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December/January 2023 Issue


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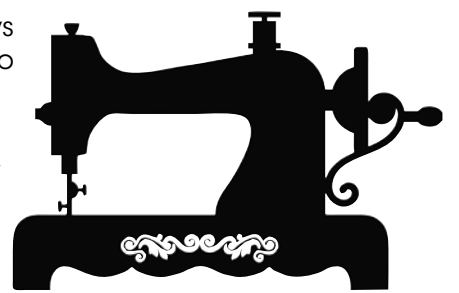
Ron's Fabric is a brick-and-mortar quilt shop, located in Cornwall, Ontario and has been in business for over 48 years. New owner, Niki Desjardins took over the business in May of 2022.

As an avid sewist for over 30 years Niki has made and tried many things, if it has fabric, she is normally tempted to give it a try; from gowns to bags to quilts she always keeps herself busy. She started out enjoying sewing when Ruby, a friend of her mother's, made special outfits for them and took Niki under her wing. Ruby never lost her patience teaching Niki the basics at 10 years old, and would encourage her to "just try it"... Niki would also work on family wedding quilts with all her aunts. Who would have known the obsession with fabrics could start at such a young age and last a lifetime!

Niki was the manager of Ron's Fabric for 4 years before taking ownership. During the Covid lockdowns she was definitely facing a challenge. With absolutely no online presence, she was tasked with trying to keep the shop going. She spent many long hours at the shop uploading all the fabrics into albums on their Facebook page, in hopes to stay going and get everyone what they needed. The work paid off and Ron's Fabrics made it through the worst of the pandemic. After Covid started letting up Mr. Nutting (Ron) decided to retire and since Niki had put in so much time, hard work and love into the store, he thought it best that she be the one to carry on the store's legacy.

Her family didn't even bat an eye when she made the decision to buy Ron's Fabric as they all knew the store had become a part of her. Niki's husband Jason is often seen popping in and out running errands for her and he would definitely say that the store succeeding is only because of her drive and determination. Jason supports every choice she makes and can't wait to see what she can, and will, do next. Her children are there to help when they can and a lot of her regular customers know them well (they know them only by their nicknames though as Niki never posts or uses their real names). Her daughter Tude is her girly who took a weekend (or 2) off to come and paint floors, walls and freshen it up.

Her sons, Brat and The Kid, are always giving their feedback since they live too far to help. Her youngest son, Smash, has been the biggest help of all from dismantling shelves, building shelves, moving endless bolts of fabric, runs to the hardware store and many late nights just doing whatever he can to help (although he may only be the biggest help solely since he is the only one left at home and wasn't really given a choice;)) Her 2 grandsons are her pride and joy outside the store; however, on many occasions her joy of fabric is shared with the oldest (Burrito). Although he isn't even 2 yet he loves helping at the store and always makes sure she takes time to sew, he gets super excited when he gets to use her longarm which is now in her office. As can be plainly seen, Niki's life is all about family and fabric!



Since taking over the store there have been many changes. Niki has opened up the isles, installed better lighting and has been expanding into notions. (To anyone who knows the old Ron's Fabric, you should understand the huge task she has undertaken) she has been able to maintain the back clearance room as well as bring in new designers and lines of fabric.

With her and a staff of 2 amazing ladies they keep a personal touch with all their customers. They love hearing about all the projects and ideas as well as advise on what she can do to keep improving the shop. With over 60,000 bolts of fabric, they truly keep themselves busy.

In the future she has plans for sewing classes for beginners all the way through to advanced. She also hopes to start having sew days just so people can get together and sew and visit.

Cornwall • Orléans

Oh, Nuts!

Nuts are an energy-dense and nutrient-rich food, plus they are also a favourite in Christmas baking. Nuts are used in many facets of our daily lives – everything from cosmetics to stains.

Nuts supply many nutrients for both humans and wildlife. Because nuts generally have a high oil content, they are a significant source of energy and are popular with vegetarians and vegans. Additionally, nut oils are popular in cosmetics, and their shells are used as an exfoliant. Moderate nut consumption – about 5 ounces (140 g) per week – may benefit weight control and contribute to lowering body weight in humans. The Mayo Clinic has found that eating nuts may be good for the heart. What they think may contribute to nut's heart healthiness:

- Unsaturated fats. It's thought that the fats in nuts — both monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats — help to lower bad cholesterol levels.
- Omega-3 fatty acids. Many nuts are rich in healthy omega-3 fatty acids. They may reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes.
- Fibre. All nuts contain fibre, which helps lower cholesterol. Fibre also makes you feel full, so you eat less.
- Plant sterols. Some nuts contain plant sterols, a substance that can help lower cholesterol.
- L-arginine. Nuts are also a source of L-arginine. Some research suggests that L-arginine may lower blood pressure, improves cholesterol, and improves overall blood vessel health.

So, I guess the nut that is the worst for our diet is the donut.

Some of the commonly used baking nuts:

Almonds

California produces over half of the world's almond supply. Due to high acreage and water demand for almond cultivation and the need for pesticides, droughts in California have caused some producers to leave the industry, leading to lower supply and increased prices.

It is from the bitter almond that we get one of Agatha Christie's favourite poisons – cyanide. It contains the enzyme which, in the presence of water, yields glucose, cyanide and the essential oil of bitter almonds.

Pecans

The pecan nut comes from a species of hickory tree native to the southern States and northern Mexico, primarily around the Mississippi River. Georgia, New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico produce nearly half of the world's total output of pecans. Pecans are one of the most recently domesticated major crops. Although wild pecans were well known among native and colonial Americans as a delicacy, the commercial growing of pecans in the United States did not begin until the 1880s.

Pecans are used extensively in sweet desserts such as pecan pie, as well as being a common flavour in cookies, cakes, ice creams and candy. Pecan wood is used in the manufacture of furniture and wood flooring. It is also used in smoking meats, giving grilled food a sweet and nutty flavour stronger than many fruit woods.

Walnuts

We planted a black walnut tree in our backyard a decade ago as we wanted to experiment with using the nuts as a natural stain. It's been a slow grower. We were aware at the time of planting that they aren't a tree that enjoys neighbours as they leach a chemical into the ground to prevent competing vegetation from growing. So, our tree is in the back corner without too much around it. If our dye experiment doesn't work, maybe we can use the wood from the tree in wood furniture as it has a lovely, fine straight grain. Did you know that walnuts were traditionally used to make an ink for writing and drawing? This is the ink thought to have been used by Leonardo da Vinci and Rembrandt.

Walnuts are commonly either eaten on their own or as an ingredient in many desserts. You can even pickle them! I don't think many of us have had the opportunity to try pickled walnuts as they are a traditional English pickle made from green walnuts. They are usually served with cold turkey or ham as well as blue cheese.

And remember, what happens to a nervous nut? It cracks!

You'll find plenty of recipes FULL OF NUTS throughout this issue!



