The Virginia Register

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The Virginia Register™

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Just A Note...

This is a wonderful time of year to enjoy many traditions, shop for special gifts and decorating needs, and so much more that the holiday season brings – using our publication as your guide. We have included recipes that you may want to add to your festivities. Have fun exploring the special events that are summarized in our Shows & Events Listing!


David, Amy, Rachel & Grace

Please be sure to visit our Facebook page and like it. We post lots of updates about shops and events, plus we welcome reader comments and interaction. On our website, you can find links to our advertisers' web sites, view the current shows and events listing, read the paper online and more.

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Would your group or guild like to receive FREE COPIES of each issue? Just send an email to amy@theregisterweb.com. Let us know how many copies (25 minimum) and a street mailing address.

Nine of our family just gathered for a Fall beach escape and we had a blast. We definitely passed along our love of travel to Rachel and Grace. Every time I turn around, they are planning a trip to somewhere or to go see someone. November and December will be busy months for our family, and I know for our readers probably too. I like to make sure to remember to enjoy these upcoming family gatherings, special events and so much more that November and December bring.

Our Jan./Feb. issue will be out shortly after the first of the year. That issue has an annual theme of Quilting, Needlearts, Fiber Arts and Sewing! So be sure to plan a visit to your favorite shop to pick up your copy!

Have fun shopping this Holiday season. Don't forget to use our guide as your road map. We wish you and your family Happy Holidays!

Amy & David

Shows and Events

November

1-Dec 22.....The Stories That Made Virginia Exhibit at Virginia Quilt Museum in Dayton (pg. 5)
1-Dec 31.....Bernina Wish Book Specials at Cottonwood in Charlottesville (pg. 6)
5-7 .....Christmas Open House at Crafty Ladies & Friends in Covington (pg. 7)
6-7 .....14th Anniversary Celebration at Sew Classic Fabrics in Harrisonburg (pg. 5)
18-21 .....34th Anniversary Sale at Quilted Expressions in Lynchburg (pg. 9)
28.....Small Business Saturday & 20th Anniversary Sale at Rose Patch Creations in Crewe (pg. 9)

December

4-5 .....9th Annual Good News Bazaar by Good News Church in Covington (pg. 7)
10-12 .....Winter Storewide Sale at Lib's Place in Rice (pg. 9)
18-21 .....Year End Sale at Cottonwood in Charlottesville (pg. 6)
19.....Countdown to Christmas Open House at Market Bazaar in Midlothian (pg. 10)

January 2027

8-9 .....Quilting & Fiber Art Marketplace at Dennis A. Wicker Civic Center in Sanford, NC (pg. 11)
14-18 ... Snow Much Crafting at Comfort Inn Martinsburg-Aikens Center in Martinsburg, WV (pg. 4)

February 2027

4-7 .....Cozy Penguin Craft Retreat at Wyndham Garden in York, PA (pg. 4)



Husband not a Shopper?
Mark your favorite shops in an extra copy of *The Virginia Register*! Circle items in the ads you would like. Send him out with the paper and our advertisers will help him find what you want under the tree!



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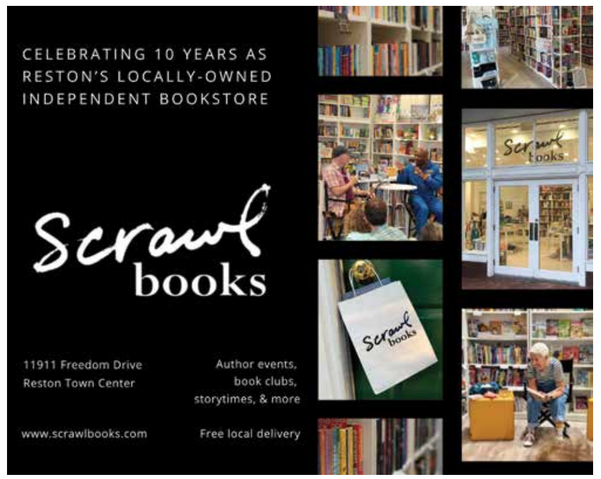














Our Writer's Favorite Holiday Recipes

Can be found throughout this edition!
We thank them and hope you enjoy trying the recipes.

