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September/October 2026

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Become Inspired!

by Annice Bradley Rockwell



Bringing in the Harvest

As the daylight hours slowly begin to shorten, we begin to shift our thinking toward preparing for the season to come. Our vegetable gardens are likely producing plenty at this point in the year, so taking our gathering baskets out to the raised beds is a country task that brings great reward. Our beans can be harvested to accompany a wonderful homemade meal, or they can be strung by hand and hung over the hearth to dry as a handmade garland to be enjoyed all year. Our heirloom tomatoes can be harvested right off the vine to make a perfect summer sandwich with some toasted homemade bread, creamy mayonnaise and salt and pepper. The abundance of our yield can also be canned to line our buttery shelves with the blessings of our harvest to be enjoyed all year long.

Our herb gardens can also be a huge source of happiness as we plan a morning out in the sun clipping and binding bundles of fragrant herbs to be hung inside to dry. They can be used for enhancing our fall meals or to brighten one of our country displays. Even an afternoon spent clipping wild blooms such as the bright mustard tansy, yellow goldenrod or the purple Joe Pye weed can provide us with plenty of natural elements to enjoy in the beautiful season of fall.

THE WARMTH OF HOME

The spectacular sunlight of September is truly a special gift. Although more fleeting than the sultry sun of summer, the beautiful days of early fall are to be enjoyed. Paired with the daytime beauty are evenings characterized by a crisp coolness. Nights come more quickly now, so our home's ambiance stands out as being even more welcoming and warm. Taking time to create warmth in our decorating is time well-spent. Early lighting such as a punched tin hanging lantern or a mirrored scone casts an inviting glow to warm the corner of a colonial keeping room. An antique floor lamp with a deep red-checked shade can enliven a favorite reading spot for a cool fall evening. And candles such as Pumpkin Butter or Colonial Apple Butter can be used as part of a harvest centerpiece where both its subtle flicker and captivating scent enhance the mood of the room. Gorgeous large wooden trays or boxes in early surface like red or mustard can be enjoyed as a focal point for fall. Filled with part of our abundant harvest, it becomes a striking natural element that takes center stage.

SIMPLE COUNTRY JOYS

Planning a day to surround yourself with the full blessings of fall is a way to connect with friends and make memories to cherish. Wrapping a schedule around a festive fall event can be rewarding and fun. Fall festivals that include local farms and creative artisans can be enjoyed alongside a trip to our favorite antiques shops that might be hosting an outdoor show filled with. great antiques, unique food trucks and decorative elements fresh-from-market to enhance our home displays.

This fall, savor the transition to those cooler, spectacular autumn days. Harvest the bounty of your gardening efforts and delight in the simple country joy of creating an ambiance that truly welcomes you home.

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

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A Lamp, A Kindness, A Legacy

by Becky Van Vleet

There is a lamp in my home that does more than give light. It sits on a table in my living room, its glow warm and steady in the evenings, the kind of light that softens a room rather than brightens it. The lamp is more than an object. It's a presence. It's been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. Its story begins more than sixty years ago, in a simple act of kindness.

My father received the small lamp after church one day when he and my mother were delivering groceries to a woman in need. The woman, grateful and wanting to offer something in return, struck up a conversation with my father. Somewhere in that exchange, they discovered a shared thread—their families had come from Czechoslovakia. That connection must have felt immediate and personal—like finding a piece of home in an unexpected place. The lamp, which she'd brought to America from Czechoslovakia, was her way of saying thank you for the groceries. Of course, my humble father declined the offer at first, but the woman insisted he have the lamp.

I don't know what the lamp meant to her before that day. But in giving it away, she passed along more than an object. She passed along a gesture of gratitude, a recognition of shared roots, and a quiet acknowledgment of kindness received.

The lovely multi-colored globe lamp with a sturdy brass base found its place in my parents' home, where it became a part of the background of my childhood. It was always there, lit in the evenings, steady and unassuming. It was simply one of those constants that make a house feel like a home. Only later did I come to understand that it carried a history far older than my own memories of it.

Over time, as so many things do, the lamp was passed down to me. Now it sits in my home, continuing its quiet work. When I turn it on, I sometimes think about the path it has taken. From a woman who crossed an ocean, to my father delivering groceries after church, to the home I live in today. It has outlasted changes in houses, in generations, in the rhythm of everyday life. And still, it does what it has always done: it gives light.

A bag of groceries. A shared conversation. A simple gift given in gratitude.

These are not the moments that make headlines, but they are the ones that endure. They travel quietly through time, carried in objects, in memories, in stories passed from one person to another. This lamp is one of those stories.

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.beckylvanvleet.com.



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Writing From Life

by Jeanette Lukowski

Quilt Auctioning

Last month, I attended my very first "live" quilt auction (which meant in-person, in-the-moment bidding).

Although I make, and gift, a variety of quilts and quilted household items, I honestly never knew about donating these finished projects to organizations for fundraising auctions. Was I not paying attention? Or have these events just become more popular?

Prior to COVID-days, I attended a live auction of Navajo woven rugs in New Mexico. Knowing nothing about the community into which I had recently moved, I attended the auction as a way to observe-and-learn. I'm sad to say I don't recall many of the details from that day, beyond the pre-sale opportunity to view the tables of rugs and such on tables on the stage; I remember the area of the auditorium in which I sat; I remember leaving the live auction after about an hour, and walking through the many vendor tables in the lobby before I exited the building. I just don't remember the winning bids, nor sizes of any rug.

I think the individual weavers of the rugs were paid a portion of the proceeds collected from the auctioning, but I cannot state this as fact. (Again, new to town = knew no one I would be comfortable asking my naïve questions.)

Jumping forward a few years, I moved to Minnesota with quilting fabric shops sharing flyers for "local" events. I learned about a variety of quilt shows and quilt auctions over the years, but never went to an auction until last month.

Thanks to an office-volunteering stint with a summer camp, I learned about their hosting an annual live quilt auction mid-summer. Curiosity took over, so I went—to observe-and-learn. (Sensing a pattern with me? You wouldn't be wrong.)



The purpose of this particular mid-summer auction was to raise funds for camp scholarships to be offered to the next summer's group of registering campers. A number of the quilts and quilted-items were available for bidding online, while a separate number of quilts were only available during the live auction. I was able to tour the building in which all of the items were displayed before the live auction began (where I also saw the many items being offered through the online portion of the auction I had viewed the day before), then headed outdoors to the lakeside stage and benches for the live-action portion of the fundraising.

Turns out, auctions are really interesting to watch! Just like nearly everything else in life, there are many different ways of viewing auctions, organizing auctions, and even distributing the proceeds from the sales generated during auctions. Similar to raffles, for instance, the "suggested value" of each quilt was revealed before the bidding began—but that's where the comparison to raffles ends. People win raffle quilts based on random odds, after all, while each auction bidder "controls" the odds simply based on how much they were willing to pay for the quilt.

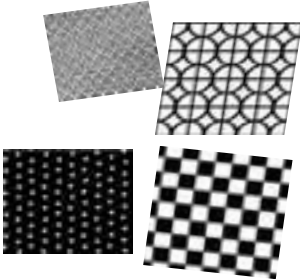
I'm going to check out another camp's quilt auction tomorrow.

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



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Life in Skunk Hollow

by Julie A. Druck

Passing on the Baton



The notation of Grandparents' Day on September 13 recently came across my radar, and upon hearing it, my mind immediately jumped back to my school days. I can remember being so proud that Pop & Mammaw, my maternal grandparents, came to my elementary school to celebrate this day in autumn. From what I remember, they sat in the back of the classroom during the morning, watching as we presented our work. Then, the best part: sitting with them in the cafeteria to share lunch together. What joy that was!

I've written before about my grandparents, particularly my grandfather whose life I had the privilege of enjoying into my '40s. But I lost my grandmother at age 15, when I was just on the cusp of beginning to appreciate her. Mammaw was a force to be reckoned with – she was incredibly organized, detail-oriented, an exemplary secretary, as well as an amazing homemaker. She taught me to type and cross-stitch, how to iron everything (including sheets and underwear, which I DO NOT do – sorry, Mammaw!), how to set a table and how to throw a great party. She made life rich for my sister and me with card games on the screened-in porch and holiday parties and special treats and sleepovers.

