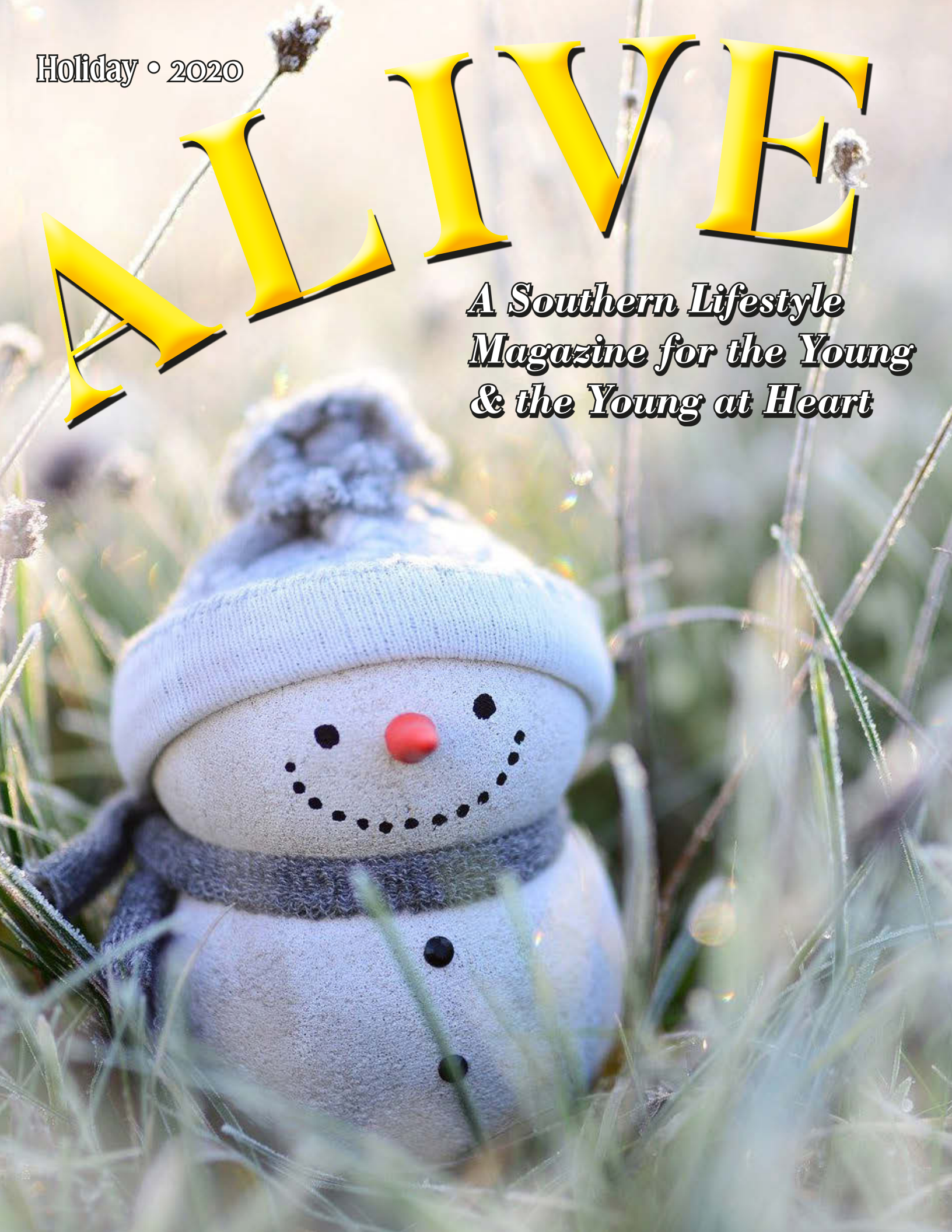


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There's no Christmas like a country Christmas! Putting up Christmas Trees, wrapping presents, cooking in the kitchen, having family and friends over for a big lunch and going to church are all a part of what we do during the holidays. COVID may dictate some of our activities this year – but we can still be together if you are mindful of social distancing the best you can, wearing masks when visiting and washing hands along with keeping surfaces clean. Alive wishes you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a most Joyful New Year!

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Dave Gibbs Memorial Toy Run focuses on kids, not Covid

written by: **Bonnie Lill** • photographs courtesy of: **Betsy VanVolkinburg**

For almost a quarter century, the Stewart County Concerned Bikers and friends have held an October Dave Gibbs Memorial Toy Run to benefit the Special Children's Christmas Fund in Stewart County.

And then in 2020 came Covid-19 and all the uncertainty surrounding it.

Maybe this would be a deterrent in the Midwest, or in the North, or in the East, but here in the South?

Nah.

