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Keep an extra copy of the current issue of our publication in your car to use as a road map for places to shop. What a fun, relaxing way to ease into Spring. And don't miss the Spring open houses, quilt shop hops and shows that are planned. The shows and events listing summarizes all the events from the ads in this issue so you can easily mark your calendar to attend!

Rachel and Grace are both doing well. Rachel is in Mobile, AL in March then back out to Denver area for her Anesthesiologist Assistant program rotations. She will graduate in December. Grace is having fun and getting great grades at UGA. She has spent a few weekends visiting friends from high school at nearby colleges.

Thank you for picking up a copy of this issue. And be sure to share your copy or pick up another copy for a friend. Enjoy shopping this Spring and please let our advertisers know you read about them here!



Amy, David, Rachel and Grace

Shows & Events

May/June events due by April 1

Mail a check for \$25 with your event info to the address at the top of page 2.

March

1-Sept 30.....Call for Quilt Entries at Virginia Quilt Museum in Harrisonburg (pg. 5)

7-9 Spring Open House at Crafty Ladies & Friends in Covington (pg. 7)

16..... Spring Open House at Cottonwood in Charlottesville (pg. 6)

23..... Spring Market Showcase at Good News Church in Covington (pg. 7)

April

1-6No Foolin' Storewide Sale at Lib's Place in Rice (pg. 12)

6..... Bernina Longarm Event at Loving Stitches Quilt Shop in Fayetteville, NC (pg. 14)

12-14Northern Shenandoah Valley Quilt Show at Clark Cty Parks & Rec Ctr in Berryville (pg. 4)

12-14 Visit Quilting Essentials at Northern Shenandoah Valley Quilt Show in Berryville (pg. 3)

13.....Madison Quilt Guild Quilters Garage Sale at Culpeper Methodist Church in Culpeper 13..... Lake Country Quilters Quilt Show at Clarksville Presbyterian Church in Clarksville (pg. 14)

13-14 Charlottesville Area Quilters Quilt Show at Center at Belvedere in Charlottesville (pg. 6)

19-20 OESD Event at Loving Stitches Quilt Shop in Fayetteville, NC (pg. 14)

19-21Spring Craft Market at the Convention Center in Virginia Beach (pg. 16)

20..... Celebrating 30 years in Business at Country Shoppes of Culpeper in Culpeper (pg. 3)

June

7-8 Quilts for All Seasons Show & Boutique at Eastlake Community Church in Moneta (pg. 11)

7-8 Tidewater Quilters' Guild Quilt Show at Cape Henry Collegiate Fieldhouse in Virginia Beach (pg. 16)

July

1-Aug 31All Mid-Atlantic Shop Hop (pg. 15)

18-20 Chincoteague Island Blueberry Festival at Chincoteague Center in Chincoteague (pg. 16)

Mar-Apr, 2024

The Virginia Register

Pg. 3

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Wit and Wisdom

Is Your New Year's Resolution Not Working?

If you have not been able to keep your New Year's Resolution, maybe this book is for you.

This year, I've decided to get serious about making a New Year's resolution. However, what can I commit to that is not too painful, wasteful or dangerous? Hmmmm...

Perhaps losing a few pounds, or forty, would be a worthy endeavor. On the bright side, it would give me more energy, grow more memory cells, looser clothing and have enough breath to get to the mailbox and back.

This may take some dedicated research to find the best possible meal plan for a big girl like me. After scrolling down through a few sites, I found a book titled: Eat to Lose Weight. That sounded like a book I could relate to, so I ordered it. That inspired me so much my stomach started growling. I finished up a half a bag of potato chips.

In the midst of my computer research, my neighbor came over for a visit and brought a bag of cream cheese cookies. So, we had a cup of tea and I shared the bag of cookies with her.

My book arrived the next day. So, I relaxed in my recliner, ready to read and get this resolution under way. Chapter one, started out very discouraging. It listed all the diseases and consequences of eating the wrong foods. The most disturbing of all, was that I would have to give up "dairy products." There goes my daily afternoon snacks of cheese and crackers.

Chapter two, advised me to eliminate eating any meat products unless it was a three-ounce piece of salmon, squid, scrod or octopus. I started having palpitations.

Chapter three, stated that enjoying sugar of any kind was totally against the "Dieter's Bill of Rights."

At the end of this chapter I just knew that starvation was my only option. This was becoming painful. I immediately had to have one square from a chocolate Hershey bar.

Chapter four, described the layout of your dinner plate. It should consist of 2/3 vegetables and 1/3 a chicken nugget. Green vegetables will produce enough protein to fulfill your minimum daily requirement. So seriously consider eating peas, beans and broccoli. At this point, I finished eating the rest of my Hershey bar.

Somehow, my dietary wants don't match up to reality. I don't believe reading the next ten chapters in my book will slim this body down.

On a serious note, perhaps my new resolution should be exercising at the gym at least twice a week. I would like to improve my muscle tone and flexibility. If I can bend over and touch my toes, I'll celebrate a victory! However, it's too late to look like a 20-year-old in a 70-year-old body!

Food for thought: "America has more to eat than any country in the world and more diets to keep us from eating it." and "You never realize what a poor loser you are until you try dieting."

by Cheryl Potts

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Cheryl Potts lives in the snow belt region of New York State.

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Life in Skunk Hollow
Learning to Speak Well

We have friends whose college-age son suffered a brain injury over a year ago now. Henry had to learn how to walk and talk and do the most basic of human processes all over again. And though he still has a difficult journey ahead, he's come a long and amazing way.

