

Welcome to...

The Country Register of Kansas

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From My Desk... to yours

By Cindy Baldwin

Memories. It has often been interesting to me that even though the contributing writers to The Country Register live in all corners of the country, submit their work to one of the many Country Register editors and don't know each other, many of them end up writing on the same theme for an issue. I'm not sure how this "group think" across the United States and Canada happens, but it does. It's obvious when we are on a holiday issue -- December is going to spark stories about Christmas or the New Year -- but an issue published in the deep heat of summer wouldn't seem to have the same pull to anything other than the joys of air conditioning or the beach. And yet -- many of this month's stories centered around memories, both fondly recalled from times past and making them for the future.

The "Memories" theme does spark a reaction in me because this issue of The Country Register of Kansas marks my 14th anniversary with the paper. I had never heard of The Country Register when a friend told me the Kansas edition was for sale, and she thought I would enjoy editing and publishing it. I purchased the paper from Kristel Lewis on July 3, 2009 and the Aug./Sept. 2009 issue was my first. And, the memories that popped up on my Facebook page this morning included a picture I had posted seven years ago of my then 8 and 4-year-old grandsons helping my office assistant Lonnie box papers to send out to stores. They've grown, Lonnie is still here, and we're still boxing papers. Making more memories as life goes on.

My friend was right. Publishing/Editing The Country Register has been a wonderful experience -- even though there are a few frustrations here and there. I've met wonderful shop owners, seen towns and shops across the state, each with their own unique flavor, which I would never have visited otherwise, and I have appreciated each and every kind note and email received from readers and advertisers alike. I've also learned a lot along the way from crafters, small business owners and community leaders about how to bring community together. So, happy 14th anniversary to us. If I had a storefront, I'd invite you all to the party. You'll just have to settle for finding a cozy spot and reading through all the goodies in this issue of the paper.

There are a lot of events coming up this fall including several quilt shows, two quilt shop hops and one yarn shop hop. I'd invite you to read the story on page 11 about Trevelyn Grimes who has participated in and made a quilt from all 24 of the Central Kansas Shop Hops. It will get you excited about developing a shop hop habit yourself. Choose one that's new to you and check it out. Supporting small businesses across the state is much appreciated.

June did bring our family the never ending wheat harvest. After months of drought and wishing for rain -- we finally began getting showers. Just as harvest started. Amazingly, we are still six weeks after starting harvest STILL cutting mud holes that just won't dry out. The 100 degree-plus temperatures and wind this week should take care of the mud, and we hope to put the combine away this weekend. Farmers -- you just can't satisfy us, right? Until next time, enjoy what's left of summer. The kids will be back in school in just a few weeks. --- Cindy

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It's Sunflower time in Kansas. Enjoy these beauties in fields or in road ditches. They make me smile.

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. 25 No. 1, Aug/Sept 2023

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- Most Lawrence grocery stores • Other various locations
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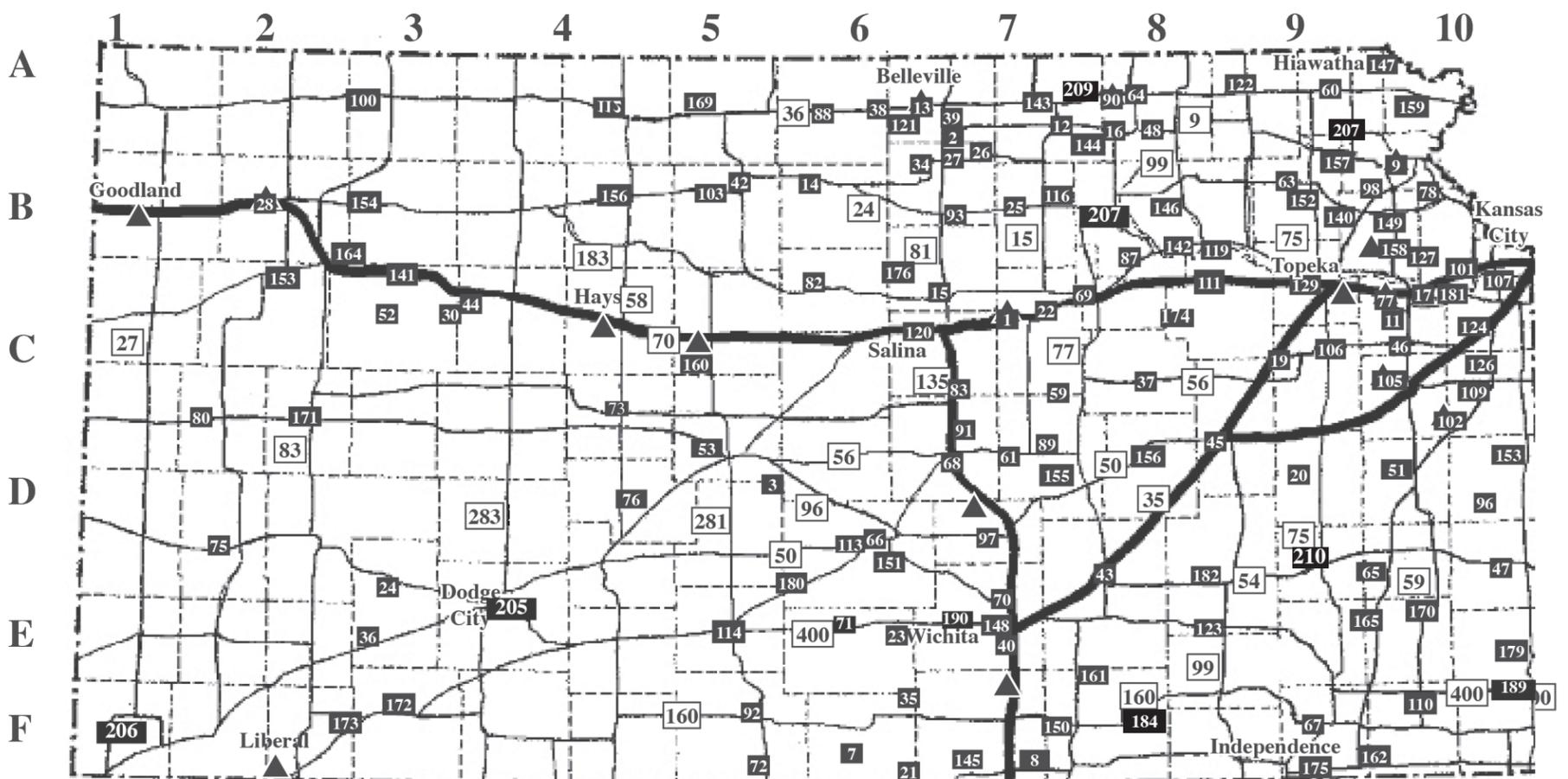
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Gift Certificate Entry Form

A Tisket, A Tasket, A Beautiful Basket

by Barbara Kalkis

Occasionally, one news story breaks through the usual daily dose of madness and mayhem to stop us in our tracks. For me, this momentous event occurred some months ago as I was preparing to settle in for a night of TV re-runs.

I had gathered my placemat, napkin, drinks, chips, chocolates, tissues (for unexpected sneezes), crochet, mystery novel, magazines, iPad, a friend's unread letter, scratch paper and pens (in case one runs out of ink during an important idea). Dropping that armful on a work (versus 'coffee') table, I plumped up the sofa cushions, plopped myself into a reclining position and hit the clicker.

During the commercials, I scanned news headlines for the least upsetting stories. The startling announcement appeared like a bolt of lightning. Martha Stewart had replaced the roof of her basket house. At first, I thought the headline was a spin on the story of the three pigs and the unwise choices of building homes of straw and twigs before thinking about brick. It was not. The headline was for real.

The proof was in the photo. Martha stood in the wide doorway of a barn-like structure holding baskets. Behind her, countless baskets crammed every square inch of space on the floor and walls. More baskets dangled from the ceiling. I nearly choked on the handful of M&Ms that I had thrown in my mouth only moments before. (You cannot eat just one.) I read the article again, thinking I had mistaken some key element of the story. I hadn't. The proof was in the details. A painted metal roof replaced old cedar shake shingles. Well, that made sense. Those metal roofs are known for their longevity.

What nagged me, however, was the need for a house of any size to store baskets. I glanced around my living room and then reviewed my kitchen and dining area. The kitchen counter was lined with baskets holding bananas, avocados, tomatoes and fruit. Baskets on the counter held pens and pencils, note pads, address books, mail waiting to be read, coupons and a phone directory.

The dining table basket was a centerpiece on a rattan woven charger. In the living room, every free surface was covered with a mandatory doily and (wait for it) a basket holding a plant. Baskets on the floor held magazines. My seasonal baskets were displayed on a shelf in my office, waiting until the appropriate holiday. Trick-or-treaters could easily grab Halloween candy out of a big round shallow basket. Christmas cards and letters were stacked in a large square basket. Another held holiday photos. They were all beautiful to look at, but they were all used every single day. A basket even carried baby Moses down the river.

When I flicked through the pages of magazines, I saw design trends focused on contemporary styles: cold metal dining chairs that no one wants to sit on. Sofas were set on four, pencil-thin legs that looked like they would collapse under the weight of anyone over 90 pounds. The awful wire guest chairs were waiting for those not fast enough to beat the hosts to the sofa. Contemporary wall art featured smears of color like the ones your 2-year-old made when he was in his 'budding artist' stage.

Like hand-crafted quilts, shawls, sweaters, doilies, paintings, greeting cards, wood carvings -- or whatever -- baskets are an intricate art form. They reveal the crafter's creativity, attitude, thinking, design sense, skill, care, intelligence. They are both traditional décor and functional items to be used and enjoyed daily. No separate house here. They are what makes a house a home.

©Barbara Kalkis.

Threads of life

By Janet M Bair

I was sewing on my machine very late one night when my daughter was home from college. Knowing that she was tired from her flight and wanted to go to bed, I asked "Will the noise bother you?"

"Oh no," she said. "When I was little, I used to fall asleep with the sound of your sewing machine in the background. It's a very comforting sound."

I never thought about sewing that way before -- comforting. I realized that cutting out pieces of fabric and putting them together to create something beautiful is a soothing process in this hectic world.

I made my first quilt when I was in my twenties because I had so many fabric scraps from dresses that I had made in high school and college. I remember cutting out over 100 squares with a paper pattern and how long it took to sew them together. I used an old blanket for filler and old curtains for the backing. When that enormous job was done, I said "That's it! I'm not making another one for a long time!"

Fast forward to retirement, I recently joined a quilt guild with the naiveté that I could make some of the amazing creations I saw at their quilt show. Even though I have sewn many complicated things over my lifetime from animal costumes to bridesmaid's dresses, quilting is harder than it looks. Re-training myself to sew only one quarter inch seams was difficult. Planning a large quilt is an expensive endeavor as material prices have soared.

However, I have found that I love my new rotary cutter and cutting board, which certainly saves time. Slowly reading my way through quilting books has shown me that there are quicker ways to piece together fabrics. I have enjoyed making smaller lap sized comfort quilts this year. Even though fabric is expensive, I think I will always enjoy looking at material thinking about what I can make next.

I also realized that my family has woven many threads of creativity into my life. My Grandma Scaduto (my mother's mother) emigrated from Sicily in the early 1900's. She could look at an outfit in a store window, go home and sew it without a pattern. After her eight children were grown, she worked in a coat shop. My Grandma Mac (my father's mother) also sewed and crocheted. She quilted and did tatting. My mother sewed and worked in a factory where she did piecework. My mother-in-law was a master seamstress. As a girl, she would wash the empty calico printed feed sacks animal grain came in and make dresses out of the material. This was on a northern Vermont dairy farm during the Depression. Besides sewing clothing, she made beautiful quilts.

Both of my girls learned to sew at young ages, making clothing for a 4-H fashion show at the Big E in Mass. Recently, my younger daughter, Emily, sewed 140 cloth dolls to be sent to children in underdeveloped countries. My older daughter, Joanna, has designed and sewn many costumes for different theater productions.

Over the years, many colors of threads have been sewn by the women in our family. Sewing is a way of life with us. We have blended thriftiness, patience, love and creativity to create a heritage that I hope will be a comfort to many.

Summer memories

By Janet Young

With summer in full swing, what favorite place do you like to visit each year? Or, what are some of your favorite summertime treats that you enjoy, that perhaps come from that one area of the country that famously sells your favorite treat. Examples might be Philadelphia Cheesesteaks, Boardwalk Saltwater Taffy, and Pennsylvania Dutch Soft Pretzels. The list can go on and on.

But what makes these treats so special that we include them in our itinerary when planning our annual vacation? Is it that the soft pretzel or the pizza is so extraordinary that we go out of our way to include that in our trip to the beach for example? Or, could it be nostalgia. The fond childhood memories we hold dear and from which we do not depart. Like memories of going to the beach with our parents. Whatever the enticement, we can't wait to share this experience with our children. Perhaps that is how you happened upon these treats or continue to visit the same area year after year, because it was introduced to you as a child from your parents.

Summertime is about making family memories. It is a time to kick back and relax and have fun. For as the years go by, these summertime vacations will become more cherished, as you realize that your children will soon be grown and on their own. But then the cycle repeats itself. For it will be your adult children's turn to institute a favorite place to visit or a special treat indigenous to that area.

