



# The Florida Register

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Annual Gardening Edition

# The Florida Register

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## Just A Note...

Welcome to sunny May and June. We hope you enjoy getting out to visit the shops advertising in this issue or shop with them online.

The May/June timeframe seems to be full of gift giving events: Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduations, weddings, teacher gifts, and the list goes on. Please remember to visit the shops advertising in this issue so the shop owners can help you find that perfect gift for your special someone (and don't forget a gift for yourself – while you are shopping). Or if you can't decide what to give, most of the advertising shops offer gift cards. So spread the news of your favorite shop by giving a gift card.



David, Rachel, Grace and Amy

Remember that the businesses advertising with us this issue and every issue need your support! Whether it's shopping in person or online ordering – please shop local and let them know you read about them in our publication please. Our publication exists because the shop owners have placed ads. We want to thank you, our readers, for being loyal readers and shoppers. We also want to thank our advertisers who continue to make this paper possible.

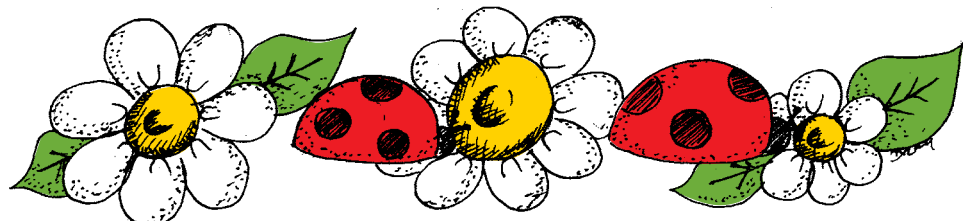
If you know of a great shop that isn't advertising with us, but should be, please email [pauline@theregisterweb.com](mailto:pauline@theregisterweb.com) with that shop's name, phone number and address so we can send them a copy of the paper. Also please visit our Facebook page and become a fan! We frequently post updates on shops and other tidbits of information.

Rachel has made several trips home over the last couple of months (it has been fun to have her here). She stays very busy with work but has a great flexible schedule so she gets to travel often. Grace will be finishing her junior year at UGA! Can't believe she will be a senior this Fall. She has a summer internship lined up at a PR firm in Atlanta and several summer trips planned as well.

Thank you for reading this issue. Feel free to pick up a second copy and share it with a friend. Our July/August issue will be out in late June/early July – just in time for you to take that issue with you visiting shops throughout the summer.

Happy May & June to you and enjoy using our publication as your guide to the best shopping and events. Enjoy Shopping!

Amy & David



# Shows & Events

### July/August events due by June 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. 12)
- Mon-Sat 5:30 pm ..... Quilts and Lace (pg. 21)
- Tuesdays 6 pm ..... Inspire Quilting & Sewing (pg. 14)
- Wednesdays 7 pm ..... Crafty Quilters (pg. 17)
- Fridays 3:30 pm ..... Quilted Twins (pg. 12)

#### May

- 1..... 5th Anniversary of Sweet Time Quilting in Sebastain (pg. 21)
- 1-9 ..... 55th Anniversary Celebration at Margie's Sew Much Fun in Crestview (pg. 3)
- 1-10 ..... Mother's Day Specials at Nana's Quilt Shop in Brooksville (pg. 7)
- 1-31 ..... Bernina Sale at Margie's Sew Much Fun in Crestview (pg. 3)
- 23..... Ornament Finishing Class at Common Thread in Ocala (pg. 6)

#### June

- 2..... Animal Crackers Finishing Class at Common Thread in Ocala (pg. 6)
- 13..... Kimberbell Patriotic Parade virtually and at Quilts and Lace in Melbourne (pg. 21)
- 27-28 ..... Stampfest at RP Funding Center in Lakeland (pg. 13)

#### July

- 17-18 ..... Anderson Quilt Show at the Anderson Civic Center in Anderson, SC (pg. 23)

#### September

- 17-19 ..... Quiltfest at Prime F. Osborne Convention Center in Jacksonville (pg. 19)



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## Wit & Wisdom

### Retired and Tired

by Cheryl Potts

Since I've retired, I'm busier now than when I was working full-time! I guess that's a familiar saying among us retirees, or as we are lovingly called, "elderberries."

Not only do we get to enjoy our leisure and try new creative endeavors but we can join groups such as "Senior Stretch-n-go", "Slow-mo Quilting", and "Scrapbooking Senility", as well as going out to lunch once or twice a week with senior friends.

However, squeezed into my creative groups and lunch dates are many important outings a few times a month. I've met some very interesting people in my travels to the "Oligists" and "Scopics". For example, last week I met with my cardiologist to make sure my heart was pumping properly and saw my blips on a screen. Of course, I sat in a massage chair, reading a four-year-old magazine, waiting a half an hour, while the nurse consulted the radiologist for my test results. The massage was wonderful. I ordered one on my phone while waiting.

Next week, I go to my dermatologist to get my skin tags, age spots, lumps and bumps examined. For this one, I have to completely disrobe while trying not to make eye contact with the doctor! Thank goodness, the office staff are all females!

Next month, I go to the ophthalmologist for my yearly exam. There's nothing worse than that "puffer" machine! It makes you blink excessively, mentally trying to avoid the puff of air into your eye, which makes you endure it five more times before getting a successful reading! Then I'm blinking uncontrollably for the rest of the eye exam. Whoever came up with that test should be scrutinized!

Part of my yearly visitations is the dentist (new word- why not). Got to keep up with my teeth cleanings and scheduled x-rays to keep the pearly-whites gleaming. That's probably the most relaxing of all the doctor visitations.

However, the worst has got to be the colonoscopy! You might be scheduled every 3-5 years, depending what they find up your...body part. In the old days, doctors would ask if you wanted to watch the exam on the TV screen. At least if I fainted, I'd be on the table already. Who in their right mind would want to watch that disgusting movie? I don't even watch medical shows on regular TV!

Suffice it to say, elderberries have no life of their own after retirement, because of the many necessary, monthly doctor appointments. I'm busy enough with my regularly scheduled lunch dates, social groups and grandchildren visitations there's barely time for doctor appointments. Sometimes there's 2-3 activities in one day! My children come home, look at my calendar and my full schedule and ask me, "Mom, why did you retire?" I say, "I guess after teaching for 30 years I wanted to try something different." "Retirement is that marvelous time of life when the sun rises and you don't."

"Retirement is when you get out of the shower and you're glad the mirror is fogged up." Isaiah 40:31 says, "but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Thank you, Lord.