I spent A LOT of time with my grandparents. My parents were deeply broken people who struggled to parent my sister and I in healthy ways, so more often than not, we either lived with and/or spent large chunks of time with Pop & Mammaw. They and their home were a place of stability and peace and joy for us. What they gave us was immeasurable, and I will be forever grateful. I recognize that they gave me a tremendous legacy, and I have a deep desire to pass on a similar legacy to my own grandchildren.

Though my relationship looks very different with my own grandchildren, there are many things that aren't different – one of which is the same desire to pour into them the love and peace and joy that I received. Over the past nine years that I've been blessed to be a grandmother, I have had at times very lucid, almost time-warp moments in the midst of being with my grandchildren - recognizing in those moments that I am literally passing on a heritage. It's a blessing that was poured into my life that I am now "paying forward" as it were, into theirs. It's a tremendous responsibility and a great joy.

I wear a colorful ring behind my wedding rings. It belonged to Mammaw. In fact, it was what they call her "mother's ring" – it contains the birthstones of her children and grandchildren. I didn't wear it for many years because it was too big, but a few years ago my husband encouraged me to have it re-sized. After I realized the joy of wearing it, I lamented not having it adjusted and worn years ago. But the thought hit me that I'm glad I didn't begin wearing it until AFTER I became a grandmother. It's become a visual reminder of the passing of the baton of the beautiful legacy I was given.

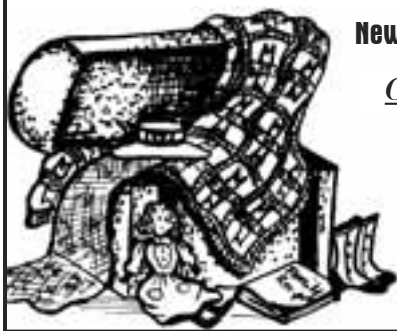
I have often wished that my grandmother could have lived to meet my children and grandchildren. But I recognize – that in a very real way – I am introducing her to them. For as I make memories with them in similar ways that Mammaw did with me, I am, indeed, continuing her legacy. I have no doubt, Mammaw would be proud ...of all of us.

Julie Druck is from York, Pennsylvania, and writes from her farm in Skunk Hollow. She'd welcome your comments at thedrucks@netzero.com.



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Prescription for Adventure

by Naomi Gaede-Penner

'Tis the Season for Zucchini!

Zucchini is one of the most prolific plants in the entire gardening world. A single plant produces an endless supply. A small row of zucchini has the potential to end world hunger. By the time August arrives, gardeners are reaping far more zucchini than they can possibly use in their soups, casseroles, omelets, muffins, breads, cakes, cookies, quiches, dips, appetizers, noodles, quesadillas, spaghetti sauces, fries, oven chips, lasagna, pizza, tostadas, jams and dog biscuits.

All too soon, they come to the end of their list for potential recipients, including family, friends, co-workers, workout buddies, reading groups, hiking pals, moms groups, Dutch Blitz card players, postal carrier, trash collectors, Sunday School teachers, personal trainers and dog groomers. Everyone avoids eye contact with these gardeners who walk around with big smiles and arms full of gigantic green curved vegetables. The gardeners latch on to moving bodies like a heat sensor, and even though their victims cross the street, they pursue them, calling out cheerful greetings. The victims feign deafness, a family emergency, a pot left boiling on the stove or the critical need to sort their sock drawer or recipe box.

This is when the gardeners start to kindly leave zucchini in the milk box and mailbox. They toss them to panhandlers on the exit and on-ramp corners. They pull them out of briefcases and share with otherwise unspoken-to commuters on mass transit. They give freely to Community Food Banks. They drop them off at the police station. They befriend strangers. They even try to bribe kids at neighborhood lemonade stands to give them away with their 75-cent drinks and popsicles.

Growers may become even more desperate. Beware when washing your car on the driveway. Lock the doors before running inside for a cold drink. Beware when leaving your stroller outside the community swimming pool. Check for "healthy snacks" left caringly by a neighbor. Beware when they sneak out, under the cover of darkness, with dog biscuits to silence your pooch, dressed in camouflage to get past your surveillance cameras and unload zucchini.

One can only hope they'll show some consideration and include a recipe for some NEW way to use zucchini; perhaps without flour, or completely vegan, or disguised in popsicles, or grated finely and stuffed into a medicinal poultice for migraines, or cut in large circles and placed on your eyes at night to prevent puffiness in the morning.

Desperate times call for desperate measures. Do what you need to, to protect yourself. Meanwhile, enjoy these facts:

- Pennsylvania Tom Roy designated August 8 as "National Sneak Some Zucchini onto Your Neighbor's Porch Day."
- Zucchini's have more potassium than bananas.
- Darker skin zucchini have richer nutrients than those that are pale.
- "Facts" differ on records of size and weight:
 - Bernard Lavery of Plymouth Devon in England holds a record of 69.5 inches long and 65 pounds.
 - Brampton, Ontario (2005) holds the record for 94.3 inches long and 64 pounds, 8 oz.
- Zucchini's were first brought to the United States in the 1920s by the Italians.
- April 25 is National Zucchini Bread Day.
- Biggest is not the best. The most flavorful zucchini's are small to medium size.

Find and purchase Naomi's Prescription for Adventure books, at www.prescriptionforadventure.com or by calling 303.506.6181.

COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Hearty Oven or Crock Pot Stew

From the kitchen of Irene Thompson, La Junta, CO

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 2 lbs. stew meat | 5 medium potatoes (cut in 1" slices) |
| 5 carrots (cut in 1" cubes) | 1 large onion (cut in chunks) |
| 3 stalks celery, sliced | 1 can tomatoes (1 lb. 12 oz) |
| 1/2 cup minute tapioca | 2 bay leaves |
| 2 bay leaves | 1 teaspoon paprika |
| 1 whole clove or 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves | |
| salt and pepper to taste | |

Trim all fat from meat. Mix all ingredients together. Put into crock pot or roaster. Time for cooking is essential: Crock pot on low for 12 hours. When using a roaster in the oven for 5 hours at 250°. Be sure the cover is on tight and do not keep stirring to avoid breaking up the ingredients. If any liquid is needed, you can dissolve some chicken bouillon cubes in some water to add. Enjoy!



Back to School Memories ...

They Don't Have to End in Childhood

by Susan Baldani

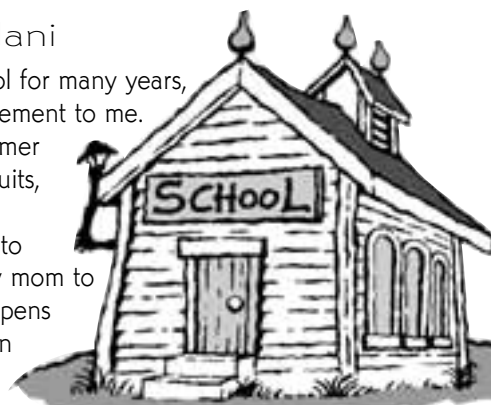
Even though I've been out of school for many years, September still brings a sense of excitement to me. It's time to put away the carefree summer attitude, shed the shorts and bathing suits, and get back to serious business.

As a child, I always looked forward to end-of-summer shopping trips with my mom to pick out new clothes, notebooks, and pens and pencils. It was a time to start again after the lazy days of summer and get back into a routine with my teachers and friends. Because no matter how great summer might have been, I was always bored by the middle of August. The schedule of getting up early and catching the school bus, which I couldn't wait to be done with in June, was something I actually looked forward to once again. I also loved learning new things, so getting my new text books and class assignments was invigorating.

Maybe this is why I continued my education long after high school. Even as an adult, going back to school still brought a thrill, and yes, I bought myself new clothes and notebooks and everything else I remembered from my youth. I found it was never too late to learn a new skill or perfect an old one. For example, have you always wanted to crochet, sew or knit but didn't know how? How about quilting? Then look through this issue and find out who is giving lessons and once you learn, there are plenty of places to go for yarn, fabrics, and anything else you may need for your new hobby. Or, have you always wanted to bake scrumptious desserts, or practice making Asian cuisine? Then sign up for cooking classes in your community.

September is a time to begin again, and not just for children or young adults. Skills can be learned at any age. Think about something you would like to do, then go about finding a class or tutor who can help you do just that. It's never too late to expand your horizons and try something new.