There is just something about making memories that will ride you through all of life. Because there will come a time, perhaps when you can no longer go on the trips you used to take, and all you will have are all the memories of what was; and the hope that because of what you instilled at an early age in your children, that your grandchildren will be able to experience the same memories brought forth from years of visits to favorite vacation spots.

So, the next time the family gathers together and one of the kids says, Mom, remember the time we etc., etc. you will have happy thoughts of time spent together under the warm summer sun, laughing and taking in all the sights that you can recall today with laughter and joy.

We lost a few summer vacations because of Covid, so let's make this the year you can begin again to create summertime memories. It is all there waiting for you to make it happen!

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

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Drawing Entry Form

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The Allure of Lithophane

by Jay Mark

Lithophane? Never heard of it? You're not alone. Lots of folks are in the dark about this intriguing Victorian decorative art. Hopefully, after discovering this fascinating piece of the past, you'll be sufficiently intrigued to begin seeking them out.

Lithophanes are hidden treasures, much like Stanhopes which this column has previously introduced. You just have to know what to look for.

Before we begin, let's define the odd word *lithophane*. It is a concocted term that comes from combining the Greek *lithos* (stone) and *phainein* (to cause to appear). Simply put, *lithophane* refers to a thin, translucent porcelain plaque surface that is carved or molded in varying thicknesses in such a way that, when illuminated from behind, magically reveals a remarkably detailed three-dimensional image.

Although a similar technique was introduced in 15th century China, the modern origin of the lithophane is attributed to a French diplomat, Baron Paul de Bourgoing, who patented his novel idea in 1827. It didn't take long for his ingenious invention to catch on. Large German manufacturers like Meissen, Royal Factory at Berlin, and KPM, Minton, Copeland, Wedgwood, and Worcester in Britain, produced hundreds of thousands between 1840 and 1870 to satisfy the strong consumer demand.

While most lithophanes are monochromatic, a smaller number were enhanced with water colors, hand decorated, which enriched and gave greater depth to the three-dimensional image.

At its peak of popularity, about 25 factories across Europe, including Belleek, Limoges, and Phoenix Pottery in the U.S. were all aggressively competing for a piece of the market. That resulted in imaginative ways to display lithophanes. They are most frequently found in a variety of lamps and lighting fixtures, art glass framed panels, candle screens, and specialty items like tea and food warmers—anywhere light can be transmitted from behind.

With the advent of photography in the 1840s, photographs, along with classical paintings, became frequent subjects for lithophane panels. Religious images were a popular subject. Even Leonardo da Vinci's iconic Last Supper was carved into lithophane panels. Although many lithophanes were frequently identified with a manufacturer's mark, most remained almost entirely artist-unsigned. So, to this day, we have no idea who skillfully executed these brilliant masterpieces.

By the end of the 19th century, the once feverish demand for lithophanes began to wane. But interest would revive after WWII.

While many lithophanes are found as panels that, at their simplest, can be hung in a sunlit window, inserted into frames, or are parts of lamps and other decorative arts objects, some later appeared in unexpected places.

ACR China, a Japanese porcelain manufacturer between 1945-1952, introduced an imaginative, a new location for lithophanes created by placing them with alluring images of Geisha's in Sake sets, and on the bottom of tea cups and saucers. They were even in the base of beer steins. These designs quickly became best sellers.

Acknowledging the significance of lithophanes, a number of museums around the world have extensive collections. With more than 2,300 examples, the Blair Museum in Elmore, Ohio, claims to have the largest collection in the world—an assertion I won't dispute.

While the early popularity of lithophanes eventually waned, surprisingly, this distinctive art form never entirely disappeared. A search of Etsy and other arts' focused websites reveals numerous modern examples. Even *Star Wars* and *Lord of the Rings* have been immortalized in lithophanes. 3-D printers make it very easy to create lithophanes. That means it is very important to be assured that what you are purchasing is a genuine antique and not a modern version.

If you are ever unsure, always demand a written guarantee of authenticity and assurance of ability to return.

Because lithophanes are very thin, they are subject to breakage or damage making historic examples somewhat scarce. With more than 500 recently offered for sale on eBay, values remain quite reasonable, ranging between \$20 and \$200, depending on artistic value of the lithophane and how it is displayed. Rare, early lithophanes can reach \$1500.

A GOOD BOOK: Lithophane is an area of collecting for which there has been little written. But you can find more information about this obscure subject in *Lithophanes*, a delightfully well-illustrated, informative book by ceramic art historian, Margaret Carney, published in 2008 by Schiffer Books.

Virtually an antique himself, Jay Mark is celebrating his 50th year in the antiques' business. Along with his wife, he owns Those Were The Days!, an online specialty bookstore. He also teaches, lectures and frequently writes about antiques and history. Reach him at jaymark@twtdbooks.com. © 2023



The magic of the lithophane is its ability to change its appearance when illuminated from behind. On the left of this modern lithophane is the image as it appears in reflected light. On the right is how it comes into view as a three-dimensional portrait when made translucent. Photo illustration: Jay Mark



Lithophanes can appear in the most unusual places. After WWII, Japanese porcelain companies like ACR China began placing lithophanes in sake and teacups (shown above) and beer steins. Wikipedia



With the advent of photography, photographs could be turned into lithophanes like this 1855 image of Samuel Colt, inventor of the Colt revolver he is shown displaying. It is reported that 111 lithophane copies were made. Wikipedia

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Writing From Life

by Jeanette Lukowski

Returner? Donator?

An episode of a comedy show from years ago keeps hitting me sideways these days, as the focus of the particular episode was about “re-gifting” something someone gave you, but you never use. Meant to make us, the audience, giggle, it also left me questioning the protocol for such situations. I lost track of the question as other things in life drew my attention away -- until about a month ago.

I am in the thick of helping someone downsize. It is one of those painful struggles, as she keeps referring to her new apartment in the senior rental community as “the nursing home.” It’s not a nursing home. It’s supposed to be independent living on her terms, right? My problem is “the stuff.” She’s not good at letting any of it go. The rationale is what doesn’t make sense to me.

Last week, I asked about passing a set of glasses to someone else who has just moved to a new apartment.

“Oh, none of those glasses are mine,” the woman replied.

Wait. They are in your kitchen cupboard, where they have been for about 20 years. If that doesn’t make those glasses yours, who do they actually belong to?

“Those glasses were a gift to my mother. They should go back to the couple who gave them to her as a gift,” she said.

Let me pause here and describe the plain, clear glass glasses. They are as generic as anything you might find on the retail shelves of any big-box store, or gracing the table of any restaurant as water goblets. Seriously, they are plain, nondescript glasses. The recipient of the original gift is deceased; it’s also quite possible the gift givers are deceased as well. Why can’t they just be passed along to someone else in need?

This past January I received an email announcing that a dear friend from school (3rd through 12th grades) had passed. Having been regular correspondents since we headed our separate ways for college -- then life -- I knew she was battling cancer. I even made her a special placemat when the prognosis worked its way towards terminal. She didn’t invite me to visit her; I didn’t ask to visit, because I knew this second marriage was suffering from issues which pre-dated the cancer diagnosis. So the placemat was a little piece of my heart, mailed off the many miles to my friend whose hand I could not hold.

I mailed the placemat in July and sent her more regular letters of chatty nonsense until her husband’s email reached me in February. My friend had died in January.

I privately mourned my own loss -- then cringed when his third or fourth email arrived in my mailbox with a photo of the placemat. “Did you make this for her?” he asked.

“Yes, I did.”

“She kept it by her side up until the end,” he replied a week later.

I smiled -- and then quietly prayed that he not send it back to me.

© 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



The Continuity of Grace

by Kerri Habben Bosman

On this overcast day, I am sitting contemplating *Grace*. The framed photograph of an old man praying hangs above my roll-top desk in our living room.

The old man prayed from their dining room while my husband, Wayne, and his siblings were growing up. He prayed after everyone left home and had families of their own. Perhaps he prayed harder during sad times and grace was needed most. Maybe he prayed more as grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and in recent years, great-great grandchildren came along. He prayed through all the sunshine and through every storm.

He is praying right now as I study him. As he always will. For grace, not just *Grace*, continues on.

The original photograph, *Grace*, taken around 1918 by Eric Enstrom, was black and white. It depicts a peddler named Charles Wilden, who lived in a sod house in Bovey, Minnesota. On the table in front of him is a loaf of bread and a knife to cut it, a bowl of gruel and a dictionary. (It has been interpreted as a Bible, but the original prop was a dictionary.) On top of the book are the old man’s glasses, lens side down as if he tossed them there in exhaustion or frustration. In 2002, the colorized version of the photograph became the official state photo of Minnesota.

Our rendition of the old man praying lived for generations on the dining room wall in a home in Wisconsin. The piece was an anniversary present to Wayne’s parents from his Aunt Tootie and Uncle Jack when Wayne and his brothers and sister were young children. My mother-in-law is now 102 years old and for some years has been asking everyone in the family what they would like from her home someday. Some items have already been moved, and others have designations on the back. Wayne asked for the picture of the old man, and Mom first offered it to us over two years ago. We didn’t take it then because there would be a blank space on her wall. On a more recent visit, he had been taken down and replaced by a framed cross-stitch piece. Thus, the praying man journeyed south with us to North Carolina.

One definition of grace is “unmerited divine help or strength.” It is there before we are even aware of it. It is there when we can’t feel it and it leads us back to ourselves if we’ve forgotten the way. It reminds us to set down the luggage of life when we are carrying too much. It is there through uncertainty and hardship. And grace is with us always, as it is as the old man prays on.

Each person inclined to prayer has his or her own method. For me, prayer is simply about breathing out and breathing in, all the while being grateful for being alive. To place everything on the table that you’ve been carrying and set aside the weight of the world. If I look at the old man’s tossed eye glasses first, I sense his release of expectation and casting aside of his burdens. I study his face as he prays. I see that he has journeyed to the core of himself and what truly matters. His steadiness reminds me to stand still, savor every breath and say thank you for grace.

Before every meal together, Wayne and I hold hands and pray silently. When we visit Mom, each evening before dinner, we take hands and say the same blessing that the family has always said. While the prayer may be said by rote, the words themselves are imbued with meaning. These moments of grace shared together permeates to who we are and how deeply we love.

All the while, the old man prays on.

Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer in Chapel Hill, NC. She can be reached at 913jееves@gmail.com.

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Making memories

by Deb Heatherly

School's out for the summer and, as my husband Phil and I watched a bus load of kids excitedly exiting the bus with various shouts of "no more school" and "hurray for summer," we began a conversation about our childhood memories of summer break.

Mine included trips to the beach with friends, sleepovers, family trips to Gatlinburg, fishing with my dad and getting up early to beach-comb for shells when the tide was just right, swimming in our pool, and having family cookouts in the backyard. I can remember that excitement of the last day of school and looking forward to what the summer days ahead would bring. I cherish each of those memories and can't help but smile when I think of them.

During this conversation, I found that my memories are quite different from Phil's. I grew up near the coast and he grew up in the mountains. This gave me pause as I guess I always assumed that, as kids, we all did the same types of things.

To my husband, who was born and bred in the mountains, summers of his childhood took on an entirely different meaning from mine. His summers were spent working many long hours in the garden to prepare for the winter. Then, when work time was over, he was free to go camping on the mountain with friends in an old, abandoned cabin. He recalled doing crazy things that boys that age find amusing.

As Phil told me about the pranks he pulled on his friends, I was left in tears because I was laughing so hard. All I could think was I'm sure my mom was glad that I never thought sticking a Pepsi bottle in a fire to see how long it would take to explode sounded like a good idea. Or that trying to pull a sleeping bag out from under a friend while he slept -- like you see magicians do to dishes on a tablecloth -- was a smart thing to do. Let's just say that it worked, and his friend stayed asleep until he got cold sometime later. It's a wonder that the laughter of the others did not wake him, because I can imagine these boys were pretty impressed with themselves.

It's funny that "grown up" summers are very different. Now, it's our grandson Luke with whom I long to make memories. He is our daughter Tarrah's son, and they live several hours away so we must squeeze in as much as possible in the precious few days we are together. When here, I know that Luke and his Poppy -- as he calls his grandfather, and I'm Maggie -- will go fishing. Just like I know we will all go to play miniature golf and eat at a local restaurant that he and his Poppy call "Skinnies." Of course, that is not its real name, and this is a joke between the two of them.

Depending on the weather, we might spend a few hours tubing down the river, and we always go to a movie if there is something playing that interests him. We will do as much as we can in the time he is here, because this grandma knows that in a few short years everything will change. Before we know it, Luke will be off to college. Then, in the blink of an eye, he'll find his soulmate, get married and start a family of his own.

What is my hope? It's that one day he and his wife will be watching excited children exit the bus for the last time in a school year, and he'll say to her, "What are your favorite memories about summer as a kid?"

Once she shares her memories, I hope he will say, "Well, let me tell you about spending time in the mountains of NC with my Maggie and Poppy. I remember that I once wiped my shoes on Poppy's back when we were fishing because I got goose poop on them, and Poppy just laughed. And once when I was tubing down the river with Maggie and my mom, Maggie killed a ginormous spider. One time we planted magic jellybeans, and the next morning they had grown into lollipops. And we cooked hot-dogs outside over a fire pit and made s'mores, too! And...and...and..."