Broccoli Salad

submitted by Juleann Lattimer

Broccoli Florets (fresh)
1 head cauliflower florets
1/2 red onion, sliced
Grape tomatoes, whole
1 can black olives, sliced

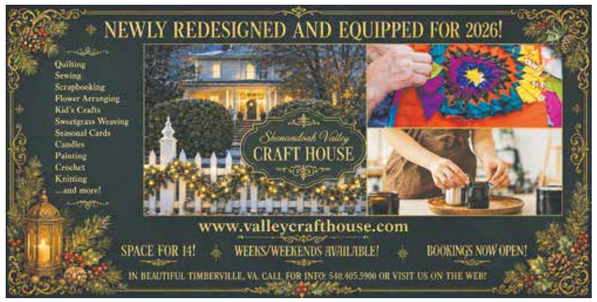
Dressing:
2/3 cup oil
1/4 cup white vinegar
1 packet Hidden Valley Ranch dressing mix

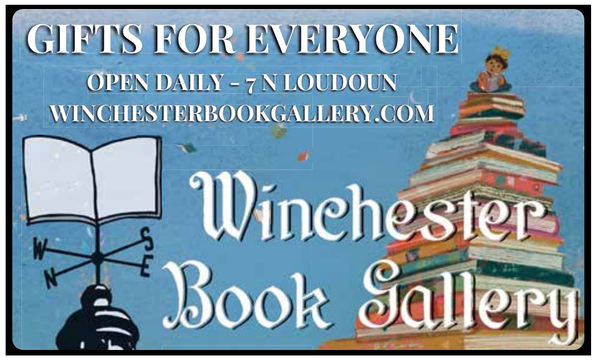
Directions:
Put dressing ingredients in shaker. Shake well. Pour over vegetables; chill at least 2 hours before serving.

Berryville, Edinburg, Meadowview, Strasburg, Timberville, Winchester plus Martinsburg - WV and York - PA















Easy Fancy Pink Fruit Salad

submitted by Judy Sharer, historical romance writer

- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 12-ounce container whipped topping
- 1 15-20-ounce can cherry pie filling
- 1 15-ounce can crushed pineapple, well drained
- 1 15-ounce can mandarin oranges, well drained
- **Optional:** 1/2 Cup chopped walnuts, 1/2 Cup Shredded Coconut

Directions:

Stir together the condensed milk and whipped topping. Fold in the cherry pie filling and then the pineapple and oranges. Add optional items if wanted. Refrigerate at least 4 hours prior to serving.

Makes 12 – 14 servings

The Sewing Machines Are Out!!

by Wayne M. Bosman

The sewing machines are out! This is something that happens fitfully here. Kerri is the one who sews at our house, so when they appear, something important is afoot.

We have a lot of sewing machines. Most of them are mine, but those rarely get used. After 49 years as a mechanic I retired- mostly. It would have been really hard after a lifetime of fixing things to just stop cold turkey.

Sewing machines are relatively light compared to cars, and I can keep a whole bunch of them around without the neighbors complaining. Or more importantly perhaps without Kerri complaining. (I should put in a disclaimer here-Kerri is absolutely accommodating to my many and varied projects. She is not the complaining type. Our neighbors are nice too.)

At any rate, I found that I have an affinity for sewing machines, especially ones about my age. I seem to be a magnet for broken sewing machines that need a little TLC. I buy them, fix them and then give them away to someone who will

continued on next page

Dayton, Harrisonburg







So there is an excitement in the house, and some anticipation as this year's Christmas gifts take shape. Kerri starts this process shortly after Christmas every year, but there is inevitably an acceleration as zero hour approaches.

There are new additions to the list of recipients and last minute inspirations as the children evolve. It is our sadness that Mom is no longer on the list. She passed last year at 104. She didn't need anything before and she definitely doesn't need anything now, at least nothing that can be made on a sewing machine.

We won't be eating at the kitchen table for a few days. Three sewing machines and tools have taken over.

Wayne M. Bosman is a retired auto mechanic living in Cape Carteret, NC.



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DREAMS DO COME TRUE

by Janet Young



Dashing through the snow, in a one-horse open sleigh, those are the words to a well-known Christmas song - Jingle Bells, written in 1857 by James Lord Piedmont. This song was not intended to be a Christmas song. In fact, it was first sung in a Thanksgiving church service. Piedmont wanted it to be a lively tune that celebrated sleigh racing. Before long, it soon appeared as a Christmas song even though it never mentioned Santa, reindeer, snowmen, or any other secular symbols of the holiday. So, why did I start this article referencing Jingle Bells? Let's begin.

When my mother was growing up, it had been her life-long dream to go on a one-horse open-sleigh ride. This was a secret I never knew about until one day, she happened to mention how she wished she would have had the chance go on that ride. By now she was in her eighties, and her chances of ever having that wish come true was slowly diminishing.

That is, until one November day I happened upon a local newspaper that talked about a local fire station hosting a Christmas Open House replete with Santa, crafts, entertainment, and last but not least one-horse open sleigh rides.

My immediate thought was how would they be able to do this. The event was to be in early December. However, in Central Pennsylvania the chances of having snow, was so unpredictable, especially since there was no weather forecast predicting snow.

As the date approached, excitement was cautiously building because I still did not know how they were going to do this. We entered the fire station, and were amazed by all the festivities. We listened to the various chorale groups. And before long the big moment arrived.

