Issue 3

Montana - Wyoming - North Dakota - South Dakota - Idaho

*America the
Beautiful!*



*Celebrating America's 250th Birthday!
The Great American Roadtrip*

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Use the Country Register as a
Travel Guide
on your next adventure!

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& explore a new shop!



Editor's Notes Traveling Our Great States

This issue is packed full of great articles, tidbits and events. This is part one of our two-part celebration for America's 250th anniversary. Red, white and blue themes throughout. We typically talk about travel and exploring our area, so this issue is focused on the Great American Roadtrip. There is so much wonder and awe to be had right here within our 50 states. Be sure to explore!

Last year, my family and I had the opportunity to explore two great states - Texas and Florida. We have been to south Texas several times visiting family that winter down there. The beaches are beautiful and full of sand dunes. The shells are so fun to wander around and collect. The sea birds are amusing, I could watch them all day. The beach life speaks right to my soul and fills my cup. I love it there. We have explored fun local restaurants and shops. We have watched fireworks over the bay for the holidays. I love walking through the display of sand castle art in awe of the talent and creativity. It is truly an amazing place.

Around Christmas time, we went to Florida for my parent's 40th wedding anniversary trip. I have to say... wow! I've been to Florida before (and LOVE IT). On the Atlantic side. This time we were down on the Gulf side. The beaches are pure white, the ocean green and warm. The shells are out of this world cool! Not to mention we just thoroughly enjoyed our beach life on the resort. There is something magical about watching kiddos play and radiate happiness in the sand and surf. We all just were completely relaxed and enjoying salt, sun and sand.

Both of these trips were packed full of joyous memories and picture-worthy recordings of our adventures. But, we really didn't have to leave our state to find equal beauty and wonder. Our family camps by a lake in our home state each summer, hikes the forest, drives just to watch the beautiful sunset over the prairie and has had many fun nights gazing in wonder at the stars and different celestial events we have had this year.

Our great states are packed full of their own wonder. Their own picture-worthy adventures. And, each state has a rich history of more than two centuries. I am so blessed to live in this great country. I hope you have the chance to get out and not just explore a new state, but stop and enjoy the wonder right in your own backyard.

countryregisternrgp@gmail.com
kelsey@moxiemarketingmw.com
Office: 605-568-0181

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- * Florida: Dave & Amy Carter, P.O. Box 365, New Market, MD, 21774, florida@countryregisteronline.com
- * Georgia: Linda Parish, P.O. Box 389, Lexington, GA, 30648, tcrga@windstream.net
- * Idaho (N): Kelsey Ruzicka, P.O. Box 2015, Belle Fourche, SD 57717, 605-568-0181, kelsey@moxiemarketingmw.com
- * Idaho (S): Barbara Stillman and Lolly Konecky, P 515 E Carefree Hwy, #1128, Phoenix, AZ 85085, 602-942-8950
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- * Indiana: Gail & Merle Taylor, P.O. Box 594, New Market, MD, 21774, info@countryregisteronline.com
- * Iowa: Linda Glendy, P.O. Box 6, Tama, IA, 52339, IowaCountryRegister@mchsi.com
- * Kansas: Kelsey Ruzicka, P.O. Box 2015, Belle Fourche, SD 57717, 605-568-0181, kelsey@moxiemarketingmw.com
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- * Wisconsin: Scott & Jennifer Hughes, P. O. Box 276, Altoona, WI, 54720, jennifer@countryregisterofwisconsin.com
- * Wyoming: Kelsey Ruzicka, P.O. Box 2015, Belle Fourche, SD 57717, 605-568-0181, kelsey@moxiemarketingmw.com

CANADA

- * Alberta: Ruth Burke, P.O. Box 97, Heisler, AB, T0B2A0, 780-889-3776, countryregab@yahoo.com
- * British Columbia: Bryan Stonehill, Box 1338, Summerland, BC, V0H 1Z0, 800-784-6711
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The Great American Roadtrip



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

A Milestone Nine-TEA-eth Party

By Lydia E. Harris

"Your table looks lovely," my friend said as she admired the bouquet I had arranged for our teatime. My favorite part of serving tea is creating a lovely setting. If possible, I like to include fresh flowers on the table along with the pretty teacups, linens, and tasty tidbits. Whether tea parties are simple or sumptuous, fresh flowers create a fragrant and beau-TEA-ful welcome.