My wish is that there are a lot of "ands" in Luke's story and that the memories we make now will make him smile for many years to come.

Deb Heatherly is a designer for Creative Grids® rulers and the author of eight popular pattern books. You can contact her at Debscatsnquilts@aol.com or call the studio, Deb's Cats N Quilts Designs, at 828-524-9578. Creative Grids® fans are invited to join her Facebook group, "Grids Girls," for tips and inspiration at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/770429649800457/>. Shop Owners are invited to join her group just for them at "Grids Girls for Quilt Shop Owners Only" at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/273593657256524>.



Deb Heatherly, center, grandson Luke, left, and husband Phil making some memories.

Chipso Soap Was Early Blessing

by Rachel Greco

Before there was a laundry soap called Tide, there was Chipso, the first laundry detergent advertised as "doing the hard work" for the modern housewife.

Chipso, created by Procter & Gamble, appeared in the 1920s and was popular until 1946, when P&G's newest detergent Tide became an overnight sensation, causing sales of Chipso to die off.

Originally produced for commercial laundries, Chipso was touted as a flake brand in a box that promoted the use of safe suds for washing. The company was quick to note its mildness, declaring that it was soft on the hand and did not contain lye. As a result, it did not deteriorate clothing. It was good for woolens, silks and dainties, and it did not fade colors.

Soap powders at the time Chipso became popular tended to form into balls, whereas the new product was made into chips that easily dissolved in water. Magazine ads in the 1920s and 30s promoted Chipso as a "new dirt-loosening method" that made "light work of washday!" These ads described how women had to loosen the dirt before they could remove the dirt in clothing. They stated that by not having to manually loosen dirt on washboards, Chipso could be used to soak clothing. After soaking, women who used Chipso merely had to squeeze the dirt away.

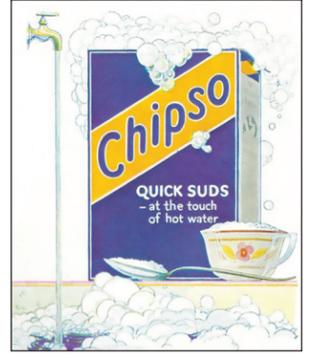
Declaring that by washing "the Chipso way," a housewife would save time and energy, ads also promoted the fact that in hot water Chipso became instant suds. They soaked clothing clean and made washing dishes take one-third less time.

Chipso was made at P&G factories in Ivorydale, Ohio, Kansas City, and Port Ivory, New York. Before gaining popularity, Chipso had been part of a lawsuit brought by a company whose product was called Chase-O. Chase-O claimed Chipso was too close in name to their product. The outcome of the suit must have been favorable to Chipso because the product continued to be sold from the 1920s through the 1940s.

When Chipso first came onto the market, laundry could take as much as two to three days to complete. 1920s-era housewives used washboards, beaters, brushes, prolonged soakings and pre-treatment. They used boilers to boil the clothing, wringers to get water from the clothing and clotheslines for drying everything. This made for back-breaking work. Since Chipso made everything so much easier, it is no wonder that the product became so popular.

One unfortunate set-back for Chipso was that the compounds in the product included phosphates which threatened drinking water supplies and commercial fisheries. As a result, phosphates were banned from use in the 1970s and Chipso was no more.

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. Rachel has written several books and patterns and runs Grandma's Quilt Club, a monthly quilt class where participants collect quilt block kits, learn about quilt history, and make new friends. Contact her at <https://grandmasatticquilting.com>





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The season of high summer

By Donna Jo Copeland, farmeress

Spring has been a season of I'm here, now I'm not. Seem to be wearing out flannel sheets and my trusty wool barn sweater. Just when I dig out a tank top and cutoff jeans, evening finds me rooting around for jeans, sweater and wool socks.

As I write this sitting in the swing beneath a huge water maple, I face a days-old calamity. My Siamese cat, who should be safely snugged in the loom house, has spent the last three days in the upper branch of said tree. Higher than I can reach with my extension ladder. I'm worried and about to play the little old lady card and call the fire department. Damn cat. If I am ever tempted by another Siamese, intervention please.

This summer I have offered a unique opportunity... to weave on Lady Mary, a 200-year-old barn loom. I warped with cotton thread, red for July. The four lucky weavers can weave a textile (about 28x54) using their choice of wefts-- cotton rags, wool fabric, wool roving and locks. A chance to be a part of historical textile making. And in the loom house sitting in the sheep pasture surrounded by dye gardens. No electricity, just country farm life.

I have set up a few times at the local farmers market on Tuesday evenings. Very disappointed, few shoppers despite a great selection of garden produce, plants, jellies and sweets, homemade goods and wool. Nice location on a main street with a four-way stop, beautiful church lawn, paved parking. But people fly by on their phones, too immersed in themselves to stop and shop local, interact with their neighbors. Very sad.

A friend who is a therapist said she treats most of her clients for depression. She recommends putting down cell phone, turning off tv and computer, going outside, walking, gardening, maybe get a pet. But they just want someone to listen to them complain and give them a pill. Geez.

In my 74 years of farming, I can honestly say I have never been bored. Always choices, adventures, long to-do lists, fiber, chores and animals liberally sprinkled with laughter and love.

Sometimes I am overwhelmed, but I find a path not taken by many and it's ok. In the echoes of my mind, I hear my Scottish ancestors "aye gel," and so I put on my big girl jeans and boots and get to it.

Reading what I just wrote, I may have given you a rosy picture. It ain't like that here.

My 150-plus-year-old farmhouse is crumbling, and there is no money to fix roof, ceiling, bathroom or foundation. No hot water, cold in kitchen sink. Wood stove for heat in one room, hand pump for livestock and garden water. When the wind blows in winter the curtains billow.

But amazingly I am happy, content. Yes, a bit of ease in my living conditions would be grand. I feel blessed to have my animals, my fiber and garden work, farm upkeep. That old sage, bloom where you are planted, resonates in my core. I do the best I can. Thankful in the simple doing.

And in the doing, I figure I have 20 more years of farming, animals, fiber and joy. So, I have been paring down what I can do, what I enjoy mixed with what I have to do (housework and dishes go here). I have been selling off some of my hand pieced quilt blocks and tops. With the nerve damage in my hand from cat scratch fever I can no long do fine hand sewing.

There is a cool fiber trail, Come Bye that I have joined running through August 31. Shops and farms in Indiana, Michigan and Ohio are joining forces to invite you to "Come Bye." And in partner with The Hand Maiden, come and natural dye! Check my Facebook page for details. I'm here by appointment and by chance. I'm still judging county fairs after 50 years.

When it's hot I love a chilled pie. See my recipe for Arizona Lemon Pie: this page.



Arizona Lemon Pie

In a blender put:

- 1 large lemon, cut up
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 cup soft butter
- 1 t. Vanilla
- 1 1/2 cups sugar

Blend til smooth, pour into a 9-inch pie shell. Bake at 350 for 45 minutes. Cool completely chill in refrigerator for 4 hours.

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Improvising!

by Barbara Polston

I consider myself a traditional quiltmaker. Even when creating art quilts, I use traditional techniques. When piecing, I work to make intersections match. If points are part of the design, I try my best to make sure they fall exactly where they should without cutting off the tips with an errant seam. All my projects have a plan for what they will look like when complete.

The Quilt Alliance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to document, preserve and share the American quilt heritage, is marking its 30th Anniversary with a Block of the Month sew-along. (You can learn more by visiting their website, www.quiltalliance.org.) Once a month, for nine months, members receive a free pattern for a quilt block. Each of the patterns is designed by a different, well-known quilt artist. Participants are encouraged to post photos of their finished blocks on social media, tagging the designers and the Quilt Alliance. I am participating in this celebration and look forward to receiving each new pattern...well, for the most part.

Last month's block was a nod to "improvisational quilting." What is that, you may ask. An improvisational quilt is defined as one made without specific intention. One of the most common forms used to create such quilts is the sewing of random pieces of fabric together with no regard to straight seams. There is no worry if block joins meet precisely. One undertakes the process without knowing exactly what it will look like in the end.

Given my predilection for precision piecing and a solid vision of my end point, tackling this block of only 12 inches square literally struck fear in my heart. The designer shared their method, which was to just sew fabric together in haphazard rows and then trim the resulting pieced fabric down to the desired size. The pattern did acknowledge those of us who would find this challenging. Directions were given to cut some 30 pieces of fabric to specific sizes and a layout was provided to stitch to an improvisational-looking result. This confused me even further. If one followed a precise pattern, how would that be improvisational? I procrastinated until the next pattern arrived in my inbox. With a need to move on to the next month's block, it was time that I took on this improvisational challenge.

I decided to just "do my own thing." I cut strips of fabric and pieced them together, varying the width of the exposed fabric. These strips were cut to a generous length and then sewn together. As planned, the created fabric was larger than needed and trimmed to size. Whew! I did it! Put that block in the "done" column.

Sometimes we need to improvise. You may discover you are lacking an ingredient for a recipe under way and must improvise a substitution. A colleague is absent, and you are called upon to make a presentation with little preparation. Based on your knowledge, you improvise and present. The need to improvise, I believe, is a rare occurrence. I learned that improvisational piecing and quilt-making is not something I would choose to do, but I also learned that, if necessary, I can improvise.

©Barbara Polston, Tucson, Arizona, June, 23, 2023. Barbara Polston, the author of *Quilting With Doilies: Inspiration, Techniques, and Projects* (Schiffer Press, 2015) and *Meet Puppy Brian and Puppy Brian and the Grey Cat* (www.puppybrian.com), lives in Tucson where she has failed at retirement, but is getting more time to stitch in a variety of forms. Contact Barbara at barbarapolstonquilter@gmail.com.

Needles and Thread

By Sheila Tinkham

All I need is my needle and thread
 I forget awhile
 Any spats
 Any troubles
 All I need is my needle and thread
 For a moment
 I am in bliss
 All I need is my needle and thread
 I sew
 A quilt
 My new creation
 Yet all I need is my needle and thread..
 Life itself
 Stands still...
 Complete.
 All I need is my needle and thread.

Sheila Tinkham lives in Lincoln, NE. She started quilting when she sprained her ankle and fell in love with the process of sewing and the focused peacefulness of making and designing quilts. Writing is her passion and she has self-published three poetry books. You can follow her on Twitter at SheilaTinkham.

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Collector's Corner

To Auction or Not To Auction

by Jim Olson

At **Western Trading Post** we believe, "If you want to find out the true value of something in today's market, put it in a well-advertised, well-attended auction, and you'll discover it." Auctions provide the quickest way to gauge current market conditions. However, auctions may not be suitable for everyone. Are they the right choice for you?

Auctions have been used for centuries as one of the oldest forms of selling property. They offer a fast-paced and exciting environment. Moreover, auctions provide transparency, allowing participants to understand the current market dynamics. Attending an auction with a good number of attendees is not only a great opportunity to socialize and network but it also provides entertainment value at no cost. Nonetheless, the question remains: "Are auctions suitable for me?"

Let's briefly examine the seller's perspective. Sellers who choose to sell at auction benefit in several ways. They know when their property will sell and can anticipate when the proceeds will be paid. Auctions are one of the fastest ways to move products or property. Additionally, sellers have the advantage of exposing their items to a large number of prospective buyers, with the auctioneer handling the marketing and other details. Sellers can also find comfort in knowing that auctions create a competitive marketplace, attracting multiple prospective buyers who compete to establish a fair market price.

For buyers, there are several advantages to consider. Auctions provide an opportunity to purchase items at a fair market value based on actual selling prices, rather than asking prices. Buyers often have multiple choices available in one location, simplifying the purchasing process. Furthermore, buyers can be confident that sellers in auctions are motivated to sell, saving valuable time by avoiding sellers who are merely fishing for a specific price. In the case of online auctions, bidders can conveniently participate from anywhere and remain anonymous if desired.

According to a study conducted by the National Auctioneers Association, over half of the total U.S. population has attended a live auction, with many considering them an exciting way to secure deals. The study also revealed that most people are willing to travel an average distance of 1.3 hours to attend an auction. Since auctions are open marketplaces with willing participants, they treat all parties involved in a fair and equitable manner.

However, it's important to note that auctions may not be suitable for everyone. Some buyers find it challenging to control themselves at auctions, experiencing "auction fever" when bidding on desired items. These individuals often bid excessively in their determination to win and later regret paying too much. For people with this tendency, an online or absentee approach may be more suitable. By determining a predetermined price limit for a particular item and leaving a "max bid" online or with the auctioneer, buyers can avoid getting caught up in the excitement of the moment and exceeding their budget.

Some sellers may worry that their property won't fetch a satisfactory price at auction. However, it is essential to recognize that, in most cases, sellers can realistically only expect to receive a wholesale price for their items, anyway. For example, if you approach a dealer to buy your item, they will likely offer a wholesale price to account for their overhead expenses and desired return on investment. While consigning items to a gallery or consignment shop may yield a full retail price, this process often takes much time, and the seller generally pays a commission of 40% to 60% for the service. Meanwhile, at auction, you may not always receive the full retail price, but most personal property auctions charge commissions ranging from 15% to 30% (less for higher-value items), resulting in a net profit at the end of the day similar to other selling methods.

