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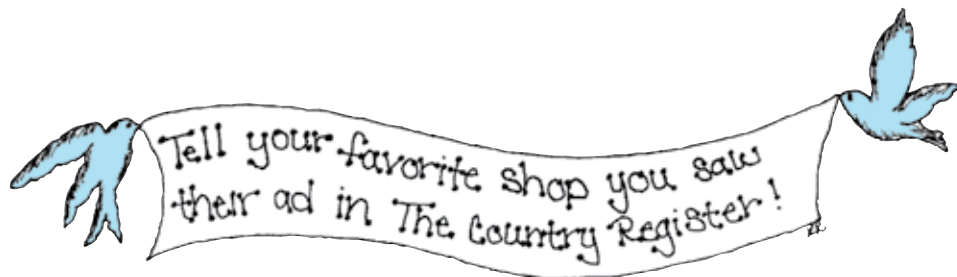
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## Make Time for You

### Recharging and Returning to What Matters

by Kim Caskey of Kim Caskey Quilt & Textile Tours • Host & Educator

There's something magical about flipping the calendar to January first. A brand new year feels like a fresh start— a blank page, a do-over, an invitation to reset. It's that same feeling I speak about in my Temperature Quilt Lecture: a new year, a new beginning, a moment to choose differently.

It's no surprise that people often feel a surge of motivation and clarity at this time. We set intentions to live healthier, declutter, finish lingering UFOs, start new projects, volunteer, travel or simply be kinder. After the joyful chaos of December, January opens the door to something quieter and more intentional—a season to turn inward and make time for YOU.

For many of us who create—quilt, sew, stitch or make—find the weeks after Christmas often feel like the perfect moment to slip back into the comfort of our craft. The pressure is gone, the deadlines are behind us and the sewing room calls us home in a gentle, familiar way.

This is the season to Make Time for YOU.

Self-care doesn't have to look like a spa day or a vacation (though those are lovely too). Sometimes self-care is as simple as reclaiming a quiet hour with your sewing machine or curling up with a hand-stitching project and a warm cup of tea. These small creative rituals don't just soothe our minds—they refill the well that the holiday rush so quickly drains.

Whether I'm at home or on the road, I've learned that creativity thrives in the spaces where we slow down. When we allow ourselves to pause—to breathe, to reflect, to simply be—inspiration begins to rise again. It's in those gentle moments that ideas start forming, colour palettes appear, and that long awaited spark returns.


This is a wonderful time of year to set a small intention for yourself and your craft. Nothing overwhelming or grand—just something that brings joy. Perhaps you'll pull out a project that was set aside in December. Perhaps you'll start something new, stitched just for the pleasure of it. Or perhaps you'll take an afternoon to tidy your sewing space, reacquaint yourself with your fabrics and rediscover forgotten treasures tucked into drawers.

As quilters and makers, we naturally pour our hearts into others—stitching gifts for family, welcoming new babies with quilts, offering comfort pieces for friends and contributing generously to community charities. All of this giving is meaningful and deeply fulfilling; it nourishes a beautiful part of who we are. But after a season spent caring outwardly, January invites us to shift that giving spirit inward. This is the moment to refill our own creative tank, to restore the energy that allows us to keep giving with joy. What can you create for you? What brings you comfort, beauty, or peace? What helps you reset?

As the new year begins, let yourself linger in the slower rhythm. Set aside some time for you. Put on music that makes your shoulders drop. Let the hum of the machine or the rhythm of needle and thread guide you back to yourself. And perhaps, somewhere on your horizon, consider a creative escape—a quilt and textile journey in 2026 could be a quiet, joyful experience to look forward to, a little time devoted entirely to your own inspiration and delight.

Here's to a fresh start, a renewed spirit and the gentle reminder that taking care of you is not only allowed—it's essential.

Kim Caskey operates and is Tour Host for Kim Caskey Quilt & Textile Tours, as well as a Professional Longarm Quilter and Educator. If you would like to learn more about Kim and her tours or quilting, please visit Kim's website: [www.kimcaskey.ca](http://www.kimcaskey.ca).



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## De-Clutter, Design or Ditch It?

# Spring Cleaning's New Rules

by Barbara Kalkis

For many of us winter means snow, sleet, blizzards, frost, fierce winds, gray days and black nights that make the stars beam like searchlights. We know that one warm sunny January day doesn't mean spring has sprung. Whether the groundhog sees his shadow or not, we know spring doesn't arrive on February 2nd. Frivolous March may come in like a Lamb but will breathe Lion-like cold before it ends. Growing up, we also knew when Spring truly arrived. It was the day we spent "Spring Cleaning" every inch of the house.

Times have changed. I am now influenced by Influencers and Authorities whose number exceeds weed varieties. These experts inform us that there's more to spring cleaning than cleaning. They encourage us to "style," "design," "organize," "de-clutter" or "edit" our homes. Suddenly, cleaning has become secondary to examining our entire living space for defects. The more zealous connoisseurs command us to dispassionately "Purge" our homes of things we foolishly thought were necessary to our comfort and contentment. One purging style is "Japandi," the blended Japanese/Scandinavian minimalist design concept. Furniture seems to float in mostly empty spaces. It's a look to love if you don't have kids or someone who loves his 200-pound recliner and side table perfectly aligned with the TV screen.

"Purging" requires us to set aside emotions and be coldly logical. (No, you do not need 10 vases of various sizes. Save two and toss the rest. After all, how many times do you fill your house with bouquets anyway? Or buy one green plant and water it, then you won't even need one vase. Voila!) Choose a theme and discard anything that doesn't fit into it. Do lots of

(story continues on p.19)

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## Perspective

by Shelby Kottemann

When I was in the fifth grade, Mrs. Wilson assigned our class an assignment to interview with a person who lived at least 50 years ago. I chose my grandpa. Born in 1926, Shelby lived through many times I'd never known yet feel connected to. We sat down one evening and went over the assigned questions, which he answered simply. I learned that Papa grew up on a farm with his four brothers and sister. He recounted that when the boys got into trouble, his Paw would pull a switch off the old willow tree. His mother was sweet till her dying day and a sought after favorite among all her grandchildren. Papa was a WWII veteran of the Pacific. He met grandma at church and married her right out of high school. He spent his career at a company that makes farm and mining equipment, called Caterpillar, and carpooled with friends, as people did back then. It was a treasure trove of family history. Yet, there was another question in particular that stuck with me. It was clear that my Papa had thought about it before. The question was, "What's a modern convenience that you're grateful to have now?"

In reply, Papa stood up and walked over to the wall, gesturing with the turn of a dial. "That I can walk over to the wall and change the thermostat." He sat down with a look of relief and satisfaction. Papa went on to describe how he and his brothers chopped firewood and all kept warm under layers of heavy wool quilts at night. They didn't dare get out of bed till morning for risk of losing the heat trapped under the covers. He remembered how, as they went to sleep, they could see their breath in the moonlight through their bedroom window. On sweltery summer nights, the family migrated onto the front porch, sleeping in the open air in hopes of a breeze.

What a concept to be so hot that you sleep on the porch or so cold you can see your breath in your own bedroom! And yet, that was now only 100 years ago! Without history and reflection, we can quickly lose touch with all the simple things we have to be grateful for. There are just so many conveniences we have in our lives today that we don't have the lived experience to fully appreciate.

I think about what simple gifts I want to be aware of. At the end of a long day, I get to melt into a warm, steamy shower. When I make dinner



for my fiancé, I have a full-sized oven and open counter space to work with. My pickup truck has heat on chilly drives. I never want to lose touch with the countless comforts I have to be grateful for. In that lies a constant sense of abundance.

P.S. Yes, my grandfather is my namesake!

Shelby Kottemann is an author and started Loves Nature LLC with a mission to help others connect their lives with their hearts. Her email is [contact@inlovesnature.com](mailto:contact@inlovesnature.com). To learn more, visit her website [www.inlovesnature.com](http://www.inlovesnature.com).

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### Kirby's Korner *A Clean Sweep*

by Kirby Gust

If your household is anything like ours, the colder weather, shorter days, and extra time spent indoors often lead to increased cleaning. Especially with the upcoming holiday season and the chance that company may drop in. Colleen and I have what would be considered a fairly traditional household. Colleen does the lion's share of the cooking and laundry. I take care of the yard, vehicles, and household repairs. The household's day-to-day chores, such as cleaning and vacuuming, are shared equally when time allows. We are both very good at taking on extra household duties if the other one is working on a special project or putting in overtime at our full-time jobs.

Now, all of that seems to be too simple if you read it in that one small paragraph above. So let me break it down a bit more for you.