In the early 1990's four Christian friends, with a shared interest in writing, began meeting once a month to learn the writing trade. The four were each active in their various churches. As part of an outreach ministry, they decided to write an inspirational newspaper column as a way to reach a wider, and perhaps mostly secular, audience. Contact the authors at: [witandwisdomwriters@gmail.com](mailto:witandwisdomwriters@gmail.com)

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## The Best Summer Vacation Ever

by Becky Van Vleet

In 1963, a dozen eggs cost fifty-five cents, bread about twenty-two cents, and a gallon of gas about thirty cents. No dishwashers in most homes. Only land-line phones with rotary dials, most with long coiled cords. We learned current events by picking up a newspaper, turning on the radio, or watching black and white televisions. If we were lucky, we could pull

in three major networks with aluminum foil wrapped around the tops of the antennas. No internet, no computers. Everyday living was slower-paced. And it was at this time my parents made plans for our family of six to take a vacation by car across the country from Indiana to California in June of 1963.

Anticipation ran high. After all, it was the first vacation for all six of us. Mother and Daddy planned in advance, saving every penny. We'd stay in motels along the way they said, whatever that entailed. As a ten-years-old, I'd never stayed at a motel. But I was about to discover what that was like.

On the morning we left Indianapolis, we squeezed into our black and white 1959 Chevrolet Impala (no AC). The trunk was crammed with our suitcases and two cameras. With the hand-cranked windows rolled down, I found myself in the back seat between my two older sisters. My little sister sat up front between Mother and Daddy. Without seatbelts, we at least had some wiggle room to move around. We set off with my mother handling the maps to guide my dad along the highways.

Motels and swimming pools. I'd seen them, but had never experienced one. Indescribable bliss. I kept asking myself if life could get any better! I didn't even mind being squished between my sisters, though I did feel a twinge of jealousy as they stretched their arms out the windows to get a "tan". They even switched sides, explaining that both arms needed equal sun exposure.

When we arrived in Colorado Springs, we stayed a few days at the Silver Saddle Motel, exploring the area. Surrounded by mountains, which were a first for me, my older sisters acted as my guardrails in the back seat as we wound our way up to the summit of Pikes Peak, navigating the twisting switchbacks. Snow in July? Unbelievable! But there it was, at the very top. My mother was quick to grab some and shape a snowball while my dad started rolling the movie camera to capture our family enjoying the snowy antics.

At Garden of the Gods, we enjoyed an Indian performance, captivated by their swift dance moves in moccasins and vibrant feathered headbands. My heart raced as we climbed aboard the vertical train cars of the Manitou Incline. That experience might have prepared me for the incredibly steep descent to the river at the base of Royal Gorge. Talk about exciting. I held my breath the entire way down.

My first experience with rock candy happened at the Royal Gorge. I gripped the stick and enjoyed each lick, pinching myself to confirm it wasn't just a dream. Despite all the exciting adventures in the Colorado Springs area, I couldn't wait to get back to our motel to swim.

When we drove through Utah, we stopped to tour the Mormon Tabernacle in all its splendor and beauty.

Driving and more driving. Sometimes Daddy would have to pull off the side of the road so he could review the maps with Mother. (Quite a contrast from today's GPS.) Eventually, we arrived in Carmichael, California where we unpacked the car to stay with Uncle Art and Aunt Marcia. My excitement mounted when I met these new family members and four cousins for the first time. I couldn't wait to see my Grandma Troyan again. It had been a long time. When Uncle Chet and Aunt Beverly joined us, the family reunion was complete.

While the sightseeing along the way was incredibly enjoyable, nothing compared to our Troyan family gathering. The air filled with laughter and heartfelt hugs. The movie camera hummed, recording each happy moment.

A few days later, we toured Sutter's Fort State Historic Park in Sacramento, close to where my aunt and uncle lived. To top things off, we drove to the National Redwood Forest to view the magnificent sequoia trees. My eyes nearly popped when we drove THROUGH one of the giant trees. Shocked. How was that possible? A visit to China Town in San Francisco and riding a trolley car added another adventure. I could hardly contain my excitement as our family scuttled across the Pacific Ocean beach.

For the return trip, we took a different route to visit old church friends in southern California and to visit the Painted Desert in Arizona. But nothing prepared me when we stopped at the Grand Canyon. As a young girl, I could barely comprehend the vastness and breathtaking beauty of this magnificent landmark.

Over the years, my husband and I have taken our four daughters on unforgettable vacations, exploring sights across the United States. As empty nesters now, we continue our travels, experiencing the world's wonders. However, no trip has left a mark on me like the family vacation to California when I was a young girl. More than sixty years later, I still enjoy watching our old home movies (now on DVDs) of that trip. Whenever I see rock candy today, I'm taken back to the Royal Gorge. It really was the best summer vacation ever!

Becky Van Vleet, a retired school administrator, lives near Colorado Springs with her husband, Troy. They are the parents of four grown children and enjoy spending time with their nine grandchildren. Becky is a children's picture book author, and her website is devoted to family stories and creating memories: [www.beckylvanleet.com](http://www.beckylvanleet.com).

## Scraps and 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

continued on page 8

## 7 Garden Growing Basics for Beginners

Growing your own produce is an all-around smart practice, from the money you'll save at the grocery store to the contributions you can make toward a cleaner planet.



Maintaining a garden takes some effort, but it's a project even a beginner can tackle with ease. Consider these tips to start growing your at-home garden:

- Select a perfect spot.** You'll want to place your garden in an area where you see it often so you're reminded to weed and care for it regularly. Find a flat area you can access easily, where erosion and other pitfalls (including hungry wildlife) won't be a problem.
- Choose between ground and containers.** There are pros and cons to gardening in containers vs. the ground, and there's no universal right choice. Rather, the best garden depends on your goals and preferences. A ground garden usually offers more space and may provide a better growth environment for roots. However, a container garden is often easier to maintain and may be all you need if you wish to grow just a few plants.
- Understand the importance of quality soil.** You may think any dirt will do, but keep in mind the soil you plant in will be the primary source of nutrients for your produce. Not only that, but quality soil provides stability so plants can root firmly and grow healthy and sturdy to support their bounty. Quality soil also allows for ample drainage. Organic matter like compost, leaf mold or aged manure all help improve soil quality.
- Keep water close.** Lugging water can quickly eliminate the pleasure of tending your garden, so be sure you're situated near a hose. You'll know it's time to water when the soil is dry about an inch below the surface.
- Plan for plenty of sun.** A bright, sunny spot is a must, since most vegetables, herbs and fruits depend on six or more hours of sun every day. Remember the sun's path changes throughout the year, and as trees and foliage grow, they may produce more shade with each growing season.
- Consider what you'll grow.** Starting with veggies you know you like is a smart starting point since you'll be pouring sweat equity into making them grow. Over time, you might add new varieties, but early on, keep your focus on foods you know you like so you can see a meaningful return and avoid waste. You'll also need to consider what you can grow to maturity within your area's growing season. If necessary, you might want to start transplants you can nurture indoors before moving them outside when the temperatures allow.
- Plant according to a calendar.** Knowing how long it takes different foods to mature will help you create a planting calendar. You don't want to harvest everything at once, and if you stagger planting and replant what you can, you'll have a garden that produces food for your family for a longer period of time.