It is always advisable to work with an auction company that has a solid reputation and earns your trust, as is the case with any business. Although most auctions operate fairly, there are dishonest individuals in every industry. Even generic online platforms, such as eBay, can be manipulated by unscrupulous sellers. Unfortunately, cheaters will always find ways to cheat, so it's best to just avoid them if possible. While the majority of auctions are reputable, it is crucial to conduct thorough research to ensure you engage with a trustworthy company.

We leave you with a few peculiar occurrences witnessed at auctions. For instance, spouses bidding against each other for the same item while not sitting together. Occasionally, individuals attempting to drive up the bid for nefarious reasons and accidentally end up winning an expensive item they did not really want (karma at work). Certain bidders adopt quirky habits to playfully challenge the auctioneer, such as trying to wait until the last second to raise their hand and place a bid. Others do so by subtly making minimal movements, like raising a finger or eyebrow to bid. Some bidders engage in games with fellow participants, like bidding on the same item as another bidder just because that person is bidding.

While there are numerous amusing anecdotes about the unexpected events at auctions, it's best for you to attend one and experience it firsthand. It's an experience you will not forget.

Jim Olson is a published author, historian and co-owner of Western Trading Post, a historic Trading Post in Casa Grande, AZ, which traces its roots back to 1877! Learn more at WesternTrading-Post.com.

Jim Olson © 2017 (revised 2023)

Jams and jellies

By Judy Sharer

Do you have a favorite jam or jelly, or do you, like me, enjoy them all?

Growing up, I was the child that helped Dad pick berries. My other sisters were afraid of snakes and, "That's the girls' job," my brothers would say to get out of work. I didn't mind picking berries, and I wasn't afraid of snakes. Dad and I would take our pails and be off. We always picked in the mornings when it was cooler.

Dad knew just where to go to pick each kind of berry, and what time of year to pick them so they were perfectly ripe. Blueberries were my dad's favorite. He called the jam that Mom and I made with them 'liquid gold'. Everyone in the family knew when a jar of blueberry jam was open, Dad got first dibs.

After a morning of picking, when we got the berries home, it was my job to fill the sink with cold water and wash the fruit. I remember standing on a step stool to reach the sink.

After measuring, sweetening and cooking, I remember listening to make sure each jar lid popped which meant they were sealed.

When Dad retired, he planted blueberry bushes, red raspberries, strawberries and grapes in the back yard. Also, there was a crabapple tree, and we made jelly from that fruit every other year. Crabapple wasn't a favorite.

Today, my cupboard is always filled with three or four kinds of homemade jams and jellies. My favorite, you might ask? You guessed it -- blueberry. Dad's favorite is my favorite too! Spread on a hot biscuit, scone, or topping a scoop of vanilla ice cream, the warm memories of picking with my dad and cooking with my mother come flooding back.

Why not make some jam and jelly memories of your own this year?

--Judy Sharer is the author of a historical western romance/family saga series titled A Plains Life, published by The Wild Rose Press. All four books are available online wherever books and eBooks are sold. If you're a quilter, you'll enjoy Judy's series with a thread of quilting throughout the story. Visit Judy's website judysharer.com for more details.





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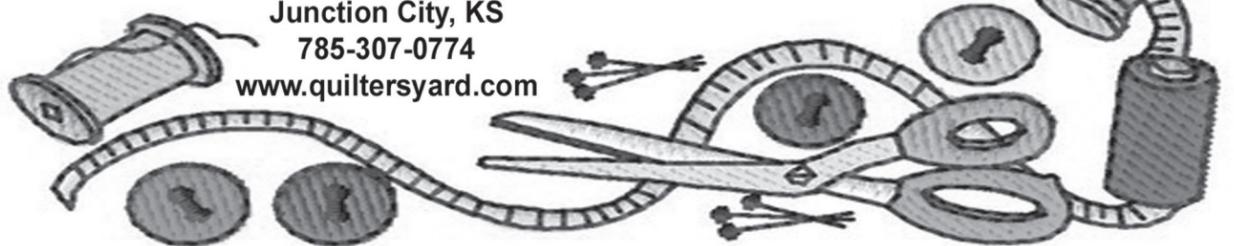
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Trevelyn Grimes quilts her way through 24 Central KS Quilt Shop Hops

By Cindy Baldwin, editor

WICHITA – Trevelyn Grimes was on the first Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop in 1999 – and each one since. She is one of the few – perhaps only – person who can make that claim as The Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop kicks off its 25th Anniversary edition in October.

Trevelyn, who lives in Wichita, is a lifelong sewer who began quilting seriously in 1996. When she heard about the first shop hop in 1999, her first thought was it would be so exciting to go on the Shop Hop and see all the different shops and what they had to offer.

Shop Hops are common today, and quilters can find one to participate in somewhere in the state or region in just about any month of the year. But in 1999, they were a new thing in Kansas. Started as a way to stimulate business using a fun event, that first Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop was a collaborative effort between 11 quilt shops, three of which are still part of the shop hop group 25 years later.

“The fabric that first year was Kansas wildflowers. It was just so beautiful. I thought it would make a nice quilt. So, I decided to go. And it sounded like so much fun that I made a party out of it,” Trevelyn said. She invited her daughter-in-law who lived in California at the time, some cousins and friends and the group hit the shop hop trail. It was the start of a tradition that is eagerly looked forward to each year.

“I mail flyers to everyone each year to entice them to come,” she said, adding that it doesn’t take a lot of convincing to get a group together. Her daughter-in-law, who now lives in Iowa, comes every year. The group this year will include a cousin from Arkansas and two friends from California. “We just have the best time!”

Trevelyn has her shop hop preparation down to a tried-and-true formula. The Wednesday before the hop begins, the ladies consider all the kits available from the different shops and decide which ones they want. The shop’s finishing kits offer a lot of variety, and Trevelyn said it’s rare for the ladies to all pick the same one as they all have different styles and preferences. The next step is to plan their route, and how many shops they intend to visit each day, what the drive time is between each shop, and how much time they can spend in each shop and still make their travel/shopping goal for the day.

“When you’re planning your route, don’t forget to schedule in time for lunch and where you want to be when you eat – and maybe an ice cream stop at the end of the day,” Trevelyn said.

Thursday, they hit the road, armed with a list of items they are looking to purchase. Trevelyn said she does try to buy a little something in each participating shop, though sometimes it’s on a return trip. She always takes sample fabrics of projects in progress that may need additional fabric and a list of things she might need from needles to tools to thread. She stressed that making a list is very important – especially if you live out of the area.

“We just have the best time. There is so much laughing going on,” Trevelyn said.

They group returns each night to Trevelyn’s house to prepare for the next day of shopping and take an inventory of what had been purchased so far. When they’ve been to all the shops, everyone spreads out their “stuff” for the others to see. “We just love looking at our fabric and seeing what the others have purchased,” Trevelyn said.

Now that the shop hop has been extended to almost two weeks, Trevelyn said they often go back to some of the shops the following week to pick up things they didn’t buy the first time through, or just to spend a little more time looking through a shop. She has appreciated the additional days as it allows more leisurely shopping. There are a lot of miles to cover to visit all of the shops and having more days to do it in is nice.

Trevelyn’s husband, Dave, is also a quilter. In fact, he has the distinction of having the Grand Champion quilt at the 2004 Kansas State Fair. He enjoys accompanying the group on the shop hop, but his primary role on the Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop is chauffeur and “holder of fabric bolts” while the ladies look through the fabric.

“He has a really good eye for color, so he does help us pick out colors,” Trevelyn said.

Trevelyn likes to use as much of the year’s focus fabric as she can in her quilts and has also started making coordinating pillowcases using the focus fabric.

After the shop hop is over, Trevelyn

gets back to the business at hand – piecing all that fabric together into a quilt top. She has one hard and fast rule for her shop hop purchases: The year’s quilt has to be done before the next shop hop. In fact, she tries to have it done by the first of the year so she can display it.

That’s right, display it. Trevelyn has all 24 quilts that she has made from previous Central Kansas Shop Hops, but she doesn’t hide them away in a closet or chest. She displays them on the beds in her home rotating them throughout the year. She thinks it’s good for them to be unfolded and stretched out.

“I enjoy my quilts. I put a lot of time into them, and I like seeing them laid out on the beds – we even sleep under them,” she laughed. “Sometimes I may have more than one layered on a bed.” If she had to choose a favorite of her shop hop quilts, it would be the quilt from 2011 that celebrated Kansas’ 150th birthday. She loved the fabric and the way it turned out.

The shop hop quilts do provide a beautiful accent to her home. In addition to the quilts pictured in this story, you can see pictures of all her completed shop hop quilts, along with the label she made for each quilt showing the year, the theme, the participating shops and where she purchased the kit on the Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop facebook page.

There is another reason that Trevelyn likes to get her shop hop quilts done in a timely fashion – to give her time to complete her other quilting projects. Since she began quilting, Trevelyn estimates that she has completed around 200 quilts of all sizes from baby to bed sized. Most of those are given away to family members and friends.

“All babies need a quilt, and I try to make one for each new family member including my nieces’ and nephews’ children and grandchildren. If we have a new baby, they have a quilt. I’ve just finished my sixth baby quilt in 2023,” Trevelyn said. Grandchildren also receive a quilt when they graduate from high school – t-shirt quilts for the boys and the girls choose a pattern they like.

Trevelyn never imagined when she went on that first Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop that, 25 years later, she would have participated in and made a signature quilt from each. But she knew she was hooked on the experience from the first day. She enjoys them so much that she has participated in other shop hops across the state, including the recent All Kansas-Nebraska Shop Hop, some in other states where friends and family live and even recently took her granddaughter on her own mini shop hop to four shops from Junction City to McPherson to look for her graduation quilt fabric.

“I think I may have stimulated some quilting interest in her,” Trevelyn said.

Her advice to those considering going on their first shop hop: go.

“Once you go, you’ll be hooked. Quilting is such a nice hobby and so rewarding. Shop hops can be lots of fun, and your reward is the fabric. Just have a good time with your sewing and enjoy what you’re making,” Trevelyn said.

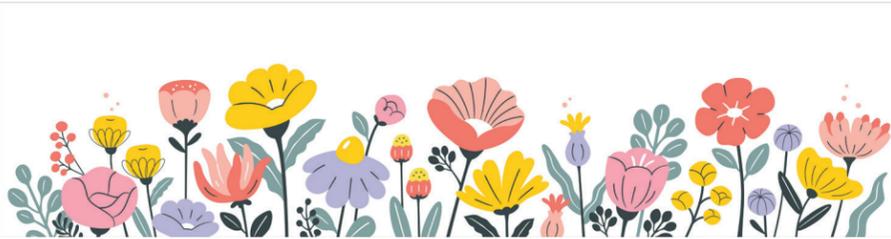
See you on the 2023 Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop!



Above: The first shop hop quilt Trevelyn made, Kansas Wildflowers. Below: Her favorite quilt celebrating the Kansas’ 150th birthday in 2011. The coordinating pillow case is in the lower right corner.



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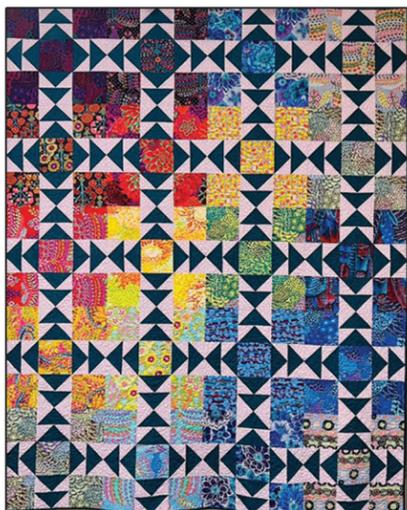
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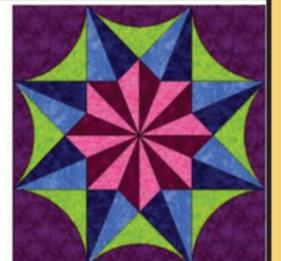
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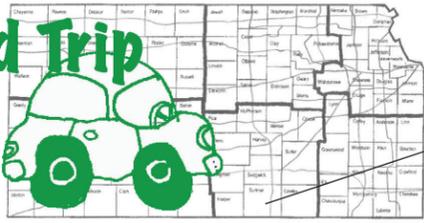
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Wellington

The Hive Retreat Center offers comfort and functionality

By Cindy Baldwin, Editor

(Editor's note: This is the second of two stories about retreat centers along US 81. The first in the series was in the June/July issue and featured Sew Country Stitchin' Retreat House in Belleville and Corner Block Lodge in McPherson.)

WELLINGTON – What do you do with a funeral home that is being replaced by a new facility? Why, you turn it into a quilter's retreat, of course.



Connie Hart, co-owner of The Beehive Quilt Shop and Toy Store in Wellington, saw the For Sale sign in front of the old Victorian-style house and inspiration struck. She and daughter Annarose White had been looking for a place they could operate as a retreat center since they had opened their shop in downtown Wellington, but nothing was working out. The old funeral home seemed just right.

Connie purchased the building -- which had started out life in 1900 as a family residence, transitioned into housing four apartments before spending several decades as a funeral home -- and began transforming it into a retreat center -- The Hive. Annarose, who helps manage the retreat center, was part of the planning, but said it is operated as a separate business from the quilt shop. They did like the "bee" connection to the quilt shop and noted that, like a bee hive, it is often full of activity.

