

Welcome to...

The Country Register of Kansas

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www.countryregister.com/kansas

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The Country Register began in Arizona, in the fall of 1988, to provide effective, affordable advertising for shops, shows, and other experiences enjoyed by a kindred readership. Since then the paper has spread to many other areas, all of which are listed below. Look for the paper in your travels.

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 • Indicates these editions are available to view online

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From My Desk... to yours
 By Cindy Baldwin

The waiting is over! When I last wrote, we were waiting for the first lambs to arrive from the sheep we had given to our grandchildren for Christmas 2021. My husband was confident that we would start lambing by October or November. As December was approaching, still no babies. Clearly we had miscalculated when the sheep would be mature enough to breed. But, we were hopeful, the ewes could barely waddle around the pasture -- when I last wrote we thought it would be any day. Any day turned into another month, but I can now report that we have lambs on the ground! In fact, we had our own little Christmas miracle when one of the ewes lambed with twins on Christmas morning while all the grandchildren were here for Christmas. Grandson Eli took the responsibility of warming up the smaller twin with a blow dryer very seriously and all nine babies born so far are doing well, with just a few more to give birth. Sheep have proved to be a very interesting experiment.



Three of our lambs and one of the ewes. They don't cooperate very well with photography shoots.

February is almost here along with the start of spring shop hop season. There are several coming up that will give you an excuse to "do some shopping." Already have too much fabric? Check out the story by Country Register reader Mary Ann Tanking on page 12 about what happened to her resolve to only use her stash.

This issue also includes the 2023 Quilt Shop Directory. Every effort has been made to make sure we are accurate, however, if you know of a shop we missed, please let us know so we can let readers know and update our own files. While several shops have closed as owners retire or move on to other adventures, we also found several that opened since our 2022 directory was published. Please keep this issue for your reference as you travel during the year, and please call ahead for hours. Some shops have limited or seasonal hours or have unexpected change of hours due to staffing or family situations. You don't want to miss out on what they have to offer.

As always we encourage you to support our Country Register advertisers whether they are located down the street or across the state. As independent owners, they depend on your business, and they do everything they can to provide you with the best customer service -- from finding that special item you were looking for, teaching skills, ordering an item, referring you to a shop that carries what you are looking for if they don't carry it or just being there.

It's almost spring, and I am ready. Think spring flowers and enjoy the snow for the next few weeks. Afterall, we need the moisture. Happy shopping.

FM-23 The Country Register of Kansas SUBSCRIPTIONS - \$18

The Country Register is distributed as a complimentary gift from its advertisers. We encourage you to stop by your favorite shop to pick up each new issue. However, for the convenience of those who are not able to get to a shop, we do offer postal delivery for \$18 per year to cover the cost of postage and handling. Or if you want a certain issue mailed, send \$3 & circle which issue - Dec/Jan, Feb/Mar, Apr/May, Jun/Jul, Aug/Sep, Oct/Nov

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Who We Are The Country Register is a United States and Canadian independently owned and published specialty bi-monthly newspaper for the consumer who enjoys outstanding shopping, events, unique recurring classes. The papers are free to our readers.

We provide targeted, effective, & affordable advertising for the pro Specialty Shops including: Quilting, Needlework, Stitches & Events, Home Garden Decor, Country, Pottery

On Our Cover...

As winter melts into spring, it's the perfect time to work on our favorite project like these quilted hearts.

Every effort is made to have an error-free paper, however, mistakes do occur. Please double check dates, times, and locations with a phone call before traveling a great distance.

The Country Register of Kansas Vol. 24 No. 4, Feb/March 2023

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Please let them know if you enjoy the paper & thank them!

Where is The Country Register available?

- Advertisers' businesses • State-owned tourist information centers
- Some locally-operated visitor centers
- Most Lawrence grocery stores • Other various locations
- Online www.countryregister.com/kansas

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- Coordinates AFTER city will help locate that city on map below (accuracy not guaranteed, please check official map before traveling)
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- 18th Annual Prairie Stars Quilt Shop Hop
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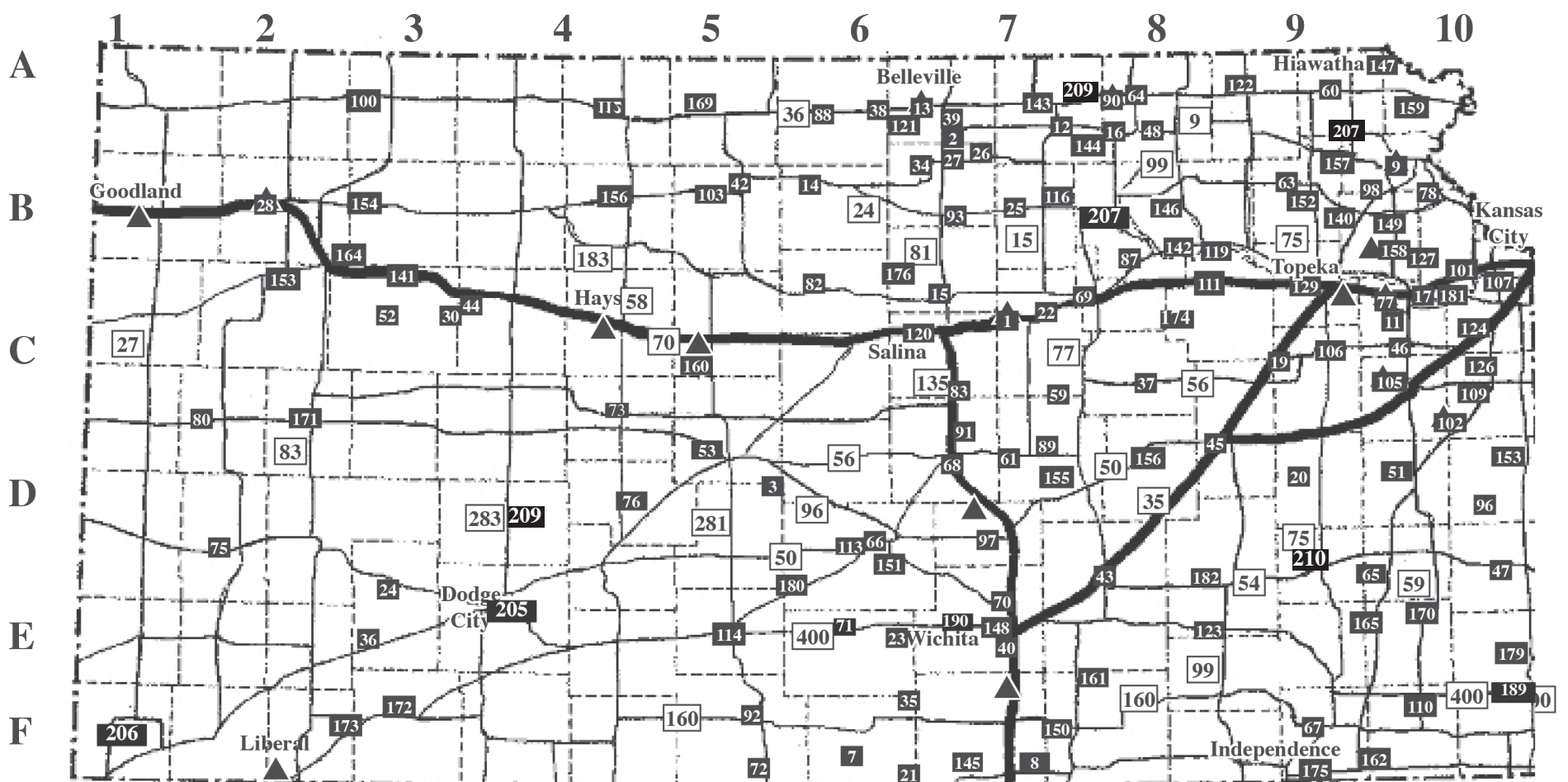
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Ad deadline for the April/May '23 issue is March 7!
IF YOU MISS THE DEADLINE, CONTACT US AND WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SQUEEZE YOU IN!

Map Index:

- # City numbers = white number in black box
- # Highway numbers = black in white box
- p Information Centers with papers = black triangles

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Store Hours
 Wednesday - Friday
 10 am - 6:30 pm
 Saturday 10 am - 4 pm

620-338-5168
 209 E. 6th St.
 Kinsley, Kansas

Stop in and see us
 during the Kansas-
 Nebraska Shop Hop
 in April and May

Watch our Facebook page for new
 fabrics, projects, and specials!

Clark's Fabric Shop
 605 Main, Kiowa KS
 620-825-4985 • 620-887-1272 (cell)
clarksfabricksu@sctelcom.net

FABRICS FROM - P&B Fabrics,
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 Blank Textile, Riley Blake, Penny Rose,
 Hoffman Fabrics, Quilting Treasures,
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♦♦ NEW Store Hours ♦♦
 Mon-Fri 10-5 Sat 9:30-Noon

February/March Specials
 • Still have large selection of prints
 Sale \$3/yard - minimum cut 1 yd
 • Lori Holt Zippy Bags Panel
 Lori Holt Sewing Boxes Reg \$24.98, Sale \$19.98
 • New Western Prints - Ride the Range/Riley
 Blake, More new panels from Riley Blake &
 Hoffman 108" Quilt Backing \$3 off/yard
 • Lots of Quilt Kits - 1/2 Price
 • New Farm Fresh Prints from Blank Quilting
 • Feedsack Vintage Prints -- \$3 off/yard -
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 • Batiks - \$2 off/yard -- 3 or more of same fabric
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 • Assorted Quilts for Sale

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Scott City Shop Hop
 Sponsored by the Scott City Quilt Guild

Friday, February 17 • 1 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
 Saturday, February 18 • 9 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
 Wm Carpenter Building • Scott County Fairgrounds
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• Scott City

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 Quilt Show and Door Prizes
Friday
 Shopping & Door Prizes
Saturday
 Demonstrations by Vendors
 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
 • Door Prizes
 Chicken Noodle & Chili Soup
 at Noon
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 Patterns • Notions • New Ideas!
 Guild Project - Bits and Pieces

All the fun of a shop hop and more without all the driving...
 For more information see Scott City Tourism www.scottcityks.org

Countryberries Designs

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Designed by Kathy Graham

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Life in Skunk Hollow

By Julie A. Druck

A Crafting of Memories

As I was considering what I would write about for this issue, I began thinking about my introduction to various fiber crafts. From crocheting to cross-stitch, from embroidery to machine sewing, I've tried a little of this and that over the years. As I meandered through memories, what struck me wasn't so much the things I've learned but rather, the people who taught me. I realized that behind every crafting skill is a wonderful memory linked to a particular woman in my life.

The first crafting skill I learned was that of cross-stitch. In my mind's eye, I can still see the little hoop and the printed fabric of a country girl in a sunbonnet tending her flowers. I don't remember how old I was, but I'm sure that Mamma must have needed an abundance of patience to teach me the craft. I was SO proud of those colorful, bright stitches, and I treasure the memory of time spent with my dear grandmother.

My best friend's mom, Joan, was an amazing seamstress, as well as a much-needed mentor in my life. When I was a teenager, Joan agreed to teach me to use a sewing machine one summer. I have fond memories of my friend, Stacia, and I in her mom's attic workshop learning the skill together. I never got terribly good at it, but I did enjoy sewing simple fabric books and finger puppets for my baby boys, after they were in bed for the evening. And later, I taught those same boys how to sew their own pillowcases in tractor and animal fabrics and to make microwave rice bags that they appreciated taking to bed on a cold winter's night.

Another family member, my Aunt Nancy, taught me how to knit a bright, colorful scarf to wrap around my winter coat. I had admired her own scarf, and she generously offered to teach me. I quickly learned that knitting was my least favorite craft, but I did persevere and proudly wore that scarf of my own making.

I discovered embroidery one afternoon when we visited my husband's dear Aunt Helen. She happened to be embroidering two printed pillowcases as a wedding gift. The designs of large, beautiful flowers caught my eye, and she not only taught me how to do it but also bought several kits for me to extend the pleasure.

And last but not least, my long-time friend, Candy, was the one who taught me to crochet. She started me on homemade dishcloths, and after I was proficient at those, we conspired to both create big, cozy afghans. When we were young moms, I would go to her house, and while our children were playing, we would sit on her sofa and crochet -- stopping occasionally when she had to help me fix a mistake. That pretty, warm afghan is now folded at the end of our bed where it has served to lovingly cover sleeping grandbabies.