Business as usual, with a few necessary accommodations. No one, and no virus, would stop the SCCB from making sure that kids in the Stewart County Special Children's Christmas Program this year would have some presents under the tree on Christmas morning.

God Smiles

On October 3, 55 bikers and a host of volunteers gathered at the spacious grounds of Wallace Supply Company on east U.S. 79, near the Stewart-Montgomery County line. It

was a picture perfect day.

So many toys were dropped off that a waiting pickup truck was heaped with them. Some bikers rode with the smaller toys in their saddlebags or on the backs of their motorcycles. Cash donations poured in as well. (Bikers are nothing if not generous.)

Santa, aka Terry Hester, made the rounds, extending greetings and posing for pictures with participants and volunteers alike. Even County Mayor Robin Brandon was on hand to lend his support.





At noon, the group pulled out under brilliant blue skies and glorious temperatures to make their way down Highway 79 to the Stewart County Visitor Center in Dover, where the toys would be stored and bagged for families.

God surely was smiling.

Volunteers

It took lots of volunteers of all ages to first load, and then unload, the toys and get them in the Visitor Center basement, but it was done with dispatch as well as smiles.

Betsy VanVolkinburg, who has been working with

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the program for 15 years, made sure it all ran like clockwork. For many of those years, her daughter, Amy Kring, had been helping, and now Amy and Scotty's sons, Jase and Garrett, also lend a hand.

Betsy said that many people are generous with their time and their energy to keep this county-sponsored event going, and it starts with the bikers.

In any year, there are kids whose parents are having a hard time for one reason or another, forcing getting Christmas presents to the bottom of the priority list.

This year, the Covid-19 situation may have made things worse, with many families in the county being laid off, working less hours, or having to not work due to child care considerations.

The SCCB has gotten the Kids' Christmas program jump-started once again, so that the county does not have to turn anyone away.

What's changing?

Ordinarily, families sign up, wish lists are made, toys and donations are collected, parents pick up the family's gifts when the kiddos are safely at school so they can put them under the tree for Christmas, and families attend a Christmas party where the children see Santa, get a gift and have refreshments and fun.

And then there was a pandemic.

However, Betsy is as tenacious and creative as the SCCB, and she and other program organizers engineered some changes so that no child in the program would be deprived of holiday bounty due to the pesky virus.

"We cannot have a Children's Christmas Party this year because of Covid-19," she said. "We will have signup for the program on November 4, and at that time we're going to give tickets to each child who signs up in each age group. Then we

are going to go live on Facebook on Wednesday, December 16, to give drawing prizes away to the families.”

Ya gotta love technology.

The following day, Thursday, December 17, families can pick up their bagged packages from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Stewart County Visitor Center.

The stretch in between

For a child, the time between the beginning of November and Christmas is a long stretch, but for the purveyors of the Special Children's Christmas Program, it's more like the home stretch.

Community members, groups, organizations and churches donate toys and money after the Toy Run, and by mid-November, volunteers go out with the cash to fill in the wish lists of the kids who have been signed up. The gifts are then sorted, wrapped, bagged and tagged. This year, extra

precautions are being taken to avoid introducing Covid-19 into the mix.

By early December, the Visitor Center basement looks like Santa's workshop. While the Toy Run might seem like ancient history by then, it can't be denied that the generosity of the Stewart County Concerned Bikers is what kicks this season of giving into high gear.

Betsy, the bikers, the volunteers and the parents can rest easier knowing the kids will be taken care of at Christmas, lending new meaning to the closing words of *The Night Before Christmas*: Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!