The 18-room mansion had retained much of its original charm throughout its various transitions, including two original fireplaces, woodwork and original stair banisters. During the transformation, some of the old carpet was removed and a wood parquet floor was discovered.

"I think we put in about 100 hours of labor taking the glue off that parquet floor, but it is beautiful cleaned up," Annarose said. "Some of our quilters helped us with that project. We suspect there are more floors like that hidden under carpet, but we aren't quite ready to tackle another project like that yet."

The focus of the remodel was to make the house into a comfortable and productive place for quilters, crafters and other groups to use. The house has 17 beds -- all singles -- 11 on the second floor and six on the first floor for those who prefer not to have to climb stairs. The house has a zero grade entry porch and will soon have an ADA approved shower in one of the bathrooms. A full kitchen and dining area is available for groups on the second floor -- which was the family living quarters when it was a funeral home -- and a second kitchen is being built on the first floor in what is now a snack room.



Second floor kitchen space. A second kitchen will be built on the first floor in a room now used for snacks and drinks.

Other amenities include high speed wifi, a television, lots of lounge areas for fun when attendees are not sewing including a full porch, a second "party" porch on the second floor and a giant L-shaped lounge couch at one end of the sewing room. Retreat attendees do their own cooking or can go out to one of the many restaurants in Wellington, some of which will deliver. Some groups even bring their own chef!

"We had one group who had one member of the group's sister come and cook for them. She enjoyed crocheting, so she did that and cooked for them while they sewed. They paid her share of the house rental. A win-win for everyone," Annarose said.

But, the primary focus of the house is the room where all the business gets done -- the sewing room.

Connie and Annarose first became interested in developing a retreat center when they were invited by Rita's Quilt Retreats from Argonia to a retreat held at a nearby church camp. This was before Connie had moved to Wellington and the pair had opened The Beehive Quilt Shop. The camp worked for a retreat



Retreat participants share rooms, but all beds are singles. Two of the rooms have been adopted by retreat participants. To the left is the Sunflower room, adopted by Rita's Quilt Retreats from Argonia. They decorated the room, piecing the bed quilts and adding the sunflower objects.



The sleeping room to the right is the bluebird room adopted by Annette Haga of Bluebird Machine Quilting in Wichita. A competition quilter and mentor for Gammil longarm users, she helped with decorating and provided several antique pieces. The room has four beds. The sunflower room has three.



Above: Cutting tables and a lounge area. Below: The sewing room. Each sewer has their own work table and outlets.

space, but sleeping on bunks designed for children and eating the camp food left a few things to be desired. The space also wasn't designed to have multiple sewing machines and irons going all day. Connie and Annarose began imagining what a comfortable, efficient and fun retreat center would be like.



Using Rita's quilting group ladies as their test group they began asking them what they would want in a retreat center. "Light. All they cared about was lighting and power everywhere," Annarose said. "And individual workspaces."

In response, Connie and Annarose designed the large first floor sewing room so that, according to Annarose, it glows at night when everyone is working. Bright white lighting was installed in the sewing area. The cutting table also has a special light above it. Each sewer has their own 8-foot table with a dedicated grounded outlet for their machine and a hydraulic, adjustable chair. The sewing area has three cutting tables, two with 60" mats, and three ironing stations. For those who want to take a break, there is comfortable furniture in the room so they can rest and still be part of the action.

Annarose said the versatile space is sometimes rented by The Beehive quilt Shop for classes, trunk shows and demos and retreat groups can also request those types of activities when they are there.

The Hive is a whole house rental with groups splitting costs between those attending the retreat. The most popular rental package has been four nights and five days with Wednesday through Sunday days of choice. However, they have had groups stay from two days to eight. However, The Hive does not rent space for events such as parties, receptions or business meetings -- it operates as a retreat center only. Fees include a kitchen equipped with everything but the food, towels, washclothes and bedding.

"People are so grateful to have a space to gather -- a creative space they can share with friends. It's better than a sterile hotel lobby. We have people flying into Wichita from all over the country -- Florida, California, Minnesota, Texas and everywhere in between to get together with friends and relatives at The Hive," Annarose said. She added that it is a plus that Wellington is only 30 minutes from the Wichita airport.

Connie and Annarose continue to ask their guests what they can add or change to make the space event better.

"We're always looking for ways to improve the experience," Annarose said.

The Hive is located at 704 N. Washington, just 5 blocks north of Beehive. To book a retreat or for more information inquire online at www.beehivequiltshop.com/the-hive-quilt-retreat.

Shop News

Stitches Quilt Shop changes hands

McPHERSON – Kaylan Martin is the new owner of Stitches Quilt Shop in McPherson, purchasing the shop from Janet Yowell. Janet opened the shop in 2010 and is now looking forward to retirement. She will be helping Kaylan with the transition and with the Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop in October.

Since making her first quilt when she was just 11, Kaylan has had a passion for the craft. She went on to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering at Texas A&M University, where she discovered that engineering and quilting share similarities in critical thinking and creativity, making them complimentary pursuits.

When Kaylan, who had aspired to own a quilt shop for many years, learned that Janet wanted to retire, she jumped at the opportunity to buy the business. She hopes to grow the shop while maintaining the high-quality that customers experienced with Janet. Janet's continued involvement as a teacher, friend, and mentor to Kaylan speaks to the strong bond they share.

A Friday Quilting Club gathers at the shop every week to spend the day quilting, having lunch and enjoying each other's company. Other offerings from the shop include First Thursday Friendship Quilters at 5:30 p.m. the first Thursday of the month and a quilt block of the month.

If it's up to Kaylan, the number of quilters in McPherson and the surrounding area will only continue to grow. She has expanded hours to stay open until 8 on Thursdays so people who work full-time have more opportunity to come in.

Younkin to continue longarm quilting services

OAKLEY – With the closing of Smoky River Quilt Shoppe July 28, Donella Younkin has announced that she will continue to offer longarm quilting services to area quilters. She will also be continuing the tuxedo side of the business. Until the building sells, she will be quilting at the shop and then in her home. She will not be maintaining regular hours, however, so those who wish to drop off or pick up quilts or rent tuxedos are asked to call for an appointment. Please call Donella at 785-953-0049.

Full of Scrap Quilts to close brick and mortar store

CONCORDIA – Tammy and Roger Maher have announced the closing of Full of Scrap Quilts storefront location in Concordia. The shop will have an inventory reduction sale Aug. 8-12. The Concordia shop will close at end of day on Aug. 12. The remaining inventory will be available through their online store at fullofscrapquilts.com.

Tammy said the decision to close the Concordia shop was made after it was determined that health issues required them to move to a different climate. The Mahers are relocating to Westcliff, Colo., where Tammy will continue to do longarm quilting, design and sew t-shirt quilts, and run the online store.

"I hate moving from my hometown of Concordia and all the friends and customers we have here, but we really had no choice," Tammy said. "The support here has been wonderful, and I so appreciate the many people who have entrusted their quilts to me to

finish – even allowing me to take them out of state. We will miss everyone."

To contact Tammy about quilting after the move, call or text 785-243-5144 or Facebook message. They will be maintaining the Full of Scrap Facebook page as well as the website.

We wish Tammy and Roger all the best with this move to Colorado.

Elsie Grace's has new ownership

FRANKFORT -- Nan Bramhill Lisher has announced that she has sold Elsie Grace's and is pleased that it will continue serving the community after her retirement. The name of the new owner will be announced soon, but Nan said plans are for the shop to continue with a similar focus.

The store will close for renovation for at least a month in mid-August. Updates on the reopening will be on the shop's Facebook page.

Enjoy your retirement, Nan. We are looking forward to seeing the new Elsie Grace's.



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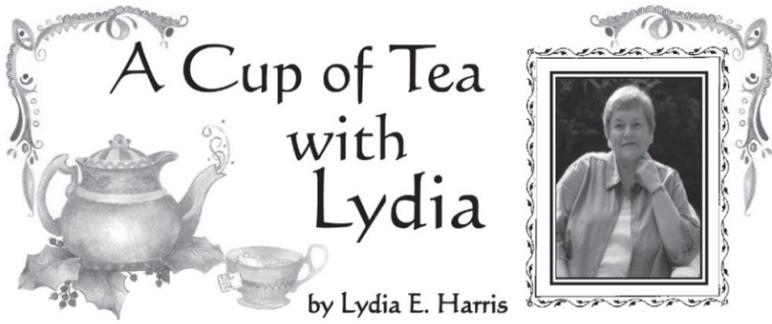
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Making memories with a Simplici-TEA

Sometimes the simplest get-togethers create the sweetest memories, especially if you share a cup of tea.

We hadn't seen our friends Ron and Tami for many years. Now they were coming to Seattle to visit relatives, hear a world-renowned singer and visit Milt and me. It would be a treat to connect with them again.

Tami and I both love all things tea, so I asked, "Would you like to join us for tea and scones?"

"I'm not eating flour or sugar," Tami replied. "But a cup of tea would be perfect."

With lots of tea choices and numerous individual teapots, we could sample several blends.

Since I was baking custard for my grandkids the day before our guests were coming, I also made custard without sugar for them -- just milk, eggs, salt, vanilla and a dusting of nutmeg on top. Quick and easy.

Then, to my delight, the mailman delivered a large tray of dried fruit and nuts from my pen pal. The label didn't include processed sugar, so I could share my gift with Ron and Tami.

As I prepared for our teatime, the sun shone, and a lilac-scented breeze blew -- perfect for afternoon tea on our upper-level deck. The shade of the canopy and the surrounding trees gave our deck the feel of a treehouse. For a friendly welcome, I set the table with linens, silver tableware, fresh lilacs, and floral china plates, cups and teapots.

We began our teatime by smelling different teas and selecting flavors to try. Paris tea and green Earl Grey tea with lavender won the first round. Ron and Tami enjoyed sipping new flavors and thought the tea assortment was the entire menu. But surprise! I brought out a large platter with dried fruit and nuts. I also served the custard in colorful egg-shaped ramekins and offered fresh blueberries to sweeten the pudding. They savored it all.

One of the best parts of sipping tea with friends is catching up on each other's lives -- taking time to listen, care, share our hearts and pray. In a sense, time seems to stand still as you linger over tea. But at the same time, it seems short and flies by. All too soon our simplici-TEA was over, and it was time for photos, hugs and fond farewells.

To my delight, later Tami emailed, "Time together with you and Milt over tea was the highlight of our trip."

"How could that be?" I asked her.

"You made everything so special for us, and the day was absolutely perfect."

"But you spent time with relatives and heard Andrea Bocelli, right?"

"Yes, everything was amazing. But your tea was a pleasant surprise. Ron and I thoroughly enjoyed it."

Of course, we enjoyed the sweet teatime with them as well.

From their appreciative response, here are my tips: 1, 2, 3 for a simplici-TEA.

1. Set a pretty table.
2. Offer a fragrant tea assortment.
3. Surprise guests with easy-to-prepare nibbles.

Sometimes the simplest teatimes create the sweetest memories.

Until our next teatime—*adios, aufwiedersehen*, goodbye, and *adieu*. May God bless you!

Lydia E. Harris is a tea enthusiast, grandmother of five (Grandma Tea), and author of *In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together* and *Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting*. Watch for her new devotional book for grandparents, scheduled to release in September for Grandparents Day. Her books are available through bookstores and online.

From Lydia's Recipe File: Grandma's Yum-Delicious Baked Custard

(From *In the Kitchen with Grandma*, page 160)

Healthy and easy to make. A favorite of Grandma Tea's grandchildren.

Gather

- 2 cups milk, scalded
- 2 large eggs
- 1/3 cup sugar (omit for sugar-free)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- nutmeg to sprinkle on top



Cook:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Microwave milk on high about 3 minutes to scald it.

- In medium-sized bowl, beat eggs slightly.
- Mix in sugar, salt and vanilla. Then stir in milk.
- Pour into a 1 1/2-quart baking dish or 5 or 6 custard cups.
- Set custard dish(es) in a pan and fill pan with 1 inch of water.
- Lightly sprinkle nutmeg on top of custard.

Bake for 45 minutes if made in a baking dish, until a table knife inserted 1 inch from the edge comes out clean. If made in custard cups, test for doneness after 35 minutes.

Serve warm or chilled. Refrigerate leftovers.

Makes 6 servings

Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else.

---- Fred Rogers

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Back Porch Break

by Nancy Brummett

A Dust Bowl Perspective



This is my 46th summer in Colorado -- and probably the first one about which I haven't complained. You see, having grown up in Tennessee, it's hard for me to accept that March is for blizzards, not blossoms. By the time May comes around and the grass finally starts to green up, I've pretty much given up on spring, and summer seems unpredictable at best.

But this year I have a new perspective! Due to reading the book *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl* by Timothy Egan, I may never complain again. As I read through this riveting account of the dust storms that blanketed America's High Plains in the mid- 1930s, I could almost taste the dust in my mouth. My heart went out to the women whose journals recounted day after day of dark skies, dust and silt seeping in around windows and cascading down walls -- and year after year when the only difference between one season and the next was the temperature, because nothing ever grew, and everything was always coated with a thick coat of dastardly dust.

One woman, Hazel Lucas Shaw, was reported to have staged a silent protest as her house was coated with dust inside and out, yet again. She just put on her white gloves and sat perfectly still at her kitchen table. I understand.