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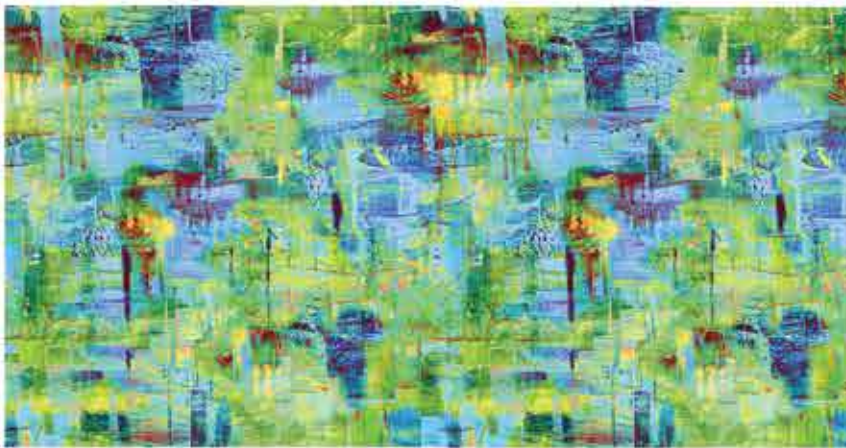
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A Multi Pink Aqua



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D Neutral



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before being taken into the house and placed in its stand in the living room. Once the branches had a chance to fall the decorating could begin. This had to wait until the house was cleaned from top to bottom, the laundry was all caught up and supper dishes were washed and put away. This was also the day that the Christmas record collection, two records, Merle Haggard's *Christmas Present*, and *First Christmas Album for Children*, would be pulled out and the LPs stacked on the turntable. This meagre collection of Christmas music is still some of my favourites to listen to over the holidays to this day.

After the tree and house were decorated, the next thing to do was to shop for presents. I can't quite recall when we would head to the big city to shop, but I do know it was only a couple days before Christmas itself. By big city, I mean the closest town that had a few choices for shopping, including a hardware store. We were a family of six and would draw names from a hat to see who would buy for whom and we would have never thought to buy more than that one gift.

On the first Saturday after school was let out for the holidays the local Lions Club would hold what they called Santa Claus Day. There was usually a skit at the local hall followed by a visit from Santa. Then there were games and a turkey shoot at the curling rink.

Unless Christmas Eve was a Sunday, that would be the day to do the last-minute grocery shopping. In the '70s and early '80s, our small town of about 100 people still had two grocery stores. That would be the day we saw Christmas oranges and nuts come into the house. After supper, we would venture off to town once more for midnight mass, which was only at midnight once every 3 years as our parish priest had 3 church services to oversee in 3 different towns that night. The parishes would take turns having Christmas Eve Mass at 7 pm one year, 9:30 pm the next and then finally midnight mass on the third year. In the fourth year, they would rotate back to 7 pm and start over again.

Christmas morning, we would find a few treats in our stockings, usually a Christmas orange, some candy and always a pack of Thrills gum. To this day a piece of Thrills gum transports me back to Christmas morning of yore at the first chew of the soapy flavour. Santa would bring us one present each. We would get one present each from mom and dad and the one that was determined by the draw of the hat. I only knew two of my four Grandparents, and never once did any of us receive a Christmas present from them.

Fast forward 40 years or more and we will be putting up our fake fir tree in mid-November. The Christmas music and movies start playing a few weeks before that. I have already had more than a few Christmas oranges before writing this. Costco has had its Christmas decorations on display since mid-August and I know more than a few grandparents that have already bought more than one gift for each of their grandchildren.

In our household, even though we normally have a very low-key Christmas to begin with, we still plan on cutting back on the normal luxuries that we afford ourselves this time of year. We will still have the homemade Christmas cookies, a turkey if the avian flu outbreak allows, and of course, I will have my Thrills gum.

Hopefully, your holidays won't be affected too much by the rising cost of everything. But if they are, just remember, your ancestors, and most likely you yourself once got along just fine and had a very happy Christmas season with very little in years past.

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When I was a kid in the '70s, Christmas was quite different than I know it today. Christmas on our farm didn't start until the bus dropped us off from the last day of school for the holiday break, which was usually less than a full week away from the big day itself. Our first Christmas treat was given to us by our bus driver, in my case, it was from my Uncle Andrew who, was my school bus driver for the first half of my school years. On the last day of school for the calendar year, he would present us with a brown lunch bag that, as I remember, had a Christmas orange and some loose candy in it. It was very meagre by today's standards but appreciated greatly. When I think back now it would have been no small task to head to town early on that day, stop at the local grocery store, pick up what he needed and then sit in a cold bus to fill brown paper bags with oranges and candy for what would have been many kids in the days when most all farms still had families on them.

Once we got off the school bus and ran for the house, we would find Mom busy cleaning and baking. We could, depending on the weather, usually pick up the scent in the air of what was either on the stove or in the oven. Mom would have picked up a real Christmas tree either that day or a few days before. When we arrived home from school a small fir tree would be leaning up against the porch waiting for the trunk to be trimmed

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Christmas Word Search

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- Believe

Candy

Cheer

Cocoa

Faith
- Grinch

Holly

Jingle

Jolly

Merry
- Mistletoe

Movies

Naughty

Noel

Peace
- Presents

Reindeer

Rejoice

Rudolph

Santa
- Snowman

Stockings

Winter

Wisemen

Building Harmony

Ghosts of Christmases Past

by Jeff Capps

"I'm afraid we're going to have to face it this year," I told my wife, Cathy. "It's pretty much just us for Christmas."

Cathy was disappointed, but she understood. The children were grown with other family commitments and the grandchildren were busy celebrating Christmas with their friends. Even her brothers and sisters had scattered around the country so she rarely got to see them. This just happened to be one of those years that things didn't work out.

We talked about past Christmases when our now-adult children were small and the same about our grandchildren. Lots of memories. Maybe that's one of the things that Christmas is about. We have lots.

The more we thought about it, though, the more Cathy started to look ahead. Are traditional Christmases behind us? She didn't want to become an obligation that the family had to endure each year. Even more, she didn't want us to become the invitees at someone else's place where we were the subject of polite and friendly conversation on Christmas Day. Sort of ghosts of Christmases past.

Wow. What a downer. We reminded ourselves that maybe that's the way things go this year, but there will still be others yet. Also, we do still have our families all year round and Christmas, after all, can sometimes be just another day of the year. Maybe we could curl up with a fire and a movie. A glass of wine and a hot tub wouldn't be a bad idea either. (I loved that idea.) So we settled into that thought.

I could tell this all this still weighed on Cathy, though. I tried to think of ways to make it special for her. Hang mistletoe? Balloons? Bake a cake? Hmm. I'd think of something, I guess.

As Christmas got closer, we both started getting the usual excitement. Guess it was a habit. We decorated the house and put up a tree. All the presents we got for everyone were wrapped, labelled and bowed. But it all felt so hollow.

"Since no one is going to be here, we might as well Fedex the presents to everyone," Cathy said bitterly.

Then came the day. Christmas Day. Cathy got up first. Mostly because I was snoring. She looked around. Merry Christmas she said to herself. She got me up. We each opened a present, shared a cup of coffee, read the news, then got tired and took a nap. Merry Christmas. At about 11:00, the dog scratched at the door to go outside. He didn't make it. Merry @%\$&*& Christmas.

Now, before you get so depressed about this Christmas story that you want to go hang yourself, just wait. I have to remind you that the day wasn't over yet.

The fire was warm and the movie was good. After two hours of curling up together, we were pretty cramped up. My arms and legs had fallen asleep.