It's truly a privilege and a joy to be made in the image of the Creator and be gifted with the ability to craft beauty with our hands. And what an even greater joy it is to spend time with our loved ones as we do so. Thanks for the memories, ladies -- you are each a work of art.

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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- Machine Quilting

Hours: Sunday-Friday: 1-6 Closed Saturday

In-Shop Specials
New Fabric Coming
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Birds of a Feather Quilt Shop and Retreat Center

Celebrating Our 4th Anniversary in March
Special Events All Through the Month of March
Check our Facebook & Webpage for Details

We are a participating shop in the Prairie Stars Quilt Shop Hop
April 21-29 & The All KS/NB Shop Hop in April & May
Join us for Open Retreats the 3rd weekend of the month.
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- Notions • Kits & Much More
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www.birdsofafeatherquilts.com
birdsofafeatherquilts@gmail.com

★ 18th Annual ★
Prairie Stars Quilt Shop Hop
April 21 - 29, 2023
(Shops Closed Sunday)
5 Shops ~ 3 States
Kansas • Oklahoma • Colorado

2023 Grand Prize
\$100 Gift certificate from each shop
\$500 total in gift certificates
(Must visit each shop to be eligible for grand prize)

Rules:

- Pick up your Shop Directory/Passport Booklet at any shop (Must be filled out to be eligible to win prizes.)
- Visit shops and pick up layer cake layers. Visit each shop and you will have a layer cake. Fabric: Eufhoria by Moda.
- Turn in completed passport at last stop. (Passports for age 18+)
- Order your quilt finishing kit from the shop of your choice.

Completed shop quilts will be available to view in February in shop or on Facebook.

Participating Shops

Bossy Sister Quilting 209 E. 6th Kinsley, KS 620-338-5168	Cheryl's Quilt Corner 1608 N. Ellison Guymon, OK 580-338-3677
Birds of a Feather Quilt Shop/CP & Q Retreat Center 314 W Spruce ST Dodge City, KS 620-262-6571	Justa Stitchin' LLC 1173 Main Springfield, CO 719-523-4985 (Mountain Time)
Sew Loved Quilt Shop and Retreat Center 559 Morton Elkhart, KS 620-697-4095	

Shop Hop hours 9 - 6 Local Time. Note Colorado is on Mountain Time.



Clutter Happens

Love. It's the Little Things

by Julie Pirtle

It's that time of year. Cupid has spread a blanket of pink and red hearts across our paths. Lovers start thinking about what they should get for their partners. Flowers? Chocolates? Mushy cards?

What if we stepped back a moment and really thought about Valentine's Day. While it's wonderful to be acknowledged with a gift on February 14, is that what it's really all about? I think love and the expression of it is in the little things.

My first love was at the age of 6. Bobby Sherman had released the single, "Julie, Do Ya Love Me" and I was smitten. That album was all I wanted for Christmas that year, and I got it.

I listened to that album over and over again on my mom's old suitcase record player, and I was SURE he was singing about me. That album stayed with me through my 30s until I finally relinquished it. But I never forgot Bobby's smiling face on that red record album cover.

Fast forward to a recent antique shopping trip with my husband, the real love of my life. We have only been together a few years and are still learning things about each other. I had told him that Bobby was my first crush, and that I regretted getting rid of that album from long ago.

My husband called me over to a bin and showed me an old album from Bobby. It wasn't THE album, but it made me smile as I told him my 6-year-old self's story. I shared how I used to dress up and pretend that he was my boyfriend. I would sing and dance for hours, memorizing every word of every song. We had a good chuckle as I reminisced.

The next week, a package was delivered and my husband said it was for me. I opened it up and there... smiling at me... was Bobby. Bobby's face on the RIGHT album! This album was a "cut" album (meaning that it was sent out free to a radio station). IT WAS STILL SEALED!

Did I cry? You know I did. We put it on the turntable and listened to MY song. Except this time, I wasn't twirling around in my mom's old prom dresses. My current day crush took me in his arms and danced with me as Bobby sang.

I have listened to it many times since and am proud to say I still remember all the

lyrics! (...yet I can't remember where I left my keys most days!) However, when I listen to it now, it has a totally different meaning to me.

My loving partner didn't just hear my story. He took the time to act on it. He diligently searched until he found the perfect copy of that album. His gift allowed me to relive that little girl's dreams. It was priceless.

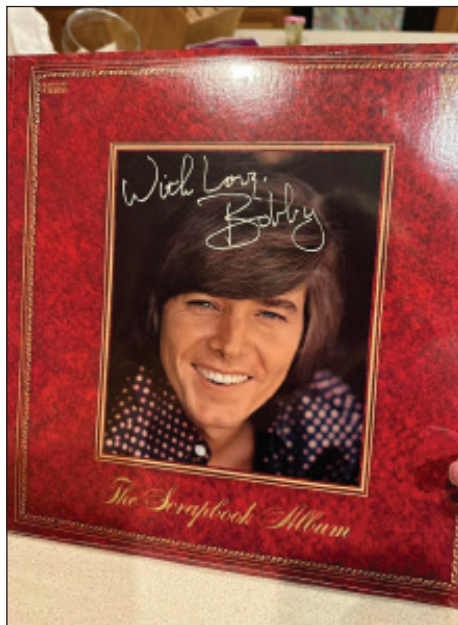
The most important thing I took from this gift was a testament to how much I'm loved by him. To top it off, it wasn't even for a holiday. It was just an ordinary day that he made extraordinary. To him, it was a little thing. To me, it was HUGE.

This year for Valentine's Day, think outside the box. It's easy to give flowers, and, yes, ...nice to receive. But making a gesture, even if you think it's small, will mean the world to those you love.

If you are single and without a "Valentine," choose a friend who is in the same love boat and do something unexpected for them. We all can use as much love as we can get!

Lastly, to my husband, I love you! This Bobby-loving girl feels lucky and grateful that we have this life together. I won't be expecting a thing on Valentine's Day because you show your love to me every day. (Ummmmmm...but some chocolate wouldn't hurt. Right?)

C'mon. We've got this. I know we do!



Julie Pirtle is a Professional Organizer and owner/operator of Clutter Happens in Mesa, AZ. She also works with clients nationally through Video Consultations. The Clutter-Challenged can reach her at clutterhappens@gmail.com, on Facebook:/clutterhappens or her website www.clutterhappens.com.

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Back in the Day

Memories Preserved

by *Becky Van Vleet*

From the time I married in the 1970s to this very day, making family memories and creating traditions has been a big part of my life. And I must give my parents credit for my endeavors in this area.

My father was the picture taker in our family. He purchased a "movie camera" (that's what we called them back in the day) in 1957. Movie cameras became available for home use right before World War II, and they became more widespread in the 1950s as the baby boomer population grew. And oh, how I treasure those sweet memories when my father grabbed that movie camera for so many special occasions when I was growing up.

In my mind's eye, I can still see my father attaching a cumbersome four-light apparatus to the camera itself. That thing must have been heavy. And, certainly, awkward in comparison to our video taking on cell phones. How I wish someone in our family had saved that camera! And Daddy made sure the still-picture camera was always close by.



My mother was into the photo albums and scrapbooks for me and my three sisters. I don't think she got into all the photo albums out of necessity with the many pictures my dad was taking over the years, rather, I believe she just really enjoyed her hobby. And, thankfully, she dated all of our pictures! As we are living in a digital day and age where photos are saved in Google, I feel I am holding a valuable treasure in my hands when I look through my own childhood photo albums. Words escape me to describe my amazement when I look at my 60-plus-years baby scrapbook which contains all of my baby congratulations cards. First, I can't believe my mother saved all of those. Second, baby congratulation cards are almost extinct these days.

I still have the original movie projector my father set up for family movie time in my childhood years. He would heave a bit as he lugged the large screen on a heavy stand out of the storage closet to get everything set up. Such memories -- oh, those were the days!

The example of my parents preserving memories through the family cameras, albums, scrapbooks and traditions ignited my desire to do the same for my own family. Yes, it looks different today, but no less important.

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.

When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.
---Victor Frankl

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Prescription for Adventure

By Naomi Gaedde Penner

A Chilly Bucket List

What's on your Bucket List? You know, that place you'd like to see or thing you'd like to do -- if you had the time, money, ability or possibility.

- Taking a Quilting cruise
- Climbing Machu Pico
- Going Deep Sea fishing
- Touring the Holy Land
- Trying Hang Gliding
- Writing a Recipe Book
- Seeing the Northern Lights
- Volunteering at a Wildlife Center, Food Bank or Senior Shuttle
- Teaching English as a Second Language

Last March, 2022, my top-of-the-list "Bucket" item was realized: to be at the finish line of the most famous sled dog race in the world, the nearly 1,000 mile "Last Great Race," otherwise known as the Iditarod, which starts in Anchorage and culminates at Nome, Alaska, along the Bering Sea.

On March 15, at 3:45 am, I received a call that a team was approaching Nome. In anticipation, I stumbled around my hotel room, pulling on wool socks and thick boots. I didn't want to miss a thing. How much time did I have?

After flying all day on three different flights, I'd made it into Nome at 6:15 pm the day before. For two years, I'd calculated when I needed to arrive. Now I was here, relieved that the winning team hadn't shown up. I just needed to get to the finish line, the place under the Burled Arch on Front Street by the Covenant Church.

The Covenant Church's Iditarod tradition is to open its doors to the public for the first musher's arrival. Several large screens track the mushers' positions on maps, and groups of parka and boot-wearing folks stand with eyes fixed on the information, while savoring homemade cinnamon rolls oozing with frosting and letting coffee or hot chocolate steam onto their faces.

When the screen indicated that the first musher was two miles out of Nome, I zipped up my parka, snugged up my fleece scarf, and pushed handwarmers into my gloves; then I left the warmth of the building for a chilly 3 degrees to squeeze as close as possible to the Arch. In the darkness, I could see the musher's headlamp shining the way towards all of us excited welcomers. At 5:38 a.m., after 8 days, 14 hours, 38 minutes and 43 seconds, Brent Sass glided under the Arch! The first words I heard him say were, "I'm so tired."

I could not even imagine. Brent arrived with 11 of the 14 dogs he'd started with. He'd carried in his sled one sleeping bag, an ax, one pair of snowshoes, eight booties per dog, one cooker and a pot for dog food. He'd made one mandatory 24-hour rest stop and two 8-hour stops. Before eating or resting, he had fed the dogs and put straw down for them to snuggle into. The veterinarians along the way had checked his dogs regularly.

This race was the first Iditarod win for the Minnesota native, who in 1998 had moved to Alaska to attend the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, and had joined the cross-country ski team, which then led to sled dog racing. With this win he'd earned \$51,798.

A friend from above the Arctic Circle had joined me in Nome. She owned 22 sled dogs and competed in intervillage sprint races where she'd placed first, second and third in competition. She knew about racing. She knew about dogs. She knew about snow conditions. And, she enjoyed a cup of good coffee.

I stayed four days in Nome. The sun struggled up at 9:19 a.m. and disappeared slowly over the frozen sea at 9:03 p.m. Ice sculptures, a craft fair and slippery walks around the village with ice underfoot added to the experience.

Iditarod 2022 is over. The memories remain vivid. I won't be repeating that "chilly" Bucket List item. But I can follow Brent Sass and this team every day on his FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/WildandFreeMushing>. And, I'm already watching the Iditarod website to see who's signing up: <https://iditarod.com/>. This year I'll subscribe to the "Insider" and watch videos and listen to interviews.

What's next on my list? Hmm...probably something else in Alaska. Meanwhile, see how you can achieve that "someday I'm going to..."

Four of Naomi's five non-fiction Alaska books are available at prescriptionforadventure.com, or by calling 303.506.6181. In Kansas, they are available at Faith & Life (Newton) and Kansas Originals (1-70 at Wilson) The Bush Doctor's Wife is also available on Amazon. You can follow her on FaceBook at "Prescription for Adventure."



Naomi Gaedde Penner on the streets of Nome, Alaska, checking off a bucket list item.

Shop News

Heavenly Kneads & Threads Changes Owners, Name

HUMBOLDT -- Heavenly Kneads and Threads Quilt Shop owner Carolyn Zellner has announced that she has sold the business to Jennifer Hunt. The shop, which will remain in the same location at 724 Bridge ST in Humboldt, will have a new name, Heavenly Threads. Zellner, who is semi-retiring, will continue to assist at the shop in the near future as part of the ownership transition.