Cattle choked and died in the fields during those years, unable to get their breath. More tragically, thousands of people died also, including many infants who succumbed to dust pneumonia in spite of having their cradles covered with wet sheets day and night. But like the pioneer women the century before, the women living through the dust bowl years were convinced tomorrow would be better. So, they waited.

One thing they waited for was rain, but even that didn't bring relief. There was so much dust in the air that the rain fell like giant blobs of mud. And did I mention the swarm of grasshoppers that ate the few tiny sprigs that began to grow one spring -- as well as devouring the wooden handles of any tools left outside? Plagues of Biblical proportions!

Reading through these hardships gave me a new perspective on our fickle but beautiful summers in Colorado. We may not have a long, productive growing season, but we do have hummingbirds, blue skies and cool nights.

As I'm writing this, an afternoon thunderstorm is rolling over the mountains, and I know there's a good chance it will bring hail to decimate my plants. But that's OK! Should that happen this summer, I'll just collect the damaged blooms, put them in a little bowl, set the bowl in the middle of my kitchen table, and gaze at it with gratitude to God. Things could always be worse.

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.

Back Porch Break Now Available! *Back Porch Break: The Hope of Glory, A Devotional Guide for Older Adults* From Columnist Nancy Parker Brummett Order print or eBook from

Swedish Apple Cobbler

Grease the bottom of a round cake pan.
Fill pan 2/3 full of peeled, cut up apples.
Sprinkle over apples:
3 Tablespoons sugar,
1 tsp. cinnamon
2 Tablespoons lemon juice

Topping:

3/4 cup melted margarine (not hot)
1 cup sugar (can use brown sugar)
1 cup flour (can use oat flour or gluten free flour)
1 egg
1/2 tsp. salt
Beat in bowl and pour over apples.

Bake at 350 for 45 minutes or until golden brown.
recipe submitted by Janet M. Bair, Ansonia CT.



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A family of quilters

By Peg Nichols

My mother married into a family of quilters.

There wasn't much else to do that mid-Depression winter when my grandparents let my father, mother and my six-year-old self share a roof. The quarters were already crowded with my grandparents, three daughters -- my aunts -- and occasionally a son who was thrown out of the army when it was discovered that he was only fifteen.

My parents and I slept three to a bed under thick layers of thin quilts made in previous winters. Both my parents were gone when I woke in the morning. I had a hard time convincing myself that I wanted to leave the snug cocoon still warm from the warmth of their bodies and expose myself to the cold, frosty air of the bedroom.

The entire two-story house was heated by a round, pot-bellied, Great Western wood-burning stove taller than me and a cooking stove in the kitchen, also wood-burning. I could usually hear my mother's voice from somewhere in the house. My father would be standing in line somewhere, waiting for a WPA job.

For the most part, each quilt made that winter was a joint project. First, the squares. Names of the patterns flew over my head -- Flying Geese, Log Cabin, Churn Dash. The only one I could correctly identify was the Double Wedding Bands. The way the two circles wended together fascinated me.

There was one pair of scissors to serve the household. They were kept in the topmost drawer of a dining room cabinet. If someone used the scissors and failed to return them to the cabinet . . . well . . . Grandmother would still be muttering half-a-day later.

A lot of quilting pieces came from floral-printed feed sacks. A huge amount of time was spent in comparing or contrasting the colors. Was it better to put one piece next to another of a similar hue, a soft pink against a pale coral, or to go for a deliberate contrast, a glowing orange competing with a violent purple?

Not all the printed feed sacks became quilt pieces. Whole garments extended skimpy wardrobes. A large woman, like the mother of the boyfriend of one of my aunts, had to wait until several sacks of matching color and design appeared in the feed store inventory. Quite by chance, a dress sewn for my aunt was the identical fabric, which led to teasing remarks that she was clothed in her "mother-in-law's" leftover scraps.

Being a newcomer to the craft, it was typical of my mother to choose a less-traditional pattern. While most quilts were squares sewn together, the Lone Star radiated out from six diamond shapes -- or was it eight? -- in the center. Each additional circular row was larger and consisted of the same fabric, often a solid color. The colors varied in a chromatic range, usually light to dark.

The completion of my mother's quilt was long delayed. Whenever we moved -- my father always in search of work -- the unfinished quilt came with us, all our worldly goods crammed into the car.

For a brief few years fabric scraps collected from a garment factory could be ordered by the pound from the two marketing giants, Sears or Montgomery Wards. Purchasers could even choose a dominant color. Mother ordered by U.S. mail at least one packet in her search for appropriate fabric to finish her Lone Star quilt.

The unfinished quilt came with us on every move. When the quilt was finally completed, I was in high school, trying frantically to disassociate myself from anything that smacked of homemade. My mother never became the master quilter her mother-in-law was, but she never gave up the craft. The quilts she made were smaller and consisted of traditional squares sewn together. Alternating with squares of fabric were squares embroidered with nursery rhymes. And they did not survive long enough to become heirlooms. By the time her grandchildren had memorized the rhymes and grown so big the quilts no longer covered their bodies, the handwork specimens were quite worn out.

Peg Nichols is the author of Sidewalk Sale Across America, a novel of the Harkins family as they struggle through the coronavirus pandemic. Sabrina hopes to keep her yarn shop open, while Harold, an amateur radio ham, fears he will lose his day job. Contact her at pegnichols@gmail.com.

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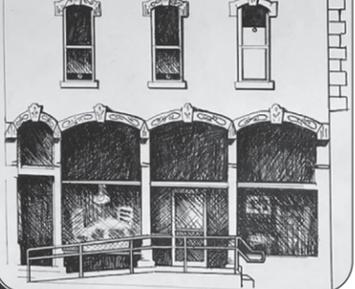
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The Heart of July (with August on the Horizon)

By Nancy J. Nash

If July is the heart of summer, what is the heart of July? What treasures of sky and meadow does it hold?

Gone are the wild strawberries of June, tastier than any store-bought variety. Black raspberries replace them, growing wild and much sought after. Neither blackberry nor red raspberry, they are at once mild and sweet and zippy. Can a berry taste energetic? Somehow, they have a liveliness that matches the month. When you wash them and place them in a dish, the plump black raspberries turn slightly mushy, sending forth rivulets of deep red or burgundy and adding beauty to their merits. Served in July with light cream and a sweetener, or as jam on toast the rest of the year, they are one of many varieties of summer berries that attract our eyes and delight our taste buds.

In a phone conversation with a friend recently, I asked why she sounded so joyful. "Ice cream and outdoor eating!" she declared. I agreed it was indeed the season. In North America, ice cream consumption has run high for a long time. Farm stands often sell homemade concoctions, eliciting smiles from babies and older folk alike. I told my friend that a local ice cream shop had a blackboard inscribed with this saying: "You can't buy HAPPINESS, but you can buy ICE CREAM... and that's close enough." It's the universal treat. I don't know of anyone who doesn't like it in some form or other.

What besides berries, ice cream and outdoor eating rest in the heart of July as treasures to be sought and savored? Its flowers, of course, are extraordinary. Some of my favorites are the wild ones that line the roadsides: simple, comforting clusters of orange day lilies; dusty blue chicory as pale as distant hazy mountains; and brown-eyed Susans nodding in the sunlight. Delicate blossoms of Queen Anne's lace, with shapes like small umbrellas, fill the meadows. Flowers inspire us as few things do, finding their way into gardens and homes in arrays both real and imagined. Everything from furnishings to wallpaper, hand-weaving to watercolors, embroidery to printed fabrics bears their imprint. Can you conceive of a world without such enduring loveliness?

And, of course, there are fireflies, starting in June and ending by mid-July. Tiny bursts of light, on and off, off and on, they create an electrical display in the sky that rivals Fourth of July fireworks. Some of these glowing insects hover in trees, where they blink like Christmas lights. Most dart about, turning dark meadows into showrooms of light and energy. Their quick, bright, unexpected appearances tease us to look for patterns and identify designs. But they are not constellations of stars, nor do they float past us like clouds morphing into sailboats and dragons. They remind me of the dots and dashes of a telegraph code or the ordered steps of a minuet, but only on the surface. Chaotic and unpredictable, how do these little beings navigate the night and avoid colliding with each other? How can their dance be so endlessly wild and free?

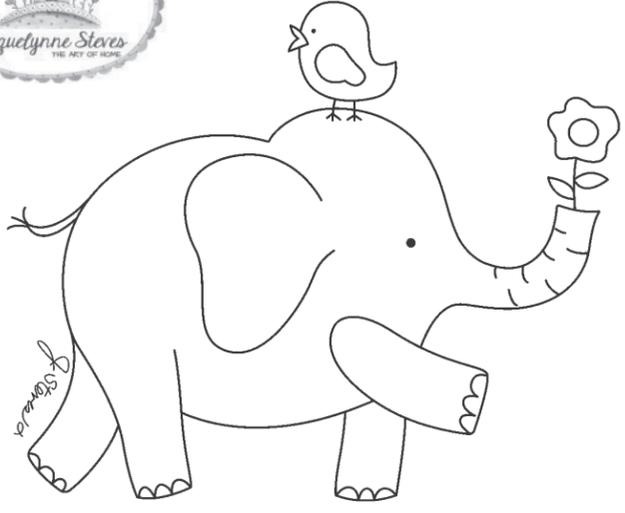
So here we have it: along with the fruits of field and meadow, the heart of July enfolds fireflies, a mystery beyond imagining. Over misty meadows, by musky brooks, like fragments of stars that have broken loose and are not sure where to land, they give us an excuse to extend a summer's day into the night. We sit on the porch and watch, mesmerized.

After July, what's on the horizon? New flowers and gentle breezes may grace our days. Evenings can be magical as we stroll through a village where streetlamps highlight soft contours of trees, as we meander down a lane and listen to critters calling and chirping in the darkness, as we feel on our faces the touch of warm air that invites us to linger. This, happily, is July's encore: August... more summer.

© 2023 Nancy J. Nash -- Nancy J. Nash is the author of Mama's Books: An Oregon Trail Story. and Little Rooster's Christmas Eve, each available on amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com. She has a B.A. in English composition from Mount Holyoke College and an M.F.A. in Writing for Children from Simmons College. She can be reached at nancynash341@gmail.com



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Town and Country Cooking

By Janette Hess

Fire up the grill

The grilling season is upon us, so make a plan to head outside with all the makings of an excellent summer meal.

Start your side dish by roasting a batch of marinated zucchini. Combine it with hot, fluffy couscous to create the perfect accompaniment to your grilled meat of choice -- either Pork Kabobs or Savory Skewered Beef.

Savory Skewered Beef gets its salty-sweet vibe from an Asian-influenced marinade. Pork Kabobs gain their depth of flavor from an intense combination of Spanish smoked paprika and minced garlic. Both recipes rely on metal skewers, which speed the grilling process by transferring heat into the cubes of meat. The skewers, of course, must be removed before serving. If metal skewers are not available, wooden skewers may be substituted, but they must be soaked in water for at least an hour to prevent burning.

So, choose a meat, round up some skewers, fire up the grill and enjoy some great seasonal eating!

Parslied Couscous with Grilled Zucchini

2 to 3 small, tender zucchini (about 1 pound)

¾ teaspoon salt

Marinade*

2 cups chicken or vegetable broth

1 cup couscous

2 teaspoons olive oil

¼ cup fresh, finely chopped parsley

Freshly ground pepper to taste

¼ cup feta cheese for garnish

Cut unpeeled zucchini into ½-inch slices and toss with ¾ teaspoon salt. Place on paper towels. Set aside for 30 minutes to allow salt to draw out excess moisture. Mix marinade in bag. After 30 minutes, pat zucchini slices dry and place in marinade. Shake to coat. Heat grill. Place grill tray (or grill basket) on hot grill. Using slotted spoon, transfer zucchini onto tray. Grill over medium heat until tender and lightly browned, approximately 10 minutes. Remove from grill and chop into small cubes. Set aside. In medium saucepan, bring broth to boil. Stir in couscous and olive oil. Cover and remove from heat. After 5 minutes, add chopped zucchini and parsley. Fluff with fork to combine ingredients. Add pepper to taste. Sprinkle with feta cheese before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

*In 1-gallon zip-top bag, combine 3 tablespoons olive oil, 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard, 1 teaspoon garlic salt, ¼ teaspoon black pepper, 1/8 teaspoon paprika and juice of 1 lemon (approximately 2 tablespoons).

Savory Skewered Beef

1½ pounds sirloin steak tips or other thick, grill-friendly steak

1/3 cup hoisin sauce

1/3 cup bourbon OR beef broth

2 tablespoons soy sauce

¼ cup peanut oil

2 teaspoons crushed red pepper

1 teaspoon garlic powder

Canola or vegetable oil for preparing grate

Trim steak and cut into 1¼ to 1½ -inch cubes. To make marinade, combine hoisin sauce, bourbon, soy sauce, peanut oil, crushed red pepper and garlic powder in 1-gallon zip-top bag. Add steak. Working through plastic, massage marinade into steak. Refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours, massaging and turning steak at least once. Pre-heat grill. Drain steak and thread onto 3 or 4 metal skewers; discard marinade. Using paper towel, pat off excess marinade. Wipe hot grill grate with oil-soaked paper towel. Place skewers on grill. Turn after 4 to 5 minutes. Continue grilling and turning until internal temperature of beef registers 125 to 135 degrees (depending on desired doneness), and steak is nicely browned. Transfer skewers to rimmed baking sheet or platter. Cover with foil. Allow to rest for at least 5 minutes before using fork to pull steak from skewers. Drizzle any drippings back over steak cubes. Makes 5 to 6 servings.

