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Down Home Cooking Recipes

The South's Twenty Seasons

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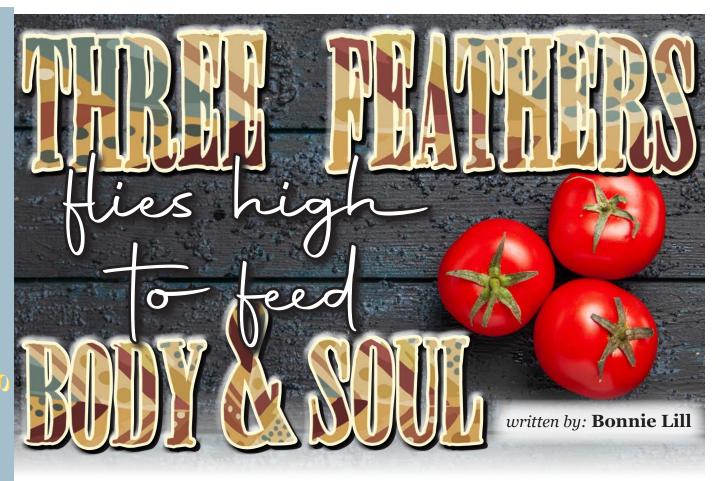
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Most people can't say that their life's work began at the dumpster.

But most people aren't Dale Harris who, with his wife Kate, now provides food for roughly 75 families every couple of weeks.

Dale and Kate operate Three Feathers, a unique food ministry that collects what the Lord provides, gets it to people who need it and plants seeds of salvation along the way...

THE BEGINNINGS

It really did begin at the dumpster, aka the Leatherwood Road Convenience Center in Stewart County.

It was about 5-7 years ago; Dale lives very much in the present and doesn't remember specifically when.

He got to talking to a man at the dumpster whose wife had cancer and was having trouble finding something she could eat.

"I have cancer in my family and knew that after chemotherapy (one family member) could only eat tomatoes at first. So I brought him tomatoes," he said.



And that started it. He started hearing about more people who needed food, and "friends had friends," so his distribution route grew.

"It's just something I think I'm supposed to do," he said.

THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE JOB

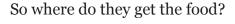
Dale is a man of faith who has always known who his Savior is, but that may not be the only reason God chose him for this ministry – and yes, he feels called to it.

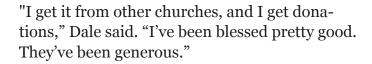
Dale has the perfect personality for it.

"You meet a lot of people coming to drop off their trash," he explained. "And I can talk to anyone, because I know where they are coming from. It doesn't matter where they are from, or if they are rich or poor, I can speak their language. I'm not above or below anyone – I am equal to everyone, so I can talk to them. We carry on and joke, and they love me for it. I just love people."

Couple that with his penchant for dropping a few seeds about Jesus and salvation, and it seems to be a match made up above.

MANNA FROM HEAVEN





He doesn't rest on his laurels and wait for bags of groceries to roll in, though; Dale and Kate put in a lot of work and a lot of miles in order to be the middle men between the source and the hungry. He never slowed down during the pandemic, because hunger doesn't slow down, either.

Just recently, he went to Second Harvest in Camden with a group from Fort Donelson Memorial United Methodist Church's Backpack Program to help Second Harvest box up food, some of which they could take home to their respective programs.

He has also been a mainstay at the Fort Donelson Pentecostal Church food program as well. And Dale has been partnering with Tennessee Ridge Baptist Church, expanding his deliveries down in that area.

A CIRCUITOUS ROUTE

Like most folks, Dale's life took some twists and turns. As a "wee lad," he was turned off by the un-Christian-like behavior of some of the adults in the Pentecostal church he was raised in.

While never losing sight of Jesus, he began to live for worldly things, eventually moving to Michigan. When he returned to Stewart County, he went to see Bro. Jerry Moore in the hospital.

Bro. Moore exclaimed, "You won't come to see me in church, but you'll come see me in the hospital?!?"



Dale replied, "You get better, and I'll come back (to church)."

He did, and he did. Dale said once he realized that he was living for worldly things, he changed his life. "I don't care about all that stuff now."

It was a tough road at first, with nothing seeming to work out, but now he says, "I am on top of the world. No one will pull me down, because my God is stronger."

WHAT'S NEXT?

More of the same. The 71-year-old retired home remodeler and auction operator "can't sit still" for very long. "But I may have to get a job to take a break," he laughed.

He said he and Kate, who have been married for 17 years, make a good team and have no thoughts of slowing down.