Find more helpful tips for managing your home and garden at [elivingtoday.com](http://elivingtoday.com). Photo courtesy of Unsplash



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## Back Porch Break

by Nancy Brummett  
Time for 'Yardening'

As we move into summer it's time to think about gardening again. Or is what you do really "yardening" instead? There's a difference, you know.

First, the wardrobe differs drastically. Gardeners wear floppy straw hats, sturdy pants with big pockets and loops for hanging tools, and clogs. Yardeners work in the yard wearing a hat from Disney World, cut-off blue jeans, and the tennis shoes they bought the year they graduated from high school.

Then there are the tools themselves. Gardeners have tools with matching handles. Each tool has a special function—and a special spot in the wooden gardener's bench at the end of the day. Yardeners are more likely to be out digging with an old serving spoon from the kitchen. They just toss it in the kids' sandbox once they have the petunias in the ground.

Gardeners have a master calendar for all their gardening tasks, such as dividing seedlings, rotating rose bushes, whatever it is Martha Stewart finds to fill up her calendar even in the dead of winter. They wouldn't even dream of pulling weeds unless it was on the schedule.

Yardeners, on the other hand, may lapse into their yardening tasks quite spontaneously. I once talked to a freelance artist who explained she had missed her deadline because she went out to get the mail and noticed a few weeds growing by the mailbox. Naturally, she stopped to pull them up, and four hours later she was still out in the yard pulling weeds. I understood completely. That's yardening at its best.

If you see people strolling their grounds, or setting up tents for a garden party, they are probably gardeners. Yardeners are more likely to be seen standing in their front yards on a Saturday morning drinking coffee, contemplating brown spots, and staring down the dandelions. The only grounds on their minds are the ones in the bottom of the coffee mug.

Of course gardeners don't have to deal with dandelions because, you guessed it—they don't have any. The anti-weed substance spread with their lawn fertilizer takes care of them. Yardeners, on the other hand, wield little spray bottles of environmentally friendly "Dandelion DOA," and pop each stubborn dandelion root up with an old screwdriver. (The screwdriver conveniently fits in the back pocket of the cut-off jeans and is equally useful for setting the choke on the lawn mower.)

The aesthetic results differ, too. Gardeners carefully coordinate the shades of green they combine in any given area of the landscape, and are careful to plant flowers which bloom sequentially, clustered in color groups of cool or hot tones. Yardeners, however, are happy whenever anything turns green, and they've been known to water weeds for weeks before realizing they weren't zinnias.

Gardener or yardener? Whichever you are, it's time to get out there. And remember, those dandelions grow while you sleep.

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](http://www.nancyparkerbrummett.com).



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### KISSed Quilts

Celebrate Earth Day!

by Marlene Oddie

In celebration of Earth Day, I'm sharing two new designs with fabrics shipping June 2026 to a local quilt shop.

I revisited an old friend when using a new Lumin Fabrics/Island Batik collection - Fossil Finesse. I originally designed this 'jewels' quilt in 2009 for a wedding. The version was called Peacock Jewels. With this new collection I used two slightly different background whites so you can see uniquely bordered jewels but also see white stars. The jewel tones and motifs in this fabric collection felt perfect for this quilt pattern. I enjoyed custom quilting it to really show it off!



Earth's Essence is another Lumin Fabrics/Island Batik collection shipping soon. I used a fat quarter bundle of the collection to make this City Windows pattern. It really maximizes the use of a fat quarter and shows off some of those larger print elements in the collection.

Ask at your local quilt shop that carries Island Batik fabrics for these fabrics and patterns.

Marlene Oddie (marlene@kissedquilts.com) is an engineer by education, project manager by profession and now a quilter by passion in Grand Coulee, WA at her quilt shop, KISSed Quilts. She quilts for hire on a Gammill Optimum Plus but especially enjoys designing quilts and assisting in the creation of a meaningful treasure for the recipient. Fabric, patterns, kits and templates are available at <http://www.kissedquilts.com>. Follow Marlene's adventures via <http://www.facebook.com/kissedquilts> and <https://www.instagram.com/marlene.kissedquilts>



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### Mother's Day Quotes

by Janet Young

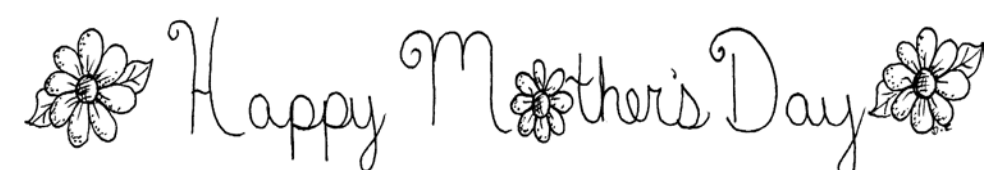
- It's that time of the year as Mother's Day rolls around, that we begin to switch gears and begin to focus on our mothers. We celebrate the many blessings she has brought into our life.
- This year I thought it would be a novel way to share some quotes that people have made about their mother. It may make you laugh, reflect, and recall some of the remembrances you have of your mother.
- Let's get started.
- Mothers can look through a child's eyes and see tomorrow. Reed Markham
- Mother is a verb. It is something you do, not just who you are. Cheryl Lacey Donovan
- All I am I owe to my mother. George Washington
- All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my mother. Abraham Lincoln
- A mother's arms are more comforting than anyone else's. Princess Diana
- My mother has a great deal of trouble with me, but I think she enjoyed it. Mark Twain
- A mother understands what a child does not see. Jewish proverb
- My mother is my root, my foundation. She planted the seed that I base my life on, and that is the belief to achieve, starts in your mind. Michael Jordan

The next three quotes are from unknown sources:

- Nothing is really lost until your mom can't find it.
- Life doesn't come with a manual it comes with a mom.
- Moms are like buttons they hold everything together.