Cathy said, "Well, it's four o'clock. If we have a bite to eat and get the hot tub out of the way, we can be in bed and asleep by eight.

"Not the Christmas I imagined," I replied.

Cathy looked sad. Then, right on cue, as if God himself had planned it, a bed and breakfast mini bus pulled up to our house. When the doorbell rang, Cathy and I answered.

"I've got the guests for your bed and breakfast," the driver said.

"This isn't a bed and breakfast," Cathy explained.

He showed her the address on his order sheet. It was ours alright. A group of elderly people got out and started to unload their luggage.

"That's the right address, but this isn't a bed and breakfast!"

The driver just shrugged.

When Cathy began to protest, a man in the back stood up and said," But Jeff promised us a free stay!"

The voice was familiar. Cathy knew that voice. It was her brother, Mick. She'd only seen him twice since he moved to the east coast. Next to him was her other brother, Jimmy, and her sisters, Emiline, Mary and Bertha. All her brothers and sisters were there! She couldn't believe it!

There were hugs and kisses all around. Cathy hadn't looked that happy in a long time. I paid the driver as they all went inside and the house turned into an instant party. (Told you I'd think of something.)

The hours flew by as they all caught up on what they'd been doing with their lives. We shared stories, sang Christmas songs and the wine flowed. Cathy and I scratched up stuff in the kitchen to make a pretty good dinner. We all laughed hard and told funny stories about each other.

That evening the talk turned to the way Christmas was changing.

(story continues on next page)

(story continued from previous page)

Mick said, "I'm in the same boat you are in. My daughter is off with her husband's family this year so I didn't even get to see the grandkids."

"Same here," said Emiline. "Used to be my house was full at Christmas. I'd be cleaning that place for a week."

"At least you have kids," said Mary.

Jimmy nodded.

Bertha said, "I live next door to my daughter and she can't make it over. She never does."

"Do you realize," Cathy added, "That this is the first time in almost 50 years that we've all been together for Christmas?" She pause, then said quietly, "If Mom and Dad were here, we'd have the whole family together again."

They all got quiet. Then Mick smiled and pulled a DVD from his inside jacket pocket. "They are," he explained, "I had all of Dad's home movies digitized and put on this disk."

The room got noticeably more exited as I put the disk in our DVD player. In no time, there were Cathy's parents. They were playing with the kids, opening presents and sharing a Christmas dinner. At one point, Cathy's parents both looked into the camera and mouthed the words "Merry Christmas."

I thought Cathy was going to melt. For a short while, she got to go back to past Christmases with her original family and relive those moments she thought were long gone. She felt the magic of Christmas again and it brought a tear to my eye, seeing her heart open up the way it did. This Christmas was beyond special. For her, it was almost spiritual.

Now, we did have normal family Christmases for years after that and they were good. But, as far as Christmas went, that year—well, screw the kids—that one was for us.

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Meet our cover artist:

Diane Kater

Diane Kater began her artistic journey at a very early age, drawing and coloring her way through childhood. Continuing into a more learned environment, she participated in a commercial art program in high school and then onto art school where she graduated with an associate's degree in advertising and design. She worked in the commercial field as an art director of an advertising agency until she branched out onto her own and specialized in graphic design.

In 1991, she met Judy VonStein of Imaginating, Inc. and ventured into a needlework designer, designing cross-stitch and quilt patterns. Her painting talents led her to her current agent, Penny Lane Publishing.

Today, she produces a range of interchangeably styled still-life paintings in acrylic medium. A "country-esque" theme shadows over much of her work as she captures the essence of home. Diane's paintings are soft and comfortable. She believes country is homemade and handmade, but most of all provides a feeling of comfort that she wishes to draw her viewer into.

To view Diane's art prints, go to www.PennyLaneFineArt.com or call Penny Lane Fine Art at 800-273-5263 for more information.

inspiration. Drawing on memories of growing up in Ohio and times spent with family and friends, she seeks to convey a kinder, gentler way of life.

"Art is my passion, but my "real-life" love is my family," explains Deb. "My two daughters are both artists and my husband and son are our biggest supporters. We are very fortunate to share such a wonderfully bonding interest." Deb feels continually blessed by her family's closeness and being able to follow her dream to create art and share it with others. Her art can be found world-wide on a number of products from fabric to greeting cards to figurines.

To view Deb's art prints, go to www.PennyLaneFineArt.com or call Penny Lane Fine Art at 800-273-5263 for more information.

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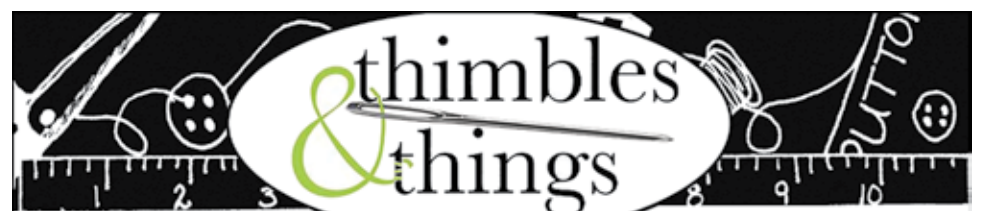
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Sour Cream Coffee Cake
with Cinnamon Walnut Swirl

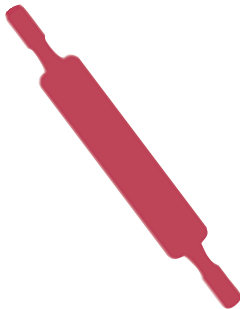
It’s hard to go wrong with a coffee cake. Having a coffee cake on the counter is common in our house, as they keep well at room temperature, and it’s easy to slice a piece for a snack and eat on the go.

Cinnamon Walnut Swirl

- 1 heaping cup walnut halves, roughly chopped
- 3 Tbsps. packed light brown sugar
- 2 tsps. cinnamon

Cake

- 2½ cups flour
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1½ tsps. vanilla extract



Make the Cinnamon-Walnut Swirl: Preheat the oven to 325°F and set an oven rack in the middle position. Toast the walnuts on a baking sheet until they’re golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer the walnuts to small bowl to cool. Once cool, mix together the walnuts, brown sugar, and cinnamon. Set aside.

Cake: Reduce the oven temperature to 300°F. Spray a 9” Bundt pan with cooking spray and dust with flour. Tap out any excess flour.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, combine the sugar and butter. Beat on medium speed until pale and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition until well mixed in. On low speed, mix in the sour cream and vanilla making sure everything is well mixed in. Gradually add the flour mixture and mix on low speed until the batter is smooth.

Scoop ⅓ of the batter into the prepared pan. Sprinkle half of the cinnamon-walnut mixture evenly over the batter. Cover with another ⅓ of the remaining batter, using a spoon or spatula to spread the batter evenly over the pan and to the edges. Sprinkle the remaining nut mixture evenly over the batter and cover with the remaining batter, spreading it evenly over the nut mixture.

Bake for 65 to 75 minutes, until the cake is golden and a cake tester comes out clean. Cool the cake in the pan for 15 minutes, then invert the Bundt pan to release the cake. Cool.

Oatmeal Squares

Thank you so much to Alma from Saskatoon for contributing this recipe! We love reader submitted recipes; it means a lot to us that you took the time to send us a recipe.