Jennifer will be moving to Humboldt from California and is excited about the shop's future. A quilter, she considers this her dream job. Her sister, Jamie, currently works in the shop and said that even though the name and ownership have changed, customers will be working with the same friendly staff and can expect the same level of service from the full-service shop. They will continue to offer longarm quilting services.

Joyce's Quilting Changes Focus

LINCOLN -- Joyce Schultz, owner of Joyce's Quilting in Lincoln, is transitioning the focus of the shop from a full-service quilt shop to an emphasis on the longarm quilting side of the business. While her fabric inventory has been reduced, she still carries a selection of 108" wide backing fabric and batting.

The shop, at 1837 E. Milo Dr. in Lincoln is open by appointment. To visit with Joyce about quilting your quilt please call her at 785-658-5702.

New Quilt Shops Opening Around the State

In putting together our annual Quilt Shop Directory, we found several new shops that have opened up in the last year. We encourage you to stop in and see what they have to offer. New shops and their locations include:

Wichita: Cotton and Wool, in Brittany Center. Owners Tina and Molly Williams offer quality quilting fabric -- the Cotton -- and yarn -- the Wool. While both women quilt and do fiber arts, Tina will concentrate on the fabric side of the store and Molly will be managing the yarn. Stop in and see this newest quilt and yarn shop in Wichita.

Leavenworth: There are two new quilt shops in Leavenworth. Opening last March, **The Quilting Emporium** at 727 Shawnee St, Ste C is owned by Lynette Gottschalk. Lynette is expanding her inventory and is looking forward to serving quilters from around the region. The second Leavenworth store is **Plain Janes & Co.** Owned by Elizabeth Thomas and her mother, Jane, the shop has been an online store and will be opening a brick and mortar shop at 506 Delaware. An opening is planned in March. Watch Facebook for updates.

Downs: After several years without a quilt shop, Downs has a new one located in the same building at 801 Morgan Ave that housed Stuff and Such. New owners Doug and Dana Smerchek and Dana's mother Fran Rucker opened **The Master's Quilt Shop** this past year. They are a full service quilt shop offering longarm quilting. In addition to the fabric shop, the family has a coffee shop in one side of the building.

As you are traveling through the state, be sure to put these new shops on your list of places to stop.



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Life on my farm

By Donna Jo Copeland, farmeress Breezy Manor farm

Mapping a New Year

In the manner of the ancient Babylonians with their chisel, hammer and stone, we turn a page on our calendars and begin a new year. Like the stone tablets of old we have to make our mark on each day, week and month in this new adventure.

As did Lewis and Clark, who set out to map the Old Northwest Territory, we embark on a long, dangerous and fun journey. I remember as a kid after reading *Treasure Island* my brothers and I would go off into the mysterious back woods seeking who knows what. (But it kept us out of Mom's hair for the afternoon) Those golden days rest warmly in my memory.

I charge each of you to make 2023 a year filled with golden memories and adventures. One of my dear friends says he expects each day to be an adventure, and he is never disappointed. Let's be like Jamie. And instead of crossing off each day, put a gold star on them for a day well lived. We only go around once.

January can be, and often is, a bleak, cold dark month. We burrow down in wool blankets, sweaters and socks. Soup simmers in the crock pot. Candles often glow in the evening for atmosphere. For us of the fiber and needlework persuasion it's a busy time. In my old drafty farmhouse, I have learned to spin and weave in fingerless gloves. And in January I work in bright colors, often overdyeing natural colored wool in pots on my woodstove. I love the fragrance of wet wool throughout my home.

I can remember my great grandmother Clara at her quilting frame after piecing the blocks together on her treadle sewing machine. Often, she would sit crocheting in her big, wing back chair by the south window. Thankfully she passed her needlework love onto me.

Busy hands are happy hands is a phrase I have heard a zillion times. And it's true. Doing something, accomplishing a task does bring fulfillment.

Okay, I do grumble and wonder why I'm doing this as I trudge through deep snow carrying feed and hay and buckets of water I have hand-pumped from the well. But I do it and am rewarded with soft baas, nuzzles, snuggles and the sound of happy munching fills my soul.

The heart and soul of a farmeress are deep, mysterious, abundant in love and strength.

I truly believe the first woman to love and hug a sheep really knew what she was

doing. And created a lovely, timeworn legacy.

Before one realizes it, it's rabbit, rabbit, rabbit and February first. Then we wait with bated breath for one fat rodent to predict the coming weather. For a farmer, spring can never come too soon. And we rejoice in the noticeably longer days. My grandpa always said you can count on one good week of weather in February, not all seven days in a row, however. Wise farmer.

Sometimes in mid-winter I get lost in the routine and struggle of just getting by. I won't lie, its hard doing this on my own and, at 73, each winter is harder. But my animals need me, and I need them. And I need deep down in my soul to create from their gifts.

In the end of winter is when I am truly thankful for my hen eggs, which I have frozen. Their deep yellow yolks brighten my scrambled egg breakfast. Homemade bread with my jelly sits by my ever-present cup of tea.

Wee farm life is the life for me, and I am exceedingly thankful.

Recipe: Pokeberry Dye

You need: 1 gallon of pokeberries from the freezer which you put up last fall

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One skein of 100 yards white wool yarn

1 cup white vinegar 1 t. alum

Water to cover

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by Nancy Brummett

Down with Winter Doldrums

A perfect cure for the winter doldrums, which tend to set in when the grass is brown and the trees are bare, is to watch the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, CA, in person or on TV. Imagine 54 botanic gardens on wheels. Add every petal in a 100 florist shops to each float and you begin to get the idea. Literally tons of flowers go into these floats, and one can boast as many as 40,000 roses.

Can't catch the parade? Here are some other winter pick-me-ups.

Locate a botanic garden and go there. Don't just stroll through. Take a book, sit on a bench, and spend an hour or two reading and absorbing the moisture and fragrances around you. Glance up from your book occasionally and let your eyes drink in the green.

Force bulbs to bloom indoors. Paper whites, tulips and hyacinths all work well, and they'll fill your whole house with intoxicating springtime fragrances.

Find a verdant, spring landscape for your screensaver. Then every time your computer goes dead -- probably just about the time the doldrums have sapped the last ounce of creativity

from your brain -- the sight of dogwoods on a mountain hillside will gently revive you.

Dig out old photos of summer gardens in bloom and immerse yourself in the memories. Better yet, sit down with a stack of gardening and bulb catalogs and imagine all those flowers blooming right outside your door. If you're a gardener, start sketching out how you want your gardens to look come spring and plant some starter seeds inside.

Light up your life. Bundle up and go for a walk during the sunniest part of the day, even if it's just around the parking lot of the building where you work. When you're inside, follow the sun. Since I work at home, all I have to do to catch a dose of sunshine is find my cat and settle in next to her. Felines specialize in sunbeam sleuthing.

A good dose of color can do much to elevate our winter moods, too. Paint an accent wall in a citrus shade. Dress in bright colors instead of the dour grays and browns we tend to wear, because they suit the mood we're in...not the one we desire.

Spring will be here before we know it. Meanwhile, take heart. We don't have to be at the parade to smell the roses.

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.



Jelly Donut in a Mug

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp butter
- 4 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp milk
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp strawberry jam
- cinnamon sugar to garnish

Directions:

1. Melt butter in a microwavable mug.
2. Add all the remaining ingredients.
3. Mix well with a fork until just combined.
4. Place a spoonful of jam down into the batter.
5. Microwave for 45 seconds or until it is firm on top.
6. Sprinkle some cinnamon sugar on top.



Recipe by Gemma's Bigger Bolder Baking



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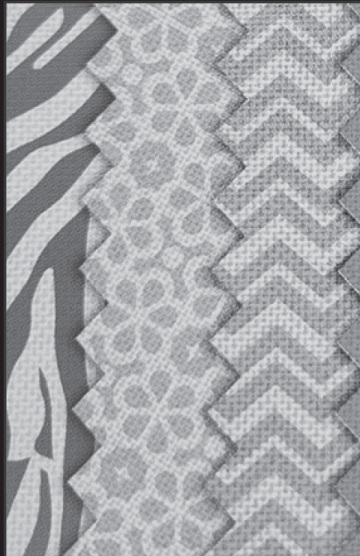
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Building Harmony

Dinner & A Movie

by Jeff Cappis

My wife, Cathy, will tell you that I can't cook. Not true. I try my cooking out on the dog, and he usually likes what I make. In my bachelor days I used to love cooking. I made a mean Kraft Dinner and was great with anything that came out of a can. I always ordered the best pizzas for delivery. Can't cook? Who's she kidding?

I do have a special dish though. Chili. I remember sitting on the kitchen counter when I was about four years old while my grandmother made chili. I watched her fry the hamburger, add the tomatoes, beans, mushrooms, sauces -- everything.

When she got it all together, she'd say, "Now you have to let it do its thing. A good chili takes time. What do you want to do now?" It looked easy. I loved the time with my grandmother, too.

Not to say I was a real Casanova in my bachelor days but cooking with a date and a good VHS movie on the TV was a charming and affordable way to spend an evening. *Officer and a Gentleman* usually set a romantic tone -- kind of dinner and a movie without having to go out.

Now, my wife is an attractive woman, so a fun and romantic evening with her sounds great to me. I've heard the No. 1 sexiest thing a man can do for a woman is cook. Really? I decided to show Cathy that I can cook and maybe we would share a few hours of quality time while the chili does its thing as well.

It was a cold winter day, so I built a fire. I got all the ingredients out on the counter, poured two short glasses of wine and put *The Notebook* DVD on the big screen TV.

Perfect. Then I brought Cathy in and sat her at the kitchen island.

"Enjoy your wine, watch the movie, and I will do the rest," I told her. With that, I put the wine glass between her fingers and made a toast, "To us."

We clicked our glasses, and I put on my chef's hat and went to work starting with frying the hamburger. Our dog made himself comfortable nearby just in case any should fall on the floor.

Cathy didn't want to interfere, but being the chief cook of the household, she felt compelled to offer up some advice. "You need to drain off the fat."

"I know that," I insisted.

Unfortunately, I had the heat too high. The grease caught fire.

Panicking, I put out the fire with tomato sauce. Cathy looked down at her glass and suppressed a smile but held her tongue.

"I meant to do that," I explained. "It cooks in the taste."

Then I found out that tomato sauce starts to boil and explode at high heats. Thinking fast, I put it out by smothering it with spices and beans, then I slammed a lid on it. "Uh, I like my beans crunchy," I said, trying to make it sound sexy.

I blinked twice and the lid blew off the pot. The dog ran under the table. Chili was all over the stove. Cathy took a gulp of wine.

"That happens sometimes. A good chili has a real pop to it," I said sexily as I looked into the pot. Half of it was left. "The good stuff remains in the pot."

I stirred it and left it to simmer on low while I cleaned up the mess. We both watched the movie and talked while sipping wine. I even made an appetizer of cheese and crackers. *The Notebook* put Cathy in the right mood and when the movie was done, I served her chili on the good dishes by candlelight. I even put down a bowl with a little bit of chili for the dog.

We sat on each end of the island and looked into each other's eyes through the flickering candlelight. I lifted my wine glass. "Here's to spending a romantic evening with the love of my life. Cathy, you are beautiful, and I'm happy to spend my life with you."

Her eyes began to sparkle and she said, "I love you, too."

We sipped some more wine, smiled at each other, then took our first mouthfuls of delicious chili. Cathy's eyes started to water. My nose began to run. The dog started to whine.

I asked, "Uh, what do you think of my chili?"

The dog whined some more and started licking his butt. I think he was trying to get the taste off his tongue.

Cathy said, "It's...uh...it's, um, well it's..." And, with that, she got up and ran to the bathroom. I gulped some more wine. The dog started scratching at the door to get out.

Well, in the end, my night was a disaster. The chili was so awful it could be considered a biohazard and my best girl was going to be in the bathroom for a while. Hard to get romantic after that. What a failure this was. I started to clean up.

When Cathy finally came out of the bathroom, she said, "If we're keeping any of that for leftovers, we'll need more toilet paper."

I slumped down in a chair. I guess Cathy sensed my disappointment. She walked over, sat on my lap, put her arms around my neck, kissed me, then looked me in the eye and said, "Your chili should be declared a banned substance, but you put together a great evening. Thank you." Then she kissed me again.

We wound up having our romantic evening thanks to wine and a hot fire on a cold evening. So, now, I ask you. Can I cook or can I cook?