Recently I had the opportunity to observe Henry as he was conversing with someone. I listened to the painstaking slowness of his responses. Because of the injury to his brain, Henry must literally process each and every word before speaking them. When a question is asked him, he pauses (I could "see" him processing) and then speaks one word. Then he processes again and speaks another word - and again and again until a complete sentence is out. It's a very deliberate, very time-consuming process for him.

Watching this interaction made me realize how much I take the "simple" process of talking for granted - open mouth and out fly the words. I got to wondering how much better off I would be (and those with whom I'm talking to or about) if I had to slowly process each and every word that came out of my mouth. The idea of "idle words" would be non-existent. If every word cost me the time, energy and effort that they do Henry, I'm guessing that I wouldn't be as lazy or flippant as I am with my words. Would I waste effort on words of complaint, of gossip, of pettiness? If I had to stop and really think about every word I was going to form with my mouth, I think I would pretty quickly realize that much of what comes out of my mouth isn't worth saying.

It's interesting to me where life lessons show up. I'm grateful not only for eyes to see such things, but for a brain and mouth that work pretty flawlessly in unison to allow me to easily communicate. But watching Henry has been a good object lesson for me. And I want to apply the skill he has learned, because learning to process my thoughts, my words, and my reactions with greater intention would be a good thing for all involved. Thanks, Henry

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



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Building Harmony
Moose Calls

This is a piece about passion, lust and heartbreak in a valentine story of unrequited love.

The air was still warm, but the leaves were softly fluttering from the trees. I was on my way out the back door with my grandson Kane. We were going to get some firewood for the evening. He's four and to him, going to the woodshed is a great adventure. It just so happened that this time he was right.

Between us and the woodshed was a large moose. She was gently munching on our lawn. Even though we didn't seem to bother her at all, I figured we should go back.

"Maybe we should just wait inside," I said while shuffling a curious Kane back in through the door. Luckily, I have a fair size tinted window near the door, so we watched the moose from inside. She just kept on munching.

Not too much later, I noticed something up the hill was moving. It stepped out of the trees with its long antlers and proud stance. A male moose. After spying her, he swaggered down the hill to let her know he was there. But, in a way, kind of coy so as not to look too interested. Keeping his distance at first, he struck another rather noble pose.

She took on a "I'm just hanging around the forest with nothing to do but look pretty" kind of pose. I suppose in her mind she was going to have a romantic night under the full moon and stars, eating grass and leaves, with the man of her dreams (or something like that).

Diluted with self-reassurance, as guys often are, the male began to saunter closer. I suppose he was thinking he would meet this other moose and talk about the weather (or something like that). Anyway, he was starting to get all cocky and confident, unaware there was a problem: another male moose coming along not thirty feet behind him.

Now the female really struck a pose.

The males began by slowly circling each other, one of them snorted. They knocked horns a few times, but not very deliberate. They kicked up a little sod. They had staring and pooping contests. This kind of thing went on for 1/2 hour.

By the time they were in the "I can scrape more bark off this tree with my horns than you can" contest, it looked as if they might be actually having fun. The female though, was getting impatient. At one point she shook her moose stuff in a provocative way, but they ignored her. She paced a bit. I suppose she was thinking "There isn't much tree left. They should be finished soon. Then I may choose my champion!" (or something like that). Turns out, we have lots of trees in the forest. Even Kane got bored and went to watch TV.

The female moved in a little bit closer but always pretend not to notice. So did the males. They got busy knocking dead branches off the newly naked trees with their antlers. After a while, the female was getting impatient. She got right close and made a few snorting noises. She even gave them that level-eyed kind of stare.

This finally got both the males' attention and everyone stopped. So, there they were, all three of them staring at each other. Kind of a moose awkward moment really. One girl, two dates. For a few minutes they just stood there until finally the two males tapped horns, pooped, and wandered off through the forest in opposite directions.

The female (she must have been confused, humiliated and disappointed), just went back to eating and fertilizing our lawn. And our bushes. And our perennials.

There are a few theories about what happened there. a) Maybe in the moose world she was considered homely or b) The two males became good friends and neither wanted to hurt the other's feelings by stealing his girl or c) Nobody could get romantic because they could see we were watching.

As it turns out, it didn't matter. In the spring she produced a newborn calf from a previous romance. Now there are two eating our lawn.

-© Jeff Cappis 2024 jcappis@telus.net

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Reader Shares!

Finished Project!

Here's Mrs. Gwaltney & Ms. Willis modeling their Crocheted Pencil Scarfs. This pattern was found on Etsy. These women finished the Scarfs in Oct. 2023.

Shared by reader S. Willis of Hampton, VA




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A Cup of Tea with Lydia

Spring into TEA

by Lydia E. Harris

I grew up on a dairy farm in Blaine, Washington, where my mother served afternoon coffee and fresh homemade zwieback (yeast double buns) on Sunday afternoons. This German Russian tradition was called faspä. Often friends dropped in unannounced during that time. Mother would quickly set out a spread of sliced cheese, meats, rolls, home-canned fruit, and sweets to serve them.

My parents' hospitality made an impression. I enjoyed these spur-of-the-moment visits with church folks and wanted to follow my mother's example.