#### Meals

I would say it is fair to say that more than 95% of all our meals, including work lunches, are prepared in the home. In fact, that number is more likely closer to 99%. Still, I will stick with a lower percentage for now, as I don't have enough recorded documentation to prove otherwise. But I am confident enough in the 95% that I can share it with conviction. Of said meals, Colleen is responsible for the exact percentages as above, and with the same reasoning.

Colleen has a vast selection of "go to meals", her words, that she prepares, dictated mainly by what is on sale at the grocery store. She also uses our home as a test kitchen for all the recipes that she shares in the Country Register. She has tried-and-true recipes that she shares with our readers on a regular basis, but she is always on the lookout for new ones. When she does come across a new recipe that piques her interest, she will not share it with our readers until she has tried it herself, usually more than once. Once she has made it according to the original ingredients and instructions, she then makes needed changes to account for local availability of ingredients. She is also a master at knowing just what to add, remove or substitute to improve the flavour. Quite often, she omits preparation and or cooking steps that she deems unnecessary and time-consuming. My job in all of this is just to sit down at the table and eat. A job I do my best to describe as a hardship to my friends and family. So far, no one believes me.

#### Laundry

Again, here I must give Colleen credit for the vast majority of this chore. I have ruined some of her clothes, not intentionally, in the past, thinking I could just toss them in the dryer like most of our clothes. Because of this, we have agreed that she will take care of the clothes, and I will take care of things like bedding and towels.

#### Household cleaning

This one we share as evenly as I think we can. I am very seldom at home or in the house most of the week. Because of that, Colleen does the picking up and wiping down of surfaces when needed during the week. I don't want anyone to get the wrong idea. Along with working full-time, I also do handyman jobs, restore antiques, and build custom, handmade furniture as a home-based business. But we have one day a week that we set aside for giving the house a good going over. The balancing out of this chore comes on that day because while I am mucking around, cleaning bathrooms and floors, Colleen is in the kitchen, cleaning and cooking. This is also the day I do my best to fix things around the house that need tending to. Colleen always says that being married to a carpenter and handyman is akin to "the cobbler's children have no shoes."

She has to ask to be added to my waiting list when larger jobs around the house arise and require more than just a few minutes of attention.

#### Yard

Colleen and I live on a half-acre lot, so taking care of that is no small task. I take care of most of the yard duties, including mowing the grass and tending the garden in the summer, and snow clearing in the winter. A snow blower is a godsend when you have a yard and driveway as big as ours. I also do all the maintenance on the yard equipment.

#### Vehicles

Colleen hates the smell of gasoline, and therefore, I make sure to keep her car filled up for her. Sometimes I forget, and she lets me know that the little gas pump warning light is on. We both have winter tires for our respective driving choices. Every spring and fall, I take on the task of jacking both vehicles up and swapping the tires from all seasons to winter tires and vice versa. Our vehicles aren't new, so some repair work is required from time to time. I recently just finished changing all the brakes and rotors on Colleen's car.

As I stated at the start of this column, we have a fairly traditional household when it comes to division of duties. But that is nowhere near where I set off to when I started writing this column.

I had sat down to share tried-and-true tips that we have learned over the years, not to bore you with trivial details of how dull our busy lives are, as we do nothing but work, clean, and cook.

Here are some tips to help you get through the winter when we all have a few extra minutes to spend on things like the hard water ring around the toilet bowl that has been driving you crazy.

#### Citric Acid

Let's start off with those hard water stains that most of us have around our houses. We have found that nothing works better on these than simply treating them with citric acid. Citric acid powder can be easily found at most health food stores. It can also be found at some fabric stores that use natural materials and fabric dyes.

To prevent calcium build-up in the fill mechanism or on the flapper in your toilet, which can eventually lead to tank leakage into the bowl, wasted water and a higher water bill, I recommend adding a heaping tablespoon of citric acid to the water in the tank and leaving it to sit overnight every 3 months or so. It will not only clean the calcium off the moving parts inside the tank, but it will also remove any rust and calcium build-up from the tank walls. If you want to remove a hard water ring around the bowl of the toilet, the same method can be used. It works best on a windy night when the water in the bowl is moving up and down due to air movement from the wind in the air stack, keeping the ring wet with citric acid treated water.

We have come across a brand of home cleaning supplies that just seem to work. We have all fallen for misleading promises on cleaning bottles or in advertisements. I had never seen an ad or any mention of this brand until I stumbled across it. The brand is Surf Pro® and is a Canadian company based in St. Amable, Quebec. The "buy Canadian" movement could be the reason this product has come to the surface (no pun intended) on store shelves.

*(story continues on next page)*

They offer a variety of cleaning products, including glass, grout, and floor cleaners. They even have a spray for eliminating odours in the home. We have only tried two of their many products, but we are more than impressed with both.

Here is an unsolicited review of the two Surf-Pro® products we have tried.

### Shower Buster®

I believe most people are familiar with a product called Gel-Gloss®, which has been around for years and is recognized for its exceptional ability to clean shower walls and prevent them from accumulating dirt and grime. Shower Buster® is a similar product, except that it does not work like a paste wax, as does the Gel-Gloss®. Gel-Gloss® must be rubbed into the surface, then let to dry, and then the leftover film buffed off. Any grit and grime left behind during the application procedure can be trapped in the wax-like finish. Shower Buster®, on the other hand, is a double spray application. The first spray application is left on for approximately five minutes and then simply rubbed with a wet cloth, followed by rinsing clean. Having a handheld showerhead certainly helps in this regard. Once rinsed, simply leave the shower or tub to dry completely, then reapply Shower Buster® to the surface, allowing the product to dry naturally. This will leave the shower looking filmy and streaky, but don't worry, these streaks are simply rinsed away either after the product is dry or the next time you have a shower. The difference between this product and the old tried-and-true paste wax type is that if you miss a spot when wiping down with a wet cloth in the first step, that spot will stand out like a sore thumb once the shower is dry after the final rinse. Any grit or grime left behind will form a sort of alligator skin on the surface. Any of these spots can be easily spot-treated and cleaned with the Shower Buster once again.

### The Intelligent Soap®

After being surprised by the performance of the shower cleaner, we thought we would give the brand's floor cleaner, The Intelligent Soap®, a try, hoping for the same results. We were surprised, and at the same time, slightly embarrassed and disgusted. Having pets, our floors are washed regularly to clean up muddy paw prints and other unmentionable things. I am one of those floor washers who rinse the cleaning pads on our floor mops until the water runs clean after mopping the area I am working on. This typically happens on the second mop, sometimes on the third mop if the floor is dirtier than usual for some reason. With the Intelligent Soap®, the second rinse was dirtier than the first. The third rinse was more like mud than water. By this point, I was really starting to doubt my previous floor washing abilities. Then I read the rest of the label on the product, which states, "The exclusive vibrating organic compound technology allows water to do the cleaning." That was when I realized the water was doing just that.

The floor was left wet after each mopping, and while I was rinsing the mop heads clean, the product was deep cleaning and pulling years' worth of dirt and grime to the surface. This was especially noticeable on the hardwood floors, which have seams between each piece of wood that collect and hold debris. We have been painting and doing some home repairs, so I am looking forward to seeing what this cleaner extracts from the floors next time around. We have three extra bottles of the cleaner in our cleaning cupboard, just in case everyone else finds out how well it works, leading to us not being able to find it on store shelves.

My next tip is for those with gas lawn mowers and snowblowers. Never use anything except premium fuel in these tools. Regular gasoline, due to its alcohol content, can clog the fuel system on these engines, leading to what is referred to as fuel varnish. This varnish can severely restrict the amount of fuel reaching the carburetor or gum up the carburetor completely, leading to a frustrated operator who cannot figure out why their equipment won't start or run properly once started. In addition to using premium fuel, I highly recommend using a fuel additive such as Sea Foam® or a similar product. Fuel stabilizers help keep the fuel itself from going bad, but they do little to help an engine run better. Products like Sea Foam® not only work as a stabilizer for the fuel, but they also clean the engine. In fact, I have brought back a varnished up engine that wouldn't run simply by adding fresh fuel treated with Sea Foam® to the gas tank. Once it sat long enough to work its way through the fuel lines and into the carburetor, the engine started effortlessly. I have been using products like this in my lawnmower since I first purchased it, and, believe it or not, in 20 years of mowing, I have never had to change the spark plug. It still starts on the first pull each spring.

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season, and maybe, just maybe, my helpful hints will make it a little easier to get through the long, dark weeks of winter, whether you are stuck inside cleaning or outside trying to get the snowblower started.