Would you like to try your hand at arranging a floral centerpiece? If so, here are some tips to get started.

Quick and Easy Arrangements

1. Select flowers and greenery from a local market or your garden. Choose mixed bouquets to complement your dishes and table linens for a spring garden feel. Or pick a single accent color for a more striking look. If possible, arrange the centerpiece the day before so you can focus on preparing food on the party day. Set the bouquet in the coolest part of your home overnight so flowers won't open and wilt.

2. Use an upright vase that fans out at the top and allows flowers to spread naturally rather than stand at attention. A neutral or clear vase will complement rather than compete with the arrangement. Fill the vase about three-fourths full of water. Keep the flowers in water until you are ready to arrange them.

3. Arrange the flowers in your hand, adding one flower stem at a time until the head of the bouquet looks attractive and is the size you wish. Hold the bouquet next to the vase to determine the proper height. Then use a sharp knife rather than scissors to cut the stems diagonally to the correct length. Scissors pinch the stems shut so they cannot drink water. Remove the leaves below the water line to eliminate decay and to extend flower life.



4. Place the flowers in the vase and let them fan out. Then trim the stems of the outer flowers slightly shorter. Be sure the bouquet is low enough so guests can see one another across the table. For added color, tie a ribbon around the mouth of the vase to coordinate with the napkins. Add more water as needed and enjoy your lovely bouquet.

5. For a spur-of-the-moment tea time or when you do not have time to arrange flowers, simply float blossoms and leaves in a glass bowl. Flowers like camellias and hydrangeas work well for this.

Creativi-TEA

Glass vases or bowls aren't the only option to use for containers. Anything that holds water will work. To make a small bouquet for a card table, use a cup and saucer, a small cream pitcher or even a gravy boat.

For a larger table, consider a teapot. One of my favorite containers is a cracked floral teapot I bought at a rummage sale for a nickel. I place a small jar inside to hold water and arrange the bouquet so ivy trails over the sides to hide the crack. Select any container with personali-TEA.

Fresh flowers perk up not only your table but your guests as well. The welcoming beauty and fragrance of flowers cheerfully announce that "It's Time for Tea!"

To add a special touch, you could serve flowering tea at your teatime. (See Lydia's Idea File for more information.)

After teatime, I sometimes send the flowers home with guests so the beauty and fragrance of our time together can linger.

I'm ready to plan a beau-TEA-ful teatime. Won't you join me?

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



Lydia's Idea File: Flowering Tea Balls

April showers bring May flowers and sometimes they even bloom in teapots. You can purchase flowering tea balls to brew tea. The tea balls are made by hand-stitching tea leaves and flowers together in various shapes before drying them. When you brew a blooming tea ball in glass cups or teapots you can watch them unfurl before your eyes, creating delicious tea along with a beautiful display. Adding them to a menu is like serving champagne or caviar—it seems elegant and a bit extravagant.

Local tea merchants or tearooms may sell flowering teas. Or check the internet for other sources. Many can be found on Etsy, including organic ones. Flowering tea adds a special delight to teatimes. They also make popular gifts, especially for occasions like Mother's Day.



Traveling with Purpose

By Julie Pirtle

I have very fond memories of summer vacations. Looking back from a parent's perspective, it is very clear how much time and effort was spent by my parents to make our vacations fun. With that being said, my Dad was a "get there now with no frivolity" kind of guy. Me on the other hand? I wanted to stop and read historical markers and stop at every roadside wonder.



The saying "It's about the journey, not the destination" rings true with me. The journey can be just as much fun as the destination! Our country is rich with history and whimsy.

Taking the time to experience it all adds such a layer of richness to a trip.

Share your route with your children and challenge them to come up with interesting (or crazy) stops they'd like to experience. Being part of the planning can give them ownership in the upcoming adventure. If you have no kids on board, challenge yourself!