- 1 cup butter, melted
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 4 cups oatmeal
- 2 tsp baking soda

Mix well and press into a 9x12 pan.
Bake at 350°F for 20-25 minutes. Cut while warm.

10-Cup Cookies

A nice thing about this recipe is that you can be on autopilot when assembling. You also won’t dirty many measuring cups!

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup sweetened shredded coconut
- 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1 cup raisins

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a large bowl, cream butter, peanut butter and the sugars until blended. Beat in eggs. In another bowl, whisk flour, baking soda and baking powder; gradually beat into creamed mixture. Stir in chocolate chips, oats, coconut, pecans and raisins.

Drop dough by tablespoonfuls 3 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake until golden brown, 12-15 minutes. Cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.

Slow Cooker Candied Nuts

I made these as a topping for pumpkin pie at Thanksgiving. They were a huge hit. They taste very seasonal with the spices, and yet it isn’t too sweet. It makes 6 cups, so there are lots for snacking on too. You can use any combination of nuts, we personally like a variety, so that everyone gets their favourite.

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp allspice
- 1/8 tsp cloves
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 2 egg whites
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 Tbsp water
- Cooking spray, for slow cooker
- 6 cups mixed unsalted nuts (pecans, walnuts, almonds, filberts, etc.)



In a medium bowl, whisk together sugars, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, cloves and salt. Set aside.

In another medium bowl, combine egg whites and vanilla. Whisk until frothy.

Spray the slow cooker with non-stick cooking spray. Add pecans to the Crock-Pot. Pour egg white mixture over pecans and stir until coated. Pour the sugar mixture over and stir again, until the nuts are fully coated. Add 1 Tbsp of water.

Cook on low for 3-4 hours, stirring every half hour. If sugar isn’t dissolving, add water 1 tablespoon at a time. When finished, remove the nuts from the slow-cooker and cool in a single layer.




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TWO MINUTE READS TO FLIP OUR SCRIPT

BY KATHY J. SOTAK

Why Write, Draw or Do Anything in Life?

I started painting my fingernails in the 6th grade. Not just any ordinary painting, you see. It was my canvas. With the tiniest of paintbrushes my mother dug up from her art set, I drew designs. This included polka dots, stripes, or sometimes "GO ORIOLES!" our school mascot. (Conveniently one letter per fingernail, plus the exclamation mark.)

On Sunday evenings, I'd grab my plastic bin of supplies. It was the first ritual I'd ever created. My heart was palpitating to see what emerged. I worked at the dining room table, while something like *Wheel of Fortune*, *Matlock* or *Murder She Wrote* played on the tiny TV. By the time the 10 o'clock news came on, my nails were dry. It was complete.

The second part of the ritual was Monday morning. My classmates would run over to grab my fingers, wanting to see this week's creation. I'm not sure if they thought I was weird or cool. It didn't matter because it brought me joy.

I didn't do this to start an artist career. I did it because it stirred something inside of me.

What stirs you, inside of you? Sometimes I catch a glimpse. It may be your catchy earrings, your knitting or your gardening. It may be in your meticulous landscaping or your social media photography. I see it in your carpentry and your caregiving. I see it in your quilting and your cooking.

Kurt Vonnegut, an important voice in the 1960s+, later responded to a high schooler's letter by saying, "Starting right now, do art and do it for the rest of your lives." He challenged the kid who sent the letter to "Write a six-lined poem, about anything, but rhymed. Make it as good as you possibly can. But don't tell anyone what you're doing. Don't show it or recite it to anybody, OK? Tear it up into teeny-weeny pieces, and discard them into widely separated trash receptacles. You will find that you have already been gloriously rewarded for your poem. You have experienced becoming, learned a lot more about what's inside you, and you have made your soul grow."

Perhaps this is the pathway to happiness. This is why we choose to create art. It is why we create YouTube channels or TikTok videos. It is why we have obscure hobbies or collections.

On the surface, I may not understand your choice of expression. But on the inside, I see that your expression is your doorway to happiness.

This is why I write. I may not be a David Whyte or an Oscar Wilde. I may not be a Stephen King or a Jodi Picoult. That is not my goal. I write because words are my way to find deeper meaning in this turbulent human journey. As a bonus, I also connect with you.

How are you expressing your creative self? If you aren't sure – just pay attention to when your heart ignites.

Then do more of it. I dare you.

For more of Kathy's work go to www.2MinuteLift.com



It's Party Time with Lesley

by Lesley R. Nuttall

The holiday season is approaching, and as we haven't been able to do much partying over the past couple of years, I suggest it's time for us to start by easing back into some fun! The magic of Christmas can be fun, the excitement and above all else, the memories we make! Entertaining should be fun! I've always been known to be a very organized person, which is likely because I'm a Capricorn, and lucky for me, that's one of the traits of a Capricorn!

As Christmas is on Sunday this year, I would like to suggest a mingling cocktail party on Thursday, December 23 from 7 to 11 p.m., or a time of your choosing. The reason I am suggesting this, is as some families plan their traditional customs on Christmas Eve, or Christmas day.



Planning is a big part of any successful party. Sit down with a pen and paper and plan how many guests you intend to invite. The biggest decision is usually what food to serve. Here, I would suggest finger foods, as guests are able to serve themselves from a special table or counter you set up.

Any number of foods are suitable for this type of party, hot or cold such as: Assorted crackers and cheese; a tray of bite size vegetables and dip; a cold meat tray with buns; you could add some appetizers from the frozen section of the supermarket to heat and serve; if you have time, it is always nice to have some homemade choices, such as deviled eggs; or bacon and cheese balls. (recipe included.) You could add some of your own choices as well.

Plan your beverage list to include, wine, a non alcohol beverage, soft drinks and bottled water.

A plate of homemade dainties would be perfect to satisfy anyone craving sweets! A good time to serve the food would be around 8:30 to 9:00 P.M.

For a decorative edible table center, I have used the following arrangement: It looks like a ball of different colored fruit. Use an orange or an apple for the base and place it in a low bowl.

Arrange bite size pieces of fruit—such as, grapes, strawberries, pineapple or melon balls on a fancy cocktail pick, or a plain toothpick, and stick each one in and all over the apple or orange. It makes a beautiful table center and people can nibble throughout the night.

To be completely organized, now would be the time to sort out your serving trays or platters. For a festive, more Christmas like look, you could cover them with the silver tinfoil. Will you use your good china side plates, or use Christmas paper plates. Decide on the glassware you want to use as well. Of course napkins are a must, as well as silverware and condiments.

On party night, arrange to have some low Christmas music playing and soft lighting for ambiance, and enjoy your own party too!

I'm always so thankful for the love and friendship of family and friends! Enjoy a blessed Christmas with your loved ones, and Merry Christmas to all!

BACON CHEESE BALLS

- 1 cup mozzarella cheese

2 tubs/ bricks (227 g) Philadelphia cream cheese

½ teaspoon onion powder
- 1 cup cheddar cheese

1 cup bacon small bits, cooked

Leave cream cheese out for an hour to soften. Whip to make smooth. Grate mozzarella and cheddar cheese and add to cream cheese. Add onion powder and bacon bits, combine well. Form into small balls. It helps to have your hands damp to keep from sticking. If it's too sticky, add more grated cheese. Cover with plastic wrap, and chill. Will last for several days. Yield: 25 to 30 balls

Lesley is the Author of *Secrets of Party Planning*. She also loves to write poetry, and lives in Thunder Bay ON, Canada with her husband.