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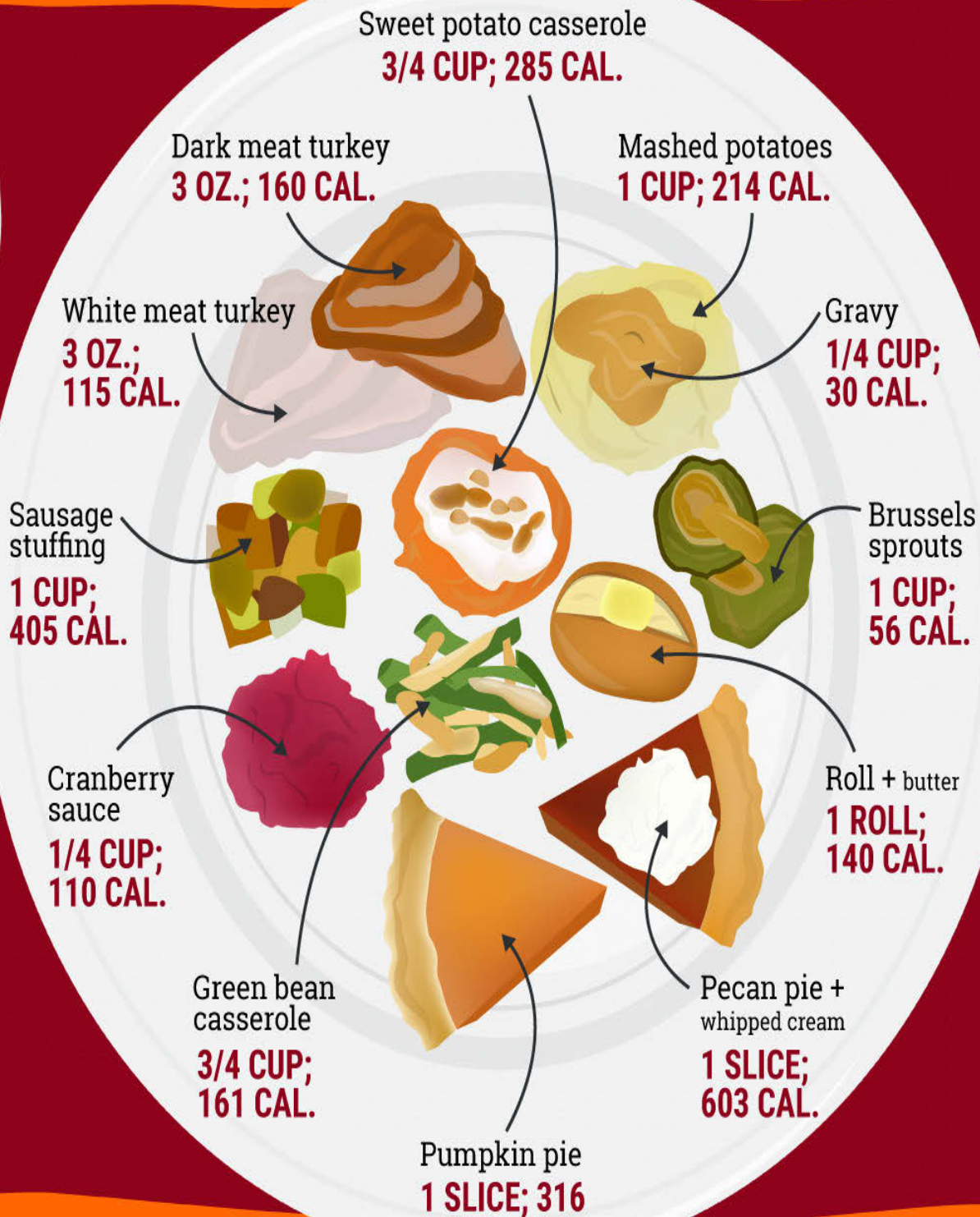
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TURDUCKEN

The Recipe & The Untold Story

written by: Alsey Gwinn Wheatley

A real show stopping centerpiece to any Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner, the turducken can be an exciting way to spruce up your table. A turducken is made up of a deboned chicken, duck, and turkey, all layered together with stuffing. This three bird roast isn't complicated to make, but speaking from experience it can certainly feel that way once you're staring down twenty five odd pounds of poultry on your kitchen counter.

The first step in making your own turducken is to debone the birds. If you haven't done this before it can be an intimidating process. The good news is the steps are the same for each bird, so you get two good practice runs in before you have to debone a turkey. Although it's much easier to see what you're doing on the larger bird, the turkey is the outermost layer of the roast and thus the one you want to be the most beautiful; it's the one

your family is going to see, after all. You'll want to have your deboning technique down before you tackle it. If the chicken or duck end up a little ragged looking it's nothing to be upset about. Those birds will be encased both in stuffing and in the turkey, and when the turducken is carved no one will



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be able to tell that your knife slipped a bit. Once your chicken and duck are fully boned out you can move on to the turkey, being sure not to cut through the skin. Unlike the first two birds, you need only remove the main carcass of the turkey. The drumstick and wing bones can remain in place to preserve the overall shape of the bird.

If you normally brine or inject your bird, now is the time to do it. If not, pat the meat dry with paper towels and season it lightly with salt. The birds should be set aside in the refrigerator for at least an hour or two, but up to overnight so that the meat has time to firm back up. A good use for all of the bones you just removed from your birds would be a hearty stock to make stuffing with. Speaking of stuffing, while your birds rest you have time to prepare some. Whether your family likes crawfish, oyster, sausage, or plain, you're going to want a good five cups of stuffing to assemble your turducken with. It may be helpful to make up your stuffing a bit drier than normal since the juices from the roast will continue to moisten it in the oven, and it can be difficult to assemble the turducken if the stuffing is too wet.