Hospitali-TEA

Years later, when a friend gave me If Teacups Could Talk by Emilie Barnes, I became inspired to invite family and friends for a cup of tea. Since I was also just beginning to write for publication, I decided to write a column I entitled, "A Cup of Tea with Lydia." When I told my writing mentor about my idea for a tea column, she said, "That would bore me to tears."

It hasn't bored me to tears. Now decades later, I still enjoy going out for tea, serving tea to others, and writing this tea column. I hope you enjoy the column too.

A friend asked me, "How do you keep coming up with ideas to write about?"

"I just keep serving tea," I replied. I don't usually plan a teatime to have a topic for a column. But often after serving guests, I realize, "This could make a good tea column." The tea party inspires the column, not the reverse.

If teacups could talk, mine would have many stories to tell. Like what happened a month ago when my granddaughters (13 and 20) planned to stop by. "Would you like to come for tea?" I asked. They did.

Impromptu Tea

Without much time to prepare, I planned a menu around the food I had on hand. I made crustless cucumber-and-cream cheese sandwiches, scone blossoms from my cookbook In the Kitchen with Grandma, and served sweets from my freezer.

Placemats, floral teacups and saucers, and a three-tier plate stand filled with foods welcomed them to the table. The bottom plate held fresh-baked scones, Norwegian krumkake, and cookies. On the side, homemade whipped cream, jam, and lemon curd accompanied the scones. The middle plate held the sandwiches and edible small trees for a garnish. A slice of summer sausage was the tree base, thin cucumber slices were folded back and forth for the tree, with a cheese star on top—all held together with a toothpick. The smaller top plate contained cupcake liners filled with fresh raspberries and small chunks of melon.

They each had their own small pot of favorite herbal tea—Country Peach Passion—and the three-tier stand rested on the table between them. What a delightful way to spend an impromptu visit! Now my teacups have another story to tell.

Spring Teas

Spring is a lovely season to share tea. How about an Easter brunch, a St. Patrick's Day par-tea, or a Mother's Day teatime? Or perhaps you have a birthday or shower to celebrate. I've included an easy three-ingredient recipe to serve. It will add a colorful sweet and salty crunch to whatever else is on the menu.

I can't wait until my next tea party! Won't you join me?

-Lydia E. Harris is a tea enthusiast, grandmother of five, and the author of three grandparenting books: GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids (2023); In the Kitchen with Grandma: Stirring Up Tasty Memories Together; and Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting. All are available online and wherever books are sold.

From Lydia's Recipe File: Spring Pretzel Flowers

Colorful and easy to make.

Ingredients:


- Pretzels (square-shaped, called snaps)
- White vanilla candy melts
- Pastel M&Ms

Directions:

- Place one candy melt on each pretzel.
- Heat a few at a time in the microwave to soften, not melt (time varies, but check every 15 seconds).
- Remove from the microwave. Place an M&M in the center of each candy with the M side down.
- Add 5 or 6 candies of another color around the center as petals of a flower.
- Chill to harden the candy melt.

Make as many as you need, at least two per person.

Variation: Use round crackers or cookies (e. g. shortbread) as the base. Spread with ready-made vanilla icing. Add M&Ms.



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Open the Door! That's What They are For.

by Barbara Kalkis

My doctor gets the credit for making me think about doors. No, it wasn't for therapy, although I sometimes wish someone would tell me what to do in certain situations. Mostly, however, I just wish I had a butler, the way some kids wish for a pony. But I digress.

It was a busy day at the doctor's office. The nurse escorted me to the examination room, apologizing that Doctor was running a bit late. No problem. Alone time helps me settle into my surroundings and shake off a list of "what-if's", which is challenging when the counters are stuffed with bandages, gloves and other "tools of the trade", and the walls are plastered with cautions, warning signs of diseases and posters of body parts you forgot you had. And did not need a reminder of.

Crammed amongst the barrage of medical information, I was intrigued to see a huge, handsomely framed poster showing row upon row of doors. It was so completely out of place that I wondered if it contained some secret hidden message. In any case, it was a welcome change in the windowless room.

There were no words, no title, just close-up photos of formal doors in every style and color that could grace the front of a house. Windows or no windows. Embellished decorations or plain. Stern glossy black doors fitted with gleaming brass handles, locks and kick-panels. Gray doors, suggesting owners who could not commit to a color. Heavily varnished doors showcasing the wood's grain.

Interspersing traditional styles were the flashy doors. The owners seemed intent to match door color to decorations on their porches. Grecian urns held massive red geraniums that exactly mirrored the door color. Green doors stood between boxwoods shaped into miniature trees with globes of tiny leaves. Bright yellow, pink, sky-blue, and lilac doors indicated cheery souls within who were brave enough to shun tradition or homeowner association color codes.

As I studied each photograph, I wondered what made this artwork more compelling than a simple scene. Dedicated to over-thinking things and having nothing to do while half-dressed, I decided that there is some deeper meaning to a door than a realtor's suggestion for "curb appeal." Scenes invite us into walk into an environment. Floral bouquets inspire appreciation of beauty.

Doors hold many more meanings. They are solid, sturdy, strong. You can count on a door for privacy. They provide security. They communicate the personality of their owners. They are the first indication of the kind of people that live behind them. Think of welcoming door wreaths at Christmas or circlets of spring flowers or 4th of July miniature flags and stars. Doors can keep us out. They also are the gateway to walk through.