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# Bee Mine, Valentine

## DID YOU KNOW? VALENTINE'S EDITION

- One of the earliest valentines still in existence is kept in an England museum and written in 1477—more than 500 years ago!
- Before envelopes, valentines were handmade from sheets of folded paper, then pressed closed with a wax seal.
- In the 1800s, admirers spent hours decorating cards with watercolour paints, pen and ink— a true act of devotion.
- By the mid-1800s, popularity demanded manufactured valentines, which were then decorated with lace, velvet and ribbons. They were often so ornate they needed their own box to send in mail!



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# Love at First Sight

by Becky Van Vleet

"How do I look, Mildred?" Alberta fluffed her hair and stood on tiptoe next to her bed at the shipyard.

"Just lovely, sweetie." Mildred pulled her hand.

"Come on. Time to go. I want to beat the boys."

When the girls arrived at the St. Julien restaurant in San Francisco, Alberta scooted into the half-circle cushioned burgundy seat surrounding a round wooden table to wait for her blind date. Had she done the right thing? Mildred had twisted her arm, that's for sure.

When two sailors meandered toward them, Mildred elbowed her. "That's them. My boyfriend, Robbie, is on the left. The other one, umm, the other one must be your date."

Alberta gulped. She rubbed her damp palms on her skirt beneath the table.

She whispered, "He's so handsome. What's his name?"

"Walter."

I'm passionate about family stories and preserving them, one at a time, for the next generations. I tap into my imagination for how events may have happened. Sheer fun for me. Moments I never actually witnessed come alive in vivid color in my movie mind.

As a baby boomer, I grew up with parents who occasionally shared relics about the Great Depression and World War II. Truth be told, I wish I'd asked more questions. At the time, I had no idea historians would one day crown their resilience as the Greatest Generation. But now, I esteem their stories more than ever.

My parents' WWII romance narrative is unique. A whirlwind romance if I've ever heard one. For some background, my mother, Alberta Thomas, hitchhiked from Indiana with her best friend, Mildred, to California after high school to serve the WWII effort. Her friends had scattered. Boys had joined various military branches faster than sparks flying from a fire. Many of her girlfriends had joined the female military counterparts.

But my mother's adventurous spirit took her on a different path. She set off across the country with her thumb up to hitch rides to eventually arrive at Mare Island Shipyard. Of course, hitchhiking during the early 1940s was much safer, and even somewhat common for women without cars. Upon arrival at the shipyard, she converted to a Rosie the Riveter with her welding assignments.

In the meantime, my father, Walter Troyan, served as a young gunner on the USS Denver in the South Pacific, enlisting at age seventeen. When a torpedo severely struck his ship, the vessel traveled to Mare Island Shipyard for major repairs which lasted from January to May 1944.

Although the sailors were still required to work during the overhaul time, they were granted a 30-day liberty leave. The 50,000 civilians working at Mare Island, mostly women, also had some time off from their six-day workweek. Sailors itching for dates with female employees was not uncommon.

Robbie, my father's friend, had already linked up with a new girlfriend, Mildred. He convinced my father to go on a blind date to meet Mildred's girlfriend, Alberta. My father thought, why not? Still a teenager, he'd already witnessed more battles and carnage than he ever imagined.

My parents fell in love instantly at the restaurant where they met. Between their working shifts, more dates followed, sometimes with my father's shipmate, Eddie Page, and his wife Emma. At the Japanese Tea Garden in San Francisco, my mother eagerly accepted his proposal, barely a month later, when he slipped a diamond ring on her finger. Within days, my father's parents hosted their engagement party from their home in Santa Rosa.

Before his ship left Mare Island to reenter the war, the couple squeezed in a few more dates, cementing their commitment. From May 1944 to November 1945, they exchanged letters for the remainder of WWII. Wasting no time, they married on December 2, 1945, just eleven days after my father stepped off the ship. We've all heard the expression, love at first sight. It was for them. Their unwavering commitment, staying married until their deaths, remains an inspiring example to me.



Walter & Alberta Troyan  
Newlyweds after WWII

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# Wrapped in Love

by Janet M. Bair



Every quilt made is an act of love. We may have fallen in love with the fabric and want to make something unique. We may have a special occasion such as a wedding, graduation, birthday or Christmas gift in mind when we start sewing. We may be sewing for charity and will never see the recipient.

The amount of time it takes to piece and press the top, quilt it and sew on the binding requires a big commitment of time. Time that ends up being an act of love. As quilters, we love to sew and we love to bless others with our gifts. If we sew a lot, we have to find people to give our quilts to, or we would have no room in our houses.

Whenever I think of those blessing others with their quilting skills, I think of my mother-in-law, Leone Bair, who was a talented quilter. She loved to make small Sunbonnet Sue doll quilts. She made dozens of these little quilts for her family, friends and friends' grandchildren. She also made many items for her church's yearly Christmas fair. All gifts of love.

Although she passed away twenty years ago, the two doll quilts still at my house are in good condition even though my girls played with them while they were growing up. At that time, I was not yet a quilter.

I looked at the doll quilts more closely the other day. She hand-embroidered all around the Sunbonnet Sue girl appliqué and the four appliquéd hearts and then hand quilted the rest of the quilt with small hearts. I know it took a lot of time. The doll quilt is now forty years old. Dare I let my grandchildren play with it? I think I may set that one aside as there is another one, all machine appliquéd and machine quilted that is similar.

Without realizing it, I guess I have carried on her legacy. Last year, after practicing making half square triangles with a charm pack, I turned it into a dolls Christmas quilt. This year I am making teddy bear quilts using another charm pack of bears with guitars for my grandson. We all enjoy being wrapped up in a cozy quilt on a cold winter's night. Wouldn't a bear love one too?

Some people think Valentine's Day is just for sweethearts but over the years, as I did pre-school story hours, I felt it was important to read stories about love to the children. The world can use more love and understanding.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God" I John 4:7 As we remind ourselves each February to love others, let us use our gifts of sewing lavishly on this hurting world.

© 2026 Janet M Bair. You may contact her at [librarybair@hotmail.com](mailto:librarybair@hotmail.com)

Becky Van Vleet, a retired school administrator, lives with her husband, Troy. They are the parents of four grown children and enjoy spending time with their nine grandchildren. Becky is a children's picture book author, and her website is devoted to family stories and creating memories: [www.beckyvanvleet.com](http://www.beckyvanvleet.com).

# Keeping In Touch

by Cindy and Joe Ashfield <old.stuff@sasktel.net>

By the time you read this, January will be a memory, but as I write mid-January, I would have to say, because of the recent warm spell, it's been just great! I'm looking out the south sunroom window, and there is lots of golden stubble poking out of the snow in the field across the road. I spent a few days over Christmas with family in Kenora, Ontario, and had Christmas dinner surrounded by snow-covered evergreens and looking out over the frozen Lake of the Woods. Quite a change for a "prairie girl". By the way, Lego is still a favourite with the great-grandkids, as it was with their parents. But, back to reality and at home, I think that I shovelled snow every day til our heat wave. That snow should be good for our hay crop come spring.



For me, winter is the time of the year (usually after all the Christmas activities), when I have more time for some of the hobbies I enjoy. So, I am back to audiobooks while I work on a quilt tucked away last spring. I have chosen an old pattern called the card trick. I am part of a group of women who meet at the library on Thursdays twice a month and have an interest in fabric art. There is a wealth of books on quilting and other fabric arts available at our local library or through our Saskatchewan library system. These days, along with gardening magazines and seed catalogues, I am reading "Nomadland" by journalist Jessica Bruder. Published September 2017, it tells of an American subculture of people who, because of circumstances, no longer live in permanent housing. Instead, they live in accommodation that they may move anywhere they may find paid work. This seems to be mostly the over forty years old age group. I think this may apply to the younger generation in Canada.

Do any of you watch Vision t.v? This is Canadian t.v. Based in Toronto, I think that their target audience is seniors or Zoomers. They feature a

lot of BBC programming as well as some oldies that we may have watched in the 80's, such as "The Waltons" and others. Their program "The Zoomer" is a roundtable discussion on current topics of interest, relevant to anyone, but often with a senior perspective. This is sometimes hosted by Libby Sznaimer. One evening, I watched her story "The Sequel I Never Expected". After a cancer diagnosis, this courageous woman let us walk through her life virtually from diagnosis to treatment. Thinking about all the creative minds providing us with zest in our lives makes me wonder, with all the talk about AI (artificial intelligence), what will our future generation find to impel them to think forward?

Our Community Centre is a hub of activity again this year. We are a well-known curling town, looking forward to the Farmers and Friends bonspiel close to the end of the curling season. The skating rink is another popular part of this facility, which is also available as a safe walking space for anyone who is afraid of an icy fall. The Whitewood town website has all the info about available times. If your community doesn't have this opportunity, why not find a place where you could set up a walking program? It is an excellent way to get out with others and keep active when the cold weather isn't cooperating.