It was a cold winter night, so my husband stayed inside with my mother while I went outside to wait in line. Before long, it was our turn to get in the sleigh. We bundled up in a cozy warm blanket and off we went around the grounds of the fire station.

How did we do this when there was no snow on the ground? Well, due to the ingenuity of a kind soul, we were transported in the sleigh that had wheels placed on a platform that the sleigh could safely and comfortably rest upon. And yes, it was driven by two horses.

While this may not seem like such an idyllic sleigh ride, let me tell you, in the darkness of the night, you would have never known you were not flying over the hills of snow. There was magic in the air that night. And, all because my 85-year-old mother had finally realized her childhood dream. With a smile on her face, and my heart filled with love, I knew that this would be a night she would forever cherish.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

© Janet Young is a Certified Tea and Etiquette Consultant, Co-Founder of Mid-Atlantic Tea

Building Harmony

by Jeff Cappis

Christmas: The Big Show

There is nothing like children at Christmas is there? Most of us were kids once so we recognize the wonder in their eyes.

Last Christmas they decided to make a video for the children's grandparents and it was a success. They sang "Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer" as they danced around each other and did a little skit. At the very end Randy sang the high note for the big finish. Cute as heck.

Ned wondered why stop there. So, he taught. them "Jingle Bells." Again, they danced around each other and Randy hit the last high note. They were naturals, and when it comes to his children, Ned is a proud father.

One day he met his neighbor Renee on the road and they both stopped to have a friendly chat. Renee asked Ned about his children. Ned beamed and talked about how talented they are. He even showed Renee the video of them singing on his cel phone.

Renee thought they were cute as the dickens. "You know," he said to Ned, "There are a few of us on our road who have nothing to do this Christmas Eve. I was going to have them over for some Christmas cheer. Do you think the kids could do their songs?"

"Sure," Ned smiled. That would be fun." And so, it began. Ned's children were sort of "booked" for Christmas Eve. Ned even taught them to sing "Silent night" in case everyone liked hearing the first two. They were great. Ned even recorded them and put the videos up on his internet page.

A few neighbors asked to bring their own children so Renee got the idea they could hand out presents to the kids as well. Better yet- he could be Santa Clause! (It's important to note that Renee is a six-foot-three, sturdily built man and an ex-French air force pilot with blue eyes and an accent).

Renee's small get together of about 6 people grew to a Christmas party of 40 people and he was beginning to wonder if they would fit in his house. When another 5 people asked to come, he booked the old fire hall down the road. Now this was becoming a community party and everyone wanted to see these cute kids perform their Christmas songs.

Ned was thrilled. The kids made a game of it and practiced singing their three songs over and over. They got it down perfectly. Ned even made some paper cut out Christmas trees to hang as a backdrop. Wendy made them some simple costumes. Mandy wanted to be a duck; Sandy was a kitty; Candy was an elf; and Randy wanted to be a dinosaur. (Wendy actually made him a puppy costume, but she told him it was a dinosaur. He couldn't tell the difference).

Renee decided to build a small stage so everyone could see the kids. Then he hung a couple of sheets for curtains. One of the neighbors, Stanley, offered to do a little juggling as a warm up act. Everything was set.

On Christmas Eve at precisely 6:00, the doors opened and people began coming in. The fire hall was warm and comfortable. Earlier Renee had laid out a table with coffee, cookies and juices. At this moment though, he was dressed as Santa sitting on a chair in the corner with a small pile of presents. Waiting for the first child.

Renee got his first child. They put little Jimmy on his right knee. "What's your name?." Jimmy smiled then peed on his leg. Renee gave him a present and handed him back to his mother.

Behind the sheets Ned was putting up the paper cut out Christmas trees while Wendy put the costumes on the kids. They were excited. Randy stomped around like a dinosaur. Stanley had gathered up his rubber juggling balls and was waiting off stage.

After Renee tried drying his pant leg, he sat back down and motioned for the next child. Little Emily. She was two. "Ho, ho, ho. What would you like for Christmas little Emily?" Emily looked up at him with her big blue eyes and threw up in his beard.

Seeing this from across the room, I commented to my wife Cathy that Renee didn't look like he was having a good time. Behind the curtain Ned and company were almost set. Stanley had a drink while he waited. By now we were all into the Christmas cheer.

Again, Renee sat down (without his beard) and motioned for the next child. His name was Timmy. Timmy was four. Timmy had a cold. They put him down on Renee's left knee. "I see you've been a good boy this year Timmy," he said as he handed Timmy a present. Timmy sneezed in Renee's unbearded face. Renee looked at his assistant. "Jeez! How many more kids have we got?"

It was finally show time. The lights went low throughout the community hall except for the small stage with the sheet curtains. Renee stood in front of the stage (without his pants and beard) and introduced Stan the juggling man.