In life, we all encounter many doors, real and abstract. The real doors are easy to deal with. We knock and hope they are opened. The abstract doors are harder to define. Those doors might stay closed to a new job or other opportunity. Many more doors are gateways to a new chapter in our lives – perhaps a move, the vacation of a lifetime, a new friend, or special person to share our lives with, a child or grandchild.

Whatever the door represents is up to each of us to decide. I like to think of a door as the entry to some new adventure, a new beginning, a new start, a new chapter, even a new season in the circle of a year. We just need to knock, walk through and the future will be open to us.



—©Barbara Kalkis. Barbara spends her time writing, teaching, and working as a marketing consultant. She's author of Little Ditties for Every Day: A Collection of Thoughts in Rhyme and Rhythm. Contact her at BarbaraKalkis01@gmail.com.



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Wear What You Love

by Janet M Bair

Spring is near and with it comes new fashions and new colors that the fashion industry wants to promote. There are usually about three colors to choose from: celery, fuchsia, gunmetal, frost, indigo, plum, or emerald, all with enticing names to compel you to buy. However, if you don't happen to like any of those colors, you may be out of luck for a season.

One spring my seven-year-old wanted a yellow Easter dress. We looked in every store in our area but not a single yellow dress was in sight. (This was before online shopping). Plenty of pinks and turquoise but she had her heart set on yellow.

Even though I was busy working and didn't know how I would squeeze in the time to sew, in desperation, we went to the fabric store. She picked out a cute yellow cotton print and a pattern she liked. I had done a lot of sewing in high school and college but had let that part of my life slide after our two girls were born. I realized that I liked sewing at night after they were in bed.

After I made the yellow dress, I decided I ought to make my self an Easter dress too. My three-year-old said she wanted a dress "just like Mommy's." I was now committed to making two more dresses (with a deadline). I finished the peach print dresses in time and felt a great sense of accomplishment that I hadn't felt in a long time. That propelled me back into sewing for the rest of my life.

Life Lesson Learned: When you can't find what you want in the stores, you can always make it. You can choose the colors that look best on you and have fun experimenting with a new pattern or style or print. You can wear what you love!

Sometimes it is the little things in life that move us into the life paths we are meant to take. This spring season as you cut out new patterns or plan gardens, be aware of the One who declared that He was the ultimate path to follow. "Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by me." John 14:6

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



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This pattern is designed to work for 5 1/2" cut squares in each frame. If you've got another size to use, the rectangle on each side can be adjusted to fit the shape!

The border stripe is fussy cut and gets you all the borders as shown in one piece for each side. The pattern includes mitering details.

You can find this pattern on my website or ask at a local quilt shop near you. Be sure to tag us if you make this up in these fabrics or something else. Happy Stitching!

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

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When a House Becomes a Home

by Kerri Habben Bosman

A house becomes a home when it gets filled with memories. Add in a special blanket, and it gets even better.

On the back of his recliner my husband, Wayne, has a favorite crocheted blanket. It is a double-bed sized granny square. My grandmother made it for my parents when they bought a new sofa in 1989. Later on, we couldn't possibly keep everything she'd made as she crocheted nearly every day for 91 years. Many items were donated to hospitals or nursing homes over the years. But when Wayne and I sold my childhood home, this blanket had to stay with us. It is big, cozy, and wrapping up in it feels like an endless hug.

We frequently have family gatherings at our beach house, and our 3-bedroom home sleeps around 9 of us and entertains up to 18. We originally bought it as a second home especially for this purpose as my stepdaughter, Kira, and her family live four miles away. Both our homes get filled up with all of us, including Wayne's five grown children, their spouses, and seven grandchildren. Two Aprils ago my now 103 mother-in-law and family visited from Wisconsin, and the house still carries a special essence from that time together.

We are overjoyed when the house breathes with a precious cacophony of laughter and conversations. I once wanted to own a Bed and Breakfast as I loved feeding people and fussing about the house. Dreams evolve, and now I ensure beds are ready and serve made-to-order omelets to family. Along the way we are tucking away memories that warm us after everyone goes home. Much like my grandmother's blanket, which is now Wayne's. The blanket has served well for 35 years.

We live three blocks from Bogue Sound on the Intracoastal Waterway. When we take walks there together, often someone will turn the blanket into a cloak. Whoever is sleeping in the TV room covers up with it at night. My stepdaughter, Sanja, cocoons in blankets. I made one especially for her, but the older one remains her favorite. Every grandchild has used it, whether while playing, reading, or sleeping. Particularly the youngest, six-year-old Quinn, who is on top of the world when he is sitting in his Grampa's recliner and also under his blanket. Bring Quinn mac and cheese on Grampa's tray, and he is king of the castle.

I keep a framed photograph of my grandmother on my roll top desk. It was taken at her 90th birthday party in 1997. In it she leans forward in her favorite chair, an enduring joy emanating from her eyes. It is a happiness mingled with a spark of mischief, a timeless vibrancy, and also an undercurrent of resiliency. A combination of these traits served her well through every era of her long life.

I keep a framed photograph of my grandmother on my roll top desk. It was taken at her 90th birthday party in 1997. In it she leans forward in her favorite chair, an enduring joy emanating from her eyes. It is a happiness mingled with a spark of mischief, a timeless vibrancy, and also an undercurrent of resiliency. A combination of these traits served her well through every era of her long life.

My grandmother passed away in 2006, but when she gazes at me from the recesses of my desk, it seems as if she is right beside me. Sometimes I just smile back at her. Other times I talk to her for a moment. Not aloud, but in my head. I tell her about Wayne, who she never met. I share with her about this beautiful family that I treasure. I tell her how I especially feel her with me when I am with the grandchildren.