My garden magazine features stories of other gardens people have created, and as I read about these other gardens, I start to think about my garden, and ambitious pictures come to mind. Looking outside, though, I see that there has been a light overnight snow, so I will have to get out my leaf blower & chase it away. For now, it will soon be time to prestart some seeds and as soon as all the snow disappears and the ground warms, I'll be watching to see if my fall planting was a success.

Watching our hours of sunlight grow longer, I hope to join you next time in the Register.

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IF IT GOES ON TOO LONG IT STEALS VITALITY AND CAUSES ILLNESS. IT'S CUMULATIVE AND IT SNEAKS UP ON YOU ~ ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU ARE TOO BUSY TO NOTICE!

**A New Beginning**

BE TRULY GLAD. THERE IS WONDERFUL JOY AHEAD.  
1 PETER 1:6

Walk on air against your better judgement.  
♥ Seamus Heaney

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DUBBLE BATHS, MASSAGE, BEING WITH FRIENDS, DEEP BREATHING, HEALTHY DIET, HOBBIES & FUN REFRESH THE SPIRIT.

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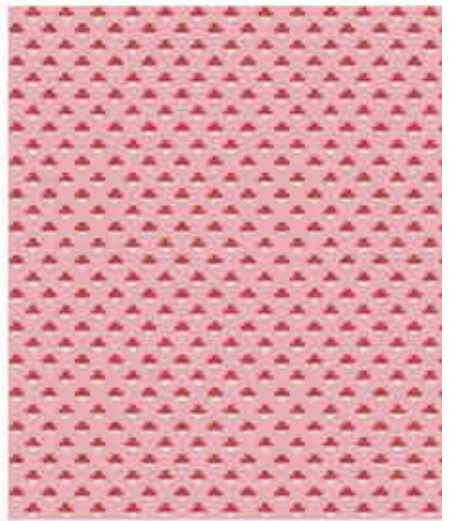
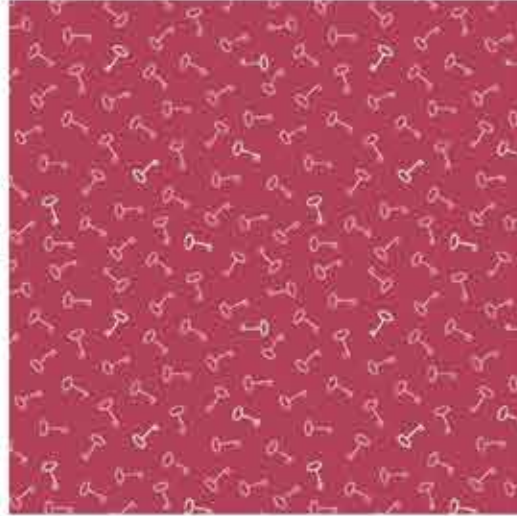
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## A Recipe for Love

"Love makes the world go 'round," according to the lyrics of a song from the sixties. And although love is in season year-round, Valentine's Day begs for special celebrations that brim with love. So, pick a time, a place, a menu and add love to someone's life. Maybe you'll plan something special for your Sweet-TEA or for a young grandchild you call Sweet Pea.

### Serve a Heart-TEA Breakfast

Any big or little sweetheart would enjoy heart-shaped pancakes. All you need is a heart-shaped cookie cutter and your favorite pancake recipe. After the pancakes are cooked, cut them into hearts with the cutter. Or place a metal heart-shaped cutter (one that's open on top) on the griddle and add batter. When bubbles form on top of the pancake, use metal tongs to remove the cookie cutter and flip the pancake.

Serve these hearty pancakes with favorite syrups and toppings. Strawberries and powdered sugar are delicious and pretty. Add bacon or sausage and English breakfast tea to the menu. For a unique twist, add a teaspoon of maple syrup to the brewed tea. If you start someone's morning with love and a little pancake pizzazz, the rest of the day will be sweeter for both of you.

### Savor Sweetheart Scones

Whom could you treat to afternoon tea? Create an inviting ambiance with background music, cloth napkins, and a lovely rose in a vase. Then serve piping hot tea and scones.

To make sweetheart scones, cut scones with a heart-shaped cookie cutter. Before baking, cut a smaller heart or circle from the center of each scone, cutting only part way through. Remove some dough from the center to form an indentation but leave a layer of dough at the bottom. After the scones are baked, dust them with sifted powdered sugar. Fill centers with red jam—strawberry, raspberry, or cherry—and pass the whipped cream. Serve with fresh fruit and fragrant rose petal tea. A-h-h-h, it smells like love is in the air!

### Plan a Romantic Dinner Tea

When my college roommate and I were single, we used to have what we called "ro-tic" dinners. These were dinners without a "man" to make them romantic. Since I've been married for 58 years, I've enjoyed many roMANtic dinners. It's still nice to romance my one-and-only. Soft music, glowing candles and a crackling fire add warmth. Of course, the food is important. Sometimes I order takeout from a favorite restaurant and serve the meal on china plates. Other times a three-course, home-cooked meal says, "I love you."



One way to serve a special meal at home is to set up a card table in front of the fireplace. Add a fabric tablecloth as well as your best silver and china and serve foods you both enjoy. Start with an appetizer, soup or salad followed by a main dish. For an added touch, include sparkling cider and end with a decadent dessert such as my truffle recipe.

Of course, you'll serve tea. Perhaps try a different blend with each course. We enjoy Harney and Sons Wedding Tea and their Valentine's Day tea with chocolate and rosebuds. Local shops and the internet offer hundreds of teas to sample.

### Decorate with Love

Scatter Hershey's chocolate hugs and kisses on the dining table or tea tray. Also, place printed love sayings on the table or include Bible verses like "Love one another" or "Love is patient, love is kind." You could even read aloud from 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter in the Bible.

My recipe for a loving teatime includes a beautiful table setting, delicious food and people sharing from their hearts. I'm ready to add love to someone's life. Won't you join me?

*-Lydia E. Harris enjoys serving tea to her grandchildren and others. Her books for grandparents are: Preparing My Heart for Grandparenting, In the Kitchen with Grandma, and GRAND Moments: Devotions Inspired by Grandkids. All are available at amazon.com or can be ordered through local bookstores.*

From Lydia's Recipe File:

### Cookie Dough Truffles

(Sweet confections lead to sweet connections.)

#### Ingredients:

- ½ cup softened butter
- ¾ cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 cups flour, heated before serving (see note\*)
- ¾ cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)
- 1 (12 oz.) package dark chocolate chips, melted (optional)
- Extra mini chips, sprinkles, and cocoa powder for decorating (optional)

#### Directions:

1. Cream together butter, brown sugar and vanilla until fluffy.
2. Mix in condensed milk. Add flour a little at a time and mix well (use hands if needed).
3. Mix in chips and nuts. The dough is now ready to eat. Refrigerate in a covered container or roll into balls.
4. For truffles, shape dough into 1-inch balls. Place them on baking sheets lined with wax paper. Refrigerate for 1 or 2 hours to become firm.
5. To dip them, melt the dark chocolate chips in the microwave following the package directions. I melt about 1/3 cup chips at a time in a custard cup.
6. Dip balls into melted chocolate one at a time. Coat them by turning them in the chocolate with a fork. Then use two forks, one in each hand, to remove the balls, letting the excess chocolate drip off before placing the balls on the wax paper-lined cookie sheet.
7. Dust with Hershey's cocoa powder or top with a few mini chocolate chips, nuts or sprinkles if desired.
7. Chill the truffles in the refrigerator until the chocolate is firm.
8. Place the truffles in a covered container and keep them refrigerated until you are ready to serve them or give them as a gift. Keep leftover truffles refrigerated.

Makes about 3 dozen balls or truffles.

**\*Note:** Eating raw flour can be harmful, so it is recommended to heat the flour first. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Place 2 cups of flour in a 9x13-inch pan and bake it for 5 minutes. Cool completely. Then sift and use.

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## Writing From Life

by Jeanette Lukowski

### Looking Forward



I am not an “eternal optimist.” In fact, my adult son would likely tell you about the hours I waste focusing on the worst-case scenario of so many things, especially after the sun goes down. Be that as it may, there’s no point in wallowing today. I’m promoting looking forward, after all!

Each January, society’s collective focus turns to a New Year. Resolutions, hopes, dreams, and plans become the focus for many—as January days creep towards more minutes of daylight, football fans hope their team wins the biggest game of the year, and plans begin forming for dream romances, get-away vacations, garden or field plantings, births, and graduations.

This year, I hope to continue with the growth and learning I have been experiencing in my quilting journey. In the middle of 2025, for instance, I decided to engage with a weekly free-pattern-release program from one of the larger fabric houses. It began sometime in the summer, and ended two weeks before Thanksgiving.