Stan took to the little bit of stage he had in front of the sheets. The space was tight and his juggling was off. Every third rubber ball bounced into the audience. Every time someone would toss it back. This really messed up his routine. Eventually someone tossed the ball back and beaned him right on the forehead. He fell off the stage. The sheets behind him came down revealing the kids.

A duck, a kitty, an elf and a dog who thinks he's a dinosaur.

The girls were okay and began their song and dance. They were in their glory. Randy though, (who'd never seen so many people) got stiff. He stuck his finger up his nose and put his thumb in his mouth. Then he just stared at the audience.

They got through "Rudolf" okay. The girls were having a great time. They kind of forgot the words sometimes and invented a new key but everybody clapped. Then came "Jingle Bells." Much the same but even more adorable. Finally, "Silent Night."

The girls held hands and sang it in the nicest voices they had. At one point Candy got tangled in the sheets and fell down. The other two danced around her. Smart phones were recording everywhere. We were touched.

The stage lights went down and the house lights came up. The kids got a standing ovation on a somewhat unforgettable Christmas Eve. Ned and Wendy were the proudest of all.

Renee changed his clothes.

There is nothing like children at Christmas is there? May the child in you will always treasure the season. Merry Christmas from Harmony Acres.

-© Jeff Cappis 2026 jcappis@telus.net



Recent vacation: Amy's parents, Rachel, David, Grace, Amy and David's mom and step-dad

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The drawing will be made prior to the next issue. The winner will be emailed information on redeeming their certificate and also announced in the next issue.

Note: We do not place your information on any mailing list.

And the Winner is...

Our winner from last issue is Bonnie Wilson. Bonnie selected *Quilter's Corner* in Midlothian & Henrico as her favorite shop. She enjoys the shop because of "the friendly, helpful atmosphere." Congratulations Bonnie.

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About The Cover Artist

Elizabeth Tyndall



Elizabeth is an artist inspired by nature. She's a wife and a mom who loves mochas, cats, old houses, playing in the garden, photography, decorating, restoring old furniture, reading, writing and searching for beauty to paint everywhere. She absolutely loves nature, stories, books, journaling, finding beauty in words and art, and can be found dreaming of new things to create daily.

Since she was eight years old, she knew she was meant to be an artist. For years she grew up crafting with her mom but found a love for painting and designing as well. At the age of 16 she began working as a florist, creating floral arrangements for weddings, upscale events and holidays, but her real passion is painting and creating art.

Bringing nature into a canvas, is what she's been inspired to do for the past 30 years, but lately she's realized how therapeutic and healing it can be to be surrounded by both. There is beauty and peace found in the world around us, so why not bring some of it indoors. Her passion is to create spaces that will help us to grow and inspire us to live a more fully authentic life. She believes you can never go wrong with bringing nature into the space you live in. Her work is mainly inspired by nature, but she also loves creating pieces that are whimsical and fun as well.

Many of her paintings are created from trips to the mountains, hikes through the forest and even visits to garden shops. She is always looking for inspiration through nature so many of her paintings show her love for the outdoors and her love for birds, animals and flowers too.

One of her proudest achievements was the creation of the new Whale Tail License Plate for California! It was released in 2011 and it's still currently available to purchase! She also was a cave artist for Mercer Caverns and has designed collectible trading cards for games like Magic the Gathering and Ophidian.

She is truly humbled and blessed that she gets to do what she loves every day and that her art can be found on licensed home decor products, such as greeting cards, gift boxes/bags, flags, floor mats, wall art and more, at places like Hobby Lobby, Barnes & Noble, TJ Maxx, Ross, Cost Plus, Joann's, Dollar Tree, Walmart and many other stores throughout the country as well as in many local boutiques, and stores internationally!

Through her art, she hopes to inspire others to see the beauty and joy that is all around us in our everyday lives just waiting to be found!

To view Elizabeth's art prints, go to www.PennyLanePublishing.com or call Penny Lane Publishing at 800-273-5263 for more information.

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The Case of the Missing Christmas Craft

by Janet M. Bair

Last fall I found a very intriguing quilt pattern called "Shadowbox" that I wanted to try. I decided that I would make it into a Christmas wall hanging rather than a whole quilt. Struggling to understand the directions, I set the bag of material and pattern aside in the spare bedroom where I sew. When I started to clean for Thanksgiving company, I put the partially started project in a "safe place."

After Thanksgiving when all our family had returned to their homes in North Carolina and Florida, I looked for my Christmas craft. There were still a few weeks before Christmas, so I figured I could finish it. It was nowhere to be found! I hunted through all of my fabric twice, organizing fabric as I went. Since I only began quilting four years ago, I don't have that much fabric accumulated.