Bring an empty tablet or journal and make daily entries. Include funny things that happened, places you visited and people you encountered. Encourage children to do the same.

If you are the kind of person that likes to document your trips with souvenirs, be sure to bring along a storage envelope. Make sure that it is large enough to hold brochures, maps, etc.

The journaling and souvenirs will come in very handy when it's time to make your photo album (whether it's scrapbooked or digital). It's so nice to have everything in one place and to also have written notes when it's time to create.

Be CURIOUS! Stop at the historical markers. They are there for a reason. Take in the information. Look at the scenery and imagine what it was like when history was taking place.

Have FUN! Unlike my Dad, my husband will stop to let me look at anything (bless his heart!!). The last time we did this was for a Flintstone roadside attraction in Arizona. It had life size simulations of their cars.

On that same trip, we found ourselves standing on the corner in Winslow, Arizona. Of course, we had to take photo opportunities at both attractions! It still makes me smile whenever I see the pictures.

Don't RUSH! Enjoy the culture, people and geography. It's memory making time.

Packing items to make the trip more convenient is also important. Of course, ample supplies of water and weather appropriate items are a must. However, there are a few items that I always include when traveling. Hand sanitizer. A roll of paper towels for spills. Disinfectant spray for hotel rooms. Zip lock bags are great to have on hand for emergency ice packs or the shell collection you found on the beach. Chip clips for snack bags. Anything that will make life easier!

So, get on the road little doggie! Stop and look at that largest ball of string. Take a picture. Preserve the memory. You will be glad you did.

(P.S. Don't forget to strap Grandma to the top of the car before you head out. They do it in the movies, right?!?!?) We've got this vacation thing down. 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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BETSY ROSS

Cold, blustery wind blew through the door frame cracks at 239 Arch Street, Philadelphia, the colonial home of Betsy Ross. Rising from her chair, Betsy stirred the embers and added more wood to the fire. Rubbing her hands together to soothe her tired fingers, she smiled quietly. Outside the door, the city of Philadelphia echoed with the excitement of the Revolutionary War and the dream of the new country, the United States of America.

Betsy's work as an upholsterer, producing uniforms, tents and flags for Continental forces was well known through the region. But today, Betsy's smile reflected on her current project, a flag for the new country. She stitched strips of red and white fabric, along with scraps of blue and white to design a flag that would fly high declaring the independence of the United States.

Each carefully placed stitch connected thirteen red and white strips of fabric creating a rectangle shaped cloth. In the upper left hand corner, a square blue piece of fabric anchored the alternating the red and white stripes. In a ruffling breeze the stripes would create the illusion of waves.

Betsy understood the importance of the flag for the soldiers in the battlefield, as well as those families throughout the colonies, living in a changing world. The flag would proclaim freedom as the flag flew high and free. Betsy was filled with pride as she remembered the day she was asked to create a flag with 13 alternating red and white horizontal stripes along with 13 white stars in a blue canton.

Quiet contemplation, along with a deep sense of patriotism consumed Betsy's thoughts as she continued. Stitch by stitch, up and down, back and forth, tying loose ends, threading her needle, smoothing the growing fabric overflowing her lap, Betsy transformed assorted fabric pieces into the United States flag. The red, white and blue fabric creation of this young 25 year old seamstress was completed in 1776 and was adopted by Resolution of Congress on June 14, 1777, as the National Standard for the American Flag. The red, white and blue flag continues to share the story of independence as America celebrates its 250th birthday.



In 1952, on the 200th anniversary of the birth of Betsy Ross, the United States Post Office honored the seamstress with a 3c postage stamp. The artwork was from a painting of Chas. Weisgerber, "Birth of Our Nation's Flag". It depicts a parlor setting with George Washington, Robert Morris, George Ross and seamstress Betsy Ross holding the flag in her lap.

Quilts of Valour

The America 250 Exhibit made its debut at the American Quilter's Society QuiltWeek event in Daytona Beach in February 2026. The exhibit features 25 quilts, including 12 new quilts showcased in the All Star Quilts of Valor: 2nd Edition book and 12 exclusive designs created with the Northcott/Quilts of Valor Foundation Semiquincentennial Quilt Panel. Together, these quilts represent a heartfelt, national "thank you" to those who have served.