I thank her for everything, especially for showing me how to love. In these reflective moments I think of Wayne's blanket and how much comfort it brings to him and our family. And to me.

The last time Sanja was here she was teasing Quinn that she had the blanket. "I've got the blanket Kerri made," she said.

"Even better," I answered. "My grandmother made it."

-© 2024. Kerri Habben Bosman is a writer in Cape Carteret, NC. Her email is 913jeves@gmail.com.

Recipe

Mac & Cheese

Courtesy of Lorraine Krupnick, from Lakeville, MA

Ingredients

* 8 oz. pasta (shells or macaroni)

* 3 tablespoons butter

* 3 cups cheddar cheese shredded

* 3 tablespoons flour

* 2 cups milk

* Salt & Pepper to taste

* Add chopped meat, ham or lobster (1/2 cup if desired)

Directions:

Cook pasta til soft and drain. Melt butter and add flour. Add 2 cups milk and simmer for 8 minutes on medium heat, add salt and pepper. Stir in 3 cups of shredded cheese. Add 1/2 cup chopped meat, etc, stir and enjoy. Yummy!

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Back Porch Break

by Nancy Brummett

Vintage Volunteers

April is National Volunteer Month so I decided it was a good time to honor some volunteers I know.

Virginia scoots around in her wheelchair from table to table in the assisted living facility's dining room. She volunteered to keep the holders for the sugar packets on each table refilled each day, and she takes her volunteer responsibilities seriously.

Lois comes to my *The Hope of Glory* class with her knitting in a tote. Each week she shows us the progress she's making on the next cozy hat she's knitting for a baby in the hospital. How grateful new parents must be to receive this handmade gift, and even if Lois never gets to see their delighted faces or see the hat on a tiny head, she keeps knitting. She also regularly reads to fellow residents with vision problems, including Joanne.

Joanne always assumed that she would spend her golden years tutoring students and reading to others, but macular degeneration derailed her plans. "I asked the Lord what He would have me do instead," she explained to our group, "and He told me to pray for the younger generation because they need to be lifted up in prayer. So now that's my volunteer assignment."

And my friend Phyllis, 93, has volunteered at a thrift shop that supports community philanthropies for almost 30 years.

It's a privilege to know older adults who still have the heart to volunteer at a time in their lives when they could so easily sit back and say, "Been there, done that. It's someone else's turn to volunteer now." Rather than be complacent, they see a need and rise up to meet it. They say like Isaiah in Isaiah 6:8, "Here am I. Send me!" I call them vintage volunteers.

What motivates these seniors to volunteer when and how they are able? They are motivated by the same three things that motivate all volunteers: passion, commitment, and hope. Our passions are those things that make us extremely happy or extremely angry! They stir in us a desire to make a difference—add joy, right a wrong, ease some suffering. Commitment is what keeps us faithful to volunteer assignments even when we're weary, and we keep our commitments because of hope—hope that our small contribution will make the world a kinder, gentler place.

If you have elders in your life with time on their hands, help them recall a passion that motivated them in the past. If possible, identify some task, however small, that they can do to feed that passion. Encourage them to be committed to this volunteer effort and instill them with hope that what they do will make a difference. Vintage volunteers have so much to offer, and volunteering in any way adds purpose to their days.

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

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Picnic in the Park

by Janet Young

After a long, cold winter the season we were eagerly anticipating has finally arrived... SPRING! Fling open your windows, and let the warm spring breezes flow throughout your house. With the dawning of a new season, the awakening of the earth, and the sun-filled days of Spring, one of the best ways to celebrate would be to have a picnic.

A picnic can be as basic as your typical backyard picnic. But if you want to tweak it up a bit why not have a picnic with a theme. Perhaps, by first deciding the location it will help you determine what theme you want to execute. For example, the beach for a beach picnic theme, or a ranch or farm with a barn for a western theme. The possibilities are endless, but you get the idea.

If you choose to go to a park, try to pick a spot that offers a nice scenic view. Some examples of themes at a park might be to choose colors of the rainbow and celebrate Earth Day. Or, do a Vintage Picnic which would be a perfect theme to have a tea party picnic theme. If you don't want to risk breaking your fine china, there are paper plates and cups that are fashioned to look like china plates. For a simpler menu why not try a cheese and charcuterie board.

If you want a picnic on the grass, you might want to get a tarp from the hardware store, if you do not have one. The tarp should be put on the ground first, followed by a blanket or blankets and even pillows if you want to go all out for comfort. (The reason for using the tarp is to keep any dampness from getting on your blanket.)

Next plan the menu. In the planning process, bear in mind the distance from your car to the picnic spot. If you have access to a child's wagon that would greatly facilitate and eliminate the numerous trips back and forth to the car and picnic spot. You can keep the menu as simple or as elaborate as you wish. If having a theme, you could coordinate the menu to reflect your theme. For instance, the rainbow theme could consist of colorful foods to reflect the colors of the rainbow.

Whatever you choose from location, to theme, to the menu, keep in mind what you are wanting to create. Is it a celebratory occasion, a reflective moment, or a certain atmosphere you want to portray? Whatever the reason, sit back and enjoy the dawning of Spring when all the earth comes alive again and we rejoice in this invigorating time of the year!

Happy Spring!