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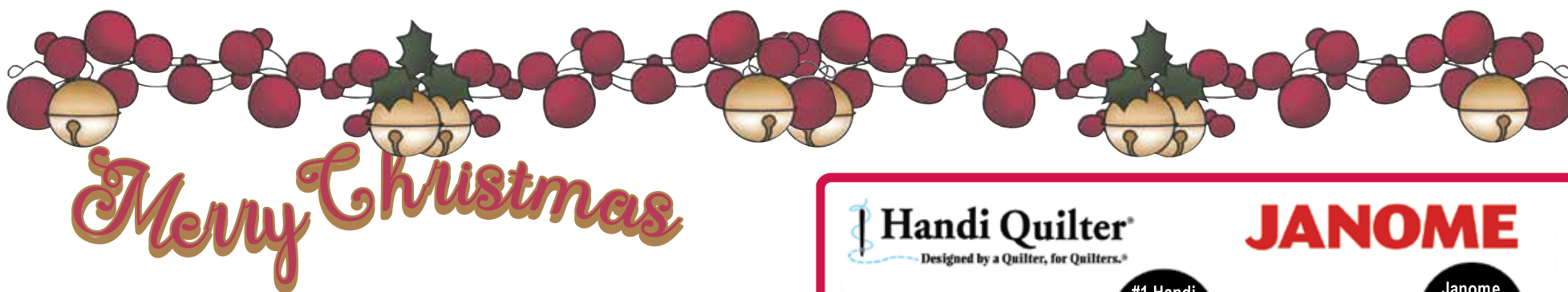
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The Gift of Tea

Christmas and gifts go together like a cup and a saucer. So why not give the gift of tea this holiday season? Your tea gift could be an invitation to come for tea, to share tea in a tearoom, to deliver tea, or to mail a tea party in a box. I enjoy giving and receiving tea in all these ways.

Come for TEA

Sharing hospitali-TEA in my home is my favorite way to give the gift of tea. My recipe for a memorable teatime includes: a pretty setting, tasty tidbits and a relaxed time to chat. For easy hosting, sometimes I order the food from a local tearoom. Other times I buy special foods from the market, such as mini croissants, chicken salad, and fancy desserts. This gives me more time to set a lovely table and relax with my guests. No time to invite someone for a festivi-TEA this December? Consider a coupon gift for a cuppa' tea in the New Year. That will extend the holidays for both of you. For a very dear friend, you could even give the coupon in a teacup.

Go Out for TEA

Taking someone to a tearoom for tea makes a sweet and generous gift. My husband and I have enjoyed taking our granddaughters to tea since they were old enough to hold a teacup—and now they're 12 and 19! During the holidays, my Sweet-TEA and I gift each other with a jaunt to one of our favorite tearooms. Their festive settings, special menus and our time together create warm, lingering memories. Plus, I gather ideas for serving tea at home—such as the recipe included for Tree-mendous Treats made with pretzel sticks and melted mint baking chips.

Par-TEA To Go

Brighten the life of someone who is unable to get out by delivering a par-TEA. Make arrangements with them and pack everything you need in a basket or box. I use a soft cooler with straps and fill it with teacups, delicious foods, tea and a tablecloth or placemats. Sometimes I bring a small gift or flowers. Then we enjoy tea together. I've delivered and served tea to friends in their homes, in hospitals and in retirement communities. It cheers their day and mine.



Mail a Par-TEA

This fun idea works well for out-of-town friends or relatives. Last Christmas I mailed my Arizona pen pal a tea party in a box. It included a few decorations, holiday paper plates and napkins, assorted teas, hot chocolate mix and candy-cane stirrers, her favorite cookies (see recipe for Everyone's Favorite Cookies), a scone mix and jam and a book of Christmas stories, which included one of mine. The note inside said, "Wish I could serve you tea in person. Since I can't, here's a tea party in a box." I added my teatime blessing, "Dear God, as we fill our teacups, fill our hearts with love, joy and peace. As the tea warms our bodies, may Your presence warm our hearts and friendship."

Would you like to gift someone with tea—in person, in a tearoom, to go or by mail? Or give a coupon to share one or more of these tea gifts in the future? Whenever you give a gift to someone, you're also giving yourself a gift because "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). God bless us everyone!

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



From Lydia's Recipe File Tree-Mendous Treats

These pretzel Christmas trees taste yummy and make cute toppers on mini-cupcakes, muffins, tarts or even a birthday cake for Jesus! Fun, festive and easy to make.

Ingredients:

- small pretzel sticks (about 3 inches long)
- mint baking chips or green candy melts
- sprinkles or crushed candy canes for decorations

Directions:

- Line a baking sheet with waxed paper. Lay pretzel sticks on sheet at least four inches apart.
- Melt mint chips in a small microwave-safe bowl for 30 seconds, then stir. Continue to heat, 15 seconds at a time, until chips are completely melted.
- Place a small plastic bag in an empty coffee mug and fold the top of the bag over the side to hold it in place.
- Carefully spoon melted chips into the plastic bag.
- Remove the bag and twist-tie it closed.
- Cut off the tip of a bottom corner of the bag to make a very small hole.
- Gently squeeze melted chips onto a pretzel to create Christmas tree branches. Start halfway up, leaving 1½ inches for the tree trunk.
- Use a back-and-forth motion to make a triangle shaped tree.
- Immediately add sprinkles or other decorations. Refrigerate pretzels until firm, then peel off the paper.
- Repeat the process to make more trees. Use trees for cupcake toppers or eat them as a treat.
- If you frost cupcakes white and add grated coconut and stand the trees in them, it looks like the trees are standing in snow.

Yield: 1/4 cup baking chips makes about 5 trees. 18 candy melts make 8 trees.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL QUILT GUILD