This special traveling exhibit will continue its journey, appearing at all remaining AQS QuiltWeek shows across the country in 2026. Following its New England appearance in April, the exhibit will be showcased at the remaining stops nationwide:

- Paducah, KY (April 22-25)
- Grand Rapids, MI (August 19-22)
- Columbus, OH (September 23-26)

During each American Quilter's Society QuiltWeek event, the Quilts of Valor Foundation honors Service Members and Veterans by awarding them with Quilts of Valor—recognizing their service, sacrifice, and dedication to our nation. Watch the Daytona Beach award ceremony on YouTube.

To learn more about the Quilts of Valor Foundation—including how to nominate a Veteran, become a member, make a Quilt of Valor, or shop to support QOVF—visit: <https://www.qovf.org>



Photo credit: Robin Koehler, Quilts of Valor Foundation Board Member.



Healing Hearts & Honoring History: The QOVF Semiquincentennial Tribute

In 2003, Catherine Roberts had a dream: a vision of a veteran transformed from despair to hope simply by being wrapped in a quilt. That dream became the Quilts of Valor Foundation (QOVF), a movement that has since wrapped hundreds of thousands of service members in comfort. In honor of America's 250th birthday, this special All-Star exhibit brings that mission to the forefront of the Semiquincentennial celebration.

This stirring collection features 25 extraordinary quilts: 12 new quilts showcased in the *All-Star Quilts of Valor: Semiquincentennial Edition* book and 13 exclusive designs featuring the Northcott/QOVF Semiquincentennial Quilt Panel. These works of art do more than display expert craftsmanship; they represent a national "thank you" to those who have served. Come witness the power of a quilt to heal, to honor, and to celebrate the enduring spirit of our nation.



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Roadtrip Fun Facts by State

South Dakota

- South Dakota is most famously known for the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally and Mount Rushmore
- Population is 935,000 to 943,000
- Est. on November 2, 1889
- 14.97 million annual visitors
- State Capital is Pierre

North Dakota

- Known as the “roughrider state”
- Population is 799,358
- Est. November 2, 1889
- 25.6 million annual visitors
- State Capital is Bismark

Monatana

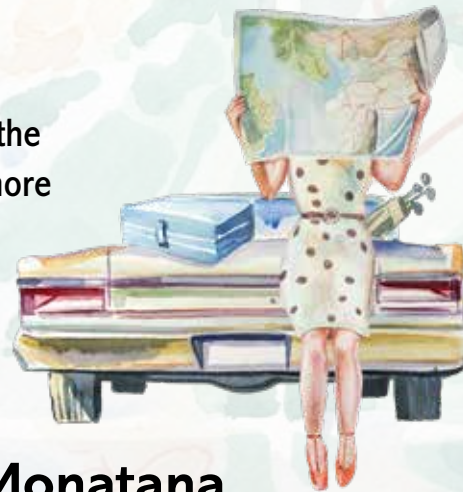
- Known as “Big Sky Country” and “Treasure State”
- Population is 1.14 million
- Est. November 8, 1889
- 13.8 million visitors
- State Capital is Helena

Wyoming

- Wyoming is the first state to grant women the right to vote
- Population is 587,618
- Est. July 10, 1890
- 8.7 million annual visitors
- State Capital is Cheyenne

Idaho

- Has the deepest river gorge in North America
- Population has surpassed 2 million
- Est. July 3, 1890
- 37+ million annual visitors
- State Capital is Boise



4th of July Drink (Mocktail)

Ingredients

- 2 oz. Pina Colada Mix
- 3 oz. Cherry 7-up
- 1 oz. grenadine
- 2-3 oz. Blue Berry Kool-aid*

*Squeeze bottles give you the best color, taste and layering ability.