An Old Resolution

By Mary Ann Tanking

I vowed several years ago after spending and overspending on a shop hop trip, not to buy any more fabric until what I purchased was sewed up.

However, a friend called and said, "Let's do lunch in McPherson. I need some new needles."

I said, "Let's go, it's a beautiful day."

Upon entering Stitches, I spotted a bolt of a beautiful William Morris fabric in blues and rose. Oh, my, I have to have a little of that . . . I'll figure out what to do with it later. One hour later, I had a beautiful pattern in hand and Woo Hoo! They had a kit all made up for the pattern with all William Morris fabrics. I then purchased plenty of the blue and rose for the backing.

Thrilled with my purchase . . . I enrolled in a quilt retreat for several days in Concordia, KS. It was a great opportunity to work long days, eat good food and have great conversations with the other 11 people.

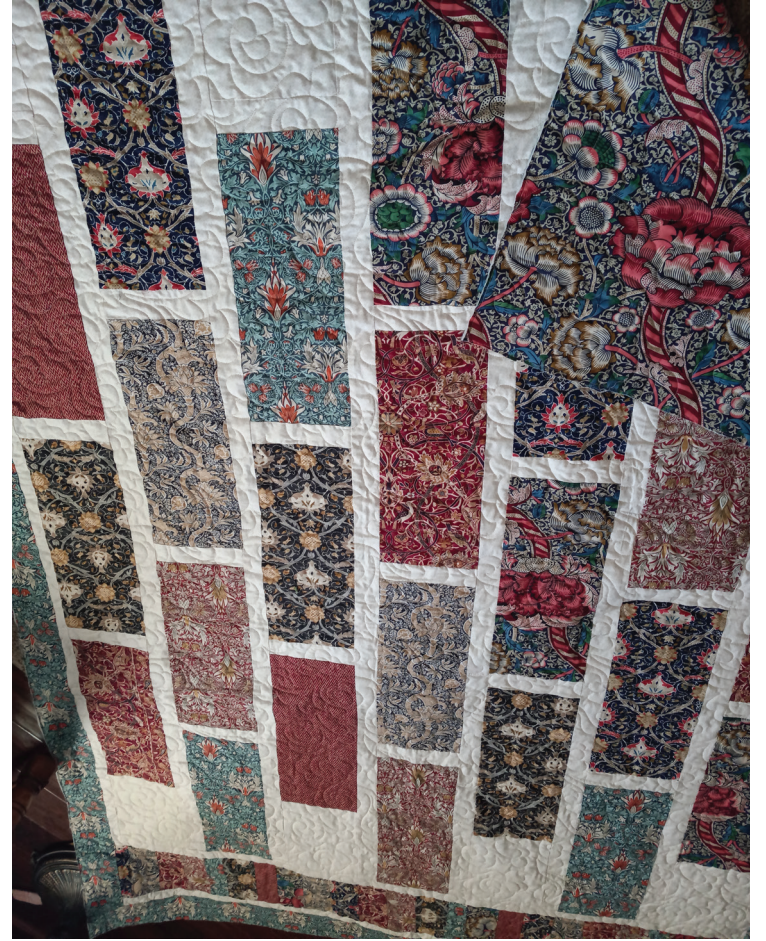
I followed the pattern to a tee . . . but I had misread the directions on cutting the sashing and borders. NOTE: when a pattern says cut all borders and sashing across grain, they mean it!! Then I discovered I was making the quilt top a bit larger than the directions, so I didn't have quite enough fabric for one of the borders.

You can guess . . . Yes, back to Stitches I went. Yes, there was more William Morris bolts and yes, one of the fabrics would be perfect for the second border.

The quilt top is finished and in the able hands of Kathryn Perney of the Quilting Station in Salina to be machine quilted.

I cannot wait to have a nap under it . . . but first I have to do the binding -- perhaps, lunch again in McPherson. Maybe I need new needles.

Mary Ann Tanking is a retired art instructor, artist and avid quilter who lives in Salina KS.



Mary Ann's quilt, top corner turned down to show backing material.



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Twisted Star

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This time around we are going to focus on a little quilt. This is designed as a baby quilt, and finishes at 48" Square. Add a border if you want it a bit bigger for a lap quilt.

Fabric Requirements:

- Fabric A - dark - 1 1/2 yards
- Fabric B - light - 1 yard
- Fabric C - medium light - 1/2 yard
- Fabric D - medium - 1/4 yard
- Fabric E- light tone on tone - 1 yard (sashing)
- Fabric F - light tone on tone - 1/4 yard (sashing)

PART 1 of 3:

Making Block 1: This is a basic Friendship star - you will be making 16 blocks
For EACH BLOCK Cut:

Two 2 1/2" squares of Fabric A (Total of 32 needed for 16 blocks)

Four 2 1/2" squares of Fabric B (Total of 64 needed)

Three 3" squares of Fabric A (Total of 32 needed)

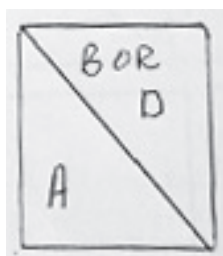
Two 3" squares of Fabric B (Total of 48 needed)

Two 1/2 X 4 1/2" rectangles of Fabric C (Total of 32 needed)

One 3" square of Fabric D (Total of 16 needed)

For ONE block:

On the wrong side of two the 3" Fabric A squares and two of the 3" Fabric B squares mark a diagonal line. Place these right sides together and sew a 1/4" seam on either side of the diagonal line. Cut on the diagonal line. Press each half square triangle towards the dark. You will have 4 of A/B half square triangles. Repeat using one 3" square of Fabric A and one 3" square of Fabric D to make 2 of A/D half square triangles. Square these up to 2 1/2".



Doilies – The Forgotten Fiber Art

By Barbara Kalkis

Doilies get a bad rap. We can easily admit to socially acceptable faults and find sympathy from our friends: Do you secretly gobble chocolate bonbons that you have hidden in a flour canister? No problem. You're in good company. Do you spend \$300 of your household "pin money" (*yes, Cash!*) purchasing fabric at a quilt show because you don't want your husband to see it on your credit statement? Get in line. Every savvy woman knows that trick.

BUT... if you tell friends that you have a collection (*please, not a 'stash'*) of doilies and ... WORSE! ... that you've sprinkled them around your house, you will be a marked woman. Your friends will be shocked. They will laugh in that indulgent way that says you are completely old-fashioned and out of sync with life in the 21st century. You will be compared to their grandmothers or, worse, their great-grandmothers -- and not in a good way. It's just easier to say you crochet and change the topic to something easy -- like the weather.

Admitting that you love doilies is like saying you love dust collectors. Just saying the word "doily" raises eyebrows and giggles. It's truly unfortunate that the word sprung from the 17th century clothmaker who created the first doily "napkin." But doilies are so much more than fanciful clutter. These spidery webs of cotton, linen or silk fuse artistry, beauty and practicality into one delicate form.

By now you have guessed that I have a doily collection. In fact, I have an entire drawerful of doilies to match the colors of every season, holiday and just-because days. Following the fall frenzy of harvest, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, the blue doilies come out in January; red in February; violet and greens in March... you get the idea.

A Tribute to Art, Patience and Ingenuity

Doilies have some special characteristics. They are crocheted from fine threads – not yarn. Thin, small crochet hooks are used as the stitching medium. They feature lacy patterns that allow the surface beneath them to be seen.

What distinguishes the doily crafter is the talent to imagine and create the airiest designs as if by instinct. Delicate pansies, roses, fantasy posies, leaves, stars and whimsical stitches form unique patterns. These exquisite flights of fancy cannot be repeated except by the artist, much less found in a pattern book.

The wonder of doilies is not just in their intricate stitches and designs but in the ways artists adapt them for practical use. Doilies serve as centerpieces, like the 25-inch diameter one that sits on my dining table. Small ones serve as coasters for wine and water glasses and dessert bowls or plates. They give a frilled edge under potted plants, lamps, alarm clocks (*okay, I may go overboard*). With a small bar of soap or lavender seeds, they make perfect pomanders for towel and linen closets.

Crocheted in closed stitches, they become potholders and hot pads. When adorned with lacy borders, pillowcases, everyday tea towels and flour sack fabrics become formal guest items.

Every doily gets its time on display in my house. It is a small way to honor the anonymous women who created this lowly form of fiber art. Perhaps they did so out of boredom or necessity. Maybe it was the desire for a touch of finery in an otherwise functional home. Or -- just maybe -- doilies express the passion for art and beauty in a loving soul.

©Barbara Kalkis. Barbara spends her time writing, teaching, and consulting with high-tech clients. She's author of *Little Ditties for Every Day: A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm*. Contact her at BarbaraKalkis01@gmail.com.



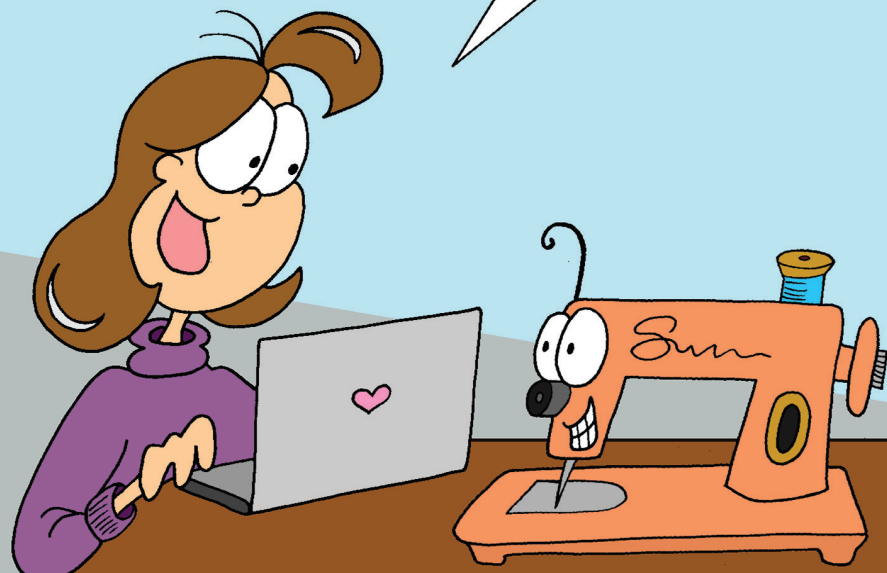
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The Modern Priscilla Magazine

by Rachel Greco

Today there are many kinds of magazines, blogs and websites devoted to needlework enthusiasts with articles, photos and how-to instructions for many different types of needlework, including sewing, quilting, embroidery, knitting, crochet and more. Social media groups are also available that allow members to interact with one another and share pictures of their work. And yet, 100 years ago, there were very few magazines on the market devoted to women's needlework.

The Modern Priscilla was a popular women's magazine that first appeared in 1887. Published by the Priscilla Company in Lynn, Massachusetts, the editors were Frank S. and Miss Beulah F. Kellog. By 1925, this monthly magazine claimed a readership of 600,000. The price per copy was 10 cents in 1911. In 1927, the price had risen to 20 cents.

Subtitled "A Fancy Working Magazine," this publication was aimed at women, with a particular emphasis on needlework fans. All types of needlework were illustrated -- from hand embroidery and clothing construction to tatting, crochet, knitting and drawn work. One advertisement proclaimed,

"Women who like pretty clothes are almost invariably needle-workers because they know that a touch of embroidery gives even the most commonplace garment an air of charm and distinction."

In addition to the emphasis on needlework, the magazine included tips and hints for caring for the household along with recipes, short fiction stories, dress patterns, China painting, information about new products and letters to the editor. Advertisements included such companies as Eagle Brand Condensed Milk, Cream of Wheat, Campbell's Soup, Old Dutch Cleanser, Heinz, Spaghetti, Quaker Oats and Jell-O.

Each issue was packed with illustrations of the latest dress patterns. Patterns in the early 1900s leaned heavily toward the Edwardian influence. Dresses were shown with dropped shoulders and long, narrow skirts that ended at the instep. Hobble skirts and tunics were also featured. Fashion changed radically by 1915 with the introduction of a style of design known as "war crinoline" showing hemlines creeping upward and skirts that were full and bell-shaped. By the 1920s, illustrations showed simple shift style dresses with clean long lines.

The magazine also featured serialized stories. Two different stories appeared in each issue, and the editors were always looking for stories that included "dramatic interest having to do with the affairs of real people." They searched for stories that were concerned with the actual problems of the day.