Yep, that meant I made more than 25 quilt blocks! This doesn’t sound like too much for those who are used to making quilts on a regular basis (as the “average” quilt might be made of five blocks across, and six or seven blocks down), but I was sewing “in the dark!” With no idea of how many blocks were to be released, or what size blocks were to be included, I just selected the random Halloween fabrics for each week’s pattern based on the pattern’s black and white image generated by my printer—and the mood I was in at the time.

I plan to assemble the Halloween blocks into some type of original design later this summer, when I visit a friend at camp.

Beyond that one plan-to-plan, I know of a baby due in May (no gender information yet), and an engagement (no wedding information yet). I also know what one of the two state-wide shop hop lines of fabric will look like. But that’s it.

I used to be concerned about not having a full plan, fleshed out with details. I wanted a course of action for myself to take. But that was when I was a student, and/or a mom of young children who had a full slate of hopes, dreams, and goals of their own.

In 2025, I watched quilters’ videos promoting “No Buy January,” followed by “Sewing from My Stash,” and “Finishing a Different UFO Project Every Month” as plans. Good for them, I cheered! I watched, but I cannot report that I was as disciplined. Oh well.

My 2026 goal? I simply plan to stay open to possibilities. Today, for instance, I innocently walked into a quilt store about twenty-five miles from my home, and overheard the owner sharing information with another customer. “We’re going to do a scrap-buster program, which I haven’t fully fleshed out in my mind yet, but it’s going to...” Just like that, a new thing I can now look forward to. Yay!

© Jeanette Lukowski 2025. Jeanette is a mother, grandmother, teacher, and author. She is inspired by the lives of strong women. Her email address is: [writingfromlife@yahoo.com](mailto:writingfromlife@yahoo.com)

## Pieces From My Heart

by Jan Keller

### Last Times

I’ve always appreciated the mystique and charm created by the mere mention of past Christmases, birthdays, or any other special occasion celebrated together with family and friends. They’re times when I seem to reflect on priceless memories.

This past holiday season I found myself reflecting on the bittersweet memories of a Christmas past. It was a wonderful day. Full of feasting, family and festivities. Yet, because of the reality of my mother-in-law’s diagnosed cancer, just beneath the surface of conscious awareness lurked her uncertain future.

(story continues on next page)

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## Cowgirl Poet, Quilter, Entertainer



Yvonne Hollenbeck

Grandma’s Homemade Aprons

I remember Grandma,  
and I guess I always will;  
I remember how she welcomed me  
to her house up on the hill;

Her homemade pies and cookies  
were the best I’ve ever ate  
and I loved her pansy garden,  
and the roses by her gate.

But the one thing I remember  
most about those days of yore,  
was the homemade cotton aprons  
that my grandma always wore.

All the grandmas wore them;  
be they slender gals, or fat;  
those aprons kept their dresses clean  
but they were more than that.

They always had a pocket,  
where she kept her handkerchief,

and peppermints for grandkids  
and she’d wipe our little cheeks

With the tail of that old apron,  
when a tear would happen by  
from a fall or from a skinned up knee  
things that’d make a young one cry.

She’d gather up the ends of it,  
and use it for a bag  
when picking garden produce,  
even used it for a rag.

She made her pretty aprons  
from feed sacks she had picked  
when buying special chicken feed  
or starter for her chicks.

What happened to those aprons?  
No one wears them any more;  
those homemade cotton aprons  
that our grandmas always wore.

Order Yvonne’s new book, “A Stitch in Rhyme” at  
[www.yvonnehollenbeck.com](http://www.yvonnehollenbeck.com) — just \$15 + \$3.50 postage.

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



(story continued from previous page)

Following what had been a fun-filled day, Mable gave each of us a hug and a kiss while preparing to leave and head for home. It was then, as Mable collected her dishes from the kitchen, that I saw how hard she was struggling to hold back her tears. I sensed she was wondering if this particular Christmas would prove to be the last time she would have a physical presence at any Christmas celebration.

This particular Christmas also happened to be the last time I saw Mable adorned by her own hair. For, by the time a week had passed and the New Year arrived, chemotherapy had played one of its typical nasty tricks.

When we went to visit on New Year's Day, Mable greeted us at their door wearing her new wig and looking as if she wanted to break down and have a good cry. The tension of the moment was broken when she melted into my arms, saying, "If you want to see my hair, it's in the bathroom wastebasket."

That was the last time I ever saw her cry.

Many of the last times I remember were ordinary and typical. Commonplace. At least they seemed common at the time.

The last time she visited our home.

The last time she cooked us a meal.

The last time we talked together on the telephone.

The last time we got a note from her in the mail.

The last time I saw her sitting in her recliner, busying herself with her handiwork.

The last times I remember go on and on, and yet, there is one last time I especially like to think about—the last time I saw Mable smile.

It was the Saturday, one week after she walked with help into the hospital for what would be the last time.

It had been a week which brought with it rapid physical deterioration. Her arms had become useless attached appendages. While family and friends took turns being there to lovingly feed her, Mable's own arms and hands lay heavy and motionless at her sides.

Her legs, too, fell victim to cancer's vicious attack. No longer could they stand in support of her weight. Why, they couldn't even change their position under the covers on the bed.

Her vision had dimmed so much that the big schoolroom type clock could no longer tell her the time. Hauntingly it hung on the wall in her hospital room, constantly ticking away the moments we had left to spend together.

The relatives who gathered for one final visit filled her room to overflowing. Instead of being clear and distinct individuals, they had become shadows—recognizable to Mable only by the voices that accompanied them.

It was into this setting that one of Mable's nephews brought his beautiful baby granddaughter for a get-acquainted visit.

As all of the relatives gathered in the room and around Mable's bed took joy and delight in the baby, someone looked at me and said, "Take the baby close to Mable so she can touch her."

Obliging, I picked up the baby and carried her close to Mable, where I held the infant up and over the rails of the bed. Then, to allow Mable to feel the baby's presence, I firmly grasped her hand and raised it up to the baby's head.

The baby, who wasn't a bit happy about being interrupted in the middle of a bottle, decided to voice a loud protest amid all this commotion by starting to cry.

At that moment, in response to a sound ringing clearly with promise for the future, an unmistakable and memorable smile spread across Mable's face and brightened her countenance.

Recalling how difficult and different life was after Mable's passing still brings tears to my eyes. And yet, through my tears, I catch sight of a rainbow. This rainbow of promise for the future comes in the form of my memory of the last time Mable smiled. By smiling in the midst of her personal pilgrimage through the valley of the shadow of death was as if Mable gave a sweet benediction to life and all it represents.



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## A Broken Thread

by Wayne M. Bosman

Anyone who has read my recent articles in the Country Register will undoubtedly notice one thread running through them. One way or another, my mother has appeared in almost all of them. That thread is soon to be broken. I am writing this at the kitchen table of the house I grew up in, which we are clearing out in the time leading up to her funeral. She was 104.

Clearing out another person's home can be a deeply personal, almost embarrassing, task. Not so much here. She spent these last years preparing to make it easier. Little stickers with names appear on many of the potential keepsakes. She insisted that we take some things home with us after visits to reduce the burden after she was gone. Her army of admirers understood that presents to her were no longer a practical idea. That was her way.

Little handmade items were still welcome, if not too expensive to make. Kerri and I focused on crocheted or woven items that she might actually use because of the love they were made with. Shawls, scarves, lap blankets all worked for her, as did little heart-shaped coasters. She kept some things in her drawers or on display because they were too pretty to use. That also was her way.

Kerri and I are spending our days helping my sister sort through Mom's things, trying to make sure that every family member has some meaningful keepsake to remind them of Mom every time they see it. Many of these are little ornaments or pictures that were made for her when her grandchildren were very young. Mom lived long enough to have great great grandchildren who made her little things. Kerri kept Mom's soup ladle. I kept a cake plate that had survived potlucks and large family meals. I also brought home a herringbone scarf I wove for her a few years earlier. She was proud of it and proud of me for adding weaving to my life skills while in my 60s. She never ceased being proud of her children and grandchildren. To some degree, our successes were hers.

My sister has a list that Mom wrote with her of things that she wants different grandchildren to have. She is doing her best to carry out Mom's wishes about keepsakes. Then comes the rest of it all. My sister has a list of charities to best use everything in the house. From clothing to furniture to kitchenware and knick-knacks, there is a place for everything. Almost nothing ends up in the landfill. That was how Mom lived.