With all of this done, it's time to put the roast together. Start by laying the turkey skin side down and covering the meat with roughly a third of your dressing. Next, put the duck skin side down on top, applying another layer of dressing onto it. Finally, do the same with the chicken. Once all of the birds are in place it's decision time. You can either use butcher's twine to wrap the turducken like a more traditional roast, or use a trussing needle to sew the turkey closed. Either way, you'll be rolling the chicken together over it's stuffing before tucking the duck closed around it and bringing the sides of the turkey together over the whole. It can be very useful at this stage to have another set of hands to help you. Just keep in mind that while you want everything tucked together nicely, you don't want to squeeze the birds closed so tightly that the stuffing squishes out.

Once it's assembled, place your turducken onto a roasting rack and cover it with tinfoil. It should roast in a 325 degree oven until the internal

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temperature reaches 165 degrees. How long that takes depends on the weight of your birds, but you should start checking the temperature after around five and a half hours. When it's close to fully cooked, remove the tin foil and let the outer skin brown before removing from the oven and allowing the roast to rest for half an hour. At that point you can move it from the roasting pan onto your serving dish, but be sure to remove any butchers twine before putting it on the table. When it comes to carving the roast, remember there aren't any bones. Simply remove the wings and drums and slice straight through so that each cut has a little bit of all three birds.

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Ingredients: 1 chicken - 1 duck - 1 turkey - 5 cups of stuffing - salt

Debone all birds, leaving the wings and drums of the turkey alone. Salt meat, and let chill in the refrigerator for one to two hours, up to overnight.

Gather stuffing, butcher's twine, and optionally a trussing needle.

Lay turkey skin side down on the counter. Spread 1/3 of the stuffing evenly across the meat.

Lay the duck skin side down atop the turkey. Cover with 1/3 of remaining stuffing.

Lay chicken atop the duck. Cover with the last of the stuffing.

Roll up the sides of the chicken, then the duck, and finally the turkey. Either tie butcher's twine around the entire bird or truss up the back of the turkey.

Bake covered in a roasting pan at 325 degrees until the inner temperature reads 165 degrees, removing the covering at the end so that the turkey skin crisps. Let turducken rest for 30 minutes before placing on a serving dish. Remove butcher's twine, & carve.

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Down Home Cooking Recipes



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1 (46 fluid ounce) can pineapple juice • 46 fluid ounces cranberry juice cocktail • 1 orange, thinly sliced • 5 cinnamon sticks • 1 tablespoon whole allspice berries • 1 tablespoon whole cloves

Pour apple cider, pineapple juice, and cranberry juice into a stockpot. Place orange slices, cinnamon sticks, allspice berries, and cloves in a muslin pouch or directly into the apple cider mixture. Bring apple cider mixture to a boil; reduce heat and simmer until flavors have blended, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove orange slices and spices before serving.

Peanut Butter Pie

1 (9 inch) prepared graham cracker crust • 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened • 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter • 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar • 1 (16 ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed • 15 miniature chocolate covered peanut butter cups, unwrapped

Mix the cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and peanut butter together until smooth. Fold in 1/2 of the whipped topping. Spoon the mixture into the graham cracker crust. Place the remaining whipped topping over the top of the peanut butter mixture and garnish with the peanut butter cups. Chill for at least 2 hours or overnight before serving.





Apple Cranberry Relish

2 navel oranges • 2 (12 ounce) packages cranberries • 2 apples - peeled, cored and chopped
2 celery, chopped • 3 cups white sugar

Grate peel of orange; reserve. Peel oranges and discard white membranes. Separate oranges into sections and place half in a food processor or blender. To the food processor add half of the cranberries, apples and celery. Process until coarsely chopped. Transfer to a bowl; repeat with remaining oranges, cranberries, apples and celery. Stir in sugar and reserved orange peel. Cover and refrigerate overnight.



Maple Roast Turkey & Gravy

2 cups apple cider • 1/3 cup real maple syrup • 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme • 2 tablespoons chopped fresh marjoram
2 1/2 teaspoons grated lemon zest • 3/4 cup butter • salt and ground black pepper to taste • 14 pounds whole turkey, neck and giblets reserved • 2 cups chopped onion • 1 cup chopped celery • 1 cup coarsely chopped carrots • 2 cups chicken stock
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour • 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme • 1 bay leaf • 2 tablespoons apple brandy (Optional)