By the 1920s, books based on the magazine's content were popular. The *Modern Priscilla Cookbook*, published in 1924, included 1,000 recipes. The *Modern Priscilla Home Furnishing Book* appeared in 1925, touting the idea of a "one-woman power kitchen." This type of kitchen was defined as "comfortable, convenient and efficient."

The Modern Priscilla magazine was so popular that it began to absorb competing publications. In March 1912, *Everyday Housekeeping Magazine* had been acquired; then in May 1917, *The Modern Priscilla* absorbed *Home Needlework Magazine*. By 1930 *The Modern Priscilla* was out of print.

Rachel Greco owns *Grandma's Attic*, a traditional quilt shop in Dallas, Oregon. A quilt historian and avid reader, she gives talks on needlework, the role of women in American history, and their connection to fabric. She has written several books and patterns and runs *Grandma's Quilt Club*, a monthly quilt class where participants collect quilt blocks, learn about quilt history and make new friends. Learn more at <https://grandmasatticquilting.com>.



Grandma's Tablecloth

By Tammy Page

Who has ever sat down at grandma's dining table of fried chicken with lots of "crunchies," real mashed potatoes with butter, garden green beans with onions and homemade pies and then slowly, but surely, strolled to the living room to sit and digest?

After the delicious meal prepared with my grandma's loving hands, she would store the dairy items in the refrigerator and cover the rest with one of her flowered starched cotton tablecloths. No one worried about the food sitting out for a while -- sometimes hours -- and besides, it made it convenient to go back in and grab a second helping if you missed it the first time.

I remember sitting on my grandma's lap while everyone continued their conversations they had begun at the kitchen table. After dessert and digesting we would make our way back into the kitchen to start up the dishes. There was no automatic dishwasher, just us girls washing, drying and putting away. Grandma had enough granddaughters to pitch in and make clean up go quicker. This clean up time with three generations of Williams' women made for lots of laughs and catching up.

I attribute my own yummy, mashed potatoes to the guidance and willingness of my grandma and mom to allow me to make mistakes until finally achieving the smoothest, tastiest bowl of tators around. Of course, there were some trial and errors like when I lifted the beaters out of the pan a little too much and splatters of potato and milk sprayed all over the kitchen.

The desserts sat out under the tablecloth for the rest of the day in case we got a hankering for another piece of pie or chocolate cake. I'm sure most people today would not chance it for fear of food poisoning, but I don't remember ever getting sick from eating the leftovers sitting under grandma's freshly starched tablecloth.

The times I remember in grandma's kitchen bring back so many wonderful memories. The smells, the warmth and the cool linoleum beneath my feet come to mind often and make my day a little brighter.

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SLICES OF LIFE

Finding an Overseas Job - Part 1

By Sherry Osland

In an earlier article, I shared about a summer job of being a nanny in New York state between my junior and senior years of college. With that under my belt, I got the “itch” to explore the possibilities of a job overseas. Mind you, this was before the age of the web interlinking the whole world with information at your fingertips and in the click of a mouse (mouse??) Finding resources was one of physically going places, seeking, seeking.

Graduating in Dec. (1973), I went to the Job Placement Center on campus. I was thinking possibly of a summer job on a ship. Traveling ports of the world, docking at exotic places, and working with and meeting people from all over. (Dream BIG or go home, right?) Over a couple months’ time, I wrote approximately 30 letters for applications. I’d had experience in sales, and I could make beds and clean toilets if I had to. Surely, I could find something! My barrier was that the ships required English AND the language of the ship’s origin.

The head of the Placement Center took an interest and offered his help. He had just recently been contacted by a representative of the Australian Government. More specifically, the State Education Department for the State of Victoria was hiring temporary American teachers. He knew my degree was in Education. “Australians speak English!” Would I like to consider that? Hum. I only had a couple weeks to think about it.

I signed up for an interview and, at the end, the interviewer readily signed me up to teach Art in Melbourne, Victoria, arriving the first part of February. She would be contacting me later with details. I walked out with my head spinning. Had I really just done what I’d done?? It had all happened so easily and quickly!

I had a bit of time at home awaiting “the” phone call before leaving for Australia. I rounded up materials, books, etc for my time away. I waited and waited . . . and waited. No phone call. With a lump in my throat, I finally called and got ahold of the lady. She told me all the positions in Victoria had been filled (the lump fell into my stomach!!). Yet, in the next breath she said, “We’re in contact with the state of West Australia, and they are going to participate in our program. Would you go to Perth instead?” Gulping the lump again, I said an incredulous “yes”. I can still clearly see my Mom’s face when I told her where I was going. She had been vacuuming in the living room, had stopped while I was on the phone and she stood -- without breathing, I’m sure -- until I got off. We were on the same page . . . Where is Perth?

The contract I signed was such that I would leave the US the first of Feb., enter the country with a minimum of \$600, have my vaccinations record and passport in hand, and would teach for one year. I was not going to a specific school or vacancy. That seemed a bit disconcerting. I would be assigned a school when I got there. The “program” I was hired for had the goal of hiring four-year trained American teachers to step into positions of two-year trained Australian teachers -- giving them the opportunity to return for two more years training.

Again, my head was spinning! I never did get a good idea of what Perth was like before I got there. A friend of my Dad’s said he had been on R&R in Perth during the war. He said it was a nice place. My Mom had an old book on Australia from her youth. The first few pages had a two-page photo of a 10’ lizard! That was encouraging -- NOT! Because Mom was having such a hard time with the whole thing, I just had to sit on my doubts and nerves and pretend I didn’t have either of those.

Things happened quickly from there. I must’ve packed, unpacked, and re-packed a hundred times. We were to take one suitcase with a 77# limit. I’d sit on it, close it, re-think what I had packed, open it and take out one blouse. So hard! Mandatory, to me, were at least a couple of my art books (heavy). I would need some of my music -- a heavy old player with some cassettes (no tiny devices like today). I barely had room or weight for clothes. I’d just have to get some clothes with my first paycheck.

I was to catch a flight out of San Francisco. I moved across the country in stages. I said goodbye to my two brothers and sister at home, then boarded the train out of Newton, Kan., at 5 a.m. -- destination, Albuquerque, New Mexico. I said my goodbyes to my folks at the train. I remember looking back at them, memorizing the scene for I wouldn’t see them for a year. Most of the train people were asleep and a porter brought me a pillow. He was so kind. He saw my tears and asked me about them and wished me well. By sunup my tears were under control.

Thirteen hours later, I was at my sister and brother-in-law’s home in Los Alamos, New Mexico. I spent a couple days with them. We hiked to their favorite canyon, rode the tram to the top of the mountain and had dinner, experienced the magical lights as we came down, visited Santa Fe and Albuquerque. Then, a short flight to San Francisco.

. . . to be continued.

The Fishing Trailer

by Kerri Habben Bosman

I find being at the beach in winter is gently affirming. The fishing pier is closed for the winter and the beach is an endless expanse, empty save for the solitude seekers and the dog walkers. The busy tourist season is in the past, and many people there now are enjoying their solitude just like I am. The late afternoon light dwindles softly into evening. There is a dormancy to it, which is what I value most about winter. It gives me extra time to appreciate the gift of each new day.

In May 2021, my husband, Wayne, and I purchased a second home on the North Carolina coast about three hours from our home in Chapel Hill, NC. At the time, Wayne’s daughter and her family lived about three miles from the new house. We loved that they were close by, but we also knew that could change. The Marines moved them to California this past June. However, within that first year, we packed in many wonderful family visits. Often, all 18 of us were together, from the nearest to those living farthest away.

In April last year, we welcomed Wayne’s mom, his sister and his brother-in-law. For four days we treasured being together, from the youngest at age 4 to the eldest at 101. Experiencing our vibrant family clustered around the table gave us the chance to soak in all the joy. From my chosen space in the kitchen -- I thrive on cooking for those I love -- I could still be fully immersed in the delightful chaos that a big family creates. Food and beverages quietly arriving at the right time somehow makes everything flow perfectly.

When we bought the house, these special times are exactly what we’d hoped for. We knew we wanted a home close to the beach that would offer a gathering place for family and friends. With everyone having varying schedules and responsibilities, often our visitors come on the spur of the moment so the house is always ready for the next arrivals. And so are we.


Wayne calls our new beach retreat “The Fishing Trailer,” which causes his grown children to shake their heads. This isn’t actually a misnomer since it is a double-wide trailer on a permanent foundation and my husband does love to fish. I understand the reverse psychology as well. If someone visualizes an old trailer with the barest of essentials, they’ll be pleasantly surprised when they discover a comfortable 1500 square foot home.

After working as an auto mechanic for nearly 49 years, Wayne knew that he would retire soon and need a place to set up the tools he’d amassed over the years. The large garage on the coast property was ideal, and it, too, has become a destination with music, a dartboard and an extra refrigerator. It will soon hold a 1965 Rambler Convertible that Wayne is restoring.

All the furnishings were included with the home, and we were pleased with the taste of the previous owners. We brought in a few things to make it our own and they mesh well. A roll-top desk is in the living room, a quiet area that has evolved into my own special retreat. When the love gets too loud or boisterous in the rest of the house, it becomes a soothing sanctuary for my writing, reading, one-on-one conversation or napping.

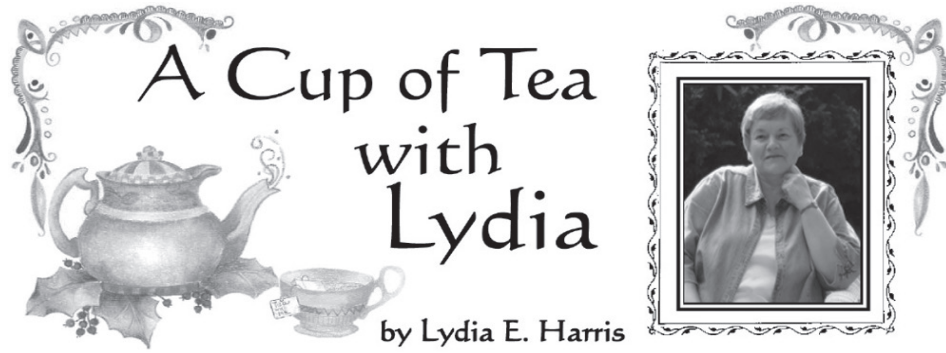
Because we go back and forth so often, we’ve developed a routine for closing up The Fishing Trailer. Before we move a single thing, we breathe in the essence of the ones who used the rooms. While looking under beds for forgotten socks, fixing a little boy’s toy box, or refreshing linens, we can’t help but savor every individual moment. Making memories... till next time.

Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer in Chapel Hill, NC.

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What Makes a Tea Party?

“What makes a tea party?” I mused while mixing up a batch of shortbread to serve a friend. If you serve tea, does that make any gathering a tea party? Or do you need to use teapots and delicate teacups? Or does it require special foods served from a three-tiered plate stand? Or is a tea party simply a party with tea?

Seasoned tea lovers offered a wide range of answers. Here are the top 10. Which ones match your thoughts?

- _____ 1. “The most you’ll get from me is plunking a teabag into a mug.”
- _____ 2. “If you want to call it a tea party, it’s a tea party.”
- _____ 3. “At least two people, tea, at least one fancy cookie -- shortbread is fine; attractive cups, and at least one other thing such as a nice tablecloth or napkins.”
- _____ 4. “I think a party has to be somewhat fancy. Otherwise, it’s simply two people having tea.”
- _____ 5. “Any time can become a tea party even with only one kind of tea and whatever little goodies you have on hand (even store-bought cookies and peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches cut into triangles). An atmosphere of friendship and time to connect and relax makes it a tea party for me.”
- _____ 6. “You need tea, guests, and LEISURELY TIME to enjoy the tea and guests. The rest is all optional fluff. Time is essential.”
- _____ 7. “The key ingredients are sharing tea with a friend and taking time to relax and enjoy talking together. It can be simple and spontaneous or planned and elaborate.”
- _____ 8. “A tea party takes loving hearts, an assortment of teas, a goodie or two, and a true desire to know the answer when you ask, ‘What have you been doing lately?’”
- _____ 9. “A tea party is a frame of mind. It’s about loving and sharing.”
- _____ 10. “A few niceties send the message, ‘You are special, and I treasure this time with you.’”

These responses ranged from fancy with frills to just dropping a teabag into hot water. But they all needed companionship, conversation, and time.