Mom was a giver by nature and nurture. It made her happy to help my sister prepare things for the Giving Circle, a local project to give tangible help to people who needed it. As she got older and less able to make things herself, her job became to wrap up crocheted washcloths that went into each package. Age slowed her abilities, but not her desire to give.

My sister, Linda, inherited Mom's desire to give back. After the big push every year for the Giving Circle, the cycle starts again. By mid-January, the bin boxes are starting to get filled with scarves, hats, and other necessities for urban areas in the northern US. An active church group contributes year round to keep poverty at bay. For Linda, her friends, and for Kerri, the knitting and crocheting doesn't really stop, the focus just changes. Prayer shawls for the aging and lap blankets for people in Hospice are a never-ending need.

Mom lived a full and long life. Although her thread is broken, the love she wove into so many lives is still strong.

**For Mary A. Bosman (December 17, 1920-November 2, 2025)**

Wayne M. Bosman is a retired auto mechanic. His email is [wbosman1@gmail.com](mailto:wbosman1@gmail.com)

(story continued from p.6)

sofa pillows comfort you? Or are they clutter? The answer we're looking for here is "clutter." Let your visitors dangle their too short legs from the sofa. They'll be impressed by your design skills, while keeping their visit brief.

One authority defines cleaning as "tidying." I like the term but am uncomfortable that it means I'm sloppy. Instead of urging us to haul out brooms, mops, cloths and spray cans, we must first "commit" to tidying up. I disagree. When you can scribble notes with your finger on surfaces, it's cleaning time. News that company's coming is also great incentive.

"Editing" allows us to select what to keep and what to toss. Eliminate one thing and replace it with something else. But isn't having more things better? Editing may result in buying something new and keeping the old item too. Evaluating every item in the house indicates considering pros and cons. No dice. It requires too much analysis and emotion making decisions.

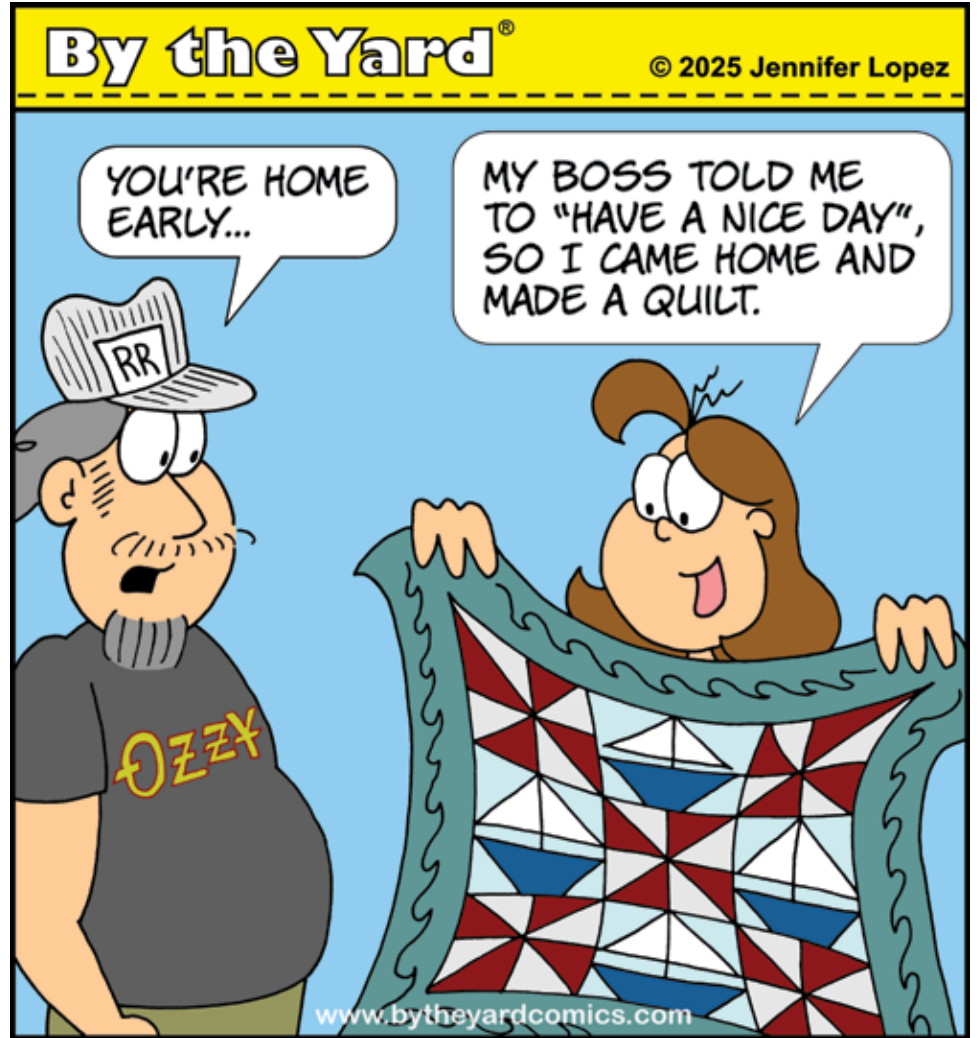
"Declutter" is the kind way of saying you have too much stuff. Determine what you don't need and get rid of it. Some experts apply the strictly logical 80/20 rule: Keep the 20% of clothes you wear all the time and donate the 80% languishing in your closet. This rule does not appreciate that I would wear those 80% skirts and pants if I had not gained weight. I like a one-two-three approach best. "One" means "throw it out." "Two" means bag it, put it in the garage and if I don't rescue it before the season is over, out it goes. "Three" means keep it - at least for now.

It seems the best approach to spring cleaning, decluttering or organizing is to fill your home with the things you love and will care for. It also pays to keep giant garbage bags handy for when the cleaning mood does strike you.

Barbara Kalkis ©2026. Barbara divides her time between writing, teaching, and the world of high tech. 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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## GIRLFRIEND WISDOM

It's a NEW beginning, a time to reflect on the past year - how about a fresh start? It just might be our state of mind - our **ATTITUDE** that needs the adjustment. Our emotional responses to life events and daily living shows up in our stress levels and of course, our joy in daily living. Standing tall, breathing deeply and Strutting Our "Stuff", will make a huge difference in our days. We will smile more, greet strangers with kindness, and have more patience with our family as we go about our busy lives.