Pork and Red Pepper Kabobs

1½ pounds pork loin

2 large cloves garlic, minced

¼ cup canola, grapeseed or other vegetable oil

3 tablespoons Spanish smoked paprika

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 red bell pepper

Trim pork and cut into 1¼- to 1½-inch cubes. Place in 1-gallon zip-top bag. Add garlic, oil, paprika and salt. Working through plastic, massage seasonings into pork. Refrigerate 2 to 3 hours. Cut pepper into 1-inch square pieces. Pre-heat grill. Thread pork and pepper pieces alternately onto 3 or 4 metal skewers. Using paper towel, pat off excess marinade. Wipe hot grill grate with oil-soaked paper towel. Place skewers on grill. Turn after 5 minutes. Continue turning and grilling until pork is just cooked through, about 15 minutes, depending on grill. Transfer kabobs to rimmed baking sheet or platter. Cover with foil. Allow to rest for at least 5 minutes before using fork to pull pork and peppers from skewers. Drizzle any drippings back over pork. Makes 6 servings.



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.

Pieces From My Heart

by Jan Keller

Color and controversy

"Hey, you look like a jellybean -- a bright red jellybean!" quipped a teenage friend, referring to the shiny bright red coat I was wearing.

"Don't you like it?" I asked, allowing my insecurity to surface.

"Yeah!" he replied. Then, after a big grin spread across his face, he added, "If the fire alarm sounds, you're all ready to go!"

I like my jellybean coat. When I first saw it, I was reminded of a cinnamon candy apple. Not only is the coat a vibrant and shiny color, but I got it for an incredibly low, low price. I was so proud of my lucky find it never occurred to me maybe the price was so cheap because nobody else would buy it.

Over the years I walked out the door wearing my jellybean coat countless times. I enjoyed my red coat because I felt totally alive, bursting with energy, and noticed -- just like summer's beautiful bright blossoms in a myriad of colors that help make summer such a beautiful season!

An early trailblazer of women television personalities was Virginia Graham. Her "Girl Talk" program aired each weekday afternoon way back when I was a teenager. My favorite Virginia Graham quote is, "If you're going to be as big as a barn you might as well paint it a pretty color!"

Me? I think red is a very pretty color, and I wear red all year -- not just when celebrating Christmas and Valentine's Day.

I consider red slacks basic to my wardrobe, and I can't remember a time when I didn't own at least one pair. But, after recently buying a new pair of red slacks to replace my old faded red pair, I've been reassessing my thinking.

This reappraisal is due to the reaction of a friend who, after learning of my purchase, with a tone of astonishment commented, "I wouldn't own red slacks!"

"Why wouldn't you wear red slacks?" I incredulously asked.

"I'd feel so -- so conspicuous!" she replied.

Since that conversation, I've been taking my own confidential survey by asking anyone and everyone, "Do you own red slacks?"

The results are in, and I've become aware that red is a very controversial color. Women either wouldn't think of wearing red or wear red and think nothing of it.

My final decision about personally wearing red shall remain confidential though noticeable and obvious!

©2023 Jan Keller No reprint without permission Jan shares other pieces of her life in her books, *Pieces From My Crazy Quilt*, and *The Tie That Binds* These books can be ordered by calling 719-749-9797, or writing: Black Sheep Books, 11250 Glen Canyon Drive, Peyton, CO 80831

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Slices of Life

By Sherry Osland

Destination: Perth, West Australia Occupation: Teacher

It's February 1974, and I'm in Perth, West Australia for my first year of teaching. I've always been a dreamer lost in daydreams; also, an avid reader of authors sharing their own daydreams come true. By being here, I am, amazingly, beginning to live out one of my own. Of my family of two parents and five siblings, I am the least likely member to do this thing I'm doing, and not the least amazed is . . . well . . . "me"! I walked off the plane quietly saying to myself, "Hello, Perth. You're my home for the next year."

Fast forward forty-nine years (gulp! Can that be right?) and I've found my journal from those days. I've had some health-related down time recently and have read it for the first time in all those years. It amazes me to re-live thoughts, experiences and relationships. It has also amazed me how much I cannot recall, so it's good to have written at least some of it down. (Hopefully, encouragement to others to journalize while living life!)

My last three stories have shared the start of my journey to teach in West Australia for a year. I had finally arrived. I explained earlier how West Australia's State Education Department implemented a program to hire American four-year trained teachers for one or two year stints, allowing their two-year trained teachers to get more schooling. The plan looked good on paper and that's basically how I got there.

I shared that my group of 26 teachers was met at the airport (after our 24-hour flight) by the TV station for this city of 700,000 people. Evidently, we were "the" BIG news of the day! It was early February and I had left Kansas in the midst of one of the worst winters on record for cold and snow. With supposedly only one 77-pound suitcase allowed per person, I had layered my clothes as much as I could. You can imagine my dismay when we stepped out onto the tarmac and into a 105-degree day (!! I'm sure we made a big impression, but I'm not sure it was a good one. After a few brief interviews, we were shepherded onto a bus that took us to the Noalimba Reception Center in a suburb of South Perth. It was a beautiful campus with a nice cafeteria, meeting rooms and several flat blocks for accommodations. It was built in 1968 to meet the needs of an influx of British immigrants coming as skilled labor during the mining boom from 1966 – 1971. (I recently googled it and found that the London immigration office offered migrants a program called 10 Pound Poms. Adults were sponsored by the State for that small amount - children were free - in exchange for two years of work. If less than two, they would return to England. They were offered the Noalimba accommodation while finding jobs, housing and learning their way around.)

While there, we had orientation meetings about banking and currency, housing, insurance, tours of the three architectural school building styles, etc. Such a welcoming and helpful way to enter a foreign country. Some trivia - it was here that I was introduced to "white tea." The only hot tea I now like is white tea (tea, sugar, milk or half & half. For a sugar high, substitute sweetened condensed milk for the half & half – whew!) In my recent googling of Noalimba, I learned it was demolished in 2003 and is now parking and housing. How sad, but I'm sure it served its initial purpose in encouraging British immigration to West Australia.

Upon our arrival, "flat" assignments and roommates were given and – THANK GOODNESS! – we had the afternoon to settle in. I barely got through the door of my flat, introduced myself to my roommate then fell across the bed. I didn't wake up until after 11:00 PM! We all had almost two weeks dealing with jet lag and getting acclimated to the heat.

With the stress of a new culture and language (supposedly English), I initially had a hard time understanding Aussies. They tend to speak with minimal mouth movement and are also more soft-spoken. That, as well as the unfamiliar accent and slang, made my head spin. "Huh"? became my annoying silent reaction. No wonder one of their stereotypes for us is "loud Yanks" (loud voices as well as typically having a bit of an attitude – or so they think). [Side note: For my first couple months at Balga, I had an older, close-to-retirement male teacher try to "get my goat," so to speak. Any negative news story about US schools or education departments, he would chide me about it at morning tea. I told him again and again, how I came from a small town, no skyscrapers, no violence in schools or the town, etc. etc. He was exasperating, but I didn't let on. Eventually, he became a friend.]

When being accepted as teachers, we assumed we were walking into specific positions. That was not the case. We waited to be assigned to our schools but ran into several postponements. While that was unsettling, it really was amazing to have the Noalimba accommodations during the nervous wait. Numbers dwindled as some received their school assignments and left. Another girl and I decided to room together. Wouldn't you know! Janet's school was the southern-most and mine was the northern-most in the city. We got a flat centrally located and figured out our transportation from there (a story for another day).

School assignments had a hierarchy to them. "Bonded" beginning teachers fresh out of college were given assignments to a Bush school (inland, Aboriginal reservation areas). After a couple years, they could choose to move to a Country school. (One of the girls from our group chose a school 100 miles

inland from Perth. Interestingly enough, she ended up marrying an Aussie and staying.) Depending on choice and vacancies, one could then expect to rotate to the more coastal city schools. I referred earlier to our assignments to city schools as upsetting the cogs of the rotation wheel. Australian teachers expecting to rotate towards the more coveted city appointments (to be closer to family, colleges for continuing education, to preferred city life, etc.) were stalled. One can only imagine the upsets (ouch!) I was glad to have arrived in the first group that was more easily assimilated and greeted with less angst.

My next slices of life will be experiences in Australia. I was so very blessed to have been able to have them and to recall precious memories from that time of my life.



Written by Sherry Osland of Praise Works Quilting in Abilene, formerly writing the *Quilts That Redeem* column for *The Country Register*. For examples of quilting (as well as pictures of Hand-braided rugs and *Quilts That Redeem* books, for sale) go to: facebook.com/praiseworksquilting Contact information: sherryo51@hotmail.com or 785-263-5528.

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We have our lucky winner of the \$50 gift certificate to an advertising shop of their choice, Reia Lenhart from Freedom, Oklahoma. For the second time in a row we have a winner from Oklahoma! We always appreciate hearing from our out-of-state readers and the wonderful stories of their shopping experiences in Kansas.

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Building Harmony

Hot tub adventure

by Jeff Cappis

My wife Cathy and I really enjoy our hot tub. It's five steps away from the house, and 15 steps away from the forest. This is the place where we do our best talking at night. We've spent thousands of hours out there sipping wine under the stars. At times it gets so quiet out there that we can hear the mice pass wind. It's especially quiet when Cathy is mad at me for something.

One particular night we were parked in the tub and enjoying the evening. Again, the stars were out, crisp and clear. The moon (just a sliver) was casting faint shadows. We were musing about being all alone. Truly alone.

Well, maybe not quite alone. We started hearing slight noises coming from deep within the forest. We both froze to listen. The occasional twig broke or a small branch would snap off. Like so many animals we've seen, we went still and just listened.

"Must be a deer", I said quietly. We were intrigued and quietly moved to the side of the tub closest to the noise. The sounds were slowly traveling through the forest.

"Maybe a coyote", Cathy replied. We heard a bigger branch break. We could tell something was walking through the undergrowth. The sound was still moving around.

"Cougar?" I mused. (Bad thing to suggest). Now we were starting to get nervous, so I tried to cover by saying "but it's probably just a bear." There was a commotion coming from the dark shadowed forest as branches broke, the forest floor snapped, something was puffing loud. We grabbed the edge of the tub and sank lower in the water. I'm sure our eyes got big as wagon wheels. The mystery racket rose to a peak and suddenly:

A moose stepped out of the trees.

It stood not 15 feet away and just looked at us. We just looked at it. It gave out a snort, Cathy gave a scream. Just about the time I was about to mention that maybe we should get into the house; I noticed Cathy was gone. I heard the front door slam shut... then lock.

Well now, you know how fast your thoughts can race in these situations. "Let's see", I thought out loud. "I'm sitting in the only water around, the moose looks thirsty, he's big as my truck, and he's lookin' at me like I'm people soup. O.K., now it's time to panic!"

I went to scramble out of the tub and slipped on the edge. I knocked over the wine glasses, and the bottle bounced across the deck. I fell back in, and water splashed everywhere. The moose craned its head to get a better look. I scampered to get out again, this time falling out onto the deck with a loud thud. Struggling to my feet, I tripped on the wine bottle and banged my face on the doorbell. The chimes started going off, and the dog howled inside. I banged on the door. The lights came on, and Cathy dragged me in.

A little confused, the moose snorted in disgust and awkwardly sauntered away. Guess we showed it not to mess with humans, huh?

We've encountered a few more moose since, but now we take it a lot calmer. We've also seen the silhouettes of deer bedding down with their young in the moonlight, observed bats, owls and once even a fox. We feel safe in our unique hot water living room. They seem to respect that. I'm sure they realize we're not people soup.

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Random Acts

by Maranda K Jones

Two Scoops

"Vanilla, please."

I will pick vanilla every single time. My favorite flavor may be the simplest, but it always makes me happy. And ice cream does make me happy! The happiest and simplest summer moments involve ice cream.

Once you have put away the gardening gloves that spent the sunny day pulling weeds, moving rocks and watering flowers, you wipe the dust off your face and wash your hands. "One scoop or two?" is music to your ears as you grab a spoon for the two scoops in the bowl. Pop the top on the chocolate syrup and pour it on. Cut up strawberries before you sprinkle the sweet treat with black pepper. Add a little whipped cream to the top and enjoy the perfect sundae. The chocolate and strawberries add sweetness to a full day of play. The cool creaminess feels like the perfect pay for a hard day's work.