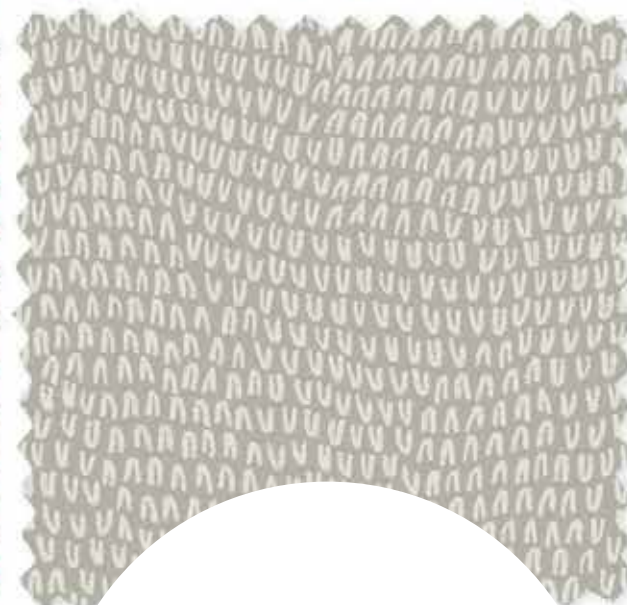
Ajax	<i>Twisted Stitchers Quilt Guild</i> For information about our guild please go to our website twistedstitchersquiltguild.com
Alliston	<i>Quilting Corners Guild</i> We meet at St Johns United Church at 7pm on the first Tuesday or each month, except January.
Almonte	<i>Almonte Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Almonte Civitan Club, 500 Almonte Street Active at 7:00 pm from September through June (no meeting in December).
Ancaster	<i>Ancaster Quilter's Guild</i> We meet at the Marshall Memorial United Church, 20 Gilbert Ave. at 7pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from September to June.
Arnprior	<i>Arnprior District Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Christian Education Centre, 257 John St. N. at 6:30 pm on the fourth Wed. of each month from Sept. to June.
Barrie	<i>Simcoe County Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Simcoe County Museum, 1151 Hwy 26, Midhurst at 1:00 pm on the Fourth Thursday each month except the 2nd Thursday in Dec and 3rd Thursday in June, from September to June. <i>Kempentfelt Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Lion's Gate Banquet Hall on Blake Street, the 3rd Thursday of the month from 7-9pm <i>Barrie Modern Quilt Guild</i> We meet at Grace United Church, 350 Grove St. East the last Thursday of the month, on alternate months from September to May - 7pm and on various Saturdays during the alternate months, for Activities and Workshops, from October to June.
Belleville	<i>Quinte Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Recreation Centre, 116 Pinnacle Street. At 7:00 pm on the first Wednesday of each month.
Binbrook	<i>Binbrook Country Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Binbrook United Church, 2623 Binbrook Rd. 7:30 pm the last Monday of the month from Sept - Nov and Jan - June.
Bracebridge	<i>The Pine Tree Quilters' Guild of Muskoka</i> We meet at the Bracebridge Memorial Arena, 169 James St at 1:00 pm on the 2nd. Thursday of the month from September through June.
Brampton	<i>Brampton Quilters Guild</i> We meet on the 4th Thursday of each month from September to June at 7:30 pm. Meetings are held at Jim Archdekin Recreation Centre, 292 Conestoga Dr, Brampton.
Brantford	<i>Brant Heritage Quilters</i> We meet at St George United Church at 7:30 pm. on the second Thursday of the month.
Brockville	<i>The Thousand Islands Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Royal Canadian Legion,180 Park Street at 7 pm on the 4th Thursday evening of the month. No meetings December, January, July and August.
Buckhorn	<i>Buckhorn Area Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Hartley Hall, St. Mathews / St. Adian Anglican Church at 9:00 a.m. on the last Wednesday of the month (excluding July, August and December).
Burlington	<i>Halton Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Mainway Recreation Centre, 4015 Mainway Dr. at 7:00 pm on the first Thursday of the month from September through June).
Caledonia	<i>Caledonia Grand River Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at 7pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from September through June.
Cambridge	<i>Busy Hands Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Preston Scout House, 1580 Queenston Road at 9:30 am on the third Monday of each month.
Chatham	<i>Chatham-Kent Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at St. Paul's Congregational Church, 450 Park Ave W at 7pm on the third Wednesday each month, except December.
Cornwall	<i>Cornwall Quilters Guild</i> We meet at St. Mathews Lutheran Church, 1509 Second St West at 7pm every third Monday evening from September through May.
Courtice	<i>Clarington Quilt Guild</i> We meet at Faith United Church, 1778 Nash Road, Courtice on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 1 – 3 p.m. We are a day time Guild
Dryden	<i>Sunset Country Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at 84 St. Charles Street at 7 pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month.
Dunnville	D.O.T.S. Quilt Guild (Dunnville's Own Tiny Stitchers). We meet at Maple Creek Community Church, 110 Inman Rd. @ 6:30 pm on the first Wednesday of the month from September to June.
Elliot Lake	<i>Elliot Lake Quilt Guild</i> We meet at Gentle Shepherd Church, 3 Ottawa Ave. at 7:00 pm on Tuesdays from September through June.
Elmira	<i>The Elmira Needle Sisters</i> We meet at the Elmira Mennonite Church at 7:00 pm on the fourth Monday of the month.
Espanola	<i>North Shore Pins & Needles Stitchery Guild</i> Meetings are held every 4th Wednesday of the month, upstairs at the Legion Hall, 370 Annette St. at 7 p.m. Sept-Nov & Jan.-May first meeting free
Etobicoke	<i>Etobicoke Quilters Guild</i> We meet at Neilson Park Creative Centre - 56 Neilson Dr. at 7:00 pm on the third Monday of the month.
Four Corners	<i>Four Corners Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Mount Forest & District Sports Complex at 7 pm on the second Tuesday of the month from September to June. For more information email 4cornersquiltersguild@gmail.com
Georgetown	<i>Halton Hills Quilters Guild</i> We Meet at 8958 Trafalgar Rd, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S5. 6:45pm till 9pm from September till June on the fourth Monday of the month.
Gloucester	<i>Common Thread Quilt Guild</i> We meet at Le Mouvement D'Implication Francophone D'Orléans (MIFO), 6600 rue Carriere in Orleans at 7:30 pm on the second Tuesday of the month from September through June.
Goderich	<i>Goderich Quilters' Guild</i> We meet once a month on the 2nd Tuesday.
Grimsby	<i>Grimsby Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Livingston Activity Centre at 7pm on the third Thursday of the month.
Guelph	<i>Royal City Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Three Willows United Church, 577 Willow Road at 7:00 pm on the second Tuesday each month from September until June.
Gwillinbury	<i>Gwillimbury Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Sharon-Hope United Church, 18648 Leslie St. at 1:00 pm on 4th Monday of the month from September through May.
Hagersville	<i>Haldimand Quilter's Guild</i> We meet at the Hagersville United Church at 7:00 pm on the first Monday of the month from September through June.
Haliburton	<i>Haliburton Highlands Quilter Guild</i> We meet at the Stanhope Community Centre, 1095 North Shore Rd, Algonquin Highlands at 1:00 pm on the second Wednesday of each month.
Hamilton	<i>Hamilton Quilters Guild</i> We meet The Church of Resurrection, 435 Mohawk Rd. W.at 7:00 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from September through August.
Ingersoll	<i>Oxford Quilters Guild</i> We meet month at the Ingersoll Creative Art Centre, 125 Centennial Lane (in Victoria Park) at 7:00 pm on the first Wednesday and 9:00 am on the first Thursday of each month.
Kanata	<i>The Kanata Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Glen Cairn United Church, 140 Abbeyhill Dr. at 9:30 am on the second Wednesday of the month from September to June.
Kemptville	<i>Kemptville Quilters Guild</i> We meet pm at the Kemptville Pentecostal Church 1964 County Road # 43 at 7:00 pm on the second Monday of the month (except for holiday Mondays).
Kenora	<i>Lake of the Woods Quilter's Guild</i> We meet at St. Louis Catholic Church, 912 Superior St in Keewatin at 7 PM on the second Thursday of the month.
Kincardine	Kincardine Sunset Quilters Guild. We meet the second Wednesday of every month except July and August, at 10 a.m. in the basement of St. Anthony's Church on Russell St. in Kincardine.
Kingston	<i>Kingston Heirloom Quilters</i> We meet at St. Johns Anglican Church Hall in Portsmouth Village at 9:30 am on the first Tuesday and 7:00 pm on the first Thursday of each month. <i>Limestone Quilt Guild</i> Meeting Area usually is – Kingston Senior Centre, 56 Francis Street, Kingston, Ontario, but we are on zoom right now. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 pm on zoom.
Kingsville	<i>Erie Shores Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Kingsville Arena, 2nd floor at 7p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month.
Kirkton	<i>Huron, Perth Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Kirktown/Wooddham Community Centre at 9:00 am on the second Tuesday of the month from September through May.
Kitchener - Waterloo	<i>The Waterloo County Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Parkside Community Room of the Parkside Arena in Waterloo at 1:30pm and 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month.
Lambton	<i>North Lambton Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Port Franks Hall on the 4th Wednesday of the month.
Lindsay	<i>Lindsay Creative Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Celebrations, 35 Lindsay St. N at 1:00 pm every 2nd Monday of the month except for October, December and June.
London	<i>London Friendship Quilters Guild</i> We meet the 2nd Thursday of the month from September to June. The meeting usually runs from 7pm to 9pm. We are located at St. George's Presbyterian Church, 1475 Dundas Street, London, Ontario N5W 3B8. To contact us: lfqg.president@gmail.com or our web page: lfqg.LononFriendshipQuiltGuild.com
Manitoulin Island	<i>Island Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Community Hall in Mindemoya at 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of the month from September though June.
Markdale	<i>Queen's Bush Quilters</i> We meet at Annesley United Church, 82 Toronto St. at 7:00 pm on the 1st Tuesday of the month from September to June.
Meaford	<i>Georgian Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Meaford Opera House, Sykes St. at 1:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month.
Mississauga	<i>Cawthra Senior's Centre</i> We meet at the Cawthra Senior's Centre at 7:30pm on the first Thursday of the month (except July and