I continued to look for the gallon size clear plastic bag of fabric over the course of the year. Never found it. I am usually very organized so I knew it was in our small house but I was puzzled as to where. Long after Christmas passed, in June I decided to do a massive house clean of our attic and basement.

In my sewing room, I looked inside a box of my husband's old computer items and we decided it was time to get rid of outdated computer discs. As I emptied the heavy box to move it out of the room, I finally spotted my Christmas craft bag! It had slipped behind the heavy box and was squashed next to the bookcase, out of sight. I had searched that area several times before to no avail.

I am very happy to have my bag of Christmas fabric back again because there are some lovely pieces just waiting to be made into something beautiful. I guess my advice is—never stop searching--and it always pays to clean.

The experience of finally finding my special project made me wonder if this was how the wise men felt when they came to the end of their search for the newborn king. The star had guided them for months and they joyfully worshiped the Messiah with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Though they left poorer, their hearts were richer for having made the long journey to see the newborn king, Jesus. May we all experience that special joy this holiday season. Now that my mystery is solved, I hope that I can finish my Christmas wall hanging soon!

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

Wit & Wisdom

It's That Time Again!

by Juleann Lattimer



The days are getting shorter, the trees are getting barer, and the weather is getting colder.

When my children were young it was a red-letter day when the Christmas catalog arrived in the mailbox (remember those?) They spent hours poring over each page, with their greedy little fingers pointing, "I want this and this and this." By the middle of December that catalog looked like it had been run through a paper shredder. It wouldn't have even been good for use in the privy!

Oh how their eyes twinkled with excitement and anticipation and trust. They were excited knowing that Christmas would soon arrive. They anticipated lots of good things, and they trusted their loving parents to give them all the toys they had chosen.

That never happened. Many toys they chose were not age-appropriate, too expensive, and some I just didn't like. We chose the ones we could afford and those we liked – not always the ones they had pointed to in the catalog, because we loved them and knew better than they what was best for them.

And that's exactly how my loving heavenly Father answers my requests. When I say, "I want this and this and this to happen this way," He often doesn't give me my desires. But He always gives me what He knows is best for me.

So, like my little children on Christmas morning, I will delight in all the wonderful gifts given, which far eclipse those that a wise and loving Father has withheld.

If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him. (Matt.7:11).

Free Pattern

For more fun and creative inspiration visit:
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Free Embroidery Pattern – May not be sold or used for commercial purposes. Use this pattern for embroidery, wool applique, punch needle or rug hooking, painted projects or whatever your imagination can dream up! Reduce or enlarge pattern as desired.



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More Than a Tree Topper

by Becky Van Vleet

Every year the same angel takes her place at the top of our Christmas tree. She's made of plastic, more than seventy years old, and a little worse for wear. She still lights up, though her outdated cord is crinkly and twisted. I'm amazed she still works.

But to me, she's far more than an old tree topper. She's a piece of my childhood.



When I was growing up, we always had a real Christmas tree, and decorating it was a family affair. My sisters and I helped hang the ornaments, Mother supervised with a camera in hand, and Daddy tackled the silver icicles. Those slippery strands seemed to cling to his fingers more readily than to the branches. He'd fling them toward the tree, sending plenty to the floor along the way. Getting them to let go of his fingers was half the battle—and part of the fun.

Our tree also held those wonderful bubbling candle lights. Once they warmed up, we watched the bubbles rise inside them. Then, when the decorating was nearly finished, Daddy would place our angel on the highest branch and plug her in. Only then did our tree feel complete.

As a little girl, I loved gazing up at her. I imagined she was singing Christmas carols just to me. She was beautiful. Angelic.

Years later, after I had a family of my own, my father passed the angel topper along to me. I was thrilled. Since then, we've placed her gingerly atop our own Christmas trees, carrying a little of my childhood into each Christmas.

These days, as our grandchildren enjoy Angelina, the name we've given her, one of her wings is broken and held together with Scotch tape. But when I look at her, I still see the angel of my childhood—and I remember Daddy placing her on top of the tree.

If I had to guess, I'd say she cost less than a dollar back in the 1950s. Her value today? Priceless!

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.beckyvanvleet.com.