Ice for the glass

Optional: Whipped Cream and sprinkles

Instructions

1. Fill up a tall glass with ice
2. In a separate glass combine Cherry 7-up and grenadine.
3. Pour your Pina Colada mix over the ice. Fill to a little less than 1/3 of the glass.
4. Slowly add your Cherry 7-Up mix to the glass. Pour close to the ice to avoid excessive fizzing. Fill about 1/3 of the glass.
5. Once your fizz has settled, slowly add the blue Kool-aide to the glass. Pour close to the ice to avoid excess mixing with your red layer.
6. Top with whipped cream and red and blue sprinkled. Enjoy!



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The Great American Roadtrip Starts Here

By Anna Engen, Staff Writer

There is something timeless about a road trip. The hum of tires on the pavement, a cooler packed with snacks, the anticipation of what lies around the next bend. For many, the National Parks aren't just destinations on a map, they are the backdrops of our family memories and the preserved heart of our American Heritage. As we move into May and June, the gates swing open to some of the most breathtaking landscapes in the world. We invite you to roll down your windows, breathe in the fresh spring air, and explore the natural wonders right in our backyards!

Across the heart of the plains, the landscape is a gallery of natural art carved by wind and water. In the Dakotas, the rugged spires of Badlands National Park and the colorful, rolling terrain of Theodore Roosevelt National Park offer a stark beauty that feels especially vibrant in the soft light of May and June. These are the lands where the American West was forged, preserved today in the stoic faces of Mount Rushmore National Memorial, and the ancient, echoing passages of Wind Cave National Park. In the late spring, these "painted canyons" become a sanctuary for new life, where visitors can often spot newborn bison calves grazing against a backdrop of emerald-green prairie and endless horizons. As the terrain climbs toward the clouds, the



high country reveals the jagged grandeur of the Rockies and other unique wonders. In Wyoming, the "Great Reawakening" is in full swing as Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons

shed their winter coats, sending thundering snowmelt down every waterfall. This mountain majesty continues north into Montana at Glacier National Park, where the "Crown of the Continent" sparkles with glacial lakes that reflect the snow-capped peaks well into June. To the west, Idaho offers its own spectacular contrasts, from the "Niagara of the West" at the thundering Shoshone Falls, to the otherworldly, volcanic landscape of Craters of the Moon National Monument. Together, these landmarks form a spectacular loop of wilderness that defines the rugged, untamed heart of our region.

As you plan your journey, remember that the heart of any road trip is found in the miles between the milestones. Pull over for the roadside fruit stand, wander through the local antique shops, and enjoy a slice of pie or ice cream in the small towns that serve as the gateways to our parks. Most importantly, bring your camera and a spirit of adventure. The road is calling, and our incredible world is waiting for you.

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Robin's Nest DIY Blog

RED AND BLUE BANDANA

May and June are two of my favorite months. The plants and flowers are blooming, and rain is better than snow! This project is pretty simple as a wall or door hanging. I used red, white, and blue for my colors to go along with this year's celebration of our nation.

YOU WILL NEED:

You will need two colors of bandanas (mine are red and blue traditional but this would be great with veterans colors for Memorial Day), ribbon and twine, a floral stem, 3 small wooden stars about 1.5 inches, scissors, floral wire, wire cutters, white acrylic paint and brush, hot glue gun and glue.



STEP ONE

I cut the bandanas into fourths (this is all I used but you can use the whole bandana, it will just be bigger). I then folded it to make a triangular piece.



STEP TWO

I then cut two pieces of twine and my floral stem. I wired them all together on top of the bandana squares.



STEP THREE

I painted my stars white and glued them on to the twine pieces.



STEP FOUR

I used the narrow ribbon for the bow because my wall hanging is smaller. I used wire to tie it on, but I also glued it all together. I hope your bow turns out better than mine!



A simple red, white, and blue door or wall hanging!

FINISHED!

Become Inspired

By Annice Bradley Rockwell

Soulful Spaces

As spring comes into full bloom, our yards become abundant with life. Our landscape becomes filled with green more and more each day. Our lawns are transformed and vibrant. The trees that line our country property are showing signs of increased vitality. Our perennial gardens seem to beckon us to enjoy some time getting back to a task we love—nurturing the herbs and flowers that have become a soulful part of what we call home.