I hope as you read these quotes some made you laugh, and some touched your heart. But more importantly, I hope it brought back reflections of why your mother means so much to you.  
For those whose mothers are in heaven, may you cherish the memories and feel the love that only a mother can provide.  
Happy Mother's Day

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



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### Piecing Life Together Learning

by Barbara Polston

I had the great good fortune of beginning 2026 by attending a week-long creative seminar. I enrolled in this course for several reasons. Having admired the instructor's work for many years, I was excited to learn her techniques. She works mostly by hand in wool and cotton fabrics, embellished by beautiful embroidery stitches using a great variety of threads. I was excited to learn more about hand embroidery and how stitch patterns and threads are chosen to work together for such intricate and beautiful results.

There was no pattern to follow – we were instructed to do our own thing and appreciate the Zen of hand stitching. We spent the first two days building the background upon which we would ultimately embroider. All our background elements were to be applique stitched in place sewing by hand. I love doing applique work, but all mine is done by machine. With a few words of explanation from the instructor, I jumped in and stitched for hours to finish that part of the process. By day three, we were beginning to sample embroidery stitches and threads – but not, as I had hoped to learn, surrounding our applique shapes. All our stitches were to create texture in the background. Finally, on day four, we began highlighting our applique elements with stitches. There was little instruction other than demonstrations of different stitches or products to consider employing. We were encouraged to just give things a try.

I was happy with the progress on my learning piece, but I still didn't think that I was getting what I thought I signed up for. That is, until the last day of class. Everyone stitched the morning away until midday. At that time, each of us laid our work at our place. All the students wandered the room, looking at everyone else's work, taking inspirational pictures of things we wanted to try at home. It was eye-opening! Every work was delightful, completely original, and different. I am so glad that I trusted the process, even more so when the instructor complimented my progress.

While I didn't necessarily get what I thought I signed up for, I learned so much! I learned that, despite not doing hand applique, that I can do it, and do it well. I learned that I know more embroidery stitches than I believed I did. I can look at illustrated directions for how to complete a stitch and do so successfully. I learned that I could create work without a specific plan and find satisfaction in the result. I learned that I am willing to give something a try – and remove it if dissatisfied. I learned that slow stitching by hand is indeed Zen.

My sample work is far from finished. This is a project that can go on and on as new ideas to try present themselves. Did I get what I thought I was signing up for? No, I got so much more.

©Barbara Polston, February 2026. Barbara is the author of *Quilting with Doilies: Inspiration, Techniques, and Projects* (Schiffer Press, 2015) and a series of children's books inviting young children to share in *The Adventures of Pappy Brian* (www.pappybrian.com). Barbara lives in Tucson, Arizona where she has failed at retirement, but is getting more time for sewing in a variety of forms. Contact Barbara at barbarapolstonquilter@gmail.com.

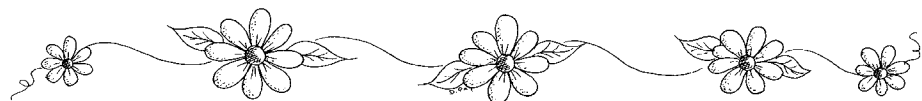
### Scraps, cont. from page 4

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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*Writing From Life*

by Jeanette Lukowski

Road Trip Season



This might make me sound silly, but while many people were spending the grey and somewhat gloomy days of January and February packing up and putting away the remains of their December holidays, I'm was thinking about where to travel during the upcoming summer months.

Perhaps this pattern began when I was a child, when my mother would drive us the five-hundred-plus miles to visit her parents, siblings, and a variety of cousins. If we were lucky, we made the drive two times a year—for winter holiday weekends, and the week-long summer vacation—but while the winter drives included my father, summers were most often reserved for my older sister, my mother, and I.

When my sister was in high school, there were additional drives to explore out-of-state colleges added; after my sister headed off to college, the summer drives naturally shifted more to just me and my mother in the car. Life sure looked different in the front seat than it had all of those years in the back!

Then, the magical year of holding a driver's permit arrived. What glorious adventures those five-hundred-plus miles became! The open road of interstate highways when my mother would drift off into a light nap in the passenger seat...I had never felt such freedom. Were those the moments when the passion for summer road trips was ignited?

Choosing a career as a teacher was decided by life's circumstances rather than the summer months of "unemployment," but I quickly learned to appreciate them. I began by planning little day trips the kids and I could take to places like zoos or historical farms which provided educational experiences for visitors; as the children got older, I planned other scenic drives which included a night or two in hotels, adding evening swims in the hotel pool to our trips focused on dinosaur digs and Girl Scout badge checklists. After my mother retired, she would join us as we headed to destinations such as Mount Rushmore—or job interviews I was offered in other states—but the drive my kids and I took to the Grand Canyon was part of a weekend birthday-gift-to-myself trek.

It's impossible for me to calculate all of the miles I've driven a car because, for me, the "prize" has been the scenery I've seen along the way. Last month, for instance, as my now grown son drove me in his car's passenger seat to my mother's burial (she purchased the plot years before her retirement—and subsequent move to be closer to her grandchildren), what did I spy on the interstate as we neared Madison, Wisconsin? None other than the Oscar Meyer Wienermobile! No kidding.

Reaching the Spring Equinox in March, my thoughts naturally turned towards summer road-tripping season. Where might I go? I admit to feeling a bit more apprehensive about driving by myself the older I get, but to stay home all summer?

© 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: [writingfromlife@yahoo.com](mailto:writingfromlife@yahoo.com)

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**Life on My Farm - Breezy Manor**

The Disappearing Back Porch by Donna Jo Copeland, farmeress

My life thus far has been spent mostly living simply, farm centered. Old farmhouse with their high ceilings, drafts and tall trees. A brief time spent in a tiny apartment, formerly a chicken coop was endured. Ugh.

One of my favorite things about an old farmhouse is the back porch. Sometimes they were planned, sometimes just kind of stuck on. Whatever their construction they defined farm family life.

Where I grew up it was small, 4 steps up into the kitchen, sharp left to basement stairs. A handy place for barn coats and boots. Lots of big nails to hang odd things from. A door with a glass panel to be used in winter, replaced with screen in summer. Sort of a pass thru leading to the barn.