Susan Baldani has an MA in Education and a BA in Psychology. She enjoys writing and in addition to writing articles about small town life, is currently working on her second book. You can contact her at suebaldani@yahoo.com or through her website at www.mywritingwall.com.



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COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Squash Bread

From the kitchen of Carolyn Purdy, Harrisonville, VA

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 box Jiffy Corn Muffin mix | 3 cups yellow squash, grated |
| 4 eggs | 1 carton (1 cup) cottage cheese |
| 1 cup milk | 1 stick butter or margarine |
| sprinkle of salt | |

Beat eggs and milk. Add muffin mix. Stir in squash, cottage cheese and salt. Pour into a greased 1 1/2 quart casserole. Pour melted butter or margarine over mixture. Bake at 375° for 40 minutes or until golden brown.





Pieces From My Heart

by Jan Keller

Brittle with a Bite!

Pistachios. Is there a more delicious nut?

There are pistachio groves near Alamogordo, New Mexico, and each time I'm in the area, I'm tempted to stop to buy some at the producer's retail outlets.

Recently my friend Maryann, who lives in Alamogordo, came for a weekend visit. As an extra-special treat, she brought some raw pistachios as a gift. Immediately, I had brittle on my brain!

It was about a month before I got out my heavy candy-makin' pan and assembled the necessary ingredients. I had researched via internet and found three recipes of special interest. After careful review of the ingredients and directions, I took elements from each recipe and concocted my own.

One of the recipes talked of stretching the brittle as it was barely cooling. My friend Norma stretches and pulls her peanut brittle and I know it's a highly coveted holiday treat. I love it. It was a no-brainer the stretching recipe was destined to become my primary recipe. Based on the other two recipes, I decided I would add cream of tartar and cinnamon, as well as a couple of spices to give that special bite.

In no time brittle was cooked and it was time for the stretching. My sister-in-law Connie was visiting. I recruited her help to pull sections of candy until it took on an iridescent sheen. After quickly re-buttering our fingers, we'd move on to another barely-touchable glob of the molten goo and repeat the process.

Everyone who's tasted the brittle has raved, so, from one nut to another, I'm pleased to share the recipe with you. Warning: this may be addicting!



JAN'S BRITTLE WITH A BITE

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2 cups sugar | 1 cup light Karo syrup |
| ½ cup water | 2 cups pistachios |
| ¼ teaspoon salt | ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar |
| ½ teaspoon vanilla | 1 tablespoon butter |
| ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper | ½ teaspoon chili powder |
| ½ teaspoon Tabasco sauce | 1 tablespoon baking soda |
- In a large heavy pan, combine sugar, Karo syrup and water. Boil this mixture until it reaches 238 degrees on a candy thermometer. Then add pistachios, salt and cream of tartar. Continue to cook, stirring frequently. When the boiling mixture reaches 290 degrees—hard crack—remove the pan from the burner and add vanilla, butter, cayenne pepper, chili powder and Tabasco sauce. Quickly stir together then add baking soda. Mix well and, working quickly, pour out onto a couple of buttered cookie sheets. Spread with a spoon. Beginning with the outer edges, with well-buttered fingers begin to pull and stretch until it's very thin and a section breaks away. It's a good idea to have a sheet of foil where you can put the pulled pieces of candy. When well-cooled, store in airtight containers or sealed plastic bags. The pistachios in this recipe could also be substituted with peanuts, cashews, or any desired combination of nuts. Good stuff—and when pulled thin, not hard on teeth.



©2026 Jan Keller No reprint without permission Jan shares other pieces of her life in her books, *Pieces From My Crazy Quilt*, and *The Tie That Binds* These books can be ordered by calling 719-866-8570, or writing: Black Sheep Books, 11250 Glen Canyon Drive, Peyton, CO 80831

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Over The Teacup

Celebrate Fall

by Janet Young

As the season transitions from summer to fall, what symbolizes the dawning of this new season? Is it the first frost or the chilly bite in the morning air that signifies it's time to pull out those warm bulky sweaters and socks, as you prepare to attend the first of the season's college football game.

In addition to the beauty that fall brings with the changing of the leaves, there is so much to do before the cold, crisp air of winter sets in. For example, perhaps one more camping trip where you can make s'mores over a smokey campfire. Or, go for a walk trampling over freshly fallen crisp leaves.

Why not go to an orchard to pick apples. Nothing is more fun for the children than to pick the apples and then go home to bob for apples. Or, why not teach the older kids how to make applesauce.

Then, there is a hay ride through a pumpkin patch, where you can pick a pumpkin or two to take home and decorate your front porch. Pumpkins provide a nice decorative touch with a splash of orange throughout the yard and house. What a nice decorative touch to add to your front porch or to any place you want that spark of orange.

Last, but not least why not go through a corn maze. The thrill of going through the maze without getting lost is something that you and your family will recall for years to come as memories are being made.

You know Fall has arrived when Fall beverages begin to appear at coffee shops, fast food places, restaurants etc. Drinks such as apple cider, pumpkin lattes and all things spicy, signify that Fall has officially arrived. And with the ever-increasing morning chill in the air, pots of home-made soup are a welcomed treat for your taste buds.

So, as you cuddle up in a cozy blanket or break out your flannel sheets – plan to enjoy this special season of the year. Come December or January, when the first snow falls, you will be glad you did. So,

CELEBRATE FALL



©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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Golden Autumn's Gifts

by Barbara Kalkis

Autumn. At last! I will miss you Summer, but there's such relief with Autumn's arrival. Finally, I can accept the fact that the five pounds I promised to shed in May will spend the holidays stuck to my hips. That thought frees me to shred my stack of sure-fire weight-loss tips. Also out: the food journal logging diet victories and confessions of eating ice cream swimming in chocolate sauce, walnuts and whipped cream.

It's also time to say goodbye to every summer salad and chilled soup under the sun which looks scrumptious in magazines and easy-breezy to prepare. One famous chef claimed that she just served salads to guests. Easy-Peasy and everyone loved them. Really? Only if I buy ingredients in a bag and dump them all in a salad bowl. Otherwise, I must cook and chill the pasta, corn, rice or potatoes, and spend hours slicing, dicing and adding all the other ingredients to make the dinner look effortless, healthy, and – bonus! - slimming. I tried that advice, but two hours later I was still hungry and needed a snack – like ice cream. I enjoyed the forbidden snack by reassuring myself that ice cream provides bone-strengthening healthy calcium, which I noted in my food journal.

In Autumn you can stow your trendy charcuterie boards. Like chilled salads and soups, they, too, are wearisome. You can pile them high with cheeses, meats and veggies that require hours of slicing; add condiments spooned out of jars and placed into cuter containers, deli sausages, salamis and cheeses that must be decorated with olives (black AND green), cherry tomatoes, pickled onions and, oh, don't forget the cracker and bread assortment. By the time I finished with my one-time only charcuterie board, I had loaded three boards and a dozen bowls and was wondering why I just hadn't popped a chicken in the oven with vegetables and called the meal "done."

Now at last, it's Autumn. My favorite season. Wait. I said that about Spring when I shook off my winter doldrums; Summer when the fresh market vegetables were really fresh and flower bouquets were from the garden. Days stretched from early sunrises to late sunsets sparkling with firefly dances and starry skies. Now, before the chill of Winter, Autumn arrives in brilliant color. Out of the closet come the comfy clothes that fit like the summer shorts didn't. In the kitchen, the microwave goes silent. Heavy pans for cooking "serious food" are pulled out of their summer storage in the oven. It's the season to cook. Best of all, it's time for comfort foods like cookies, pies, and cakes.

Autumn is the perfect time for everything from meat to vegetables to cookies and every kind of dessert. We can practice old recipes and try new ones before the holiday season. Magazines, organizations, and even companies enthusiastically support cooking. Wisconsin Energy's Cookie Book has been published continuously since 1928. Pennsylvania cookbooks feature apple crisp, snickerdoodles and Gobs (or whoopie pies). Some states have an official state cookie, pie or desert, while provinces promote iconic foods associated with a region. Think about the popular foods where you live. The foods routinely featured and ordered in a café or restaurant are part of a region's cultural signature. For me, there's nothing better than sitting down with a glass of ice-cold milk, a cookie – or 6! – fresh from the oven and watching the sunset. The warmth of something baked in an oven touches the heart in a way that a tossed salad or cold salami never can.