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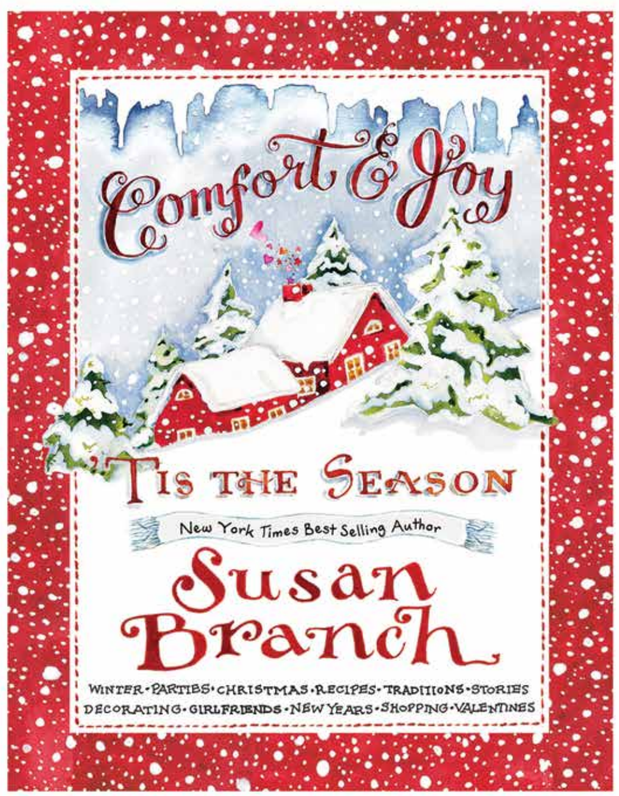
Pennsylvania Dutch Dried Corn

submitted by Janet M. Bair

1 package of Copes Dried Sweet Corn (available on Amazon)
1 cup milk
1 tiny can evaporated milk (If you don't have evaporated milk, use a half cup more of regular milk.)
1 tsp salt
2 tsp sugar
2 Tablespoons butter

Directions:
The night before, *grease a 2 quart casserole dish. Add one package of Copes Dried Sweet Corn. Add 1 cup milk and 1 tiny can evaporated milk. Soak overnight.*
The next day, *remove dish from fridge early to let it warm up before putting it into the oven. Add: 1 tsp salt, 2 tsp sugar and 2 Tablespoons butter. Cover with foil.*

Bake at 350 about 45 minutes

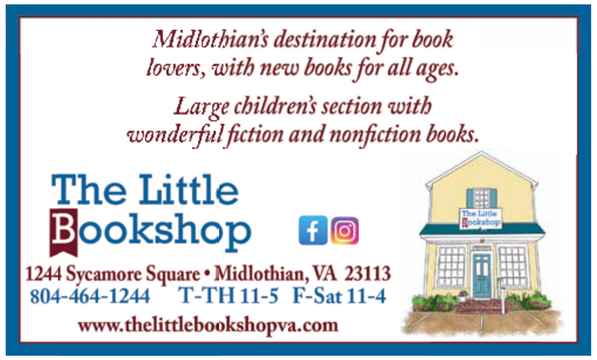


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Available Nov.15 at a bookstore near you. Along with Comfort and Joy, many of Susan's older books, including Autumn and Summer, are back in print & available at bookstores ~just ask! Order books & read about Susan's cross-country book tour (Nov-Dec) at Susan's website, www.susanbranch.com.

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Life on My Wee Farm

Pockets Filled with Thankfulness

by Donna Jo Copeland, farmeress

A year like no other, 2026. As I sit at my old kitchen table in my crumbling farmhouse, sipping tea, munching on homemade bread and peach jam, I try to remember to be thankful. Good lord yes, I'm scared! Barely getting by.

I take a deep breath, fold my hands, call up my ancestors. Centering on their strength, their resolve, their love, their faith in tomorrow.

A vision of my grandmother's apron pocket comes to mind. I never knew exactly what she kept in there...clean hankie, horehound candy, keys. Often during the day, I would see her, hand in that pocket, far off look in her eyes. I think now she must have been giving thanks, maybe praying, maybe remembering.

So, I shall sum up the year in pockets.

In one pocket I will put those most dear to me, my animals. They sustain me. Give me reason to rise in the morning, bringing me smiles, ready for feed and hugs. The companionship of my cats and dog. The wonderful wools from my bunny's goats and sheep. Fresh eggs from my hens. A very full pocket.

In another pocket I will carry my family, my kin. Their strength and love. Promise of generations and adventure. An odd assortment of personalities but they are mine.

My health and love of fiber and hard work go into another pocket. So thankful I am able to care for my animals, pursue my fiber work, somehow keep body and soul together. Glad I rise with a smile on my face no matter how hard the day ahead.

Another pocket is for my realm, my wee farm. The wonders of trees, plants, stream, rocks and fertile soil. The hum of bees. Birds. Wild things. Dragonflies in my garden, fireflies in the summer nights. Hoar frost on fence lines. Diamonds in the dew. A place untouched by chemicals and little technology.

In another pocket I must put my love of reading, my quest to learn history, to find out why and how. Books to keep me company on sleepless nights. Stories to wander in on summer afternoons. Knowledge of the ages, printed on paper, bound up with the stuff of life.

Friends should have a pocket for they are dear to me. Some wander in and out of my life. Others always there. I rely on their listening, help, love and loyalty. I don't judge them, ask only understanding for I am a feral crone.