Boil apple cider and maple syrup in a heavy saucepan over medium-high heat until reduced to 1/2 cup (about 20 minutes). Remove from heat and mix in 1/2 of the thyme and marjoram and all of the lemon zest. Add the butter, and whisk until melted. Add salt and ground pepper to taste. Cover and refrigerate until cold (syrup can be made up to 2 days ahead). Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Place oven rack in the lowest third of oven. Wash and dry turkey, and place in a large roasting pan. Slide hand under skin of the breast to loosen. Rub 1/2 cup of the maple butter mix under the breast skin. If planning on stuffing turkey, do so now. Rub 1/4 cup of the maple butter mixture over the outside of the turkey. With kitchen string, tie legs of turkey together loosely. Arrange the chopped onion, chopped celery, and chopped carrot around the turkey in the roasting pan. If desired, the neck and giblets may be added to the vegetables. Sprinkle the remaining thyme and marjoram over the vegetables, and pour the chicken stock into the pan. Roast turkey 30 minutes in the preheated oven. Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees F, and cover turkey loosely with foil. Continue to roast, about 3 to 4 hours unstuffed or 4 to 5 hours stuffed, until the internal temperature of the thigh reaches 180 degrees F and stuffing reaches 165 degrees F. Transfer turkey to a platter, and cover with foil. Reserve pan mixture for gravy. Allow turkey to sit about 25 minutes before removing stuffing and carving. To Make Gravy: Strain pan juices into a measuring cup. Spoon fat from juices. Add enough chicken stock to make 3 cups. Transfer liquid to a heavy saucepan and bring to a boil. In a small bowl, mix reserved maple butter mixture with flour to form a paste, and whisk into the broth. Stir in thyme, bay leaf, and apple brandy. Boil until reduced and slightly thickened. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Winter Squash Rolls

1 1/2 cups cubed winter squash • 1 cup scalded milk • 2 (.25 ounce) packages active dry yeast • 1/2 cup warm water (110 degrees F) • 6 cups all-purpose flour • 1/2 cup white sugar • 2 teaspoons salt
1/2 cup shortening

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. In a small saucepan, cover squash cubes with water. Bring to a boil and cook until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain, cool and mash. In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. In a large bowl, combine 5 cups flour, sugar and salt. Stir in the yeast mixture, shortening, squash and milk. Mix well. Stir in the remaining flour, 1/2 cup at a time, beating well after each addition. When the dough has pulled together, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth and supple, about 8 minutes. Lightly oil a large bowl, place the dough in the bowl and turn to coat with oil. Cover with a damp cloth and let rise in a warm place until doubled in volume, about 1 hour. Divide the dough into twelve equal pieces and form into rounds. Place the rounds in a lightly greased 13x9 inch baking pan. Cover with a damp cloth and let rise until doubled in volume, about 30 minutes. Bake at 400 degrees F for 10 to 15 minutes or until golden brown.





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written by: Jennifer Wheatley

It's special to Santa Claus when he puts on the fancy red suit, sits in his chair inside the shiny little house decorated with the big candies, arrives on a fire truck on North Pole Family Fun Day (the Friday after Thanksgiving) and gets to listen to and talk with the children who come to see him. It's more than whether they have been bad or good. It's more than the toys they want for Christmas. Santa knows that he represents a time when children still fully believe in the spirit of the holiday.

Chatting in an undisclosed location recently, the Big Man, who was in town early to check on a couple of very naughty girls, shared that preserving that special feeling of the holiday is one of his favorite parts of his weekends, between Thanksgiving and Christmas, when he visits the Court Square in Paris, Tennessee. He said the best thing is "seeing the kids who want to believe, but are maybe getting to the age where they don't" and the reactions to seeing him in person. The whole

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experience puts him "in the Christmas spirit, seeing the kids and their parents, even though I have to tell some of the kids that their parents are on the naughty list."

Those little visitors have lots of questions. They frequently ask where the rest of the reindeer are, as Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer accompanies him. The children want to know the rest of the Christmas travel team are well. They sometimes bring him cookies and inquire as to his favorite food, so they can have it ready on Christmas Eve. They want to know if it's okay if they don't have a chimney, and he assures them it will be fine. Santa admits that there is a special place in his heart for the little ones who never mention themselves, but come with a list of gifts they want others to receive.

It's Santa's wish that the visit to his little house "is something they think is fun. I hope it helps create a Christmas they remember." He promises to never be in a hurry. Every child is special and gets his undivided attention. The elves who usually



work with him will not be part of the fun this year, due to safety concerns. Santa will also be sporting a special mask, just to be extra careful with his little visitors and their families.

Santa loves to see the same young people year after year. He calls them by name and always notices how much they have grown. Some of those repeat visitors have grown all the way up, but he loves the college kids who come to visit with their families to shoot a photo and keep a tradition

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alive and healthy. One mom, afraid he would say no to her grown family, brought him a photo album to show that the annual experience with Santa is a treasure to her. Santa, of course, said yes and welcomed the whole group.

Santa has been a regular visitor for the holiday season on the Court Square since 1983. Kathy Ray, one of his special helpers and the former executive director of the Downtown Paris Association, remembers

his first little red house and the donation of his current structure, which she and Larry Ray, Davin Roberts, Chris Ray and Treva Tayloe "embellished" with the glitter and candy decorations, making it more appropriate.