**GIRLFRIEND WISDOM:**  
STRUT Your STUFF - You will be glad you did!

Joy & Blessings, *Jody*

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

# SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL QUILT GUILD

<b>Ajax</b>	<i>Twisted Stitchers Quilt Guild</i> For information about our guild please go to our website <a href="http://twistedstitchersquiltguild.com">twistedstitchersquiltguild.com</a>	<b>Markham</b>	<i>Markham Towne Quilters Guild</i> General meeting first Thursday of every month (September-June). 11 Church Street, Markham <a href="mailto:markhamtownequilterguild@gmail.com">markhamtownequilterguild@gmail.com</a> .
<b>Alliston</b>	<i>Quilting Corners Guild</i> We meet at St. Johns United Church at 7pm on the first Tuesday or each month, except January.	<b>Meaford</b>	<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.
<b>Almonte</b>	<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).	<b>Mississauga</b>	<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).
<b>Ancaster</b>	<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.	<b>Miramichi</b>	<i>Miramichi Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Seamans Hospital at 7:00 pm every Tuesday and 10:00 am every Thursday.
<b>Amprior</b>	<i>Amprior 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.	<b>Mount Forest</b>	<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 <a href="mailto:4cornersquiltersguild@gmail.com">4cornersquiltersguild@gmail.com</a>
<b>Barrie</b>	<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>Kempfenfell 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 All About Sewing 565 Unit 1-M, Barrie Ontario the last Thursday of alternative months from September to May - 7pm and on various Saturdays during the alternate months, for Activities and Workshops, from October to June.	<b>Napanee</b>	<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.
<b>Belleville</b>	<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.	<b>Newmarket</b>	<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.
<b>Binbrook</b>	<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.	<b>Niagara Region</b>	<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.
<b>Bracebridge</b>	<i>The Pine Tree Quilters' Guild of Muskoka</i> We meet at 56 Salmon Avenue, Bracebridge, Ontario at 1:00 pm on the 2nd. Thursday of the month from September through June.	<b>Nobleton</b>	A chapter of the <i>Modern Quilting Guild</i> We travel to various locations in Southern Ontario on a rotating basis.
<b>Brampton</b>	<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.	<b>Norwich</b>	<i>Quaker Quilt Guild</i> We meet at 89 Stover St N, Norwich at 9:30 am on the second Monday of the month.
<b>Branford</b>	<i>Brant Heritage Quilters</i> We meet at St George United Church at 7:30 pm. on the second Thursday of the month.	<b>Orangeville</b>	<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.
<b>Brockville</b>	<i>The Thousand Islands Quilters' Guild (TIQG)</i> Meets the 4th Thursday of the month at 7pm both in person and zoom except July/Aug/Dec at the Bethel Christian Reformed Church located at 117 Windsor Dr., Brockville, On K6V 5V5. Library opens at 6:30pm.	<b>Orilla</b>	<i>Orilla Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at ODAS Park, 4461 Fairgrounds Road, Orillia at 1 PM on the third Wednesday of each month except July.
<b>Buckhorn</b>	<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).	<b>Orleans</b>	<i>Common Thread Quilt Guild</i> Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm at MIFO, 6600 Carriere St, Orleans. <a href="http://www.commonthreadquiltguild.ca">www.commonthreadquiltguild.ca</a>
<b>Burlington</b>	<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).	<b>Orono</b>	<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.
<b>Caledonia</b>	<i>Caledonia Grand River Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at 7pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from September through June.	<b>Oshawa</b>	<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
<b>Cambridge</b>	<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.	<b>Ottawa</b>	<i>Ottawa Valley Quilters Guild</i> Our guild meets both in-person and on the ZOOM platform September to December and April to June and only on ZOOM for the January, February and March meetings. The meetings are held the second Monday of the month. In-person meetings are at the Riverside United Church, 3191 Riverside Drive in Ottawa. Email: <a href="mailto:ottawavalleyquiltersguild.org">ottawavalleyquiltersguild.org</a>
<b>Chatham</b>	<i>Chatham-Kent Quilters' Guild</i> Meetings are at 7:00 pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Meetings are held at St. Paul's Congregational Church at 450 Park Ave. West, Chatham, ON. <a href="http://www.ckquiltguild.com">www.ckquiltguild.com</a>	<b>Owen Sound</b>	<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).
<b>Collingwood/ Wasaga Beach</b>	<i>Slope to Slope Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Wasaga Beach RecPlex, 1724 Mosley St, the first Thursday of the month, 7-9 pm, September to June.	<b>Paris</b>	<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: <a href="mailto:parisquiltingbees@gmail.com">parisquiltingbees@gmail.com</a> .
<b>Cornwall</b>	<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.	<b>Penetanguishene</b>	<i>Georgian Bay Quilters Guild</i> Meets every month from September to June at the Penetanguishene Arena, 61 Maria 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.
<b>Courtice</b>	<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	<b>Peterborough</b>	<i>Kawartha Quiltmakers' Guild</i> Meetings are at the Westdale United Church, 1509 Sherbrooke Street, Peterborough on the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30 am.
<b>Dryden</b>	<i>Sunset Country Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at 84 St. Charles Street at 7 pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month.	<b>Perth</b>	<i>Lanark County Quilters Guild</i> We meet at Lions Hall, Perth Fairgrounds at 7pm on the 4th Tuesday of the month.
<b>Dunnville</b>	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.	<b>Petawawa</b>	<i>Pembroke Log Cabin Quilters</i> We meet every 3rd Tuesday of the month during the school year in the basement of 1163 Victoria Street. Our social time begins at 6 pm and meeting at 7 pm. Email: <a href="mailto:pembrokelogcabinquilters@gmail.com">pembrokelogcabinquilters@gmail.com</a> , FB: Pembroke Log Cabin Quilters, Web page: <a href="http://pembrokelogcabinquilters.ca">pembrokelogcabinquilters.ca</a>
<b>Elliot Lake</b>	<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.	<b>Pickering</b>	<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.
<b>Elmira</b>	<i>The Elmira Needle Sisters</i> We meet at the Elmira Mennonite Church at 7:00 pm on the fourth Monday of the month.	<b>Port Loring</b>	<i>Argyle Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Lions Den in Arnstein on the second Thursday of the month.
<b>Espanola</b>	<i>North Shore Pins &amp; 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	<b>Port Perry</b>	<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.
<b>Etobicoke</b>	<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.	<b>Prince Edward</b>	<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.
<b>Georgetown</b>	<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.	<b>Rayside</b>	<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.
<b>Gloucester</b>	<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.	<b>Renfrew</b>	<i>Quilt Guild Renfrew &amp; 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.
<b>Goderich</b>	<i>Goderich Quilters' Guild</i> We meet once a month on the 2nd Tuesday.	<b>Richmond</b>	<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.
<b>Grimsby</b>	<i>Grimsby Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Livingston Activity Centre at 7pm on the third Thursday of the month.	<b>Ruthven</b>	<i>Erie Shores Quilter's Guild</i> We meet at the Ruthven-Olinda United Church every third Tuesday.
<b>Guelph</b>	<i>Royal City Quilters' Guild</i> Monthly meetings are held at 7pm (Eastern) on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from September through June. Monthly meetings are virtual and feature a guest speaker. A Zoom link to the meeting will be emailed to all members and registered guests the day before the Guild's Meeting.	<b>Sarnia</b>	<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.
<b>Gwillimbury</b>	<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.	<b>Sault St. Marie</b>	<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.
<b>Hagersville</b>	<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.	<b>Scarborough</b>	<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.
<b>Haliburton</b>	<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.	<b>Simcoe</b>	<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.
<b>Hamilton</b>	<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.	<b>Stittsville</b>	<i>Norfolk County Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Vittoria & District Community Centre on the first Tuesday of each month except October.
<b>Ingersoll</b>	<i>Oxford Quilters Guild</i> We meet monthly at the Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre, 125 Centennial Lane (in Victoria Park) the first Thursday of the month at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. and also have virtual only meetings for the months of January, February and March. A zoom link is emailed to all members and registered guests the day before the Guild's meeting.	<b>St Marys</b>	<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.
<b>Kanata</b>	<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.	<b>Stony Creek</b>	<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.
<b>Kemptville</b>	<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).	<b>Sudbury</b>	<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.
<b>Kenora</b>	<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.	<b>Sudbury</b>	<i>Sudbury &amp; District Quilting &amp; Stitchery Guild</i> We meet at 140 Durham Street at 7:00 pm on every Tuesday from September to April.
<b>Kincardine</b>	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.	<b>Sutton</b>	<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.
<b>Kingston</b>	<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> We meet on the first Wednesday of the month. September to December we meet at Our Lady of Lourdes church hall, 490 Days Road, Kingston Ontario. January to April we meet on Zoom. Doors open at 6:45, with meetings starting at 7:00 pm.	<b>Teeswater</b>	<i>5 Star Quilt Guild</i> Meets the 4th Wednesday of the month at the Community Center in Teeswater
<b>Kingsville</b>	<i>Erie Shores Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Kingsville Arena, 2nd floor at 7p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month.	<b>Thunder Bay</b>	<i>Thunder Bay Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Calvin Lutheran Church on Edward Street at 7:30pm on the 3rd Monday of each month from September to June.
<b>Kirkton</b>	<i>Huron, Perth Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Kirkton/Wooddham Community Centre at 9:00 am on the second Tuesday of the month from September through May.	<b>Toronto</b>	<i>Etobicoke Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at the Neilson Park Creative Centre at 7:15 pm on the third Monday of the month.
<b>Kitchener - Waterloo</b>	<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.		<i>Pieaful 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. <a href="https://www.pnag.ca">https://www.pnag.ca</a> .
<b>Lambton</b>	<i>North Lambton Quilt Guild</i> We meet at the Port Franks Hall on the 4th Wednesday of the month.		<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.
<b>Lindsay</b>	<i>Lindsay Creative Quilters' Guild</i> We meet at Jennings Creek Christian Reform Church, 206 Angeline St. N., Lindsay ON at 1:00 pm every 2nd Monday of the month except for October, December and June.		<i>York Heritage Quilters Guild</i> We meet at the Toronto Botanical Gardens on the 3rd Tuesday of every month from September through May.
<b>London</b>	<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: <a href="mailto:lfqg.president@gmail.com">lfqg.president@gmail.com</a> or our web page: <a href="http://www.lfqq.org">lfqq.org</a>		<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.
<b>Manitoulin Island</b>	<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 through June.	<b>Waterloo</b>	<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
<b>Markdale</b>	<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.	<b>Whitby</b>	<i>Kindred Hearts Guild</i> We meet at the Whitby Baptist Church on the third Tuesday of the month.
		<b>Windsor</b>	<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.
		<b>York Region</b>	<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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*by Annice Rockwell*

**A Silent Snowscape**

When the busy days of holiday festivities draw to a close, we often feel a significant shift to the steady and slower pace of winter. Glancing out at a silent snowscape changes our perspective and suggests that somehow nature's pause in the rhythm of the year might be a welcomed one for us as well.