A pocket must be for our country. What it was and will be again. Change is inevitable but we have lost sight of compassion and respect. I am thankful there are still people who hold to morals and honor. May we gain ground in the coming year, thankful for our aged history.

And being a farm child, farmers must have a special pocket of thankfulness. I can feel their fear, disappointment. Please let them gather strength, resolve, our support. I am so thankful for them, large and small, family farms. The farmers made and still keep this country. The greedy who abuse them can go to compost.

In another pocket I have to put those who protect us...soldiers, policemen, firemen. The everyday heroes. I'm thankful they feel led to serve, help us, one another. May they stand tall with honor.

My heavens my pockets are full. I have much to be thankful for as the year ends. And as Christmas approaches, I have Christmas wishes. Those I won't list here. You make your own list, fill your own pockets of thankfulness.

Let's be a little kinder, less judgmental, gentler, more caring, more loving. Sharing. Peace and blessings.

© 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.

Become Inspired

Decorating, Entertaining and Living in the Early American Style

by Annice Rockwell



Anticipating the Wonder

Often one of the most anticipated times of the year, the holiday season is filled with plentiful opportunities to create spaces that welcome and inspire. With themed gatherings planned for family and friends, we often feel a great sense of anticipation to share our creativity and to beautifully transform our homes to suit the season of celebration.

Charming Authenticity

In order to design a seasonal space we can often use some of our favorite classic antiques accented by elements of nature to surround us with charming authenticity. An antique lift-top mule chest in early red paint can be heightened and enhanced by stacking a smaller antique box in blue on top. Nestling boughs of evergreen between a primitive trencher and a blue decorated stoneware jug adds a balancing touch of nature to our vignette.

Antique sleds that radiantly reveal their use from age can be adorned with a spray of fresh hemlock, red berries and twinkling white lights to brighten the corner of the hearth. Centerpieces created by using a large divided carrier filled with greens and cones can feature a glass chimney to hold an antique hogscraper or one of our favorite scented country candles like "Orange Clove Pomander" or "Balsam Christmastide."

Early punched tin lighting that has come to represent tradition and comfort can be used to cast the beautiful play of light it was intended to create. Petite cedar trees in various sizes can be placed in crocks, firkins, early kegs or baskets to enliven a seating area or even brighten a country bathroom. Handmade country stockings fashioned from woven coverlets in bright red can be filled with greens and hung on our mantel or an interior door to add texture and color to our rooms.

Embracing the Magic

One of the blessings of the holidays is planning a festive night out with friends to take in the sights and sounds of Christmas. Main streets of small towns become magical and unusually alive on an Open House Night when storefront windows gleam with the glow of Christmas. Through the front windows we can see freshly decorated inviting displays of antiques, textiles, scented candles and decorations that deeply appeal to our country style. As we enter these local shops the music of the dulcimer plays traditional tunes while we take in a cup of hot mulled cider while we browse. We know that the hand-selected purchases we make are even more special because they are local and support the shops that provide us with a sense of genuine connection.

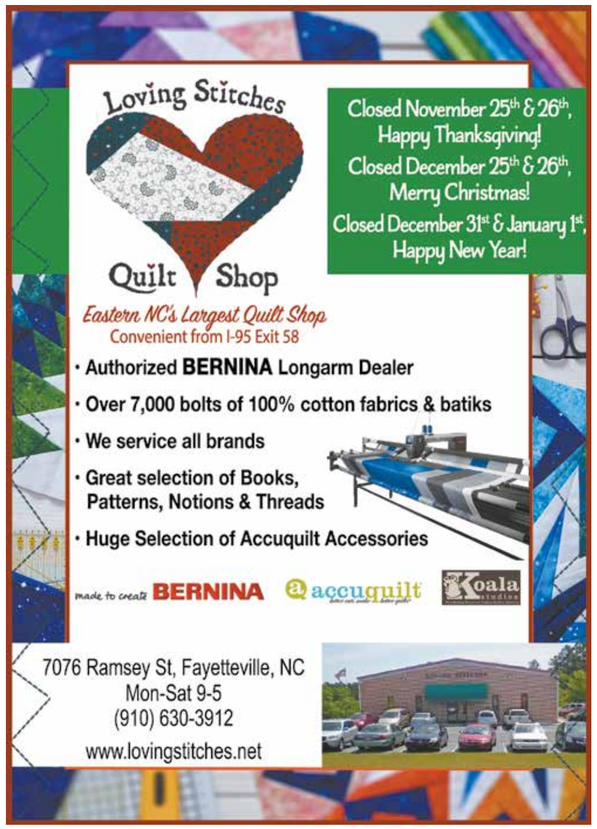
After finding the perfect treasures to give as gifts or the ideal antique to enhance our displays, we can visit a local restaurant that promises to be a memorable part of our night. Taking time to plan a festive, local night out is time well-spent as we share in the abundant blessings of giving.