©Barbara Kalkis, 2026. Barbara divides her time between writing, teaching and consulting. She is a terrible cook but appreciates those home chefs who have perfected the art. Reach her at BarbaraKalkis01@gmail.com.



On this day in History

September 16, 1893: The largest land run in history begins with more than 100,000 people pouring into the Cherokee Strip of Oklahoma to claim valuable land. With a single shot from a pistol the mad dash began, and land-hungry pioneers on horseback and in carriages raced forward to stake their claims to the best acres.

October 4, 1927: Sculpting begins on the face of Mount Rushmore in the Black Hills National Forest of South Dakota. It would take another 12 years for the granite images of four of America's most revered presidents, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt, to be completed. Washington's face was the first to be completed in 1934. Jefferson's was dedicated in 1936, with then-president Franklin Roosevelt in attendance, and Lincoln's was completed a year later. In 1939, Teddy Roosevelt's face was completed.

Countryberries Designs



Jack

This pattern is free for you to use. Please give the artist credit. Not for commercial use. Enlarge this pattern to your desired size. This pattern was designed as a wool applique. The eyes and teeth can be mismatched buttons or wool. The vine is embroidered. This pattern can be embroidered, needle-punched, hooked or even painted. Have fun!

Designed by Kathy Graham

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COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Apple Bread

Submitted by Irene Thompson, La Junta, CO

1 cup sugar	1/2 cup shortening
2 eggs	1 cup chopped apples
2 cups flour	1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 Tablespoon vanilla	1 teaspoon soda
1 1/2 Tablespoons buttermilk	1 cup chopped pecans

Pour into prepared pan and sprinkle with a mixture of 3 Tablespoons sugar and 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Bake 1 hour at 350°. Enjoy!



COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Linguini Carbonara

Submitted by Linda Debeneditts, Peyton, CO

1 lb. linguini pasta	6 eggs, beaten
3 tablespoons parsley	2 tablespoons butter
1/4 lb. prosciutto finely cut up into very small pieces	
1/4 to 1/3 cup shredded Parmesan cheese to taste	
1/4 cup heavy cream	

Cook pasta according to package directions for 'al dente.' Combine beaten eggs, heavy cream and parsley, mixing well with a fork. Drain pasta and return to its hot pan and add butter, tossing until it coats all of the pasta. Add egg, cream and parsley mixture and toss continually until egg mixture cooks onto the pasta. Add prosciutto until it coats pasta mixture. Add Parmesan and toss, then add salt and pepper to taste and serve immediately. Great with a tossed salad with Italian dressing on the side.

My family loves this dish. I learned to make it when we lived in northern Italy for 3 years while my husband was active duty in the Air Force.





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Four Letters:

Four Letters:

Five Letters:

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Six Letters:

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KISSed Quilts

by Marlene Oddie

Design Ideas Sometimes
Need to Percolate for...20 Years:

When presented with the new fabric collection from Frond Studios - Bells of Ireland distributed by Northcott, I immediately remembered a block design that I developed over 20 years ago. I fortunately found it in an old file cabinet and worked on creating it in Electric Quilt 8 to start playing with it on a larger scale – an entire quilt.

This collection has a beautiful canvas panel for bag making and a couple of different large print running yardage SKUs, but I chose to focus on the more color saturated SKUs combined in a way to make this beautiful Tartan—fussy cutting the printed tartan for the border.

This On Point Plaid pattern and the Bells of Ireland collection of fabrics are shipping to your local quilt shop now. If you need patterns, templates, fabrics and/or kits—please ask!

The possibilities for this pattern are endless. Find your favorite plaid color combination, a family tartan, one that works with your personal aesthetic or dream up your own.

I've written the pattern in such a way that you are making strata sets and then cutting and reassembling the entire block and the pieced setting triangles. The key is to get your color placement of the block correct so that with the sashings, cornerstones and the blocks it makes a continuous plaid.



Marlene Oddie, of Grand Coulee, WA, is an engineer by training, a project manager by profession, and a quilter by passion. At her quilt shop, KISSed Quilts, she quilts for hire on a Gammill Optimum Plus and especially enjoys designing quilts and helping create meaningful keepsakes. Fabrics, patterns, kits, and templates are available at kissedquilts.com. Follow Marlene's adventures on Facebook and Instagram.



Brain Games Answers

3 letters: Let, Rue, Rut, Set
4 letters: Lure, Lust, Lute, Rest, Rule, Ruse, Rust, True
5 letters: Lures
6 letters: Luster, Rustle

A Not So Routine Check-Up

I went to the Lord's Clinic to have my routine check-up, and I confirmed that I was ill.

When Jesus took my blood pressure, He saw I was low on tenderness.

When He read my temperature, the thermometer registered a fever of anxiety.

He ran an electrocardiogram and found that I needed several 'love bypasses' since my arteries were blocked with loneliness and could not provide for an empty heart.

I went to orthopedics because I could not walk by my brother's side or hug my friends since fracturing myself when tripping with envy.

He also found that I was shortsighted—I could not see beyond the shortcomings of my brothers and sisters.

When I complained about deafness, the diagnosis was that I had stopped listening to Jesus' voice talking to me on a daily basis.

For all of that, Jesus gave me a free consultation, thanks to His mercifulness. So, my pledge is to only take the natural remedies He prescribed through His words of truth:

Every morning take a full glass of gratitude.

When getting to work, take one spoonful of peace. Every hour take one pill of patience, one cup of brotherhood, and one glass of humility.

When getting home, take one dose of love.

When getting to bed, take two caplets of clear conscience.

Do not give in to sadness or depression for what you're going through today. God knows how you feel.

God knows exactly and with perfection what is being allowed to happen to you in your life at this precise moment.

God's purpose for you is simply perfect. He wants to show you things you can only understand by living what you're living, and by being in the place you are now.

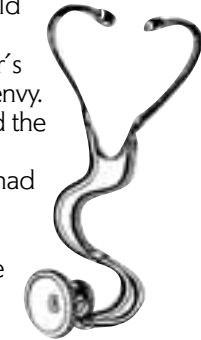
May God give you . . . For every storm, a rainbow;

For every tear, a smile;

For every care, a promise, and a blessing in each trial.

For every problem life sends, a faithful friend to share;

For every sign, a sweet song; and an answer for each prayer.



Submitted by a reader



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Back Porch Break

by Nancy Brummett

Falling Afresh

It's been 60 years since I spent all day every day in a school building. And yet when September rolls around I get that "first day of school" excitement all over again. To me, September feels more like the time for a fresh start than January ever does. I have to rein in my shopping excursions this time of year, however, because I have a real weakness for new pencils and pens, lined notebooks, and everything else stores set out in their back-to-school displays. I'm still enjoying a purple folio I bought one year because...well, because it was purple with a purple legal pad inside. Who could resist?



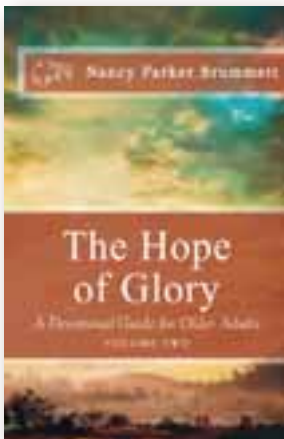
Beyond the back-to-school feeling, however, are all the refreshing signs of change. My Virginia Creeper begins to take on shades of orange and gold. The tips of the leaves on the red maple behind our house hint at the bright ruby brilliance soon to come. And there's always that one day in the fall when the light becomes noticeably different. Rather than the sun beaming down with a harsh glare, a more peaceful, golden light descends upon our world. Such a beautiful and peaceful change.

And don't we need this season to recover from the hectic pace of summer and restore our souls to prepare for the winter to come? Maybe it's because we remember the chilling winds and icy roads winter brings that we savor every golden September day. Autumn days are just too precious and fleeting to spend them holding on to summer or fearing what's to come. Rather they bring an opportunity to take a deep breath or two, clip the last of the roses to bring in the house, and curl up on the back porch with a light blanket and a good book.

We hear a lot about New Year's resolutions in January, but fall is an even better time to reflect on the months of the year behind us and embrace changes that refresh us before we head in to the holiday season. If you find joy in decluttering your office or culling clothes from your closet, fall's the time to do it. If you want to replace the grab-and-go meals of summer with some hearty stews and soups or pumpkin-flavored everything, now's the time. Refresh family menus with some new recipes from those seldom opened cookbooks!