With temperatures gently warming and daylight hours stretching out before us, this time of year is indeed a blessing. Spring is the ideal time to tackle some of the tasks we have planned all winter long. Whether it is mending our Williamsburg-style fence or putting a fresh coat of paint on our batten doors, spring often affords us both the weather and the motivation to bring our ideas to life. And at the end of the day, after all of the hard work, the satisfaction felt as you look upon the fresh improvements will be a sweet, welcomed reward to be enjoyed all season long.

Creating Interest and Delight

Preparing and decorating our outdoor spaces is time well spent. As we sip our early morning coffee on our stone patio on one of the first warm mornings, we may come up with special country touches that will add interest and delight to our outdoor spaces. Woven bee skeps are a signature country motif that can be put on a large, seasoned stump or tall post as a focal point to enjoy. Country accents like tall, colorful birdhouses can be hung against the backdrop of a primitive fence to add color amongst the growing herbs. A sundial can be mounted on a hand-hewn post to become a central image in the kitchen clipping garden.

When it comes time to harvest our first batches of tender herbs, there is nothing like bringing out our sturdy, splint gathering baskets to assist in this joyful country task. As we gather, bind, and hang our first bundles of sage, sweet marjoram, and lemon balm, we are easily inspired, for this is only the beginning. Our gardens, whether culinary, medicinal, or decorative will serve us well with our generous care. And in exchange for our efforts our reward will be a feeling of true peace that comes with deep connection.

Honoring True Beauty

This season take time to savor the simple yet significant gifts of spring. Delight in being surrounded by true moments of beauty—like the unexpected return of your first hummingbird, or the vibrant first blooms of the lilac bush that graced your front stepstone for generations. Take comfort in knowing that these reminders will always be around us if we take the time to honor them.

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



ROADTRIP GAMES

License plate game

I spy

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Punch buggy

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20 questions

Categories

Fortunately/Unfortunately

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The quiet game

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Grilled Corn with Basil

Ingredients

8 ears of corn
Olive Oil
Salt

Basil Butter

2 sticks unsalted butter at room temp.
1 cup basil, loosely packed
1 tablespoon sea salt



Directions

1. Preheat the grill to medium hot.
2. Roll corn in a little olive oil and sprinkle it with salt. When the grill is hot, add corn and close the lid. Rotate the corn a few times, until some of the kernels are blistered and the rest a bright and shiny yellow. This shouldn't take longer than 8 minutes. Be careful not to overcook, or the corn will be dry.
3. Meanwhile, add the butter, basil, and salt to a food processor and blend thoroughly. You may need to scrape down the sides once or twice. When the basil is finely chopped and the butter has a light green tint, it's done.
4. When the corn comes off the grill, slather it with the basil butter. Sprinkle with a little more salt if desired. Eat immediately.
5. Note: basil butter can be made ahead and extra basil butter will keep for about a week or two in the fridge. You can roll it into a log with plastic wrap and slice it off as you need it. It's AMAZING on toast.

BOOK REVIEW

THREADS OF THE PAST:

Stories of Pioneer Women and Their Quilts

by Lanie Tiffenbach

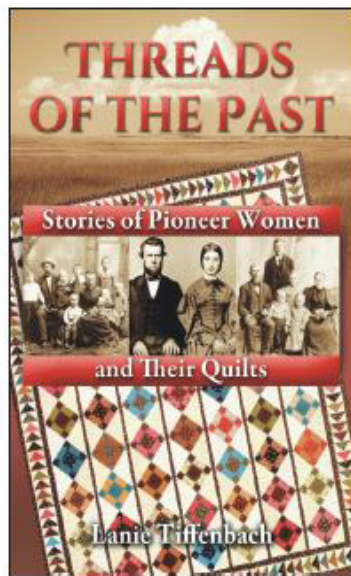
Lanie Tiffenbach has been both an avid genealogist and an avid quilter for many years. She has combined her two passions in the writing of her historical fiction novel, *Threads of the Past*, allowing her immigrant ancestors to tell their stories in their own "voices" in the form of letters or diaries.

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.