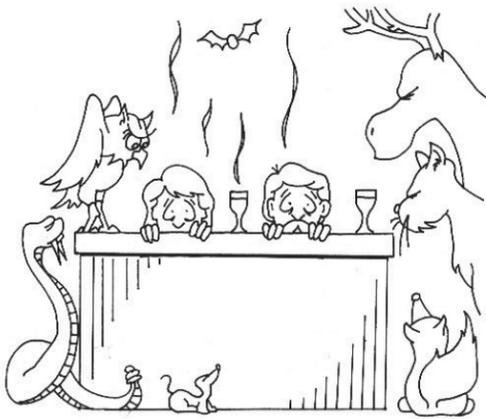
My sister and I often helped outside, much like mentioned above. When we were too young to fight over who would drive the riding lawn mower, our mom enjoyed the time on the tractor, and we pulled weeds out of the rock bed. Then one of us would get distracted by the kittens playing with the leaves, telling the other to watch. We'd pull a long stem of grass and extend our arm toward a fluffy feline, offering it as a toy hoping to entice a kitten into our laps for some cuddles. Then the mama cat would remind the kittens they were barn cats in training and not pets. Duchess would carry the kittens by the scruff back to the litter and teach them to hunt. We watched and listened to her communicate, correct and coach her babies with amazement and admiration at their hunting instincts. We filled her bowl with milk, an ice cream sundae in feline form.

While feeding the cats, we would feed the dogs too. Giving them time to eat before the next game of fetch, we would scoop and rake to make sure they had a clean yard to play in. And us too! After putting the shovels back in the garage, we passed by the ball bin and grabbed a basketball. We aired it up and gave it a test bounce before starting our game of "horse." We both loved to dribble and shoot, so we never needed reminders to practice. Dad always managed to squeeze in a game or two, getting us to spell H-O-R-S-E before he did, and then he would go back to his D-I-Y projects around the house.

Mom parked the mower and picked green beans from the garden. We snapped the ends while she ran the water and prepped the rest of supper. Dad soaked and lit the charcoals before adding the burgers to the grill. We ran through the sprinklers to cool off and clean off before sitting down on the patio together. To the west we could see the sun stretching down toward the mountains behind the freshly mown field.

At the table we could see the family who worked and played together, sitting down for a simple meal. We talked, laughed and enjoyed our cookout. As usual, as we were finishing up, my dad asked, "What's for dessert?" And as usual, my mom answered, "We have ice cream!" Then with his best waiter skills, Dad took orders for flavors and amounts. "One scoop or two?" And I always picked vanilla.

© 2023 Maranda K Jones. Maranda Jones' new book *Random Acts* is now available at amazon.com. The book includes her reader-acclaimed articles from the last decade.

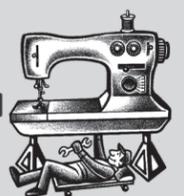


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Calendar of Events • Internet



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.

July

26-August 5...Back to School Sale @ Old Town Business, Conway Springs, p. 16
28-29...5th Weekend Fabric Sale @ Seneca Variety, Seneca, p. 8

August

8-12...Inventory Reduction Sale @ Full of Scrap Quilts, Concordia, p. 19
9-12...Handi Quilter's Truck Event @ Quilter's Yard, McPherson, Corner Block Lodge
19...Barnes Annual Antique & Junque Fest, Barnes, p. 20
26...Miltonvale Tootlefest Quilt Show, Miltonvale, p. 20

September

1-2...35th Annual Little Balkans Quilt Show, Pittsburg, p. 5
16...Coed Softball Tournament @ Westmoreland, p. 9
16...Cornhole Tournament @ Westmoreland, p. 9
23...31st Anniversary Sale @ Sew Country, Belleville, p. 19
30-October 31...Cottage Lane Pumpkin Patch, Ellis, p. 18

October

5-14...25th Annual Central Kansas Quilt Shop Hop, Various, p. 12, 13
7...Stitches in Time Quilt Show, Ulysses, p. 17
12-13...2023 Quilter's Motor Coach Trips - 2-Day Shop Hop Trip, p. 23
13-14...18th Annual Threads Across Nebraska, p. 12
17-21...Central Kansas Yarn Hop, watch for details
18-21...Run for the Border Shop Hop p. 12
21...Fall Festival @ Craft-ee Crafters Craft Mall, Topeka, p. 9

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

Tuesday:

6 p.m. -- Make It Sew, Quilter's HQ, 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.

Clutter Happens

Time to Clear Out Collections Which Add to All That Clutter

by Julie Pirtle

Collections, collections and more collections! We all have them. Lots of them! Antiques, craft supplies, vintage toys -- the list goes on. Usually when we declare that it's time to clear out, we think of these kinds of collections...the items that draw us in and compel us to collect. Perhaps these are not the worst space taking items in our homes.

I have spent the last month preparing for an out-of-state move. You would think that being an professional organizer, I would not have much to prepare for. But you would be wrong! When I started digging deep, I discovered collections of day-to-day items that I never really paid attention to.

These items are sneaky when they multiply. They are easy to ignore and end up taking up space that they don't deserve. I've been taking notes on these culprits of clutter and decided to share with you what I found lurking in the dark depths of my home.

Socks. Really? Just how many pairs of socks does one person need? More so, why do we keep the ones that are missing their better half? Perhaps I am an optimist to do so, but from looking at my drawer, the better half never made it back.

It's time for a come-to-the-sock moment. Get rid of stray socks, socks that don't fit well and socks with holes. You know what they say -- you never know when you might get in an accident and find yourself in the hospital with holey socks!

(Side note here. I remember adults saying this to me and, even at a young age, it perplexed me. Wouldn't having holey undergarments of any kind pale in comparison to the fact that you were just IN AN ACCIDENT? Do I really care at this point? It makes me wonder where these old sayings came from!)

Boxes. In the days of overnight deliveries, they can pile up quickly. Cute boxes, handy shaped boxes, boxes for emergency purposes...STOP THE MADNESS! Instead of tossing them in the garage, get into the habit of breaking them down and take them out to the recycle bin. Don't mourn the loss of these cardboard monsters. There will most assuredly be more in your future!

OK. This next one is going to hit a nerve for many women out there. Shampoo and Conditioners. Oh, clutter angels help me! It seems like I am always in search of the perfect shampoo. The partially used bottles end up in cabinets where they have no right to be. I'm sure I put them there lamenting about the money I spent and assuring myself that I might use them someday. If they didn't work when I tried them, they aren't going to work later! Share the wealth with a friend or let them go.

Cosmetics fall under this same category. How many shades of taupe eye shadow are necessary? Aren't three open tubes of mascara two too many? Cosmetics are a feel-good purchase for me so I don't get rid of the items that didn't work as quickly as I should. It's best to pare it down and keep track of the expiration dates on each item. This is especially true for eye products as they can harbor bacteria that your baby blues do not need to be subjected to.

Pantries are a prime spot for an overabundance of items that should not be there! Check expiration dates on a regular basis. Donate foods that you over stocked or used but didn't like. Look online and see if your neighborhood has a social media page. Take a picture of your food and offer it for pick up. I was surprised at the response I got when I did this. Times are tough right now for many people, and free groceries can be a real boost.

Hear me out on this one, please. Stop with the bag collections! Personally, I am not guilty of this clutter crime. I just know that most every closet or pantry I open to organize will have a plethora of bags. It's even more interesting to me how attached people are to this collection. It's of epidemic proportions! Just say no and let them go.

I think the largest category of items I had to purge were cleaning products! It was quite surprising how many had accumulated that I was not using. Again, think of posting on your local social media page. Your neighbors will thank you and so will your cupboards!

Keeping an organized home does not have to depend upon exhausting weekend projects. Take a look around and see what small spaces you can tackle. Do one at a time instead of all at once. Try to be of the mindset to release as much as you add to your home. Developing daily habits will keep the clutter at bay and your sanity intact!

Now, march to your sock drawer and make it happen. It's calling you. Do you hear it? C'mon, you've got this. I know you do!



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



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Motor Coach begins and ends in Minneapolis KS
No Place Like Home Quilt Shop

**• Houston International Quilt Show
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Prescription for Adventure

by Naomi Gaede-Penner

Autumn's Treasures

Brilliant gold aspen and birch leaves shiver in the breeze. Berry bushes change from green to red, then deepen into purple. Tall fireweed molts magenta blooms into cottony strands and green leaves curl into faded red ribbons. Low bush cranberries ripen into crimson clusters among mounds of lacy moss. White dogwood flowers fade, begetting fluorescent orange berries. The smell of smoke no longer puts homesteaders on alert for forest fires, but now, after weeks of soggy rain, it is a friendly outdoor fragrance. Walks in the woods are less padded as the moss stiffens with cooler temperatures.

"In Kansas, August would be sticky hot," says my mother. "Here in Alaska, there is frost in mid-August." She's content on the Gaede homestead that she and my father have hewn out of the wilderness, yet a chunk of her heart belongs to Kansas and the farmland where she grew up.

In this northern land, the sun no longer plays all night, and evenings are cut short at 9 p.m. The joyously frenzied summer activities wind down, yet there is the frantic race to prepare for

the winter lock-in. My mother picks peas -- and then deliberates on when to bring in carrots and potatoes from her garden. My sister and her husband hurry to slam in last-minute T-posts and stretch field fence. My brother takes his Piper Super Cub off floats and puts it onto wheels, brings it off the lake and back to the hangar-fold on the homestead.



Picking cranberries on the Gaede's Alaska Homestead

During this autumn time, we spend hours gathering cranberries, which Alaskans call the tiny lingonberries that grow close to the ground. The mosquitoes are less nuisance, and we've become accustomed to drizzle. We crouch low to the ground, exclaiming over our finds of the biggest berries ever and marveling at the natural landscaping of

weathered stumps filled with fuzzy natural vegetation and topped with black crowberries. In the quietness of the woods, with boots buried in moss, we savor the special moments of Alaska Autumn. We have hunted and gathered. We have stored away memories of another Alaska summer. We're nearly ready for winter, yet not for Alaska's Autumn to come to an end. Perhaps we can catch one more after-supper walk down the grassy airstrip. Perhaps the golden corridor of aspen tree leaves will be as we remembered it yesterday.

Hurry! What are we waiting for? Let's go!



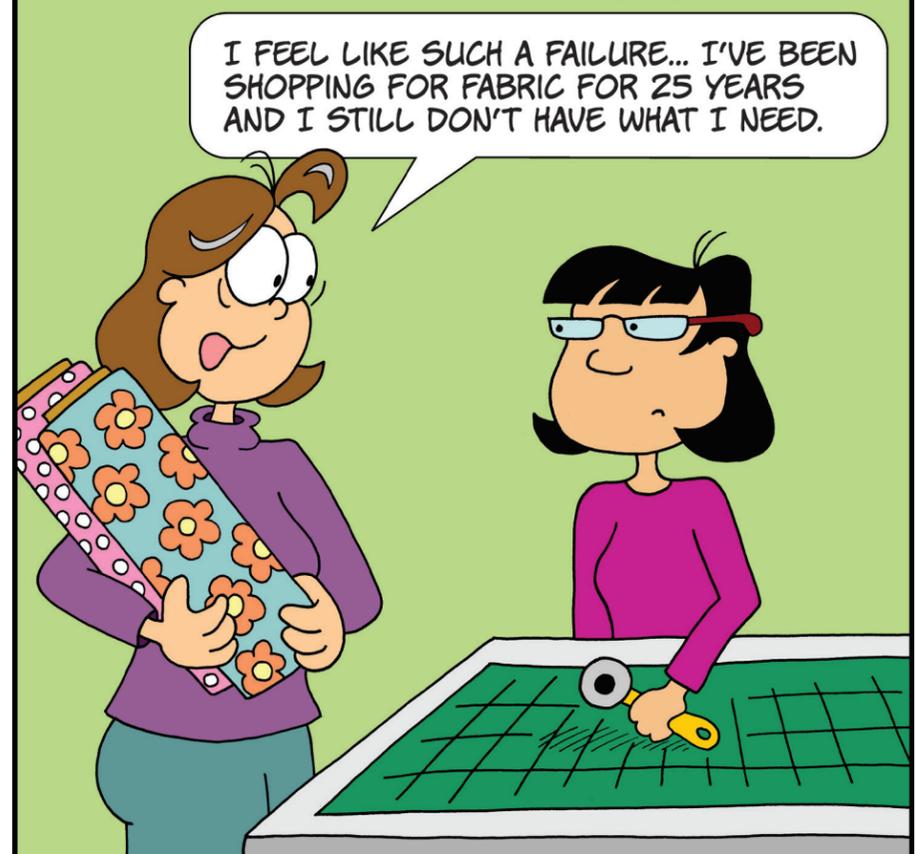
Naomi's non-fiction Alaska books are available at prescription-foradventure.com, or by calling 303.506.6181. In Kansas, they are available at Faith & Life (Newton) and Kansas Originals (1-70 at Wilson.) "The Bush Doctor's Wife" is also available on Amazon. You can follow Naomi on FaceBook at "Prescription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

By the Yard®

by Jennifer Lopez

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SUMMER TOMATOES

BUY LOCAL BUY FRESH

Garden *Fresh*

Put all ingred. in a glass bowl or jar, cover tightly & set in the sun 4 or 5 hrs.

Use as salad dressing, on toast for bruschetta, or fresh over hot pasta.

Saturday Morning Farmer's Market

8 vine-ripened garden tomatoes, roughly chopped
 3 cloves garlic, put through press
 3 shallots, chopped
 1 c. good, fruity olive oil
 1/4 c. balsamic vinegar
 2 Tbsp. fresh basil, sliced
 2 Tbsp. parsley, chopped
 1 tsp. sugar
 lots of freshly ground pepper; salt to taste

OH! SO! GOOD!

Savor this taste of Summer, put it on everything! With Love, Susan Branch www.susanbranch.com