A praise hymn by Daniel Iverson contains the lyric, "Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me." I want to be still long enough this fall season to feel the renewal of the Spirit within me. Then I'll have a chance of falling afresh in to the new season with joy and hope.

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



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Search for the underlined words in the recipe in the word search below!

Copy Cat Chick Fila Chicken Tortilla Soup
recipe from Delish

Ingredients:

- 2 (15oz) cans white beans, divided
- 2 tbsp neutral oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp chipotle chili powder
- 1 (15oz) can fire-roasted diced tomatoes with green chiles
- 1 (15oz) can black beans, drained unrinsed
- 4 cups low sodium chicken broth
- 2 tbsp masa harina
- 4 cups shredded cooked chicken
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- 1/4 cup full-fat sour cream
- 3 tbsp fresh lime juice

Tortilla Strips:

- 4 corn tortillas sliced into strips
- 1 tbsp neutral oil
- Kosher salt
- Fresh cilantro, shredded cheddar, avocado etc for toppings

Instructions:

In a blender or food processor, blend 1 can white beans plus their liquid until smooth. Over medium heat, heat oil in heavy pot. Add onion and cook, stirring, until softened; season with salt and pepper. Add garlic, cumin, paprika, and chili powder and cook, stirring and adding more chili powder if needed, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add tomatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes; season with salt and pepper. Add reserved pureed beans, black beans, broth, and remaining 1 can white beans and their liquid. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened and flavors have melded, about 20 minutes. In a small bowl, mix masa harina and 2 tablespoons water until combined; stir into soup. Add chicken and corn; cook, stirring occasionally, until heated through, about 10 minutes. Stir in sour cream and lime juice; season with salt and pepper, if needed. Preheat oven to 400°. In a small bowl, toss tortilla strips with oil, adding a little more oil if needed, until well coated. Spread on a baking sheet. Bake strips, checking at the 7-minute mark, until crispy, 8 to 10 minutes. Top soup with cilantro, avocado, cheese and tortilla strips.

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R P Q A P Z C R O P O P L Y J M D V G L

Cookies & Cream Mug Cake

Ingredients:

- 4 tbsp flour
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 3 tbsp milk
- 2 tbsp melted butter
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 crushed Oreo

Directions:

1. In a microwave safe mug, mix all ingredients.
2. Microwave on high for 1 minute 10 seconds.
4. Let cool for 1 minute.
5. Add an extra Oreo on top after cooking.



Recipe by Cherry Latte Feelings



Life on Breezy Manor Farm

Donna Jo Copeland, farmeress

250 Years of Wool and Counting

It's 100 degrees outside. I'm sitting in front of a fan surrounded by wool yarns, roving and a big piece of burlap. I am recreating a 250 year old textile, something most of us have never seen.

I've always been a history buff. Growing up with great and great great grandparents, aunts and uncles I listened to their stories, watched their hands as they worked. I absorbed like a thirsty sponge never dreaming of where it would lead.

About 5 years ago reading a book on Kentucky long rifles and hunters I came across Rebecca Bryan Boone, Daniel's wife. She was Scottish, Quaker, spinner, weaver, midwife, healer and sharp shooter. In her spare time she birthed 10 children, raised 8 nieces and nephews. And she never learned to read or write. In the book she was given 2 lines.

I set about researching her. It was the Scot/Quaker/Weaver/Spinner that got me. Kindred spirit.

The home textile industry of the 17th and 18th centuries has fascinated me since I saw my first overshot coverlet. Not the fancy Jacquard ones, but the 4 harness overshot beauties. And I began my weaving adventures about 50 years ago weaving those patterns, often spinning the weft yarns. I wove over a dozen full size and then wandered into miniatures, warping with sewing thread.

With Rebecca's spirit. I'm weaving coverlets again. Spinning the weft yarns, dypots simmering.

My ancestors smile and probably share a dram at my efforts. I have found the weaving easy but the consistent spinning is a chore.

My sheep seem excited at a new, hundreds of years old, use for their wool.

In one of my books I came across bed rugs, made and used as coverlets on the bed. They were quite common in the 16th to 18th centuries, then as homes became warmer, fell out of fashion. The really neat part is they were hooked with handspun wool yarns onto burlap. In true Scottish means as cloth was far too dear to be cut into strips rather than used for patching clothes. Very clever those old Scots.

Searching I found a few examples of bed rugs in museums. And I was hooked!

As to size they were about 45x65, just enough to lay on the bed. In those days people didn't lay flat to sleep, sort of like sleeping in a lounge chair.

So one fine day I set about designing my bed rug. Decided to give it a fall feeling. All those colors, and yes had to include sheep and a crow. Had to be handspun yarns, naturally dyed. A deep dive into my cedar chest stash of yarns began! And at the end it didn't make a dent in the stash. Maybe another adventure awaits.

I budgeted about 6 months of time to hook but surprised myself with how quickly it went. OK I was anxious. I hooked with a big oval quilting frame to hold the piece, a bit at a time. It was heavy. And I hooked the rug in a month! Still spinning the yarn to bind it with.

The bed rug was quite a challenge but I'm so glad I did it. My ancestors and Rebecca's spirit are happy I think. The rug will probably never go on my bed but will hang on the plaster walls in my 1890 farmhouse. An honor to my lineage and my sheep.

I do so wish people today would not use acrylic and polyester, go back to healthier natural fibers. They do require a bit of care but so worth the effort. Better for the planet.

Well this Maven of the old ways needs to get back to work. Wool doesn't spin itself here.

In peace and kindness.

FALL IS FOR APPLE CRISP

From my Great Grandmother's Recipe File

Butter a 9x9 dish, cut up about 8 apples, peel if you want. Mix with 2 cups brown sugar, and some cinnamon. Add 1 stick of shredded butter, a big handful of quick cooking oats and some walnuts. If it seems stiff add 1/4 cup water. Pour into dish, bake at 350 for about an hour.

Serve warm with cream. (I used whipped cream.)

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.



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Wit and Wisdom One Truly Reliable Source by Juleann Grand



My newest bird feeder is a high-tech model with a camera and two-way communication system. When a feathered friend lands on the feeding tray, the camera snaps a picture; if the bird lingers, a video is created, complete with chirping, tweeting and fluttering of wings.

If a squirrel or chipmunk stops to pillage the sunflower seeds, I can use the cell phone app to either activate the scare alarm or verbally tell the creature to vamoose. So far, I have only used the feature to talk to my husband when he is outside filling the feeder.

The system also relies on A.I. (artificial intelligence) to identify bird species. The camera captures a small portion of a bird, depending upon where the bird is positioned. It may be the tail, breast, wing or head. Most times the identification is correct, but now and then it's wrong. The funniest misidentification it has made to date was the day I filled the feeder and the camera snapped a picture of my palm. A.I. identified me as an "Eurasian coot"!

Now, an Eurasian coot is a noisy water bird, native to Australia. It has black feathers, a white bill and a white forehead that makes it look bald. Oh, and it has green legs and blueish webbed feet. A quick look in the mirror reassures me that I look nothing like a coot!

Geoffrey Hinton, often called the "Godfather of AI," resigned from his position at Google to freely voice his concerns about the potential dangers of artificial intelligence. Chief among his concerns was the spread of misinformation—fake photos, videos and text generated by AI, that make it difficult to distinguish truth from fiction.

A.I. is only as reliable as the "handlers" who input information. It can be inaccurate, distorted and misleading. You can't trust—or believe—everything you read online. In this day of questionable technology, there remains one source I turn to time and again for consistent and trustworthy information, inspiration, encouragement, help and hope: God's Word – the one I can hold in my hands. "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." (Isaiah 40:8 NIV)

Judyann Grant and her husband Don live across from Lake Ontario in northern New York State. With the help of their children and grandchildren the couple have spent this year celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary with special gatherings and get-aways. For more from this author, her newest book, *Reflections: Walking in the Light of God's Word*, contains one year of daily devotions and is available by contacting her at: witandwisdomwriters@gmail.com



COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Mom's Hot Dish

Submitted by Bobbie Gulick, Las Cruces, NM

Macaroni, cooked until done

ADD:

chopped ripe olives

chopped onions

chopped tomatoes

tater tots

1 large can of mushroom or cheese soup

Mix all ingredients together and bake in oven at 350° until hot.