**Cozy Winter Days**

On a frosty, cold weekend we might invite ideas of our own to come to the surface for a full day of country crafting. With a homemade meal of beef stew cooking on the stove all day, we can relax and begin planning an ideal, cozy winter day at home. We might decide to fashion some fully scented accents for Valentine's Day made from the spicy notes of cinnamon and clove. We can decorate hand crafted twig heart wreaths with dark red "scarves" to adorn our doors for the season of winter. We might also delight in our "day off," to happily dream of country outings that make the most of the snowiest of days.

**The Wonder of Winter**

An old-fashioned experience of family sledding and snowshoeing is one that is always memorable. Enjoyed by all ages, a day outside in the bright sunshine bundled up against the cold, can be a fun way to welcome winter. And after a few racy runs down an icy slope, a mug of hot cocoa can be enjoyed around a fire in the cauldron made with twigs collected from our country yard. Our warm treat can be made even more special with the addition of whipped cream and peppermint sprinkles to be relished by all.

And even the most familiar woodland hike becomes almost completely reinvented when blanketed with a beautiful fresh coat of snow. We can easily see tracks from our small animal visitors from their ventures into the new landscape of winter. The inland marsh takes on a unique mirrored glow on these winter days, hardening just enough to transform the entire view. All around us as nature shifts, nature is also quite active. Just underneath the surface of silence lives the spirited promise of spring.

This winter, savor the wonder of the season. Embrace the slower days to recharge and pursue your creative ideas. Take time to plan invigorating country outings for your family to appreciate. Shift your perception to see winter as a special and powerful blessing. And as you do, you will be reminded of the magnified magic that nature always provides.

*--Annice Bradley Rockwell is an educator and owner of Pomfret Antiques. She is currently working on her book, New England Girl. NewEnglandGirl2012@hotmail.com*



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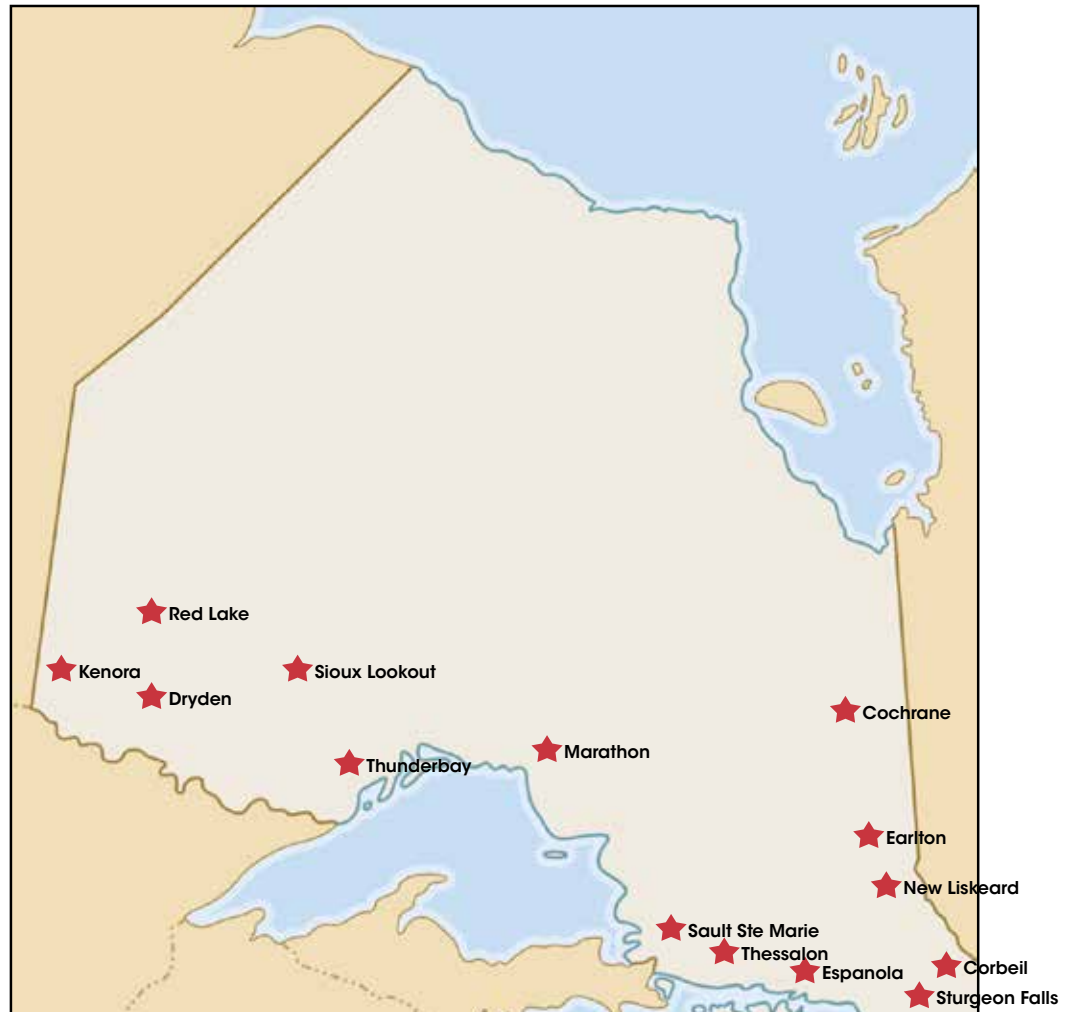
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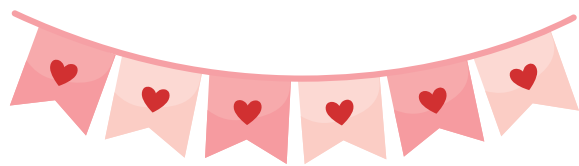
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Priddis, AB



## Stages of Love by Janet Young



February is known as the Heart Month. This is the time when thoughts of love and romance begin to blossom as we get closer to Valentine's Day. Of course, most recently February is also known as Heart Month, reminding us of our cardiovascular health and how to stay healthy. But let's get back to the original meaning, the meaning that comes to mind when we think of Valentine's Day.

"The love in your heart wasn't put there to stay, Love isn't love till it's given away." This is a familiar quote that is often found on pillows or in catalogues or even posters. When I read that, it got me to thinking. From the moment of birth, we are beginning to feel what it is like to be loved. As an infant, we may not know the meaning, but we feel the love that our parents bestowed upon us the instant we were born. As we grow into childhood, it becomes evident that our parents love us, even when they punish us.

Fast forward to our teenage years. This is a time when we may experience what we perceive to be true love, only to experience our first heartbreak. Love can be the most wonderful thing in the world, but it can also bring pain and sadness. Does that mean we never love again? Of course not. As a young person, you will have many opportunities to date until one day you know that you know, this is that perfect person, the one you want to spend the rest of your life with.

Soon you start a family. And again, as you welcome that child into the world you will experience a love that you have never experienced before. And this love will be in your heart until your last breath. This love will take you on a journey unlike any love you experienced before, for no matter what that child does, even if it brings heartache or disappointment, you will always love your child. This is called unconditional love.

Years move on, you are now empty nesters and perhaps retired and now you can devote your time and love for one another. Your many years of marriage is a testimony of how great love can be.

Unfortunately, there will come a time when you will lose a spouse. This is when you will feel a loss like you never felt before. Your life will never be the same. That is the power of love.

If love can bring pain and heartache, why do we love at all? I believe it is our innate nature to love and be loved. When all is said and done, I think you will agree you would have rather had life full of love than one of loneliness and sadness.

Remember not only on Valentine's Day, but every day, let your loved ones know how much they are loved. Remember: "The love in your heart wasn't put there to stay, love isn't love til you give it away."

*© 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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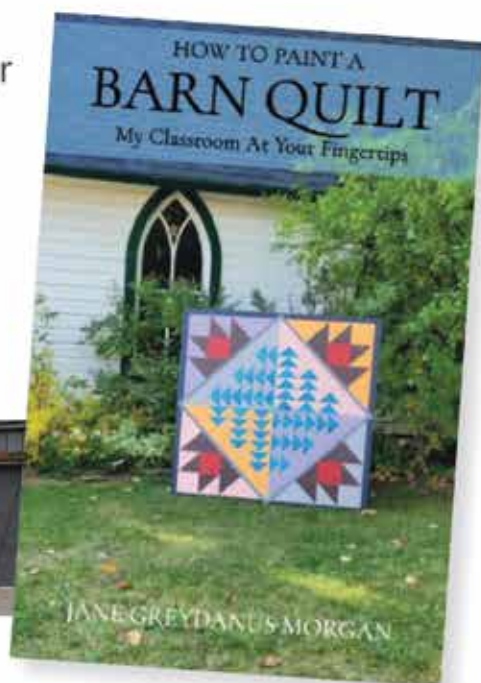
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