Teas may have different names: Light Tea (tea and scones, which sometimes includes a light lunch). Or High Tea (lunch or dinner with meats and cheeses). Or Afternoon Tea (dainty sandwiches, scones, and desserts). But it doesn’t matter what we call our par-TEAS. Mainly, my desire is to bless, not impress, my guests. If I have time, I enjoy preparing a fancy teatime to share with a guest or two. But I’m also content to simply sip Republic of Tea’s Mango Ceylon tea and nibble Walker’s shortbread with a friend. When appropriate, I also enjoy praying together.

Thank you, God, for the sweetness of friends and the warmth of your love. Bless our teatimes with relaxed sharing and the joy and comfort of your presence. In your name. Amen.

It’s a new year with new opportuni-TEAs. So, pick your style, and let’s have a tea party! I’ve included a homemade shortbread recipe to try.

Lydia E. Harris is a tea enthusiast, grandmother of five, and author of *In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Recipes Together* and *Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting*. Her books are available at Amazon.

From Lydia’s Recipe File: Two-for-One Shortbread Cookies

Use the same buttery dough to make Basic Shortbread and Fancy Shortbread.

Basic Shortbread Fingers

- Ingredients:**
- 1 cup butter, softened (2 sticks)
 - 3/4 cup sifted powdered sugar
 - 2 cups flour
 - 1 tsp. vanilla flavoring
 - Coarse sparkling sugar crystals

Directions for the Shortbread Base:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line two 8-inch square pans with parchment paper. Let the paper stick up about an inch around the edges to lift out the shortbread when baked.

Cream together the butter and sugar. Mix in vanilla.

Add flour, one cup at a time. Mix thoroughly.

Divide the dough in half.

Evenly spread half the shortbread dough into each pan.

For Basic Shortbread, sprinkle coarse sugar on top and pat it down.

Bake for 20 minutes, until light brown.

Remove from oven. Cut into shortbread fingers, about 1 inch by 2 inches. Prick each finger with a fork.

Bake for another 5 to 10 minutes. Watch closely. The shortbread should be light brown and firm when done.

Carefully lift the parchment paper and shortbread from the pan onto a cooling rack.

When cool, place the shortbread pieces in a covered container.

Makes about 16 pieces.



Fancy Shortbread Squares

Topping Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups shredded coconut
- 3/4 cup chopped candied fruit mixture (pineapple, red and green cherries)
- 1/3 cup golden raisins
- 1/4 cup chopped nuts (walnuts or pecans)
- 1 cup sweetened condensed milk

Directions for the Topping:

Combine the coconut, fruit, and nuts in a bowl.

Stir in condensed milk.

Spread the topping on the unbaked shortbread base in one of the pans.

Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until done. Topping should be firm and brown. Do not overbake.

Remove from oven and cool.

Transfer the shortbread on the parchment paper to a cutting board.

Cut shortbread into one-inch squares. Place in a covered container and refrigerate.

Makes about 30 squares. Serve in small paper liners if desired.

Variations:

1. For different flavors of basic shortbread, consider adding a few drops of almond or lemon extract.

2. To make only Basic Shortbread from all the dough, line a 9 x 13-inch pan with parchment paper and spread the dough evenly in the pan. Follow the baking steps.

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Town and Country Cooking

By Janette Hess

The kitchen playground

From babies chewing on plastic measuring cups to toddlers rearranging lower cupboards to teenagers helping with meal preparation, kitchen activities are fun for kids of all ages. Help your kids get comfortable in any kitchen “playground” by inviting them to assist with simple cooking projects.

Who knew that making a batch of granola could be an amusing alternative to screen time?

Slow Cooker Cinnamon Granola starts with simple ingredients combined in a slow cooker. Under the watchful eye of adults, kids learn how to level off dry ingredients and pack brown sugar. They observe the various volumes in a stack of measuring cups or spoons. They use their clean fingertips to crunch sliced almonds. They measure brown sugar before oil, and then they measure honey in the oily cup, so that the honey slips right out. By measuring ingredients in a planned order, they see that a single measuring cup can be used three different times. Score! With this recipe they avoid hot ovens and stoves, although adults need to run the food processor and keep little fingers away from the slow cooker once it starts heating.

When the granola is completely cooled, it may be served as a breakfast cereal, a nutritious snack, or a central ingredient in a super-simple, kid-friendly recipe such as Yogurt and Granola Parfait or Cinnamon Ice Cream Dessert.



Slow Cooker Cinnamon Granola

- 3½ cups old fashioned oats, divided
- 1 cup natural sliced almonds
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup canola oil
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon water
- Dash salt

In small food processor, pulse ½ cup oats to fine. Place all oats in slow cooker. Add almonds by hand, crushing into small pieces with fingers. Add cinnamon and toss to combine. In small microwavable bowl or measuring pitcher, combine brown sugar, oil, honey, vanilla extract, water and salt. Heat in microwave 20 to 30 seconds, or just long enough to soften honey but not make liquid dangerously hot. Remove from microwave; whisk to combine. Pour mixture over oats and almonds. Use spatula to toss and combine. Cover with vented lid and cook on low for 2 to 3 hours, stirring every ½ hour. (If vented lid is not available, leave lid very slightly ajar.) After each stirring, wipe condensation from lid with paper towel. When mixture is golden brown, spread on rimmed cookie sheet to cool. Store in airtight container or bag. Makes approximately 4 cups granola.

Yogurt and Granola Parfait



- ¼ cup blueberries, diced strawberries or diced bananas
- 1 single-serving container of yogurt, flavor or style of choice
- ¼ cup Slow Cooker Cinnamon Granola

Using clear cup, layer half of fruit, yogurt and granola, in that order. Repeat layers. Serve immediately. Makes one kid-sized parfait.

Cinnamon Ice Cream Dessert

- 1½ quarts (48 ounces) vanilla ice cream
- 1 12-ounce carton whipped topping, thawed
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 cups granola, divided
- ¾ to 1 cup caramel ice cream topping

In large bowl, soften ice cream. Fold in whipped topping and cinnamon. Sprinkle bottom of 9- by 13-inch pan with 1½ cups granola. Carefully spread with ice cream mixture. Top with remaining 1½ cups granola. Evenly drizzle with caramel topping. Freeze until firm. Cut into squares to serve. Makes 12 to 18 squares, depending on serving size.



A trained journalist, Janette Hess focuses her writing on interesting people and interesting foods. She is a Master Food Volunteer with her local extension service and enjoys collecting, testing and sharing recipes.

2 Minute Lift

By Kathy J. Sotak

Just Say NO to New Year’s Goals: Do This Instead

Are you kicking around new commitments this year? You may have noticed we don’t talk much about new year’s goals anymore. Perhaps after years of trying, it’s safer to keep to ourselves. At this time of year, we eagerly write down our dreams for the next 365. Then, as the rhythm takes hold of our days, we slowly hear the fizzle.

I set goals every year -- an expected ritual, which usually declares, “Lose weight and exercise more.” Or “Save money and pay off debt.” Perhaps, you too?

If you disagree with me and have incredible success with each year’s goals, you may as well stop reading now. However, keep reading if you ponder, like me, “Why are our new year’s goals pierced with uncertainty and struggle?” I’ll tell you why: we are doing it wrong.

Our goals hang out in the future without an **anchor in today**. You may be familiar with the definition of depression and anxiety: depression can occur when our mind lives in the *past*; and anxiety can occur when our mind lives in the *future*. *How much of my life have I lost by living in the past or the future?* No wonder my new year’s goals haven’t worked.

On *this* new year, I have taken a new approach. I am **planting seeds instead**. When I do – I have to be present, and I can’t just walk away.

When I set a goal:

- It feels like WORK to get there, with STRUGGLE along the path
- It unconsciously says I may FALL short
- Only SOME succeed

When I plant a seed:

- I am eager to spend time with my seeds, to witness how they unfold at every stage
- I treat them with great tenderness and care. I must regularly water, give sunlight and touch its leaves and soil
- Although I want to see it bear fruit in the future, I can’t worry about that now. My focus is tending to my garden as it is *today*

I have planted my seeds on this new year. I carefully opened my packets and placed hand-selected seeds in this beautiful, fertile garden of 2023. What seeds are you planting this year? Perhaps we can visit each other’s gardens, help pull weeds and tell a tale or two along the way. Later, we can celebrate each other’s harvest and pick the finest seeds for next year.

May the seeds of your new year be planted along the path towards your bliss.



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Harmony in Love and Marriage

by Lesley R. Nuttall

Love and marriage are intertwined. You can't have one without the other. Now, I'm not an expert on marriage -- or a marriage counselor, but I have experienced 61 years of marriage with the same fellow.

In the beginning, it certainly is a learning experience. We all have different wants and desires in life. This is where you learn to compromise to get along successfully. I was a shy farm girl, while my hubby, Craig was an outgoing, fun loving city guy. It wasn't long before we had bonded. When we started out, he smoked cigarettes and cigars.

As it turned out, I was allergic to the smoke. It wasn't long before he threw away the smokes and became a 'non-smoker.' That was 'compromise' in action.

After a year of bliss, we were blessed with a boy, and several years later a girl. We had started our own business and worked successfully in it together. We spent a lot of time with our young family camping and traveling. We each volunteered for our children's activities -- Hubby as our son's hockey coach, and I became leader of our daughter's Brownie and Girl Guide group.

As it turned out, we both seem to like the same kinds of activities, which was great. There was the camping and traveling we enjoyed with our kids, and we both enjoyed sports like hockey and baseball. We had friends we loved playing cards with. Volunteering took up a lot of our life when the mayor of our city asked my Hubby to be the chairperson of a group to rebuild the arena that had burned. Once rebuilt, attention was directed to building an indoor swimming pool and then a seniors recreation center. I helped throughout these volunteer ventures to benefit our city, and we both enjoyed what we were doing.

In any marriage, a couple doesn't have to do everything together. It likely works better if you each do have your own interests. He enjoyed fishing and snowmobiling with his guy friends. I loved to play my accordion with several friends entertaining seniors in a long-term care home. Sometimes we just 'jammed' together, playing our various instruments. Craig would often come along to listen.

In marriage there are always ups and downs. Loss is a big downer. We were no different than any other family. We lost our parents, he lost siblings, and we lost siblings-in-laws. We lost our son to cancer, which was a very difficult time for us. We held on to each other and made it through the grief. Losing a child is a hard time for anyone, but losing a spouse must be equally challenging, and I sympathize. I dread the day if/when that happens to me.

A lasting marriage needs a lot of love! Kindness and caring plays such a big part. There is always give and take in any marriage. I found one of the most important things in marriage is 'respect' for each other. Showing your appreciation has a lasting effect. Serving him coffee in bed every morning is one of my 'acts' of kindness. He still brings me a 'surprise' gift of flowers when I least expect it.

Every person has individual 'likes and dislikes' in food. He likes seafood and olives; I say, 'no thanks!' I love sour cream and cottage cheese. He says, 'yuck!' Marriage is what you put into it and give each other. In our 80s, we help each other a lot. I do the cooking, and he does the dishes afterwards. I do the laundry and he helps fold sheets and towels. He does most of the grocery shopping because I hate it!

Bless all of you who have enjoyed a long relationship, and I wish you many more years together!

©2023 Lesley Nuttall is the Author of *Secrets of Party Planning*. She lives in Thunder Bay, ON, Can, with her husband.



Lesley and Craig Nuttall on their wedding day.

Writing From Life

by Jeanette Lukowski

New Year's Ideas

It's that time again! New Year's Resolutions. We hear about them almost everywhere we turn: make a resolution to lose weight, make a plan to start exercising, make a goal to renovate the house, make a plan to start a garden.

Doesn't it always sound great? Until we face the check-in on those plans in about February. For some, it's a great report! For others, it's just another reason to beat ourselves up, because "I failed to" do whatever had seemed like a good idea in that last week of December or first week of January.

What if we take the pressure off ourselves? What if we were to simply change the language we use? Rather than referring to something as a Resolution, why not call it an idea? Or even a project? As in, "I have this idea for a project I would like to explore. Remember that section of the garden that didn't bloom so well last year? What if I try planting some new flowers in that area?" Or "I'm thinking it might be fun to join my children/grandchildren this next spring when they go to hike [insert location here] -- so walking around the block every time the weather is good will help increase my stamina!"

Without making the goal too strict (like walking three miles every day, rain or shine) or too vast (like creating an entire new garden in the part of the yard where the swing set has sat unused for five years), we can turn the task into a routine -- a routine which conveniently begins with baby-steps.