- © 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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With Age Comes Wisdom

A 75-year-old man who loves to fish was sitting in his boat the other day when he heard a voice say, "Pick me up."

He looked around and couldn't see anyone.

He thought he was dreaming when he heard the voice again say, "Pick me up."

He looked in the water and there, floating on the top, was a frog.


The man said, "Are you talking to me?" The frog said, "Yes, I'm talking to you. Pick me up, then kiss me. I'll turn into the most beautiful woman you have ever seen. I'll make sure that all your friends are envious and jealous because I will be your bride!"

The man looked at the frog for a short time, reached over, picked it up carefully, and placed it in his front breast pocket.

Then the frog said, "What, are you nuts? Didn't you hear what I said? I said kiss me and I will be your beautiful bride."

He opened his pocket, looked at the frog and said, "Nah, at my age I'd rather have a talking frog."

With age comes wisdom.



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Book Review - Register to Win

By Melissa Michaels

Savoring Simple Joys in Every Season

Home-decorating expert Melissa Michaels invites you to experience the peace and joy that come from a well-balanced life that nurtures your home and soul throughout the year.

You might think that you need to make big changes to create a better life but it's often the small, intentional, everyday decisions that shape our environment over time and bring sustained contentment and well-being. Savor the process.

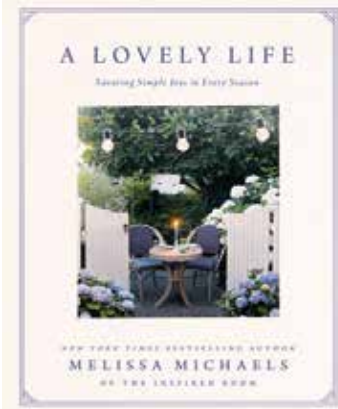
Melissa Michaels shows you how to cultivate a lovely life in each season:

- Spring—experience renewal as you clean up and reimagine your spaces and learn to enjoy everything the outdoors has to offer.
- Summer—enjoy refreshment with a summer staycation, self-care nourishments, and the delight of simple pleasures.
- Autumn—make room for reconnection when you decorate to reflect your family, style, and story; embrace gratitude; and adopt seasonal rhythms for body, mind, and soul.
- Winter—enter a season of rest as you establish morning and evening rituals, winterize your bedroom, and indulge in restorative home spa treatments.

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Reader Shares!

Finished Project!

I am currently making and selling these market bags. It was a free pattern I found on Pinterest.



Shared by reader T. Burke of Gloucester, VA



Mystery? Quilt

This time, we are going to mix it up a bit – we're doing size options! The first size finishes 48 x 48. The second size finishes 60 x 76. Since the first size is baby quilt size or a lap cover for the car, someone wheelchair bound, etc., you can choose fabrics accordingly. If you want the bigger quilt, that will be Part 3.

The other neat thing about this quilt is, it's designed with just two fabrics. The key is to make sure you have a light to medium – I used a subtle print – that is complimented or enhanced by a dark – I used a tone on tone black. Erica has had this line of fabric in her store for a bit and every time I pass by it, I slow down and drool over the rich shades and tones in it. So, the quilt is designed around this line of fabric.

Fabric Requirements:

Quilt Option #1

Fabric A - 2 3/4 yards Fabric B (dark) - 2 yards
Binding (dark) – ½ yard

Quilt Option #2 (additional fabric needed)

Fabric A – 2 yards Fabric B (dark) – ½ yard
Binding (dark) – ¾ yard

PART I:

Making the Block: (Make 36 blocks) Cut (per block):


Fabric A
1 – 5 x 5 inch
1 – 2 ½ x 4 ½ inch 2 – 2 ½ x 6 ½ inch 1 – 2 ½ x 8 ½ inch

Fabric B
1 – 5 x 5
2 – 4 ½ x 4 ½ inch

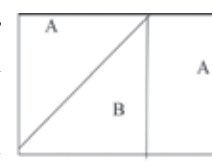
Watch the Magic

Mystery Quilt - 2024
Designed by Ann Jones, Nevada, MO

If you have any questions contact Erica at Nine Patch Quilt & Fabrics, Nevada, MO
ericaskouby@gmail.com or 417-667-7100. Miss one of the parts?
Check www.countryregister.com




- On the wrong side of Fabric A, 5 x 5, mark a diagonal line. Matching right sides together of A & B, sew ¼ inch on either side of the drawn line. Press.
- Cut on the drawn line. Press towards B.
- Square these two blocks to 4 ½ x 4 ½. See diagram below. Set aside.




- On the RIGHT SIDE of the above A/B square, right sides together, sew the 2 ½ x 4 ½ Fabric A. Set seam, press open towards A.
- On the bottom, right sides together, sew a 2 ½ x 6 ½ Fabric A. Set seam, press open towards A.

- On the two 4 ½ x 4 ½ B squares draw a diagonal line on the wrong side.
- On the above set, right sides together, place a 4 ½ x 4 ½ Fabric B in the BOTTOM RIGHT CORNER, making sure the corners and sides line up.
- I strongly encourage you to pin these together at this point so that the 4 ½ x 4 ½ B block doesn't shift when you sew.
- Take your time, and sew on the diagonal line. I found it to be more accurate if I set my needle position a stitch to the right of the diagonal line so I wasn't sewing directly on it. That gives the fabric room to fold over and "square up" to the corner. Set the seam and press open towards Fabric B. See Diagrams below.