This season, enjoy the anticipation of creating magic. Transform your home to include the splendor of a country Christmas. Spend a treasured evening with friends embracing the sense of wonder that this spectacular season always brings.

--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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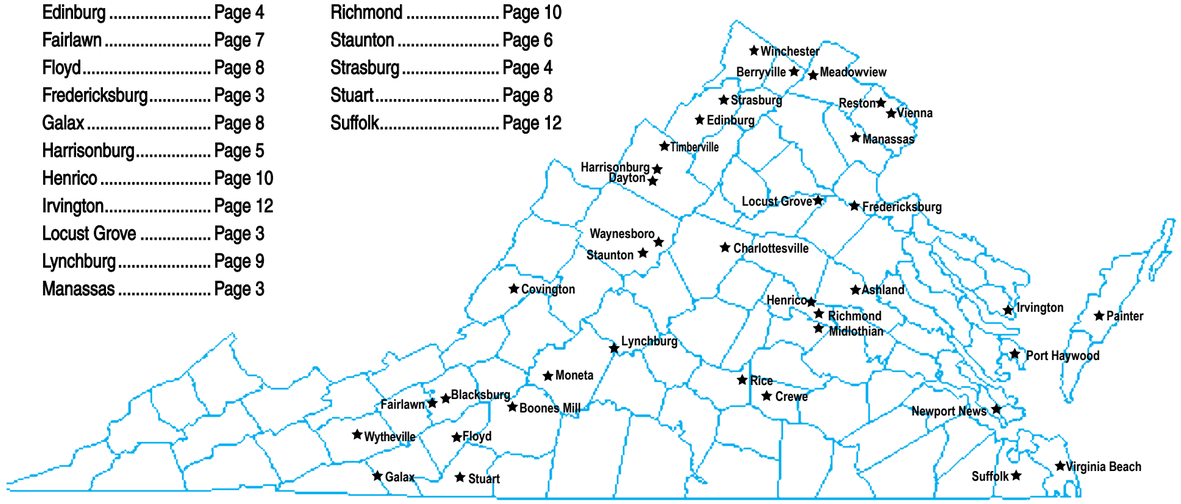
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City Index and Map

Ashland..... Page 10
Berryville..... Page 4
Blacksburg..... Page 7
Boones Mill..... Page 7
Charlottesville..... Page 6
Covington..... Page 7
Crewe..... Page 9
Dayton..... Page 5
Edinburg..... Page 4
Fairlawn..... Page 7
Floyd..... Page 8
Fredericksburg..... Page 3
Galax..... Page 8
Harrisonburg..... Page 5
Henrico..... Page 10
Irvington..... Page 12
Locust Grove..... Page 3
Lynchburg..... Page 9
Manassas..... Page 3
Meadowview..... Page 4
Midlothian..... Page 10
Moneta..... Page 7
Newport News..... Page 12
Painter..... Page 12
Port Haywood..... Page 12
Reston..... Page 3
Rice..... Page 9
Richmond..... Page 10
Staunton..... Page 6
Strasburg..... Page 4
Stuart..... Page 8
Suffolk..... Page 12
Timberville..... Page 4
Vienna..... Page 3
Virginia Beach..... Page 12
Waynesboro..... Page 6
Winchester..... Page 4
Wytheville..... Page 8
North Carolina..... Page 11
Pennsylvania..... Page 4
West Virginia..... Page 4



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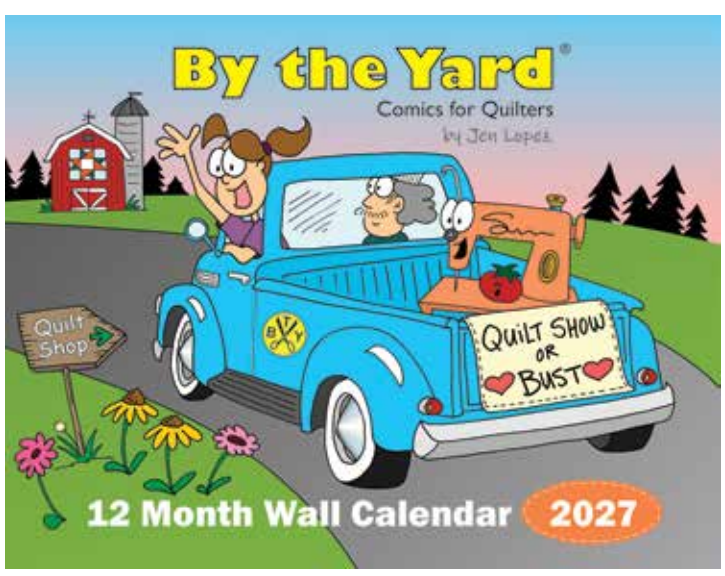
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