Sprinkle cheese on top and serve.



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From Sketch to Stitch: How the Ashli Quilt Came to Life

By Kathryn LeBlanc

People often ask where quilt ideas come from. Sometimes it's a vintage quilt, a beautiful fabric collection, or a traditional block. Other times, it's something far less expected.

In this case...an acrylic lipstick organizer.

One morning, my friend Ashli from Quilt2EndALZ.org sent me a photo and asked, "How would you turn this lipstick case into a quilt block?"

My response? "Challenge accepted."

I started studying the organizer, focusing on its angles and repeating shapes rather than its purpose. Before long,



I was sketching ideas in EQ8 (Electric Quilt 8), where those clear acrylic compartments evolved into rows of colored squares set on point, and connected by sashing & corner stones, to create a striking lattice design.

One idea led to another, and before I knew it, an entirely new quilt had emerged.

With Ashli's blessing—and because she inspired the challenge—it was only fitting to name the finished pattern Ashli.

One of the things I love most about quilt design is that inspiration can come from almost anywhere: a tile floor, a garden gate, the shadow cast by a staircase—or, in this case, a lipstick organizer. As quilt designers, we learn to look beyond what an object is and instead see the shapes, lines, and patterns hidden within it.

The next time something catches your eye, take a second look. You never know—it just might become your next creative project.

The photos below show the journey from: the original lipstick organizer, to the digital EQ8 design, to the finished Ashli quilt. The link to the printed quilt pattern is here: <https://authorkathrynmykel.com/store/ashli-printed-pattern/>



Kathryn LeBlanc (also known as best-selling author, Kathryn Mykel) is a creative force in the quilting world. A talented pattern designer and storyteller, she blends her passion for textiles with her love of mystery and heartwarming tales. Through both her sewing patterns and fiction novels, Kathryn inspires quilters and readers alike to embrace creativity, community, and connection. www.quilt-sandfiction.com www.facebook.com/DragonflysQuiltingDesignStudio/ www.instagram.com/dragonflysquiltingdesignstudio/ Newsletter: <https://authorkathrynmykel.myflodesk.com/magazinequilters>



GIRLFRIEND WISDOM

just
IMAGINE
live simply DREAM give
BIG LOVE
be GRATEFUL laugh LOTS

Just Imagine if we Lived Simply, had Big Dreams, shared our Love, was Grateful for everything, and Laughed alot ~

How would we experience our world today?

This question is worth some time and contemplation. The definition of contemplation is inspiring – concentration on spiritual things as a form of private devotion – an act of considering with attention – the act of regarding steadily.

Contemplation about anything is pretty rare today. When was the last time you spent a considerable amount of time thinking about anything? We live in a fast pace world and we often want tasks or decisions to be resolved even faster.

GIRLFRIEND WISDOM

Find a comfy place and simply "contemplate" on one thing of your choice. It might be a challenge – be patient with yourself – Give yourself some Grace!

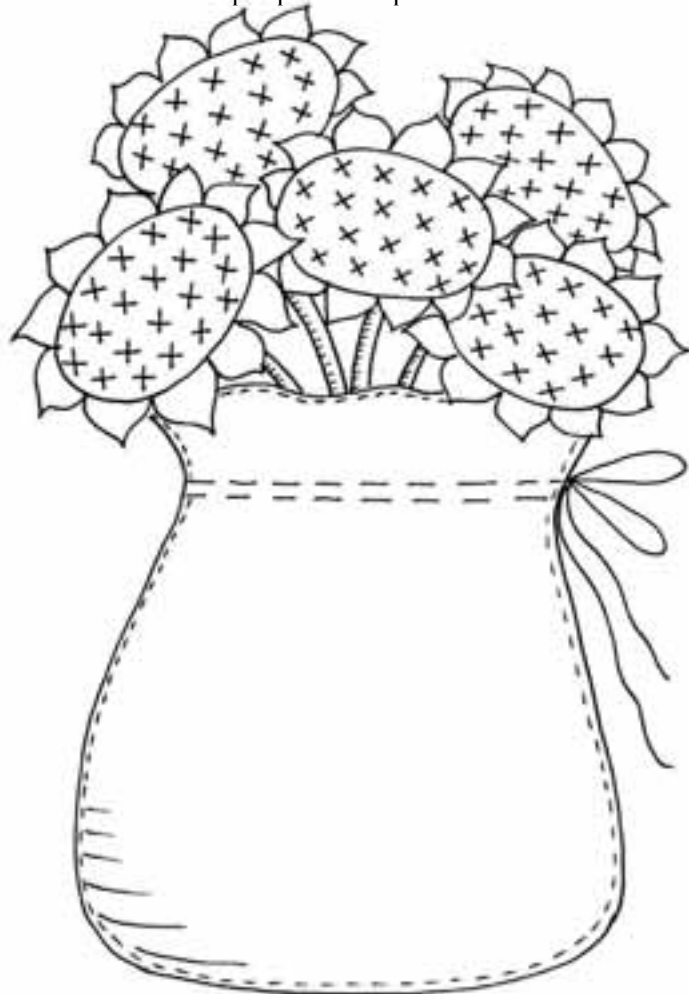
Joy & Blessings,

Jody

Girlfriend Wisdom is written and illustrated by Jody Houghton®.
Color files of this writing and artwork are available: www.JodyHoughtonDesigns.etsy.com

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Courtesy of Terri Gurney of Pumpkin Seed Primitives in Benton, Maine
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Trick or Treat

Halloween Word Scramble

Unscramble the words. Key is below.

1. _____ ohorhroro shock or fright

2. _____ goebynma fictional scary person, used to frighten children who misbehave

3. _____ ctirk joke or other act of deception

4. _____ tauendh place frequented by ghosts

5. _____ adenlc wax object with a wick in the middle

6. _____ sthgo haunts a house

7. _____ natelnr type of lamp

8. _____ nbolig small, ugly, mischevious creature that caused trouble

9. _____ tsomntoeb large upright stone placed at the head of a grave

10. _____ olbdo red liquid running through veins and arteries

11. _____ tkesonel person's inner frame of bones

12. _____ etsfiavl celebration or special event

13. _____ etermecy where dead people are buried

14. _____ paritipaon transparent, ghostly figure

15. _____ arlokcw a male witch

16. _____ migtenarh scary, bad dream

17. _____ raithwccft magic practised by witches

18. _____ atrte candy collected on halloween

19. _____ npkra trick or practical joke

20. _____ kbrosctiom used by witches to fly

1. horror 2. bogeyman 3. trick 4. haunted 5. candle 6. ghost 7. lantern 8. goblin 9. tombstone

10. Blood 11. skeleton 12. festival 13. cemetery 14. apparition 15. warlock 16. nightmare

17. witchcraft 18. treat 19. prank 20. broomstick

A Nice Remembrance Twenty Years Later

by Kerri Habben Bosman

As I was contemplating ideas for this autumn article, two things happened. First, I dreamt of my grandmother, who passed away twenty years ago on September 6th. Even though I feel her with me every day, I almost never dream of her. Second, I went to the doctor for my annual wellness check. I came away from both these events with gratitude and a renewed awareness of all my grandmother gave me.

In my recent dream my grandmother was as she was towards the very end of her 99 years. While she passed away at the hospital, in this manifestation she was resting in her bed at the assisted living facility. We were holding hands, gazing steadily at one another. Even as I realized she was dying, I also had that surreal feeling when you know you are in a dream. I made a semiconscious decision to not awaken, so that I could fully feel her essence longer.

I was alone with my grandmother when she died in 2006. Outside of gradual aging in her 90s, she was fortunate to enjoy good health (save for elevated blood pressure and high cholesterol) until 99 ½. Then she developed aplastic anemia, wherein her white blood cells and platelets stopped working. It was, at least, a peaceful way for her to leave this world behind. I sang hymns to her at the last. She stopped breathing during Amazing Grace, as I sang the line, “and grace shall lead me home.” Even now if I unexpectedly hear that hymn, tears overtake my eyes.

When I was nine months old, I started calling my grandmother, “Huba.” I said it with a short “u” sound. She embraced my nickname for her, and throughout the years she became “Huba” to my friends and even adults who came into her life. Huba made the best mashed potatoes in the world. “I beat the hell out of them,” she used to say as a genuinely sweet smile emerged. Every time I mash potatoes, I hear her voice.