At about this time last year, I heard about a Quilting Journal. As a writer, I was intrigued by the idea. A quick internet search presented me with information about quilting journals I could purchase -- and the information meant to be recorded for posterity in those keepers-of-notes-and-swatches.

It seemed like too much work, so I closed out of the internet search and headed to the refrigerator. Yep, one could say I'm an emotional eater.

The idea of the quilting journal lingered, though. I realized I have lots of different notebooks (I can't help myself from purchasing a new one when it's on sale or has a cute cover). Why not just use one of them?

By about March, the quilting journal had simply become a habitual part of starting -- or finishing -- a quilt project. On some pages, there are notes from quilt guild meetings; on other pages, quick sketches or measurements of a quilt project I saw, heard about, or had an idea about on my own. There is even one page with a taped-on page of graph paper, documenting the details about a quilt I had sketched out to capture the design.

I have enjoyed recording each project when completed. I think I'll continue it this new year. Maybe I can even add something new, like a log of new quilt shops I visit! One a month?

© Jeanette Lukowski 2023. Jeanette is a mother, grandmother, teacher, and author who lives in Mankato, MN. She is inspired by the lives of strong women. Her email address is: writingfromlife@yahoo.com



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Chronic Illness

by Barbara Polston

A very young friend is very ill. He has missed weeks of school, been in and out of the hospital and had more tests than anyone his age should endure. Sadly, medical professionals are stumped.

He told his mother, "There is no hope and, if this is how my life will always be, what's the point if I will be living sick every day."

Hearing this broke something inside of me. Both of my daughters and I live with chronic health conditions. My daughters struggle more than I, but not feeling on top of our games has become an ever-present fact of our lives.

Here is what I believe I have learned:

It is possible to adjust and live a full, meaningful life. You get to know your body, recognizing when it will be a good day and when it will not.

You take advantage of the good days and do the best you can on the not so good.

There are things, like travel, that may no longer be a possibility or need to be planned for to the highest degree.

It is easy to feel sorry for yourself.

You are not being punished for anything you did or did not do. It just is.

It can seem bad until you hear others' stories. You will choose your own troubles when you hear some of the things that others deal with.

You learn to be honest, ask for what you need and are unafraid to say "no" when you cannot.

You learn more about employment law, know your rights and stand up for them. Some diagnoses put you in a "protected class" and employers must make "reasonable accommodation."

Sometimes, you back out at the last minute. You apologize. Those who respond with anger are not worthy of your time. Those who respond with empathy are true friends.

It is important that you eat healthfully and get good rest.

What, you may ask, has this to do with quilting? Just this -- my last bit of learning is that you need to find things to do that feed your soul. No surprise, for me that is quilting and sewing. For one of my daughters, it is the creation of fine art; for the other, immersion in the worlds presented in video games.

Engaging in those activities moves you out of your physical limitations into a different head space where the fullness of your imagination is your only constraint. If I am sewing a gift or a quilt that will be donated to support others, I think about the person who will end up with my creation. Thinking about and doing for others is a tremendous help for me. The act of simply creating something wonderful out of fabric is a tremendous help for me.

Please hold my young friend in your good thoughts.

©Barbara Polston, Tucson, Arizona, November 11, 2022

Barbara Polston, the author of *Quilting With Doilies: Inspiration, Techniques, and Projects* (Schiffer Press, 2015) and *Meet Puppy Brian* (2022 on www.puppybrian.com), lives in Tucson where she has failed at retirement, but is getting more time at her sewing machine. Contact Barbara at barbarapolstonquilter@gmail.com.



From Tammy Page's Recipe Box

Chocolate Chip Cream Cheese Bars

My husband Bud's, favorite bar cookies.

Mix:

1 box dry cake mix (any flavor but dark chocolate is our favorite)

1 egg and 1/3 c. oil

Pat into an 9x13 greased pan, reserving 1 cup for third layer

Bake for 10-12 min on 350.

Then Mix:

1 pkg cream cheese, 1/3 sugar, 1 egg and 1 cup choc. chips

Pour over baked cake mixture. Then add reserved 1 cup dry cake mixture

Scatter over entire cookie and bake for 18 min. longer.

Let set to cool.

(Can be a lower fat version by using low fat cream cheese and canola oil.)

*Submitted by Tammy Page. See her article in this edition.



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Yvonne Hollenbeck

Vintage Quilt

She's tattered, worn and faded,
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Years ago she was a beauty,
for that's what I've been told.

She holds a lot of memories
of happy days before,
but also scores of sadness
from sickness, death and more.

So try to treat her gently
and give her special care,
for all too soon, just like the quilt,
this too will be our fare.

Order Yvonne's new book, "A Stitch in Rhyme" at
www.yvonnehollenbeck.com — just \$15 + \$3.50 postage.

© Yvonne Hollenbeck; 2022

Yvonne Hollenbeck, from Clearfield, SD, performs her original poetry throughout the United States, captivating audiences in her wake. She is one of the most published cowgirl poets in the West and is not only a popular banquet and civic entertainer, but also co-writes songs with many western entertainers. Yvonne also pens a weekly column in the "Farmer-Rancher Exchange" and writes articles about life in rural America in various publications throughout the West. For more information, visit <https://www.yvonnehollenbeck.com>

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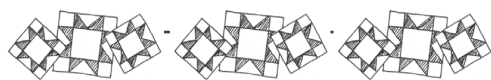
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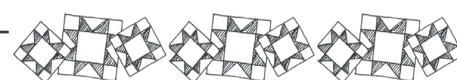
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was verified prior to going to press.. This Directory is made up of both current Country Register advertisers and non-advertising shops. Current advertisers have a notation (Ad) next to their name indicating where their ad is in this issue or visit our website, www.countryregister.com/kansas to download this issue of The Country Register. • Are we missing a shop? Please let us know.

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AD on p 22 Material Girls
306 N Buckeye
785-263-7787

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AD on p 9 Prairie Flower Crafts
205 Pioneer St
620-534-3551

ARKANSAS CITY

AD on p 11 McDonalds Sew and Vac
222 S. Summit
620-441-0939

BALDWIN CITY

AD on p 19 Quilters' Paradise
713 8th St
785-594-3477

BELLEVILLE

AD on p 6 Sew Country
1834 M St
785-527-2332

BENNINGTON

Kansas Troubles Quilt Shop
103 N Nelson
785-488-2120

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AD on p 11 Textile Art/Retail Therapy
415 N. Main
620-438-2172

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AD on p 15 Silver Threads & Golden Needles
321 Neosho St
620-364-8233

CHAPMAN

AD on p 22 Lucky Charm Quilts
405 N Marshall
785-922-6190

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612 Lincoln St (US 81)
785-818-5000

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AD on p 11 Old Town Business
101 E Spring
620-456-3225

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AD on p 16 Calico Rose Quilt Shop
319 Broadway
620-273-6020

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AD on p 5 Birds of a Feather Quilt Shop
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913-217-7736

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Valentine Note

By Barbara Kalkis

The Best Day and Way to Say, "I Love You"!

There are lots of ways and days to say, "I love you!" Birthdays, anniversaries, airport greetings and farewells, mornings off-to-work or off-to-school, hospital visits. The words can be lighthearted, serious, expressed with deep emotion at any event on any day. But how often do we say it?

If the answer is "not enough", Valentine's Day is meant for you. This one single day of the entire year is about, and specifically dedicated to, love. Birthdays, anniversaries and other events invite -- but do not require -- a proclamation of love. Valentine's Day is different. It nudges us to announce our love for someone -- anyone -- for any reason.

Consider it a make-up day for all the other days we forget to say thank you ... I appreciate all you do for me ... I never told you how much you mean to me ... thank you for helping me get a job ... my child is so happy to have you as a teacher ... you are the best secretary/assistant/manager I've ever had ... your friendship means the world to me.

Sometimes We Need a Reminder.

When I was teaching, one of my eighth-grade students visited me every morning before she went to her "home" classroom. "Ellen" was a talented artist with a gift for design, color and beauty. I let her use one chalkboard as her canvas to create her whimsical drawings because they exhilarated everyone who entered the classroom.

One morning in January, she came to my desk and shyly confided that her favorite day in elementary school was Valentine's Day. All the kids would write their name on a brown bag, decorate it, and hang it on the wall. On Valentine's Day, the children had to give everyone in their classroom a Valentine. No exceptions. She said she missed those days and the notes she received. Her wistfulness and longing not only touched me but signaled a need a teacher cannot fill.

I took the hint. That day, I told her class that we would have a Valentine's Day exchange. Everyone was to give a Valentine to every other classmate. My seventh-grade homeroom students adopted the idea when they saw the bags go up on the wall. Soon the walls were covered with bags as word spread about the special event.

That Valentine's Day became a joyous celebration of cards with names and mystery senders. For one day, the sophistication of being 13 years old disappeared. It became a day of surprise and laughter.

Doesn't that make perfect sense? Don't we all wish to hear that we are special to someone? And isn't there true joy in being the person who gives that joy to someone else?

Some USA and Canadian post offices with relevant names will forward your cards with special Valentine postmarks. Simply search the phrase "Post Offices with Valentine's Day Names" at the USPS.com or Canada Post websites. You will see cities like Kissimmee, Florida; Heartwell, Nebraska; Loving, Minnesota. Confirm that they offer a Valentine's postmark.

Join the Fun. Get a Loveland, Colorado, Valentine Postmark.

Tuck your addressed and stamped Valentines into a large envelope. Address the large envelope to The Postmaster, 446 East 29th Street, Loveland, Colorado 80538. Request the special postmark. They will forward your Valentines. Be sure the postmaster receives your cards by February 2, so they arrive at your destinations by February 14.

It's easy to say, "I love you!" Saying it on Valentine's Day makes it extra special.

©Barbara Kalkis. Barbara is a long-time high-tech marketing and public relations consultant, but her first loves are teaching and writing. Her poetry book, **Little Ditties for Every Day: A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm**, was published in 2021. Contact her at Barbarakalkis01@gmail.com.

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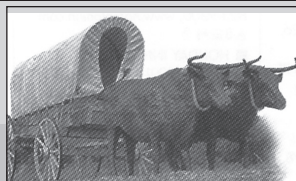
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Quilting With Barbara

By Barbara Conquest

Contain the Chaos!

A new year stretches before us. What will we do with it? Now that the holidays have become memories, it's time to look ahead, to plan new projects, to welcome the lengthening days, to get organized... "Organized," she said? Oh yes! After the chaos of December -- wrapping, unwrapping, baking, concerts, special events, over-eating and finishing gifts at the last minute (or not) -- it's time to regain some order in our lives, and a great place to start is the sewing room where we spend so much time.

Following are some ideas gleaned over the years about such organization. Some I have adopted or adapted, and some I have not, but all have some merit. But first...get rid of anything in that room that doesn't pertain to sewing, or that you know you will never use. You know -- the things you've planned to use "someday," like the two balls of yarn you'll need when you learn to knit someday, and the Styrofoam™ cones left over from a project you finished (or not) five years ago. Give the yarn to a knitter and the cones to a primary teacher or daycare. **Just get rid of it!** Once these extraneous objects disappear you can see what remains to be organized. And it will be easier, because you'll have more space.

Let's start with the big one. Most of us have unwieldy stashes of fabric and pre-cuts that will be easier to access if they are sorted and stored together according to some plan: by colour, by fibre content, by season, by size or format (e.g. jelly rolls) by theme -- whatever you think will best fit your sewing habits. One January I worked a solid week to sort my stash by colour, but that was a week well spent. Ever since then if I need a piece of red fabric, for instance, all the reds are together in one place, and that's the only place I need look.

There are methods of sewing and organizing scraps too, besides the obvious one of colour. Bonnie Hunter (Quiltville.com) has a comprehensive sorting system called *Scrap User's System* on her site. This system is useful especially for scrap quilts because it will save hours, leaving more time for piecing. Joan Ford details her system, *ScrapTherapy™* in her book *Cut the Scraps* (Taunton, © 2011) and other books in the *ScrapTherapy* series. Searching Google and YouTube also yields ideas for organization.

Thread too can be found faster if sorted. Little plastic boxes for thread storage can be useful, but really any small container(s) will do. It may suffice to use general categories such as warm colours, cool colours, neutrals and novelties -- whatever works in your space.