Charles Hopkins, former owner of the Toggery, says that the visits with Santa are "the number one photo op on the Square at Christmas." Over 1300 young people, not including their grown ups, stopped

by to say hello in 2019. There are also opportunities to shoot photos with Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, the Christmas Mouse and the Grinch.

Santa could spend his time anywhere, but he makes the effort to visit Paris and Henry County every year. Why is that? Ray says "It's the most wonderful community in West Tennessee!"

Santa agrees with her, but has his own reasons. He says it's because of "the best kids!"



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ALIVE'S *Photos*



LEFT TOP: Kathy Ray, this year's Holly Jolly Christmas Parade Ambassador, is making sure the Grinch doesn't steal anyone's Christmas presents!

LEFT BOTTOM: The Advent Walk is the perfect way to begin the Christmas activities. It is a time of fellowship and a reminder for the true reason for the season.

MIDDLE: Everyone comes to Paris to see Santa and his friends at the North Pole



Christmas *Photos*

Photography Showcase

Family Fun Day. This fun event is always the day after Thanksgiving on the Court Square downtown Paris.

RIGHT TOP: Nothing warms the heart like seeing Mrs. Claus snuggle Santa.

RIGHT BOTTOM: The Festival of Tress will include beautifully decorated Christmas Trees on site and virtually. The number of participants has grown so much thru the years that one room can't hold them all.



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written by: **Diann McGuire with Keep Paris/Henry Co. Beautiful**

Christmas Crafts

Paper Christmas Tree

Christmas decorations can be expensive, so this particular do-it-yourself craft is great to save money on top of being environmentally friendly.

From repurposed magazine or Christmas cards. Make these cute Christmas Trees with old magazine papers or Christmas cards. Cut approximately 10-15 squares from largest to smallest size. So, if you are starting with 5" squares, then you need 15 squares of 5" followed by 15 squares of 4.5" and then so on. Stack them on a skewer and you got a Christmas tree. How fast and easy is that!



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When I was little, my best friend Jeanne thought we were rich.

A great deal of her misconception about our financial status had to do with Christmas.

Christmas was big for just about everyone in the 1950s, particularly since people didn't have as much every day as they do today. Our family took that jolly holiday to a whole new level. For weeks, our Mom would bake and (beautifully) decorate pans and pans of cookies and make plates of fudge and candies, only a little of which we were allowed to sample before the big day. Our dad never questioned the amounts of baking supplies she would ask him to bring from the grocery store he managed, knowing he would eventually enjoy

the fruits of her labors. In our house, Santa was just a pleasant sidebar to Baby Jesus, who was unquestioningly the Main Man of the holiday. Therefore, the decadence was just a natural preparation for the birth of our Savior.

And it wasn't only food that occupied our attention; gifts were also in the Yuletide mix.

Now, I come from a family of artists. Unused wrapping paper was never discarded but kept from year to year - even the small scraps. Boxes, bows, ribbons - they were all recycled. Each Christmas package was a work of art, carefully wrapped and ribboned and bowed - and the tags, containing mysterious messages, were crafted to match the packages.



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"Pretty packages" was how my grandmother referred to them, and she was right. Grandma Glenn could make a florist-type bow with plain ribbon - and as many times as I have tried, I never have been able to come close to her skill.

By Christmas Eve, the "pretty packages" were all put out on display around the tinsel-laden Scotch pine tree, spilling over to the end tables, floor and even the back of the couch. The grownups wanted to relax and drink it all in before the wrapping was torn apart the following morning.

But it wasn't all about the wrapping; the content of those packages was equally interesting.


At the beginning of school in the fall, we did not go "school-shopping" like many of our public school friends did. Our school shopping consisted of the "uniform exchange," and we got just enough underwear and socks to hold us until Christmas.

Then on Christmas, we received many of those things, wrapped as pretty packages.

When we opened our gifts - and we took turns, youngest to oldest, so we could all ooh and aah over each present - it never occurred to us to be disappointed with the white blouses or brown neckties. And of course, we also received some toys, books, records, etc. - and every present was in a beautifully wrapped package.

Without realizing it at the time, that pretty packaging, so carefully crafted, allowed us to see each item as a true gift. We had the unwitting opportunity to view it in a different light, with unfettered gratitude, in the presence of the people we loved the most, and who loved us to distraction.

What a gift it is to have the things that we need! So I guess Jeanne was right. We really were rich. We were rich indeed.

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Not even the Pandemic Can Stop the Living Nativity

written by: **Jennifer Wheatley**

The boy liked being with his friend's family. They were nice to him and it was less chaotic than his own home, where one parent was incarcerated and the other worked too many hours trying to keep them ahead of the bills.