She crocheted from the time she was eight years old, making beautiful and warm things that turn houses into homes. Over her 91 years of needlework, she gave much of what she made away to family, friends, and to those in need. One of her favorite phrases as she grew older and older was, “it will be a nice remembrance.” I was nine when she taught me how to crochet. Therefore, Huba is in everything that I make. She taught me how to give with an open heart, so I, too, give away much of my crocheting. My work is her living legacy.

Huba cared for her husband and her sister through long illnesses when they were both in wheelchairs, and she never lost her joyful and playful spirit. Somehow she always had more to give.

Which brings me to my doctor’s visit. Huba does indeed have more to give, even after two decades. All of the tests they did were normal, save for my cholesterol level. I learned that I have her high blood pressure. Though I suppose I should be a responsible adult and claim it as my own. No medication at this point, but a check-up in six months.

After a few internet searches, I see many breakfasts of oatmeal and refreshing drinks of green tea in my future. As well as more walks than I usually enjoy around the neighborhood. Thankfully, I read that nearly everything I like to eat, including potatoes, is good for monitoring cholesterol. One article said to add fiber to my day, which surely must mean that all my yarn and crocheting helps too.

A grandmother’s love and a little amazing grace won’t hurt either.

Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer living in Cape Carteret, NC. Her email is 913jeeves@gmail.com.

COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Macaroni Corn Casserole

Submitted by Dorothy Burkhardt, Brush, CO

1 can cream style corn

1 can whole kernel corn, with juice

1 stick margarine

1 cup American cheese, cubed

1/4 cup milk

1 cup raw macaroni

Melt margarine. Add rest of ingredients to margarine. Put in casserole dish and bake at 350° for 1 hour. Stir once while baking. Let set 10 minutes before serving.

COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Hungry Jack Casserole

From the kitchen of Karen Zollars, Denver, CO

1 package (10) butter biscuits

1 lb. hamburger

1/4-1/2 cup barbecue sauce

garlic salt

1 onion, chopped

1 green pepper, chopped

1 cup cheddar cheese, grated

Press biscuits into a 9 x 9” teflon pan. Turn up on sides. Brown hamburger and onion together then stir in the green pepper, barbecue sauce and garlic salt. Pour mixture onto biscuits and top with cheese. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes.

There are only two seasons:
Autumn - & waiting for Autumn.

 In the village store someone says, "I heard the geese go over," & there is a moment of silence. Why this is so moving, I do not know. But all of us feel it.  Gladys Taber

 Whooo went the wind around me, shhh went the leaves. And the church clock rang the hour. With **LOVE** from the Heart of the Home & me... Susan Branch



Labors of Love Last Forever

by Barbara Kalkis

If the Year gave a party, I think September would stroll into the room with quiet assurance and accompanied by the muffled drum beat of a military marching band. There's an aura about the month that screams "schedules," "routines," "order," "discipline," "school is in session" and, worst of all, "summer is over"—although summer doesn't even end until the third week of the month!

What makes September feel like Summer is over? I think it's because kids are back in school's structured days, and the autumn sports, band practices, and drama club rehearsals are in full swing. At home, chrysanthemums and zinnias still blaze in their vibrant colors; fields fade to yellows and creamy whites. Trees begin their slow turn to autumn with red, orange, gold and yellow outlining the veins of once vibrant green leaves.



Mostly, I think September stands out because of Labor Day. In the parade of months January hosts the new year. Hooray! Out with old! In with the New! February keeps us in suspense about when winter will end based on the whims of a groundhog. March boasts a Lion and a Lamb to excuse its alternating onion snows and breezy spring days. April welcomes fools. May begins honoring International Workers, Moms, and those lost in war. Who can compete with that?

June formally welcomes Summer, regardless of not having a groundhog or other prescient animal. And what's not to like about all the graduations and weddings? July is Independence Day and just plain fun with 31 days of summer. August languidly meanders into the year's party with it dog-days of heat and the listlessness of doing nothing but lazily dreaming in a hammock, or dreaming of owning a hammock. Barely waking from the wonderful dreams that Summer inspires, September arrives to wake us up to the reality of work.

Unlike May's focus on people who work, September focuses on the jobs that workers do. Labor Day is about all those occupations that require physical effort. Is there any word that speaks to intense physical effort, shoulder-to-the-grindstone, head-down concentration on getting a job done? I don't think so.

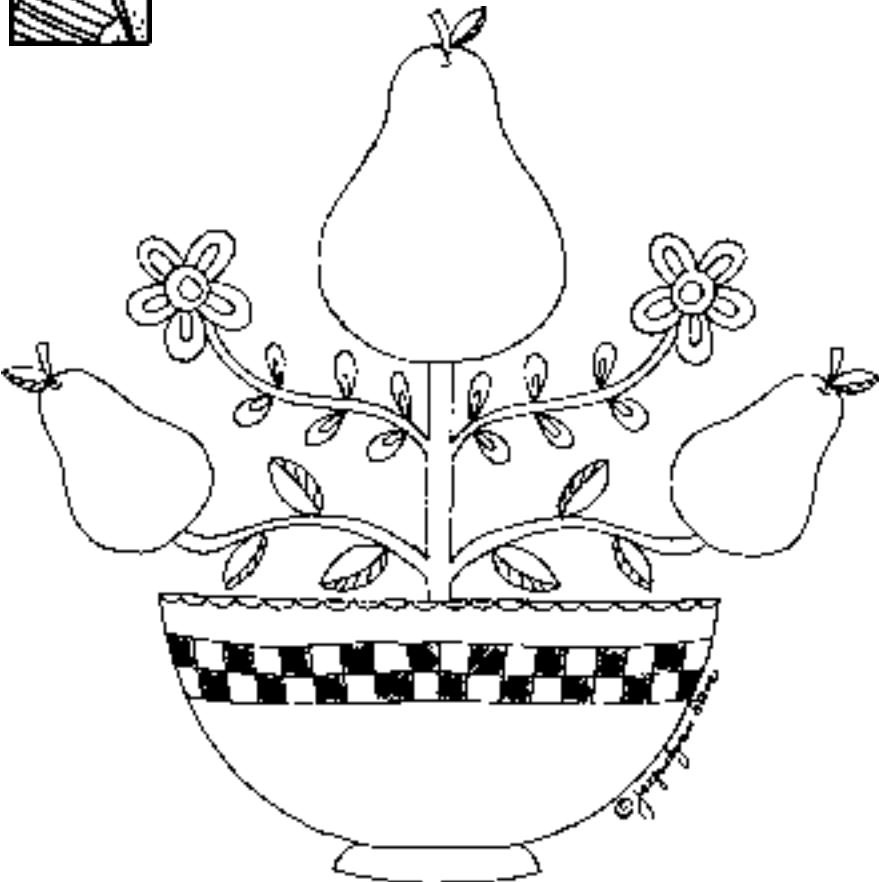
But every cloud has at least one silver lining, and September has many. There's honor in labor. Sure, there's honor in work, but work isn't the same as labor. Work is something we all do, like homework, housework, field work, earning-a-living work. Labor requires the diligence of doing a difficult job masterfully well, concentrating with a needle-eyed focus. Labor is about the pride we feel when we've completed a chore perfectly or close to perfect.

The crafting projects we undertake pale next to the labor of building a skyscraper, farming crops that will feed many, manufacturing electronic devices that drive technology, or working in a factory. What binds us are the qualities required for any job well done: energy, determination, and a deep-down love of doing something really well for ourselves and others. However, you labor—for work or for love or both—happy Labor Day! Join the party, September!

©Barbara Kalkis, 2024. Barbara is a writer, teacher and high-tech consultant. She views these jobs as fun work, while cooking and house chores are labor. Her poetry book is Little Ditties for Every Day: A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm.



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A Cup of Tea with Lydia

by Lydia E. Harris

Any Day Is Grandparents Day!

Fall usually means back to school, back to work, and back to scheduled routines. It's also back to Grandparents Day—which is celebrated on the second Sunday of September each year. This year it falls on September 13. But my husband and I don't need an official holiday to celebrate with our grandkids. We enjoy time with them as often as we can.

When our grandkids arrive at our home, I often ask them, "What day is it today?" Their usual reply is, "Funday!" Any day with them is fun for all of us.