	August). <i>Mississauga Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Tomken Twin Arenas at 7:30 pm on the first Thursday of the month (except July and August).
Miramichi	<i>Miramichi Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Seamans Hospital at 7:00 pm every Tuesday and 10:00 am every Thursday.
Napanee	<i>Heritage Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Strathcona Paper Center at 7:00 pm on the third Tuesday of each month from September through to June.
Newmarket	<i>The Region of York Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Newmarket Community Centre, 200 Doug Duncan Drive on the fourth Wednesday of the month from September through May. <i>Moraine Quilt Guild</i> We meet in the hall at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church – 484 Water Street, Newmarket at 9:30 am – 12 Noon for Social Sew and 1:00-3:30 pm for the Meeting on the first Wednesday of each month year round.
Niagara Region	<i>The Niagara Heritage Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Merrion Community Centre, 7 Park Ave., St. Catharines on the third Wednesday of each month.
Nobleton	A chapter of the <i>Modern Quilting Guild</i>
Norwich	We travel to various locations in Southern Ontario on a rotating basis. <i>Quaker Quilt Guild</i> We meet at 89 Stover St N, Norwich at 9:30 am on the second Monday of the month.
Orangeville	<i>Dufferin Piecemakers' Quilting Guild</i> We meet at the Orangeville Event Centre at 7:30 pm on the third Monday of the month from September through June.
Orilla	<i>Orillia Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Royal Canadian Legion, 215 Mississauga St. E. at 1:00 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.
Orleans	<i>Common Thread Quilt Guild</i> Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm at MIFO, 6600 Carriere St, Orleans. www.commonthreadquiltguild.ca
Orono	<i>Ganaraska Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Seniors Activity Centre. 200 Station St. W at 7:15 pm on the last Wednesday of the month.
Oshawa	<i>Durham Trillium Quilters'</i> We meet at the Zion Christian Reformed Church 409 Adelaide Ave. E, Oshawa at 7:00pm every second Monday Sept.- June
Ottawa	<i>Ottawa Valley Quilters Guild</i> Our guild continues to meet on the ZOOM platform because of the covid-19 pandemic situation. Our normal in-person meetings will resume some time in 2022. The meetings are usually held the second Monday of every month September to June, at the Riverside United Church, 3191 Riverside Drive, Ottawa ON, K1V8N8. Our email address is ottawavalleyquiltersguild.org <i>QuiltCo</i> We meet at the Trinity Anglican Church in Old Ottawa South on the second Monday evening of the month except July and August.
Owen Sound	<i>Bluewater Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre, 1900 3rd Av E at 7:00 pm every third Monday from March to December (except May which is on the second).
Paris	<i>Paris Quilting Bees</i> We meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from September to June at the Paris Fairgrounds at 7 PM. For information email: parisquiltingbees@gmail.com .
Penetanguishene	<i>Georgian Bay Quilters Guild</i> Meets every month from September to June at the Penetanguishene Arena, 61 Mario St. Penetanguishene, Ontario. Monthly meetings (except for December & June) are the 4th Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. December & June meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of the month with the June meeting starting at 6:00 p.m.
Perth	<i>Lanark County Quilters Guild</i> We meet at Lions Hall, Perth Fairgrounds at 7pm on the 4th Tuesday of the month.
Pickering	<i>Rouge Valley Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Peace Lutheran Church, 928 Liverpool Road, Pickering at 7:00 pm on the 4th Monday of the month September through May, excluding December.
Port Loring	<i>Argyle Quilters Guild</i>
Port Perry	We meet at the Lions Den in Arnstein on the second Thursday of the month. <i>Port Perry Patchers</i> We meet at the Hope Christian Reform Church, 14480 Old Simcoe Rd. in Prince Albert at 7:00 pm on the third Monday of the month, at 7 p.m. from March to December.
Prince Edward	<i>Prince Edward County Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the BCR Church in Bloomfield at 7:00 pm County on the second Wednesday of each month.
Rayside	<i>Rayside Balfour Quilting and Stitchery Guild</i> We meet at the Chelmsford Arena (upstairs) 215 Edward Avenue, Chelmsford, Ontario at 7:00 p.m. every Monday from September to May.
Renfrew	<i>Quilt Guild Renfrew & Area</i> We meet at the Horton Community Centre, 1005 Castleford Road, Horton from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from September to June.
Richmond	<i>Richmond Area Quilters Guild (RAQG)</i> We meet at the Richmond Legion, 6430 Ottawa Street at 7:30 on the third Wednesday of each month.
Ruthven	<i>Erie Shores Quilter's Guild</i> We meet at the Ruthven-Olinda United Church every third Tuesday.
Sarnia	<i>Sarnia Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Redeemer Christian Reformed Church 5814 Blackwell Sdrd, Sarnia at 7pm the first Monday of each month.
Sault St. Marie	<i>Stitches From The Heart Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Senior's Centre on Bay St at 7pm the last Monday of the month.
Scarborough	<i>Rouge Valley Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Peace Lutheran Church, 928 Liverpool Road, Pickering at 7:00 pm on the 4th Monday of the month September through May, excluding December.
Simcoe	<i>Twilight Quilters' Guild of Norfolk County</i> We meet at the Old Wyndham Church, 30 Glendale Crescent at 7:00 pm on the second Monday of the month.
Stittsville	<i>Norfolk County Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Vittoria & District Community Centre on the first Tuesday of each month except October.
St Marys	<i>The Quilters Club</i> We meet at the The Pretty Street Community Centre at 7:00 pm on the third Monday of the month. <i>The Stonetowne Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the End Zone Room of the Pyramid Centre at 9:30 am on the third Tuesday of the month from September to May.
Stony Creek	<i>Stoney Creek Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Royal Canadian Legion, 12 King Street East, at 6:30 pm on first Wednesday of the month from September to June.
Sudbury	<i>Sudbury & District Quilting & Stitchery Guild</i> We meet at 140 Durham Street at 7:00 pm on every Tuesday from September to April.
Sutton	<i>The Georgina Pins and Needles</i> We meet at the Knox United Church 34 Market Street at 7:00 pm on the first Tuesday of the month from September to June.
Thunder Bay	<i>Thunder Bay Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Calvin Luthern Church on Edward Street at 7:30pm on the 3rd Monday of each month from September to June.
Toronto	<i>Etobicoke Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Neilson Park Creative Centre at 7:15 pm on the third Monday of the month. <i>Piecetful Nights Quilters' Guild of North Toronto</i> meets the second Wednesday of each month. During COVID-19 meetings will be held via Zoom. Guests welcome. https://www.pnag.ca . <i>Toronto Modern Quilt Guild</i> We meet at The Workroom Studio, 46 Nobel St Studio 102 at 3:00 pm on the last Sunday of each month. <i>York Heritage Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Toronto Botanical Gardens on the 3rd Tuesday of every month from September through May. <i>Yorkshire Rose Quilters' Guild of Toronto</i> We meet at Danforth Mennonite Church, 2174 Danforth Avenue at 7:30 pm on the second Wednesday of the month from September through May.
Wasaga Beach	<i>Slope to Slope Quilters Guild</i> We meet in the Community Hall at the Wasaga Stars Arena at 7pm on the first Tuesday of the month September through June.
Waterloo	<i>The Waterloo County Quilters' Guild</i> We meet the Albert McCormick Community Centre at 1:30 pm and 7pm on the third Wednesday of each month from September through June
Whitby	<i>Kindred Hearts Guild</i> We meet at the Whitby Baptist Church on the third Tuesday of the month.
Windsor	<i>Windsor Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 594, 5030 Howard Ave., Windsor, ON N9A 6Z6 at 9:00 a.m. the first Wednesday of the month from September to June.
York Region	<i>The Moraine Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the St. Andrews Presbyterian Church at 1:00 on the first Wednesday of the month.