Tonight he was with them and they were eating fast food and driving through some church thing. It would be okay. Normally the boy managed to have a ride or something else to do when the family headed to church. He was 12, too old for Sunday school and definitely bored by the sermons, but his friend had told him this thing was pretty cool, so he was willing to ride around and look at it. He liked Christmas.

Leaning forward toward his friend's mom, he asked "What is a Nativity?"

She answered "It's people acting out the story of how and where and why Jesus was born."

They had turned off their headlights and a man wearing weird clothes was to their right.

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The boy had expected some lights, not a guy who looked homeless. He asked the mom "Who is that?"

She smiled back at him and said "That's John the Baptist. He was Jesus' cousin and he told people that all the stories from the Old Testament about a Savior were coming true. Jesus is real and among us."

The boy didn't really know the difference between the Old and New Testaments. Everything in the Bible seemed pretty old to him. Soon he was looking at a village scene and some kind of barn. The animals were real, including a camel. He had never seen a real camel before. A really young girl was holding a baby. He asked "Is that baby Jesus and his sister?"

His friend said "That's supposed to be Mary, Jesus' mom."



*A big sign said
"Wise men still
seek Him." That
stuck in his head.
The boy thought
maybe, later,
he would ask
his friend about
church and
seeking Jesus...*



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The boy took a long drink of his milkshake and said "She looks too young to have a baby."

His friend shrugged and said "I think they had them younger back then."

They kept driving. There were some people dressed as angels and some more who wore uniforms. A big sign said "Wise men still seek Him." That stuck in his head. The boy thought maybe, later, he would ask his friend about church and seeking Jesus...

The drive through Nativity scene at New Harmony Baptist Church, located between Paris and Big Sandy at 7050 Highway 69, has become a community staple since it began in the mid 1990s. Thousands, averaging between 2500 and 3000 each year, have driven through and been lovingly taught the story of Jesus' birth through actors, live animals and detailed scenery. A church committee of 12 - 15 oversees the project.

Committee chair Tracy Turner says this year's event will be December 4, 5 and 6, but with shorter hours, 6 pm - 8 pm nightly. The lessened viewing time will help diminish the exposure the 75 actors and helpers have to one another out of respect to the Covid health risks, but she says the "community can participate and be socially distant."

The event started, according to former event coordinator Tammy French, as a "gift to the community". No donations are accepted, Everyone who

attempts to give back is asked politely to "give it somewhere else". The one exception was a year that several local residents lost their homes to a tornado. The church accepted donations on behalf of the victims and passed the money on to them.

French oversaw the special ministry for 15 years and worked hard to grow the event, both in people who visited and the number and complexity of the sets. She remembers a peak year of 4500 guests and knew that it was the most cars that could be accommodated on the drive through. She says the church "had no idea" how many people to expect and that "we started really simple".

The impact has not been simple. People often send thank you cards and tell stories of how meaningful seeing the beautifully represented Nativity has been. That was the whole idea. French says "It is a way to get to people that might never come to church, to let everyone see the true story of Christmas."



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New Year's Eve

All around The World

written by: **John Wambles**

New Year's is just around the corner if you can believe it. Here in the country we believe in certain things you must do. You need to

be kissing your honey at midnight under a huge fireworks show. If you want to make a dime in the new year you better have a pot of greens or black eye peas cooking. And your mama might just give you a good whooping if you even think about putting some clothes in that washing machine. Have you ever thought... what do they do around the world? The same as us or something totally different? Here a few of the fun traditions and superstitions, as compiled from A Taste Of Home, from other countries and cultures.

Australia is a lot like the United States, they love fireworks. The New Year's Eve night sky is anything but dark in neighborhoods all over the country. They are one of the largest purchasers of fireworks in the world.

Spain has a tradition of eating grapes. For a prosperous year you must completely eat and swallow 12 grapes, beginning at 12 second before midnight. If you do you will have a year full of prosperity. If you don't, well... don't ask.



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France brings in the new year with style. It includes a decadent meal of foie gras, oyster, lobster and escargot along with many bottles of champagne. This huge feast is known as le reveillon de la saint-Sylvestre. You start the year living as prosperous, you end the year the same way.

Brazil believes in the lucky number seven. Brazilians eat seven grapes to ensure abundance in all areas of life. They eat seven pomegranate seeds to keep the purse and the wallet full of money. They jump seven waves, making a wish as they leap over each one for the new year. Some travel hours to participate in this tradition.

Ireland bakes a fresh loaf of bread and bangs it against the wall. This is to chase away any evil spirits or bad luck and to invite in good luck. The bread banging also makes sure that the house is full of bread and other food all year long.