Entering is easy – simply tell us why you enjoy reading **The Country Register** for your chance to win.

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The drawing will be held on June 5th. The book will be mailed to the winner and will be announced in an upcoming issue of The Country Register.

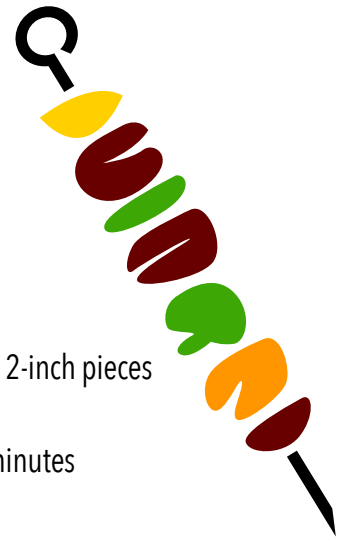
Hawaiian Chicken Kabobs

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons sherry
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 8 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 (20 ounce) can pineapple chunks, drained
- 8 bamboo skewers, soaked in water for 20 minutes

Directions

- 1.) Combine soy sauce, brown sugar, sherry, sesame oil, ginger, and garlic powder in a shallow glass dish. Add chicken pieces and pineapple chunks; stir until well coated. Cover the dish; marinate in the refrigerator, 1 to 2 hours.
- 2.) Preheat the grill to medium-high heat and lightly oil the grate.
- 3.) Thread chicken and pineapple alternately onto skewers. Discard excess marinade.
- 4.) Cook on the preheated grill, turning occasionally, until chicken is no longer pink in centers and the juices run clear, 15 to 20 minutes. An instant-read thermometer inserted into centers should read at least 165 degrees F (74 degrees C).



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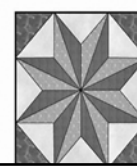
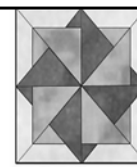
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SCRAPS & CRAFTS What COULD be Better?

By Deb Heatherly

Summer is a great time to pull out your scraps and put them to use! Scraps not only make great scrap quilts but fun crafts as well. Here are a few ideas for scrap projects to make with your grandchildren or other young people in your life. You can also donate scraps to a friend teaching a summer camp or to someone teaching crafts at Bible school.



For the youngest, cut a variety of colorful squares, rectangles and triangles from the scraps. Add paper, crayons or colored pencils, ribbon or twine and a glue stick, and you have everything you need! These items will be like paint to a young artists mind. As an added bonus you will be teaching about shapes. Small rectangles can be the petals and leaves for a flower. Triangles can be the sails of a boat. Small squares can be eyes and a rectangle can be a mouth on a funny face. The ideas are endless.

Older children, with a bit more patience, might enjoy using small snips in a collage. Tiny pieces can be glued to a drawing they create or use a coloring book page as the backdrop. Color the drawing or page first, then glue tiny bits of like colors on the page. Provide tweezers to help them carefully place the small bits and scissors for needed trimming. As a bonus, provide them with a small clear Christmas ornament in which they can place leftover bits. This ornament will memorialize a fun day.

Those old enough to use a rotary cutter and sewing machine (with supervision of course), are sure to love making the popular "hot dog" pillowcases. If you are not familiar with these, just google "hot dog pillowcase" for a tutorial. The term comes from the technique of rolling up the fabric and then pulling it out on one end. When I owned my quilt shop, this was always a favorite project for my kids club. They loved making them for themselves and as gifts. If you have an embroidery machine, let them personalize them! The look of fascination and delight as they watch the machine stitch out their name always made me smile.

Another favorite of my kids club was anything that lets them play with buttons. This mini flag is a perfect project to celebrate our country's 250th. You will need (1) 6 1/2" square of blue, (3) 1 1/2" x 7 1/2" and (2) 1 1/2" x 12 1/2" strips of red, (2) 1 1/2" x 7 1/2" and (2) 1 1/2" x 12 1/2" strips of white. Sew the 1 1/2" x 7 1/2" strips together and add to the right of the blue square. Sew the 12 1/2" strips together and add below. Sew on buttons in the blue square in any formation. (I added some white chenille on the white strips but that is optional). You can make this into a mini quilt or add a back to make it into a pillow.