- At this point, you will have three layers of fabric in the bottom right corner which is a bit bulky. If your corner matches up and your block is a square 6 ½ x 6 ½, then you can trim the excess fabric so the block isn't too bulky. Cut the excess "triangle" and set aside. These triangles can be sewn together and squared into 3 ½ x 3 ½ half square triangles for another project!



- Following the instructions and diagrams above, right sides together, sew a 2 ½ x 6 ½ inch Fabric A to the RIGHT SIDE of the above block. Set seam and press towards A.
- On the bottom side, right sides together, sew a 2 ½ x 8 ½ inch Fabric A. Set the seam and press towards Fabric A. At this point, your block should be 8 ½ x 8 ½ inches.
- Taking the second 4 ½ x 4 ½ inch Fabric B block, right sides together, place it in the bottom right corner, making sure your corners and sides match. Pin in place. Sew along the diagonal line. Set seam and press open towards Fabric B. Again, make sure block is square and then trim extra fabric and save for another project. See diagram below.



- Make 36 blocks total, following the above directions.

Crewe, Lynchburg, Rice

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Town and Country Cooking

Magical snacking

by Janette Hess

Exotic Party Nuts

1 tablespoon butter
3 tablespoons packed light brown sugar
1 teaspoon curry powder
¼ teaspoon salt
1½ cups lightly salted mixed nuts with peanuts
Dash of cayenne pepper, if desired

Prepare rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray. Set aside. In heavy skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add brown sugar, curry powder and salt. Cook and stir until brown sugar is completely dissolved. Add nuts and cayenne pepper. Cook and stir 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer nuts to baking sheet, separating nuts as much as possible. Cool completely. Store in airtight container.

"Family Favorite" Snack Mix

1 12-ounce box crisp corn cereal squares
1 7½-ounce bag bugle-shaped corn snacks
1 9¼-ounce bag original corn chips
3 cups soup (oyster) crackers
3 cups square cheese crackers
2/3 cup butter-flavored popcorn oil
4 teaspoons dry ranch dressing mix
1½ teaspoons lemon pepper
1½ teaspoons dried dill weed
Several dashes of cayenne pepper, if desired

Combine dry cereal, snacks, chips and crackers in jumbo (2½ gallon) zip-top bag, taking care not to crush cereal squares or other ingredients. Whisk together oil and seasonings. Drizzle mixture into bag while constantly rotating, once again taking care not to crush ingredients. Transfer mixture to 2 or 3 large rimmed baking sheets. Bake at 275 degrees for 20 minutes. Remove from oven and cool to room temperature on baking sheets. Transfer back to bag. Allow flavors to blend at least 12 hours, rotating bag several times. Store in mixing bag or airtight containers.

Brickle Snack Mix

½ cup (1 stick) butter
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
¼ cup light corn syrup
¼ teaspoon baking soda
1 12-ounce box crisp corn or corn-rice cereal squares
1 to 1½ cups candy-coated milk chocolate pieces or 1 to 1½ cups honey-roasted peanuts

Prepare two rimmed baking sheets with cooking spray. Empty cereal into very large mixing bowl or container. (A roaster makes a nice substitute for a large mixing bowl.) Set all aside. In saucepan, melt butter and stir in brown sugar and corn syrup. Bring to boil over medium to medium-high heat. Boil and stir for 2 minutes. Stir in baking soda and quickly pour over cereal. Using thin rubber spatula, fold and stir to thoroughly coat cereal with hot mixture, taking care not to crush cereal. Carefully spread on baking sheets, separating squares as much as possible. Bake at 250 degrees for 40 to 50 minutes, or until lightly golden but not browned. Stir at least two times during baking. Remove from oven and stir again to separate pieces. Cool on pans before adding chocolate candies or nuts. Store in airtight containers or bags.

GIRLFRIEND WISDOM

What is the Main Thing?
Hummingbirds are spectacular to watch! Due to their extremely high metabolism, hummingbirds have to visit hundreds of flowers a day.
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GIRLFRIEND WISDOM:
The Hummingbird seems to hold a special talent and focuses on the main thing it needs to be successful: taking care of its body so it can beat those wings forwards or backwards to the next flower. Hummm - what is your special talent to focus on - are you attending to the Main Thing to nourish it in your day? When you see a Hummingbird in your yard, let it be a reminder to be aware that focusing on the Main Thing for your Heart's Desire needs to be nourished today!

Joy & Blessings,
Jody

Girlfriend Wisdom is written and illustrated by Jody Houghton®. For color files of this writing, contact Jody at: jodyhoughton@msn.com or www.JodyHoughtonDesigns.etsy.com

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Our winner from last issue is Wayne Mielczasz. Wayne selected Milmont Greenhouse in Waynesboro as his favorite shop. He enjoys this shop because of the "helpful staff plus lots of plants and flowers." Congratulations Wayne.