Columbia peels potatoes for prosperity or maybe you could say the lack thereof. They take three potatoes, one is peeled, one is not and one is half peeled. The peeled potato represents financial problems, the unpeeled potato represents prosperity and abundance, and the half peeled potato is something in between. The three potatoes are placed under the bed and the first one they grab is the fate for the year.

Philippines serves 12 round fruits. The round shape represents coins and prosperity. There are 12 fruits served so that you have wealth and abundance all throughout the year. Grapes, apples, oranges or any other round shaped fruit will do.

The traditions may be totally different in each area, but they all have one thing in common. Hope. Hope for the new year that things will be better than the year before. Beginning. A new start, a re-do, a begin again if you need one. Prosperity. Prosperity of money, food and happiness for everyone. So however you celebrate your New Year's Eve do it with a glad heart and a desire for a better new year.



A Christmas-themed card for Tennessee Valley Community Church. At the top is an orange silhouette of the state of Tennessee with a white cross. The text reads: "Tennessee Valley COMMUNITY CHURCH", "2500 E. Wood St. • Paris, TN", "731-641-TVCC (8822)" with a Facebook icon. Below this is a red banner with white text: "Feel the welcome when you attend worship with us!". Further down, it says "Wonderful Children's Program", "Worship Services at 8am, 9:30am, & 11am", "Services Live on the Web at:", and "www.tvcc.us" in large red letters. The card is decorated with green pine branches and gold stars.

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A holiday-themed poster with a light blue background and white snowflakes. The title is "5 ways to Reduce Waste & Recycle right during the holidays". Below the title, it says "As the holiday gift-giving and entertaining season kicks into high gear, here are 5 ways you can reduce waste and avoid contaminating your recycling bin with non-recyclable items:". Five tips are listed in circular callouts: "Offer recycling bins and reduce waste at your parties.", "Purchase wrapping paper made from recycled materials and that is also recyclable.", "Recycle your cardboard and break down the boxes to be placed in recycle bins.", "Recycle your old electronics.", and "Shop with your own shopping bags.". In the center, it says "Be a litter free environment!" above a "NOBODY TRASHES TENNESSEE" logo. At the bottom, it says "Brought to you by Keep Paris/Henry County Beautiful".

5 ways to
Reduce Waste & Recycle
right during the holidays

As the holiday gift-giving and entertaining season kicks into high gear, here are 5 ways you can reduce waste and avoid contaminating your recycling bin with non-recyclable items:

- Offer recycling bins and reduce waste at your parties.
- Purchase wrapping paper made from recycled materials and that is also recyclable.
- Recycle your cardboard and break down the boxes to be placed in recycle bins.
- Recycle your old electronics.
- Shop with your own shopping bags.

Be a litter free environment!

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It's holiday time and we're kitchen tornadoes
 Cooking turkey and fruit cake and yams and potatoes.
 But beware of the Grease Grinch! He'll clog in a blink!
 He'll gunk up your pipes! He'll stink up your sink!

All the pan drippings from ham and from roast,
 The leftover bits from your frenchy French toast,
 The lettuce from salads all covered with dressing,
 The mystery casserole that still has us guessing...

Bacon grease, meat water, sauces and gravy
 Should NEVER be poured down the drain. That's just crazy!
 When the grease is too hot, pour it in a container
 Like an empty tin can, it's a simple no-brainer.

Into the trash is where all grease should go,
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Nov. 6-8

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North Pole Family Fun Day

Nov. 27 • 10am - 2pm

Santa, along with Mrs. Claus and their crew, will roll into Downtown Paris on a big red fire truck at 10am! Stick around for Trackless Train and Reindeer Roundup Scavenger Hunt, too.

Advent Candles and Carols

Dec. 2 • 6:30pm

Join us at the north entrance of the Henry County Courthouse on Washington Street for a candlelit devotion and carol singing. We'll walk to a couple of downtown churches, too!

Passport to Christmas

Nov. 6 - Dec. 12

Shop and save with your Christmas Passport! Pick yours up at any participating business and collect stamps until Dec. 12. The more stamps you get, the more chances to win \$1,000!

Santa's House

Nov. 27 - Dec. 12

Both Santa and Mrs. Claus will be visiting with the youngsters every Saturday (10am - 2pm) and Sunday (2-4pm) throughout the holiday season at their house on the court square.

Christmas Festival

Dec. 12

Get ready for a fun-filled day in Downtown Paris! Synthetic ice skating rink... 35 ft. tall inflatable slide... Fire Pits... Wagon Rides... and more!

Festival of Trees

Nov. 24 - Dec. 16

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Light Up Paris Christmas Lights Tour

Beginning Nov. 27

New to Downtown Unwrapped! Load up your family and take a tour of Paris and Henry County through Christmas lights! Use our easy online map to plan your route!

Holly Dolly Electric Christmas Parade

Dec. 12 • 5pm

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