Summer is for memories and nothing could be better than creating those memories with the younger generation. When you take the time to instill the love of creation, you do more than just use up a few scraps, you plant the seed of creativity that will last a lifetime. Who knows, the craft you teach today could be a craft they will pass on for generations to come.

Deb Heatherly 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. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/770429649800457/>. Shop Owners are invited to join her group just for you, "Grids Girls for Quilt Shop Owners Only" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/273593657256524>.

Visit Deb's website at www.Debcatsnquilts.com



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Life... to be Continued

by Wayne M. Bosman



Last year was a momentous and chaotic one for our little family with the passing of both my daughter and my mother, but life continues on. With spring's annual rebirth going on all around us comes an inspiration to see what life has in store for us in this new season of life. While I am still slowly opening my eyes and heart to the joy of life, Kerri has already started exploring hers.

For her, the place to start was to revisit things that she has enjoyed in the past. She has always loved local history and been an avid seamstress. She has spent the last few years teaching preschool to indulge her love of young children. A natural meeting point of these things fell into place for her this spring.

When we moved to the North Carolina coast a couple of years ago, a new local history opened up. Because life can be busy, we never had time to explore the history of the region. We had passed right by the History Museum of Carteret County many times, always vowing to stop in. We have time now. What we found was an opportunity for her to pursue three of her loves.

The museum started a program aimed at opening up fourth graders to how their area was settled and grew to what it is now. Kerri fit right in. Over the years she made a number of true to period dresses that she wore giving tours at historical sites. Most of them still fit, although some apparently shrank or something....

She augmented them with new dresses and aprons that she spent enjoyable evenings creating. One of her characters that she got to portray for the Museum program was a locally well-known woman who was a Civil War era spy for the Confederacy. Miss Emeline spent the war smuggling supplies to Confederate soldiers across Union lines. The voluminous skirts of the era coupled with a lady's personal modesty gave her plenty of hiding places. Kerri stitched together a slip with pockets capable of holding a pair of boots, two pairs of pants, bandages, sewing articles and an entire ham without looking out of place. She put her hair up in a way common to the era and hid notes in her hair that she gave to the fourth graders during their field trips.

The children loved it all. Opening a window for them to a time when there was no internet, no television or even radio. Telephones were not yet invented, much less cell phones. Cars? No. Malls? No. For most families, a trip to town was a major undertaking to sell what they produced or to buy what they couldn't. Kerri would come home from the museum excited and enchanted by the questions the children asked, and how some children's eyes lit up when something caught their imagination.

Kerri, for her part, started sewing things by hand whenever she could, to try to make everything as true to life as possible. No more zippers, which weren't invented yet. Elastic, invented in 1820, was technically okay, but the likelihood of it being available here was small. Buttons, hooks and ties were the order of the day. Dyeing by hand was common, especially with indigo as a local cash crop. She hasn't tried that yet.

For Kerri, Spring has sprung. For me, the first tentative shoots are emerging from my fallow soil. I hear the birds more now, insistently calling out their springtime message. I look over my unfinished projects and actually finishing some! I look out at the ocean, waiting for the schools of fish to migrate through, following a rhythm that only they understand. I stay still, grateful that I have a life to be continued.

Wayne M. Bosman is a retired auto mechanic living in Cape Carteret, NC. His email is wbosman1@gmail.com.

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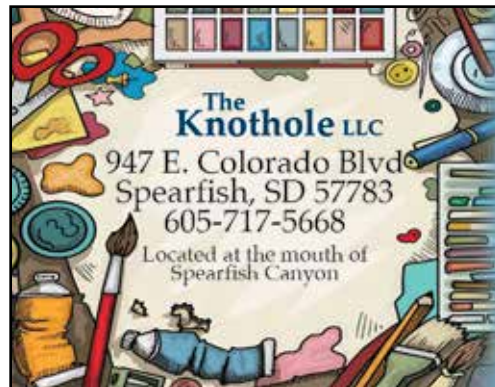
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