Our neighbors across and down the road had a glorious back porch—long and narrow, lots of small windows on the west side. Near the kitchen door space for a small table and old Hoosier cabinet. I loved visiting Bonnie and Harold, walking thru that back porch, we never used the front door. Her clothesline and chicken yard were just outside the door. The house sat on a small rise, tall trees lined the drive.

Where I live now, for over 50 years, have a magical back porch which has transformed itself many times. House was built in late 1800s with wood front and back porches. In 1960, in what seemed to be a cement pouring era, they were removed, cement floors poured, brick facing, storm windows and doors. And my back porch floor has a bump which keeps the door from opening all the way. I've tried grinding it down to no avail.

My young kids and I enjoyed many summer breakfasts there at my great grandmother's kitchen table. Then it became a brooder house for baby chicks, and still does. Then bunny cages one frigid winter.

Once I went to a livestock auction, brought home 2 day old calves, angus and holstein. Bedded them on the porch for quite a while. The chick's got moved into the kitchen—penned under the kitchen table.

When I had my goat dairy (over a quarter century) I had an old Philco fridge there filled with milk, cheese, eggs and ice cream. Customers came in, got what they wanted, left money in a coffee can.

For the last 30 years I have let the porch take on its own life. The Wool from my sheep fill shelves, a long table serves as a dye studio. A spin dryer sits on a small table. A tall chimney cabinet holds dyestuff. My hand tools nestle on a handmade corner shelf. Seedlings start in the east windows.

Lots of love, laughter and magic have happened on that back porch. The big windows bring in sunshine, fresh breezes, it's one of my happy places. The cistern with its old handpump sit just outside the door, path to the barn on the right.

Some may consider the kitchen to be the heart of a home. I think it's the back porch holding laughter, animals, boots and the soul of the family

Sadly looking at new houses today I see no back porches, just a door to the garage. The farm back porch whether neat, messy, filled with life and laughter was where your friends and neighbors entered. The door was never locked.

You can't do that today  
For all of our advancements, we have lost so much. Old farmhouse back porches carried a life and magic all their own. And almost all gone, living in memories

At 76 I probably won't move again but should I get the chance to build a new house, the back porch would be the first design

Late spring, early summer is absolutely delightful. Warmth, long days! Being out in the fresh air. Let's all get busy with a garden, get our hands and bare feet in the dirt, play in the mud. And grow our own food.

Peace, love and laughter!

©2026 - Donna Jo Copeland writes from her farm, Breezy Manor, Mooresville, Indiana where she tends her flock and creates art from the wool. Being the 14th generation of farm owner/operator, Donna Jo brings alive the struggles of farm life.



Amy and Grace celebrating her 21st birthday then we went on a cruise for Grace's Spring Break.

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1 c salad oil

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(Family Features) While almost all bird seed may look pretty much the same to you, it doesn't to the birds you're feeding. Knowing what kinds of seeds different birds like can help you attract a variety of fine feathered friends to your feeders.



Consider these popular seed types and the common backyard birds they attract:

**Sunflower** – Black sunflower seeds attract blue jays, goldfinches, woodpeckers, purple finches, chickadees, titmice and nuthatches. Striped sunflower seeds appeal to chickadees, doves, grosbeaks, northern cardinals, nuthatches, titmice and woodpeckers. Sunflower hearts (also known as "hulled sunflower" and "sunflower chips") attract chickadees, common redpolls, juncos, doves, finches, goldfinches, grosbeaks, nuthatches, pine siskins, titmice and woodpeckers.

**Nyjer** – These lightweight, tiny seeds are a favorite of goldfinches. Put nyjer seeds in a hanging feeder with tiny holes so the small seeds won't get blown away. Nyjer also attracts redpolls, juncos, doves, indigo bunting and pine siskin.

**Safflower** – These white seeds are slightly smaller than black sunflower seeds. Because they are bitter, grackles, blue jays, starlings – and squirrels – don't like them. However, they do attract doves, purple finches, chickadees, titmice and downy woodpeckers.

**White millet** – Good for scattering on the ground, white millet attracts ground feeders such as juncos, sparrows, indigo buntings, towhees and mourning doves.

**Cracked corn** – Popular with ground feeders, cracked corn appeals to doves, crows, jays, sparrows, juncos and towhees. Avoid getting finely cracked corn as it's vulnerable to rot and can quickly turn to mush.

When choosing a bird seed mix, pay attention to the ingredients list on the package. Bird seed is required by law to list ingredients in order of content. Some cheaper mixes have filler seeds such as wheat, red milo, red millet or "assorted grain products." Most backyard birds won't eat those, and your seed mix could end up wasted on the ground.

Learn more about making your backyard an oasis for birds of all kinds at [elivingtoday.com](http://elivingtoday.com)  
Photo courtesy of Unsplash

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**Building Harmony**  
 A Stormy and Furry Night

by Jeff Cappis

It was one of those stormy Friday nights. The rain was driving down and lightening was flashing constantly all around, Cathy and I were intrigued by the storm as the thunder rattled our house. Our dog Waldo didn't take it quite so easily though. He either tried to find a place to hide, (like behind a toilet) or huddled close to us when the thunder clapped. We had to keep an eye on him so he didn't piddle on the floor in fear. That was fine with him. He liked to stay close.

Later on that night Cathy grew tired and went to bed but I was still watching the storm. Something about these storms draws me to them. There is a smell to the rain and the sound of it driving down. The flash of light and eventual boom. Wow. I decided to step outside to experience it first hand.



There is a good spot for this just outside the garage door. The eaves protected me (barely) from the rain and I got a good view of nature's fury. The trees on our property were whipping around with the wind. I was in awe. Then I heard the door close behind me and latch.

I was locked out. Drat. I considered ringing the doorbell but this would mean waking up Cathy. After careful consideration I looked for another option.

At least I was mostly protected under that eave for the moment and the show was spectacular. Every time the Forrest lit up I could see every leaf and every blade of grass for just an instant. Between lightening flashes the Forrest was mostly dark, except for a small solar light some forty feet away.

Boom! Cool! Flash! Wow! Boom..... This was going on for a while when I noticed something out of the corner of my eye. Something moved in front of that solar light. It cast a silhouette towards me through the mist.

In the brief flashes of light I could see it was close to the ground with spiky wet fur violently shaking off water. Between the flashes it let out a horrible howl. Then the Forrest would go dark again.

Still I could tell through that faint shadow in the mist, that it was getting bigger, or closer. I was blinded by another lightening flash. Again, darkness and a sinister howl.

Now I could hear it panting. It even let out an occasional snort. I tried the door. Still locked. I dare not move or make a noise. Perhaps it hadn't seem me. With the rain driving down, the wind a few blinding flashes, the immediate booms and all that howling I was getting pretty unhinged.