Recently, when they arrived, they answered, "Workday!" That's because Anna, 12, and Owen, 16, along with their mom, had offered to help us with house-cleaning and yardwork.

We can still have fun," I said, as I began to sing Whistle while you work.

Work they did—and with a good attitude! After they vacuumed and washed the floors, cleaned the bathrooms and dusted furniture, our home almost shone "like the top of the Chrysler building," as Miss Hannigan says in Annie. The yard looked better, too.

Of course, it wasn't all work. We took time for tea and treats, enjoying the sunshine on our deck while sipping their favorite peach herbal tea.

"These cookies taste good," Anna said when she took a bite of the chocolate chip cookies I'd baked the previous day.

I also served oatmeal cake, gluten-free chips and fresh strawberries, which they love eating dipped into sour cream and brown sugar. They think it almost tastes like dipping them into caramel sauce.

Their help that day was a win-win situation. They were planning to attend an out-of-state church camp in a month so I wrote out a check to help cover some of the cost.

"That's a lot of money," Anna said when they started to leave.

"Thanks for helping us," I said and smiled. "Do you know what else you were doing?" They waited for my reply. "You were laying up treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:20).

They drove away smiling and I smiled as well when I stepped inside our clean home and I knew God was smiling, too.

Any day is Grandparents Day. And any occasion can turn into a tea party with fun memories that linger and bless others and ourselves.

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.

From Lydia's Cookbook—In the Kitchen with Grandma: Popcorn Cake

(Fun to make with grandkids)

- GATHER WITH GRANDMA
- 3 1/2 quarts (14 cups) popped popcorn
 - 1/2 cup butter (one stick), melted
 - 1 10-oz package miniature marshmallows
 - 20 unwrapped caramels, cut in half
 - 2 cups favorite small candies, such as candy corn, M&M'S®, gumdrops, or a mixture of candy.
 - 1 cup lightly salted or honey roasted peanuts or mixed nuts (optional)



MAKE WITH GRANDMA

Lightly grease an angel food cake pan with butter or nonstick cooking spray. Measure the popcorn into a large container that holds at least five quarts. Mix in nuts and candy, except the chocolate candy. Measure the chocolate candy into a separate bowl to add later, otherwise the chocolate will melt and turn the cake brown. In a large saucepan or microwave-safe bowl, melt the butter and caramels together until the caramels are soft, stirring with a wooden spoon. Add the marshmallows and melt them completely. When melted, pour the marshmallow mixture over the popcorn mixture. Mix the cake with a wooden spoon. After the mixture cools slightly, stir in M&M'S or other chocolate candy. Press the popcorn mixture into the cake pan using wax paper or fingers greased with butter. Press down until the cake is compact. Refrigerate the cake for an hour or until firm. Remove the cake from the pan and place it on a plate. Serve at room temperature. Slice with a serrated knife. To keep the cake fresh, wrap it tightly with plastic wrap or foil or place it in an airtight container. This cake is best eaten in a few days. Wrap and refrigerate the uneaten cake to prevent it from becoming sticky.

SERVES 12 TO 16

Tip: For popcorn—use plain popcorn, kettle corn or lightly salted and buttered popcorn. You can buy it already popped if you prefer. (A package of 5.5 ounces of popped popcorn will give you 14 cups.) See cookbook for variations.

Happy fall, y'all!

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Stories of a Farm Wife

by Tammy Page

Autumn—My Favorite Season



Do you remember when we layed at the end of our twin beds, on top of the covers with a fan blowing in our faces? I was 6 in 1966 and I remember the August and September temps of the day still reached well over 90 and did not cool down by bedtime. My sister and I would put or baby doll pj's on and lay side by side in our twin beds. We would put our pillows at the end of the beds in hopes the air coming in through the screens would be cooler than the air in our room.

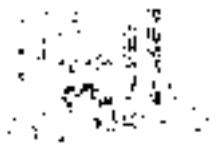
We started out talking into the fan making the rumbling sound it makes when you talk near the blades. Our fan had a protective front and back and was made of metal back then. No doubt it also had a wobble and it made a gosh awful rattling noise. The noise would lull us to sleep. But, of course, we had to sing some songs and giggle for a while before mom would come to the door for the umpteenth time to remind us it was time to go to sleep. We would toss and turn and get up a hundred times to re-arrange our pillows just right so that our faces could lay on them at the right height and still it was way too hot and muggy to go right to sleep. By this time, mom would come back into our room and threaten to make us go back to the head of our beds if we didn't quiet down and go to sleep.

In extreme temperatures, our parents just might let us sleep in their room with the window air conditioner, after we promised to go right to sleep. Sometimes on a rare occasion, we were allowed to sleep in the living room where we had a new Westinghouse window air conditioner that cooled the entire living and dining room. We thought we were rich!

Most of our friends were in the same boat, only having a fan or small window air conditioner. It was rare to visit home with central air back then. If one of our friends had central air conditioning, we thought they were millionaires.

By the time morning came around and we had slept in our hot rooms, our hair would be damp and looked like Bozo the Clown. Those days my mom had to put my hair up in a ponytail for school. Schools were hot back then too, but thank goodness my school, #82, had 2 sets of wall to wall windows in each classroom that could be opened. Sometimes, if were lucky, only sometimes, our teacher would bring a fan in from home.

This Indiana heat would continue well into October when some other parts of the country were already getting snow. Needless to say, when the cooler temps came, most of us were thrilled. I was especially happy when bedtime was not so miserable. So, I have declared autumn my favorite season where you can leave the windows open, feel a cool breeze and go back to sleeping at the head of your bed.



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October 2nd & 3rd • Santa Fe, NM

The art of quilting will be on colorful display at Quilt Fiesta Santa Fe on Friday and Saturday, October 2 & 3, 2026. Presented by the Northern New Mexico Quilt Guild, this biennial show features over 150 quilts that span the range of Traditional piecing and quilting techniques to Modern and Art quilting.

A short walk from the Plaza in beautiful downtown Santa Fe, Quilt Fiesta transforms the ballroom of the Community Convention Center into a hub for quilting enthusiasts. In addition to the exhibit, attendees will have multiple opportunities to shop for themselves or get their Holiday gifting done early. Over 15 vendors with fabric, tools, and assorted products will be in attendance, and the guild's expansive gift shop of handmade items surely has something for everyone on your list.

New to the show this year is a quilt appraiser. Whether you're interested in learning more about the history of your vintage quilt or you want to insure a beloved quilt for peace of mind, AQS Certified Quilt Appraiser Cindy Kurey will meet with you by appointment at Quilt Fiesta.

Raffle tickets for the quilt "It's Cherry Blossom Time" will be available at the show, with the drawing at 3 pm on October 3rd. Made by multiple guild members over many hours, the raffle quilt is 84" by 96" and features a hand stitched tree and appliqued flowers on a navy background. Tickets are \$2 each or 6 for \$10.

Finally, Quilt Fiesta 2026 will include an America 250th Commemoration Panel Event. Quilts made with the specially printed Northcott Fabrics panels, both the Quilts of Valor version and "250 Years" version, will be presented together in their own exhibit.

Quilt Fiesta hours are 9 am to 5 pm Friday and Saturday, October 2 & 3, at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center: 201 W. Marcy St., Santa Fe, NM. Admission is \$10, cash and card accepted. For more details about participating in Quilt Fiesta, having a quilt appraised, and vendor information, please visit: <https://nnmqg.org/quilt-fiesta.html>



By the Yard®

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QUILTING AND BUYING FABRIC ARE ACTUALLY
TWO DISTINCT HOBBIES... AND I'M VERY
DEDICATED TO *BOTH!*



COUNTRY REGISTER RECIPE EXCHANGE

Ginger Snap Cookies

Submitted by June Stephens, Trinidad, CO



CREAM TOGETHER the first 4 ingredients:

1 cup sugar

1 egg

2 3/4 cups flour

1 teaspoon ginger

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon tartar

3/4 cup bacon grease drippings

1/4 cup molasses

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons soda

1/2 teaspoon clove

Shape into walnut-sized balls. Roll in sugar then place on an **UNGREASED** cookie sheet. Bake one sheet at a time on oven's bottom rack for 7 minutes, take out of oven and sprinkle more sugar. Return to oven and bake 3-4 minutes longer. Test one cookie and if done, remove the cookies from the oven.

Makes 2 1/2 dozen.