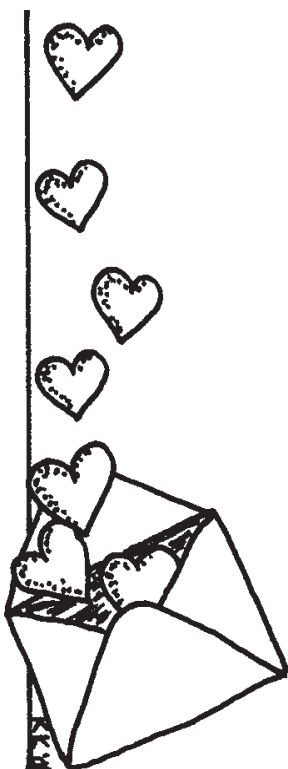
Keeping "like with like" is a principle that applies to small tools and notions. Grouping similar often-used tools like add-a-quarter rulers, seam rippers (alas, I have many of those), purple thangs™ and such together in unused coffee mugs or even tin cans kept near the sewing machine saves precious minutes of frantic pawing through piles of things looking for one elusive small tool. If you don't want to go the coffee mug route, there are many inexpensive dollar-store containers ideal for the organization of small tools. As for other notions such as batting tape, fabric glues, snap fasteners, and such, I have found that listing the contents of a container is a good idea. It is much faster to scan a list than it is to sort through a container and easier to see immediately whether you have a particular item. Pin the list(s) up somewhere obvious.

As a former librarian, I have my numerous quilting books numbered and entered in an online program called *The Organized Quilter©* (now unavailable, but there are others). Books are listed by author, subject and title. Had I fewer books, it would have been sufficient to group them on the shelves by subject (e.g. applique, Christmas) alphabetically, or by author. Either method saves time in the long run.

Quilters who have several UFOs (who doesn't?) could save themselves some frustration by placing all the components of each UFO in a separate bag, making a list of them, and relegating them to an out-of-the-way corner out of sight. Who needs them in a location that allows you to see and hear them nagging and whining every time you enter the room? The list will tell you immediately what you have in that corner without disturbing them, and, when you get around to finishing one or more of them, it is so satisfying to check them off the list!

Here's to an organized and productive 2023. Happy New Year!

Article © Barbara Conquest, *BlueSky Quilting*, Tofield, AB w



Winter Walk

By Nancy J. Nash

In many parts of the Northern hemisphere, winter seems to last a long, long time. We wonder what it will bring -- heaps of snow, freezing rain, temperatures well below freezing?

Gone are the deep red roses that looked like brilliant balloons about to float away on a mellow day last summer. Gone are the green leaves of trees that glowed like lanterns when lit by the sun. The patchwork combinations of fall reds, oranges and yellows have disappeared without a trace. Birdsong is sparse, as are the shouts and laughter of children.

One wintry day, I decided to walk around the hardware store parking lot for a little exercise. There were only a few vehicles scattered about, candidates for bringing home purchases of shovels and ice melt rather than lawn chairs or patio tables.

At the edge of the lot, I noticed the silence. It seemed like a presence that had emptied the air of sound.

A snow-covered field bordered the rim of pavement, and close by, a cluster of straw-colored weeds tumbled over each other. Where had these slender stalks come from? What was the point of their existence? Did anyone else even know they were there? They seemed stranded in space, held in the cold emptiness of the universe as the earth turned toward night.

I found myself musing: why should there be anything at all in our cosmos? "Nothingness" would seem to make more sense than the incredibly intricate creation of which we are a part. Yet here they were, against all odds, meadow grasses silently bending in arcs as shadows lengthened.

Winter can appear empty -- and yet there is life in seemingly lifeless weeds. There is beauty in the lacy outlines of leafless trees against the twilight sky. Take time to notice. Take time to wonder. As stars emerge like tiny silver buttons scattered across the dark velvet of night, contemplate what lies beyond human eyesight.

The longing for meaning exists deep in our hearts in all seasons. The stillness of winter days can nudge us to tend to this desire, showing us how to stir the embers for a renewed spiritual journey. May this longing start us on the path to walking with our Maker every remaining day of our lives.

© 2022 Nancy J. Nash. Nancy has a B.A. in English composition from Mount Holyoke College and an M.F.A. in Writing for Children from Simmons College, with two books listed on Amazon.com *Mama's Books: An Oregon Trail Story* and *Little Rooster's Christmas Eve*.

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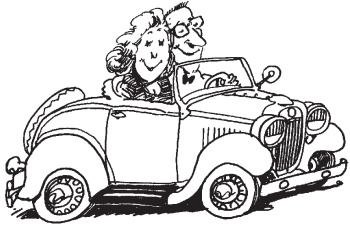
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Calendar of Events • Gift Certificate Entry • Bus Trip



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

When making a road trip, always call ahead to confirm times and dates. We make every attempt to provide accurate information, but there are instances when things change. Always check weather conditions and travel safe.

February

- 11...“Going to Bali” Batiks Quilt Class, Seneca Variety, Seneca, p. 20
- 4...Learn to Machine Applique with Amy Bradley, Prairie Point Quilt & Fabric Shop, Lenexa, p. 18
- 8-11...Superbowl Sale, Prairie Flower Crafts, Alden, p. 9
- 8 & 23...Carpenter’s Star Class, Needle in a Haystack, Severy, p. 14
- 10-11...It’s a Super Sale, Stitches Quilt Shop, McPherson, p. 8
- 11...Yarn and Souper Bowl Sale, Yak ‘n Yarn, Topeka, p. 21
- 13-18...Cabin Fever Shop Hop, Various
- 17-18...Scott City Shop Hop, p. 4
- 18...Sew Fun Day, Prairie Point Quilt & Fabric Shop, Lenexa, p. 18

March

- 8 & 16...Confetti Runner Class, Needle in a Haystack, Severy, p. 14
- 17-25...5th Annual Border Run Shop Hop, various
- 20-25...AQS Show in Branson, MO, 2023 Quilter’s Motor Coach Trip by Pack and Go Tours p. 23
- 24-25...Celebrating 9 Years, Yak ‘n Yarn, Topeka, p. 21
- 24-26...Mission Lake Flea Market, Horton, p. 19
- 29-April 1...Ad Astra Shop Hop, Various
- 31- April 1...NEK Junkin’ Trail Shop Hop, see Elsie Grace’s ad p. 21

April

- April 1 – May 31...2nd Annual All Kansas & Nebraska Shop Hop, Various, p. 21-29...Prairie Stars Quilt Shop Hop, Various p. 5

November

- 1-5...Houston Intl. Quilt Show, 2023 Quilter’s Motor Coach Trip by Pack and Go Tours p. 23

Facebook Live • Directory of Advertising Shops

These are the ones we know; more will be added as we discover them. If you are an advertising shop who hosts a scheduled Facebook Live program, let us know so we can include you.

Monday:

- 2 p.m. -- Quilter’s Paradise
- 4 p.m. -- The Quilted Sunflower - weekly

Tuesday:

- 6 p.m. -- Make It Sew, Quilter’s HQ, weekly
- 7 p.m. -- Facebook Live Flash Sale, Birds of a Feather Quilt Shop, weekly

Thursday:

- 9:00 a.m. -- Prairie Point Quilt & Fabric, weekly

Friday:

- 9 a.m. -- Yellow Dog Quilt Shop, weekly
- 1 p.m. -- Charlotte’s Sew Natural, weekly
- 5:30 p.m. -- “Come As You Are” Sales Party, Wool Market and DIY School, weekly

Saturday:

- 9 a.m. -- Overbrook Quilt Connection (2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th Sats.)
 - 9:30 a.m. - Overbrook Quilt Connection (1st Sat.)
- Look for updated Directory in each issue of The Country Register. You can have Facebook remind you when an event is starting -- great for those times when a shop posts an unscheduled Facebook Live event.

AND THE WINNER IS . . .

February/March 2023 Gift Certificate Winner

Our lucky \$50 gift certificate winner for this issue of The Country Register is Susan Johnson from Lyons, Kansas. Susan has requested her gift certificate from Charlotte’s Sew Natural in Newton. She likes to do her shopping there because of the helpful staff and large selection. We hope you enjoy your time shopping, and we thank you for this comment for *The Country Register*; “This paper is so much fun to read, it has all the quilt shops and what they have, very informative paper.”

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In this issue of *The Country Register*, we will give away a \$50 gift certificate. Use your gift certificate to go shopping at your favorite *Country Register* advertiser. The winners will be announced in the next issue. **Deadline for entry is MARCH 15, 2023.**
(Names are not sold, given away or used for any other purpose.)

2023 Quilter's Motor Coach Trips

More Information or to reserve your space contact
Jayne Heller
Pack and Go Tours
785-529-2382 or 785-658-7272
rjheller53@yahoo.com

- **AQS Show in Branson, Mo**
March 20-25, 2023
Pick up in Beloit, Salina and points along 170 east
- **Houston Intl Quilt Show**
November 1-5, 2023
Pick up in Beloit, Salina & points south along I-135

This trip is usually a sell out so reserve today

Start Making Your Plans Today!

Drawing Entry Form

Name _____ Phone _____

Address, City ST _____

E-mail address: _____

If I win, I would like my \$50 Gift Certificate from: (list a current advertiser from this paper)

I enjoy visiting the above chosen shop because:

I picked up this issue of *The Country Register* at _____

Do you tell the shops you saw their ad in the paper? Always Sometimes Never

Comments and/or Suggestions about *The Country Register*? Please include a note.

To enter, complete this form and mail to:
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Want to save a stamp?

Just email the above information to: kansas@countryregister.com
OR enter on the website at www.countryregister.com/kansas click on the **Contact Us** tab and fill in the necessary information.

Quilters, Knitters & NeedleArtists:

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KISSed Quilts

City Shadows

by Marlene Oddie

Several years ago, as an Island Batik Ambassador, I received a stack of 10" squares of the City Culture 2 collection and came up with this design. I took inspiration from the word 'City' and thought of concepts from when I lived in San Francisco, California.

Starting with a stack of 10" squares, I added a 'shadow' fabric and a 'background' fabric to get this unique setting of three sizes of blocks. Note that every third column is offset by 1" to keep the design from looking too consistently blocked. It reminded me of



the different buildings in the city when the sun casts a shadow.

The quilting is 'Breath of the Gods' pantograph that reminded me of the swirling winds around the buildings.

Northcott has created a beautiful Shimmer Paradise collection. It will be shipping Spring 2023. The fabric collection has lots of shimmer with vines and leaves, beautiful flowers, hummingbirds and coordinating graphic prints with waves, raindrop spots and butterflies. There is also a basket weave print in two colors.

An updated version of City Shadows uses this new Shimmer Paradise collection. Ask

for this collection and updated pattern at your local quilt shop or find the pattern on my website. The pattern now includes four sizes.

Marlene Oddie (marlene@kissedquilts.com) is an engineer by education, project manager by profession and now a quilter by passion in Grand Coulee, WA, at her quilt shop, KISSed Quilts. She quilts for hire on a Gammill Optimum Plus, but especially enjoys designing quilts and assisting in the creation of a meaningful treasure for the

recipient. Fabric, patterns, kits and templates are available at <http://www.kissedquilts.com>. Follow Marlene's adventures via <http://www.facebook.com/kissedquilts> and <https://www.instagram.com/marlene.kissedquilts>

GIRLFRIEND WISDOM



Are you as Happy as your Dog?

Inspirational Author Alan Cohen has written a book we should all consider: "Are You As Happy As Your Dog?" He found it a worthwhile question and studied his dog Munchie to learn some life lessons from his furry friend. Munchie was happy - all the time. He lived in a state of delight and discovery. I know every time I left my house, upon my return, my little Coco jumped for joy that I had returned - it might have been 20 minutes, or 3 days - always the same. Tail wagging, happy jumping with sweet little whimpering noises. Our little friends do live in a state of Delight and Discovery. Now that is a worthy goal! It is a new year, a fresh start for goals to enjoy more happiness in our lives. **GIRLFRIEND WISDOM:** Let us seriously consider the question and find a few changes in our behaviors by asking: **Am I As Happy As My Dog?**



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



RING OUT THE OLD RING IN THE NEW

A New Beginning

SHE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT SHE WANTED OUT OF LIFE, WHICH, IN A WORD, WAS EVERYTHING.

♥ Dawn Powell

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

With Love from the Heart of the Home Come...
Susan Branch
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YOU GOT-TO HAVE A DREAM, IF YOU DON'T HAVE A DREAM HOW YA GON-NA MAKE A DREAM COME TRUE?

Im just sayin,