Now I could smell what ever it was and it was rank and close by. There were noises all around and I wasn't sure what to trust.

Suddenly it leapt at me... knocking me to the ground hard. I could feel it's weight as it landed on me and even more: it's claws on my chest! It growled and howled. It drooled on my face as it came ever closer.

In the lightening flashes I could see it's spiked wet fur and it's teeth up close. It's breath stank. It gave out one last howl as I prepared to lose my entire face and then... It licked me.

Then it wagged it's tail. What? After a moment my heart settled down. Turns out Waldo had sneaked outside with me and got lost in the rain. He was wet, lost and scared but more than happy to find me. He tried to lick my entire face off. Things went from scary to just kinda gross.

The door stayed locked so we hung out under that eave and watched the storm. Waldo even started to enjoy it. He was soaked, but we had fun.

All of this made me wonder: Why do dogs smell when they get wet?

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*Writing From Life*

by Jeanette Lukowski



**Technology**

In a True Confessions sort of way, today's story begins with a truth about me: I have a Love / Hate relationship with technology. Perhaps one third of my days pass with me being indifferent to having a smart phone, one third finds me annoyed with the constant warning "pings" my 2023 car generates...but yesterday, the remaining one third celebrated an adventure with my elderly mother—brought to fruition thanks to the help of those two technological devices.

We were sitting in Mother's local public library, checking the library's computer for the next title one of her monthly book clubs will discuss. My job would be to climb the umpteen stairs to a very high second floor, extract the book from the shelf, and bring it back downstairs to Mother while she waited near the circulation desk.

Finding the title in the computer, Mother turned to me: "Where is Little Falls? North or south?"

"North," I quickly replied. I drive north to visit my mother several times a month; the town she was asking about is, in turn, further north.

"No one comes that way," she replied rather sadly. "The computer shows that they have one copy on the shelf."

Since I was already spending the night with Mother (to accompany her to an early morning doctor appointment the next day), I pulled my smart-phone from my purse—merely out of curiosity. I punched the town's name into the mapping program, and discovered: "It's 37 miles away. Want to go?"

My smart-phone clock had already displayed the time as 4:08pm, and the roads were still clear of weather—an important factor for a late November driving adventure.

Mother's interest was piqued...but she's still the pragmatist. "Do you have their number right there?"

Affirmative.

"Call them first, to make sure they have it in hand."

Again, the smart-phone made it easy. One finger's touch on the search engine's screen, and my phone switched over to dialing mode.

A few minutes later, the librarian confirmed that the book was in her hand. Without confirming the plan with Mother, I told the librarian we would be on our way, and disconnected the call.

Getting out of the city's traffic took a bit longer than I had anticipated though, and I began to get nervous about the time. (My map feature said we would arrive by 4:58pm.) Thanks to the Bluetooth connection between my car and my phone, I was about to call the librarian again at 4:41pm. "Would it be easier if I just gave you Mother's library card information now? That way you can leave the book outside the door, if we don't get there before you close."

The librarian graciously reassured me that everything would be fine, as they don't leave at exactly 5pm, but she took the library card information anyway.

Returning to Mother's apartment later that evening, I realized that I am pretty spontaneous. Technology was just the tool which aided me in accomplishing the task.

Next challenge?

© Jeanette Lukowski 2024. Jeanette is a mother, grandmother, teacher, and author who lives in Mankato, MN. She is inspired by the lives of strong women. Her email address is: writingfromlife@yahoo.com



### Plant City

## 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 NC coast a couple 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 you produced or to buy what you 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, 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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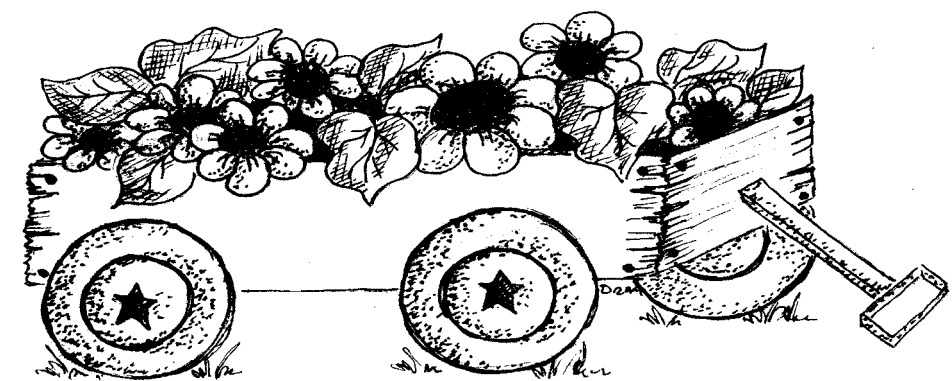


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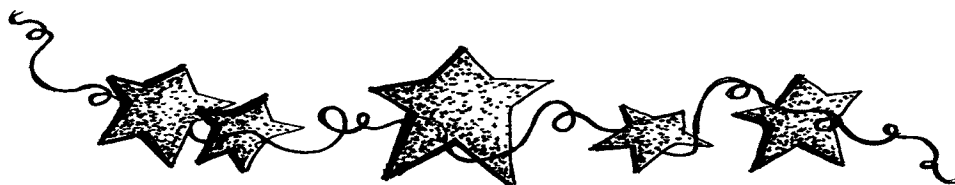
**Frugal Gardening Tips and Tricks**

Gardening can be a simple way to beautify your yard, relieve stress and save money on your grocery bill, but like any hobby, you can get carried away buying necessary equipment.

Fun, frugal and environmentally friendly, these tricks can help you create a cost-effective garden:

1. Use a yardstick and permanent marker to mark inches and feet on the handle of your rake, shovel or hoe. The next time you plant, simply lay the marked handle along the row to create perfectly spaced holes for seeds.
2. Line the bottom of a clay pot with a coffee filter to keep soil from leaking out the bottom.
3. Use empty plastic water bottles or clear milk jugs to fill the bottom of large pots. They reduce the weight of the pot and require less soil to fill.
4. To test your seeds to see if they are still viable for this planting season, place a wet paper towel inside a zip-top bag, drop in 3-4 seeds and wait a week to see if anything grows.
5. One way to help prevent weeds is lining your garden with a layer of newspaper. Just top two or three sheets of newspaper with a layer of pine needles, grass clippings or dried leaves for an eco-friendly and inexpensive weed barrier.
6. Keep gardening twine handy. Nail a funnel to your potting bench with the spout pointing downward, feed the twine through and your string will never go missing. For a more portable solution, place a ball of twine inside a canning jar, make a hole in the lid and feed the end of the twine through the hole. Now, you can take twine anywhere, tangle-free.
7. There is no need to buy expensive potting systems for starting seedlings. Place several cardboard toilet paper rolls inside a clean plastic clamshell, like those used for premade salads. Fill each cardboard tube with potting soil and plant. Once your seedlings grow too tall for the clamshell, simply tear off the top lid.