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THE TIME HAS COME for me to start thinking about retirement. If anyone out there has an interest in owning a quilt shop, I am open to selling it complete or selling the inventory to anyone interested in starting a new business. It's a great business with wonderful co-workers, customers and teachers and there is definitely a need for it in the Sault. Thank you to all of you who have been such a big part of my success.

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Calendars have arrived!

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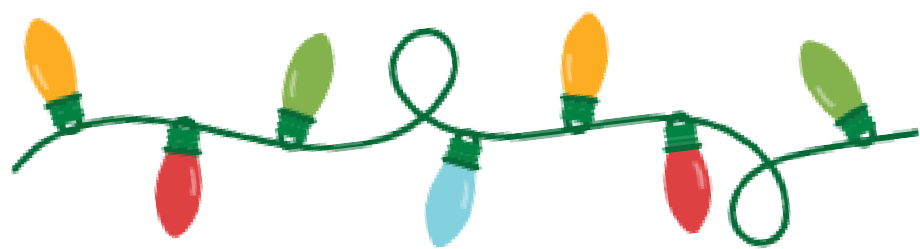


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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Pecan Pie Bars

This recipe is a little unusual in that it calls for molasses, which we found cuts down on what can be an overwhelming sweetness with pecan pie. I'd recommend starting this recipe early in the day if you want it for supper as it needs to cool down and then be refrigerated to firm up.

Base Layer

- 1¾ cups flour
- ½ cup sugar
- ¾ cup cold butter

Top Layer

- ¾ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ⅓ cup +1 Tbsp flour
- 4 large eggs
- 1 Tbsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup molasses
- 1 cup corn syrup
- 2 cups roughly chopped pecans, no need to toast the pecans



Grease a 9x13 baking pan and line it with parchment paper so that you can lift the entire batch out of the pan after they have cooled for easier cutting.

Preheat oven to 350°F for aluminum bakeware and 325 °F for glass bakeware.

BASE: Mix together 1 ¾ cups flour and ½ cup sugar. Mix the butter through the flour mixture until it is well incorporated and resembles a dry coarse meal.

Press the crumb mixture firmly and evenly into the bottom of the prepared baking pan and bake for 25 minutes. The edges should just be starting to brown. Remove from oven and pour on the topping while still hot.

TOPPING: Mix together the flour and brown sugar well. Whisk in the eggs, vanilla extract, salt, molasses, and corn syrup.

Let the mixture stand for about 15 minutes while the bottom layer pre-bakes, stirring it occasionally. This gives the flour time to soften and help thicken the top layer.

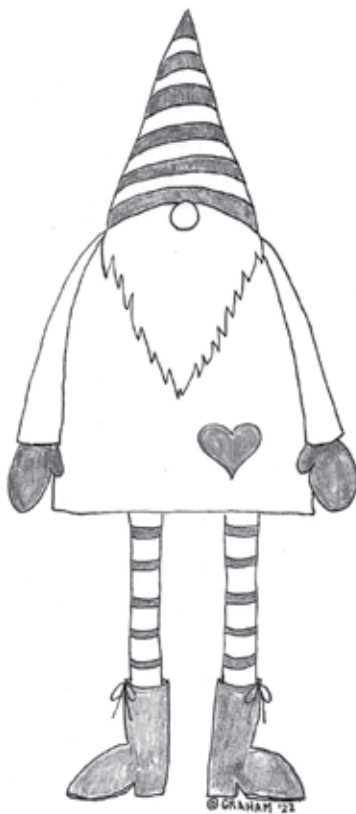
Mix in the chopped pecans and pour the topping over the partially baked bottom crust as soon as it comes out of the oven.

Return the pan to the oven and bake for an additional 40-50 minutes until the filling is set. Shake the pan a little. The center can wobble a little like set jelly but it should not be runny.

Cool the pan to room temperature before chilling the cookie bars in the fridge for several hours or overnight before attempting to cut them.

Countryberries Designs

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Carrot Slaw with Cranberries & Walnuts

I was looking for something a little different to go with our roast beef and Yorkshires and this fit the bill. It has a nice crunch and a bonus; the leftovers keep well in the fridge. In fact, you could make this a day ahead of time.

- ½ cup walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1½ pounds carrots, peeled and shredded
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp lemon zest and 2 Tbsp lemon juice, from 1 lemon
- 3 Tbsp freshly squeezed orange juice, from 1 orange
- 2 Tbsp honey
- ½ cup raisins
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced, or about a third of a white onion, very thinly sliced
- 3 Tbsp chopped fresh Italian parsley
- ¼ tsp salt, heaping
- ¼ tsp pepper



Set oven rack to middle position and preheat oven to 350°F degrees. Place walnuts on baking sheet and bake until toasted and fragrant, approx. 10 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Combine all remaining ingredients in a large bowl and toss well. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow the flavours to blend. Season to taste with salt, pepper, honey or more citrus. Toss in walnuts and serve.

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