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15 Quilters Commandments

by Deb Heatherly

- I hope this gives you a chuckle. As quilters I think we all can relate.
- 1: I promise to do my part. Money cannot buy happiness, but it does buy fabric and fabric makes me happy. Since I know that my friends and family want me to be happy, when I buy fabric, I am doing my part to keep everyone happy.
 - 2: I will put blame where it belongs. My need to buy fabric is the fault of the designers who create the fabric. I promise to stop buying when they stop creating.
 - 3: I will plan ahead. My stash is my retirement plan. One day I may have to actually use it. Until then, I'll buy more new fabric when I need to actually cut and sew, and always buy extra so I make sure to feed my stash.
 - 4: I will not envy my neighbors stash. Instead, I will diligently shop until I accumulate an even bigger one.
 - 5: I will practice equality. For every new "toy" my husband buys, I will spend an equal amount of money buying fabric.
 - 6: I will contemplate. I promise to think daily about all of the projects I will one day make from my stash. For now, just planning them is enough.
 - 7: I will utilize space wisely. It is important to come up with new ways to hide, (I mean store), my stash.
 - 8: I will be energy efficient. Stacked neatly, my stash acts as insulation.
 - 9: I will exercise my mind. I will do this by thinking of new ways to sneak (aka transport) the fabric into the house without being seen.
 - 10: I will be a good homemaker. This will be accomplished by coming up with creative ways to display and blend my stash into the home décor. Charm packs can be coasters. Yardage can be a tablecloth. What-nots can be placed on jelly rolls as lifters and to add a pop of color to a display.
 - 11: I will not whine. No, if a friend buys the last piece of a certain fabric that I wanted, I will not whine. I do reserve the right to guilt her until she shares.
 - 12: I will support the local container store. I will buy the largest containers possible because they will hold lots of fat quarters. As a bonus, when stacked in the kitchen cupboard behind cereal and cookies, they will be camouflaged from my husband.
 - 13: I will actually complete a quilt or two. By doing so I will need to replace the used fabric and my family cannot accuse me of hoarding. I will also keep in mind that quilts come in all shapes and sizes. A table topper counts as a completed project.
 - 14: I will always be there for my fellow quilter. Especially when she needs fabric therapy. I promise to accompany her on all buying trips and will clean out my car before the trip so there is plenty of room for the purchases. I will further support her by offering to store her purchases in my car until she can sneak (aka transport) them into her own house without her husband seeing.
 - 15: Finally, I will practice DUI. "Developing Ultimate Inventory." This supports my local quilt shop and keeps them in business so I can continue to develop my stash.

--Deb Heatherly is a designer for Creative Grids® rulers and the author of eight popular pattern books. Creative Grids® fans are invited to join her Facebook group, "Grids Girls," for tips and inspiration 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>. Visit Deb's website at www.Debcatsnquills.com.

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Ann’s Lovin’ Ewe

What’s in a Name?

by Ann Stewart

*What’s in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.*

William Shakespeare makes that claim in Romeo & Juliet. Ironically, we once had a ewe named Rosie. Wouldn’t say she smelled sweet, but her name did endear her to us more than some of the other nameless sheep on the pasture. There have been a few other naming exceptions. The year UVA won the National Championship, we had Minnie (for Minnesota where they clinched the title), and Kyle (UVA star player), and Bennett (UVA Coach).

Following basketball’s March Madness, April brings a “shower” of lambs to Skyemoor Farm. Though there are plenty of opportunities to name each fluffy knobby kneed arrival, we try not to attach a name as it also proves Shakespeare’s quote that “parting is such sweet sorrow.”

Naming a baby is more fun but holds great responsibility. Two recent arrivals to our extended family were named Lydia ANN and Flora Elizabeth, both well thought out and meaningful names. Many websites list everything you could want to know about a name’s origin, meaning, and popularity by decade. There’s even research about how people perceive a person when only given their name. Catherine vs. Katherine evokes a different image in the reader’s mind. So then what effect does a name have on a person’s future?

Our pediatric ophthalmologist was Dr. Starer. While touring colleges, we listened to Dean Dean. A noted magistrate presides as Judge Judge. Perhaps at your next dinner party talk about “nominative determinism” which hypothesizes that people are drawn to the career that fits their name. Or bring up the funniest or worst names. That’s always worth a good story.

As someone who hopes to be a grandma one day, I also find the names given to grandparents very intriguing and apparently so do others. There’s a book on just that called Nanagrams and if you google names for grandparents, you’ll find all sorts of suggestions including:

Boppa, Papa, Gram, Gigi, Meemaw, Poppy, Bibi, Momo, Gaga, Pop Pop, Gramsie, Grammie and Grampie, Bubbe, Gpa, Gma, Yaya, Gran or Grannie as Downtown Abbey granddaughters dub the family matriarch.

In France they use Grand-Mère and Grand-père or Mémère and Pépère In Italy, Nonna and Nonno. Germans call out for Oma and Opa, (that’s better than grossmutter and grossvater) while in the Philippines they use Lola and Lolo.

Lydia ANN’s grandmother is going by “Nana.” When my friend Anna was dubbed Gramanna I was so enamored with the name I gave it to a character in my first novel. Another friend was dubbed Granny Lahoo by her grandkids—though she has no idea how it derived. But that will always be a tender favorite. When my daughter Christine was nine months old, she called my father, Bumpa. How I wish the name had lingered, but it was extinguished when she heard her cousins call him Grandpa.

Her full name--Christine Alane--means “Bright and shining follower of Christ.” That’s what I hoped for her and it’s how she lives her life. My other daughter Julia’s name comes from the Bible, and she shares my middle name Marie. I have to admit I gave her the names purely because they sound beautiful together and strike an image of someone who is beautiful inside and out. She is, too!

How were you named? Do you wish you had a different one? Do you know what your name means? Or why you were given it? It’s kind of fun to see if the meaning or the proverbial shoe fits. Hopefully, it’s been a good match as Shakespeare says, “Good name in man and woman is the immediate jewel of their souls.”

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