Find more ideas for creating a garden without spending a bundle at <http://www.elivngtoday.com> Source: Family Features.com



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**A Cup of Tea with Lydia**  
Creating Beau-TEA-ful Floral Bouquets

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 continued on page 18)

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### Cup of Tea, cont. from page 17

Idea File below for more information.)  
After the 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.

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### Summer Vacation!

As an adult looking back, I have many fond memories of summer vacations. Once school was out, it meant being free to spend time with neighborhood friends and visiting family.

Our neighborhood had many kids of all ages. We would gather together to play kickball, tag, hide and seek, or ride bikes. When the streetlights came on, it was a race to make it home.

In my family, Summer meant we had additional chores. I worked in the garden planting the vegetables and when the produce was harvested, I'd help with the canning. Dad had a small patch of strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries that we'd pick and make into jam and jelly plus enjoy with shortcakes and cobbler.

My brother was tasked with keeping the lawn mowed. My sisters did additional housework as well as looked after me, the baby of the siblings.

When I was young, I remember visiting my grandparents who lived in a neighboring town. My parents would put me on the bus with my little suitcase. I'd sit right behind the bus driver with instructions not to bother the other passengers. My grandparents would meet the bus at the bottom of the hill from their house. I liked visiting because I had my own room and bed to sleep in. Grandma taught me how to do needlework, knit and crochet. Families tended to live close in those days and mine was no exception. My aunt and uncle lived right up the hill on a farm. I'd spend time with them during the summer too. I'd help feed the beef cows, pigs and chickens with my uncle and my aunt and I would bake sweet treats to put in my uncle's lunchbox. We would often read books together after supper or listen to music on the radio while dancing around the living room.

All of these experiences contributed to making me the strong and capable woman I am today. Bored? We didn't have time to be bored. There was always something interesting to do.

Of course, this was in the 1960s; a time before cell phones, computers, Xboxes, and iPads, before a lot of things today's children have to occupy their time. Parent usually want their children to have more than when they were young, but if I could go back and change time, I wouldn't change a thing. I believe I turned out just fine. What will you be doing with your children or grandchildren this summer vacation? Hopefully, you'll be making some sweet memories.

Judy Sharer just released her spicy historical romance/family saga titled *Secrets in Room Four*, the first in her series *Love Lessons*. She is also the author of a sweet historical romance/family saga series titled *A Plains Life*. This four-book series also published by *The Wild Rose Press* is appropriate for the entire family and is available on-line wherever books and eBooks are sold. Visit Judy's website [judysbarer.com](http://judysbarer.com) and follow her on Facebook and X.

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**Strawberry Shortcake**

1/2 cup of butter  
 1 cup of sugar  
 1 cup of milk  
 Juice of 1/2 a lemon

3 eggs  
 3 t. baking powder  
 1 cup of flour

Cream together butter and sugar. Add beaten eggs and lemon juice. Mix the flour with baking powder and add to wet ingredients.  
 Bake in greased cake pan at 350° for 20 minutes.  
 Mix sliced strawberries and sugar to serve with the shortcake. Cover with whipped cream.

Enjoy!

### Spinning Wheels for Freedom

by Janet M. Bair

As the 250th anniversary of our country draws near, I have been contemplating freedom's cost. Freedom is not free.

When the American colonies decided to boycott British imports of tea and cloth, the American women did their part. By the 1750's, a great deal of cloth was imported from Britain.

We read these facts today, but it doesn't register what extra work this would mean for the average mother of a large household.

Making cloth involved many time-consuming tasks such as spinning thread from wool or flax and then slowly weaving the threads on a loom. The Patriot leaders called upon American women to create cloth locally so that the colonies were no longer dependent upon Britain to survive.

Wearing homespun became the patriotic thing to do. Just as women became creative in brewing teas made from native plants such as sage, raspberry and strawberry, they grew flax and sheared their sheep. Various plants were used to dye thread as well as onion skins, nut shells, and bark.

In the late 1760's and early 1770's, women got together for spinning bees for the cause of freedom. Each woman would load her spinning wheel into the back of a wagon and go to the appointed gathering spot, usually the minister's home. The women would sit and spin for a whole (farmer's) day, from dawn to dusk. The gatherings often numbered 100 women from all economic backgrounds. Freedom from Britain was their united goal.

It's no surprise then to know that every scrap of fabric was cherished and re-used and re-worked until it became only small pieces, which were then patched into a quilt. The artistry and creativity of colonial women is to be admired. It makes me wonder what American women would do today to help the cause of freedom.

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

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Potted Garden  
 Cutting Garden  
 Hummingbird Garden  
 Meditation Garden  
 Rose Garden  
 Rock Garden

TO PLANT A SEED IS A HOPEFUL DEED

When I hear the CHIMES in my garden it's like fairies are going by.

I AM WEARY OF SWORDS & COURTS & KINGS. LET US GO INTO THE GARDEN.

Find lots more about the garden in Susan's new Summer Book at www.susanbranch.com ~ Happy Spring! 'Tis the Season!

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#### Sewing On-the-Go

### Batting Breakdown: Choosing the Right Batting for Longevity, Drape and Warmth

By Steve Baker

Batting is the quiet backbone of every quilt - rarely seen, often overlooked and yet responsible for how a quilt feels, moves and survives over time.

Two quilts made with the same pattern and fabrics can age very differently. One may soften beautifully with use, draping like a well-loved garment. Another may feel stiff, lose warmth or break down sooner than expected.

Choosing the right batting isn't about finding a universal "best." It's about understanding how batting affects longevity, drape, warmth and even how a quilt performs under the bright lights of a show or competition.

Batting lives between the quilt top and backing, doing work that is both structural and sensory. It influences how a quilt ages, how it responds to washing, how it hangs on a wall and how it feels when wrapped around a body.

Four key factors should guide batting selection: longevity, drape, warmth and show performance. Longevity reflects how well a quilt withstands time, use and washing. Drape describes how fluidly a quilt folds and moves, an important consideration for bed quilts, lap quilts and show quilts alike.

Cotton batting is a traditional favorite, known for breathability and a classic crinkled look that develops over time. It offers excellent stitch definition and works well for heirloom, wall and traditional quilts.

Specialty batts such as bamboo, silk and blends bring additional options. Bamboo offers exceptional softness and drape, silk provides luxury with minimal bulk and blended batts balance durability and feel.

Before buying batting, it helps to ask one simple question: How do I want this quilt to feel ten years from now? That answer often clarifies priorities better than any label.

There is no universally "best" batting, only the batting that best serves the quilt you are making. Chosen with intention, batting helps quilts age gracefully, remaining beautiful, functional and meaningful for years to come.

Steve Baker is the Director of Marketing at SewEndipitous located at 1093A Albright Road in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Visit [www.SewEndipitous.com](http://www.SewEndipitous.com) for more information.

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that perches in the soul and sings the tune without the words,  
 ...is the thing with feathers  
 and never stops at all.

**HOPE**

Emily Dickinson, was a very wise woman! Her connection with nature and virtues like Hope, take us to a more profound level beyond wishful thinking. Hope perseveres through trials and helps us maintain our moral integrity. Hope is the combination of the desire for something and the expectation of receiving it. When Ms. Dickinson connects the concept with nature it gives us a visual and sensual experience. I can just hear that little sparrow singing a song about flying to her babes still within the shell of her eggs.

**GIRLFRIEND WISDOM:**  
 Hum a tune of Hope when doubt enters your world, it will calm your mind, lower your heart rate, and bring you some peace!

Joy & Blessings,  
 Jody

### Sweet Treats

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

- |              |             |            |
|--------------|-------------|------------|
| BUTTERSCOTCH | FRUIT JELLY | MARZIPAN   |
| CARAMEL      | FUDGE       | NOISETTE   |
| CHEWING GUM  | JELLY BEAN  | NOUGAT     |
| CHOCOLATE    | LOLLIPOP    | PEPPERMINT |
| FONDANT      | LOZENGE     | TOFFEE     |

### South Carolina

#### Celebration of Quilts Returns July 17 & 18

The Prickly Fingers and Electric City Quilters Guilds of Anderson, SC, are proud to announce the return of the Celebration of Quilts Biennial Quilt Show on Friday, July 17, and Saturday, July 18.

This highly anticipated event will showcase the incredible talent of Anderson quilters and features vendors, demos, and special shopping opportunities for art enthusiasts of all kinds. Visit the show at The Civic Center of Anderson; located at the Anderson Sports and Entertainment Center, 3027 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Anderson, SC. Hours Fri. are 10-5 and Sat. 10-4. Admission is \$7.00 per person daily, plus applicable taxes and fees.

Attendees will be treated to a spectacular display of over 200 quilts entered into 18 different categories. You will be welcomed by a stunning collection of quilts by past years winners and antique quilts from private collections, as well as the quilts available for raffle. A favorite feature of the show is the popular Viewers' Choice Awards, which allows entrants to cast a ballot for their favorite piece in each category.

A highlight of the show is the Junior Showcase, a special non-voting category that shines a light on the works created by talented quilters under the age of 17. Visitors are invited to see the exciting creations of the region's future fiber artists.

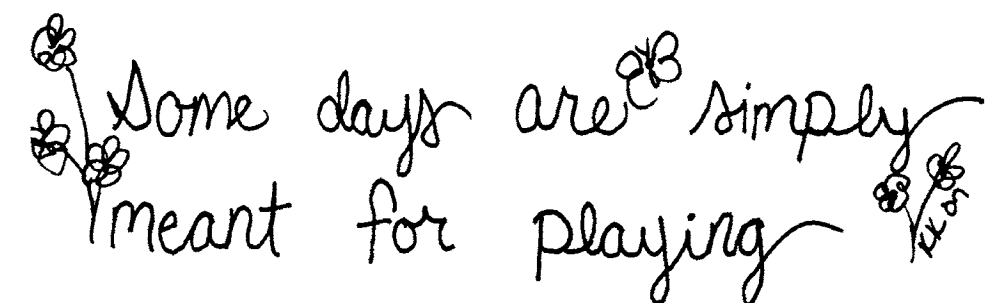
Explore and shop with 15 vendors offering a wide array of quilting and sewing supplies. Check out the Book Nook for used quilting magazines and sewing books, and the Second-Hand Shop for great deals on new and gently used quilting and sewing notions. Find unique, handmade items crafted by guild members in the boutique.

Participate in themed Raffle Baskets (\$1 tickets) and a Silent Auction featuring a variety of thoughtful creations. The Silent Auction will close every two hours to make bidding easier. Each guild has a full-size quilt to be raffled. Tickets for these quilts will be sold at the door and the winners for both will be drawn at the end of the show (winners need not be present). Photos of the quilts are available online.

The Prickly Fingers and Electric City Quilters Guilds are deeply committed to philanthropic efforts by making quilts, pillowcases, bags, and Christmas stockings for those in need in the Anderson area. The show will feature booths from two key philanthropy partners: Quilts of Valor, which creates quilts for veterans, and Project Linus, which makes quilts for children. The Guilds extend their sincere thanks to All About Fabrics in Williamston for their continued support, along with all other sponsors. The show is supported by ATAX Funding provided by the City of Anderson and Anderson County to promote tourism and economic development.

Hotel rooms are available at a courtesy discount rate for out-of-town visitors. Information is on the website. Please mention the Anderson Area Quilt Show when making reservations.

For more information on the show, vendor opportunities, sponsorships, or the quilt guilds, please visit [andersonsquilts.org](http://andersonsquilts.org). See the ad on this page and let them know you read about the show in *The Florida Register*.



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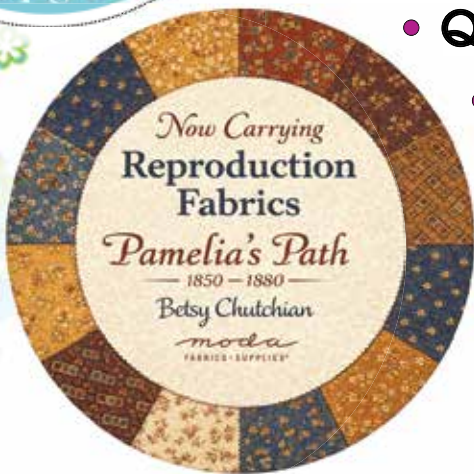
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*Happy Sewing, Beth & Kelley*

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