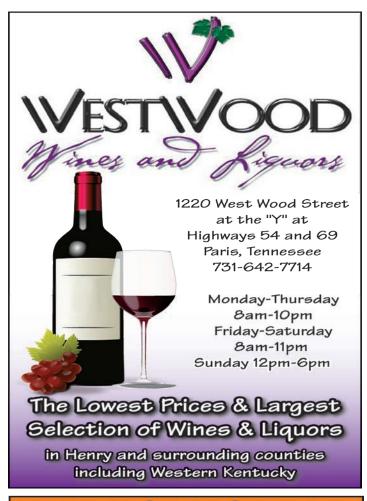
"Kate and I love this. She gives me a hand with everything."

And why the name Three Feathers?

"I'm Cherokee. Born Cherokee, raised Cherokee, I'll die Cherokee."

Yes, Three Feathers is flying high to help the hungry, and the couple will use it to feed body and soul, by word and by deed.





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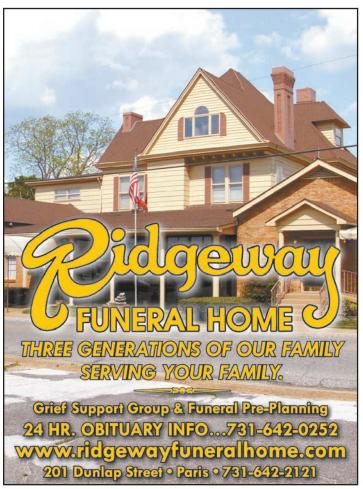


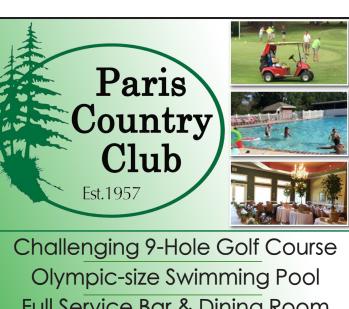




Viviana Rodriguez readily admits that becoming the first female firefighter for the City of Paris has not been "rainbows and roses," but like many other obstacles she has encountered, the 35 year old has faced the challenge head on. Born in Colombia, she was orphaned by age 10 and sent to the US to live with relatives. Her father had been executed when she was only four and she has a clear memory of the day her mother met the same fate. She says "It was about one in the afternoon and I was doing my regular chores, sweeping." A paramilitary group arrived to interrogate her mother, who took her youngest child aside, gave her a blessing and sent her little girl outside so she would not have to watch her mother's murder.

That day sent Viviana's life in a completely different direction from the coffee farm where she had been her whole life. Pursuing political asylum for the young girl, relatives arranged for her to travel to Florida and then on to North Carolina to live





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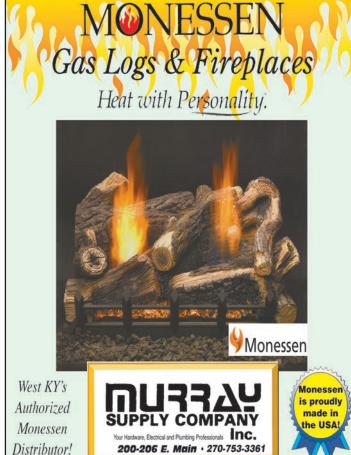
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with a cousin's family. When told of the plan, Viviana said she "didn't even know what the US was." She was also not prepared for the culture shock, the strange food, struggles at school and, especially, learning a new language. Her cousins were bilingual and she says they "spoke English to me all day" and interpreted anything she didn't understand. The overwhelming nature of her situation made her "want to stay in bed." She "felt like I had lost it all" and remembers an sense of numbness, but her adult self acknowledges a bigger picture. She can now "see the blessing that came from such a horrible experience. Being able to have a home, a family and a future was the blessing that I couldn't see."

The family eventually moved to Missouri, where Viviana excelled at soccer and decided to try college before eventually moving with her significant other to Paris, Tennessee. The relationship did not last and Viviana found herself a single mother. Seeking a career to care for herself and her daughter, Yamilet, the ambitious young woman sold advertising and eventually enrolled in the Nestle Beauty School. Being a hairdresser made her remember working with a family member at a salon in Florida, where she swept hair and "thought it was the grandest thing."

But like many of the unexpected turns in Viviana's life, being a hairdresser turned out to be

a critical phase. One of her customers was Paris Fire Chief Michael Williams and he made her consider being a firefighter. The Covid virus and its devastating impact on hairdressers and others caused her to take a job at Lowe's in Murray, Kentucky, and begin researching joining the Army National Guard. She was "one paper away" from her enlistment when she learned about the opening at the Paris Fire Department. She began researching the requirements for the job and discovered than only 11% of firefighters nationally are female.

The three phase application included physical requirements, a written test and then an interview. She remembers vividly the upper body strength and stamina she needed and says she "works out every day." She also recounts the math and sci-



ence required for the written test, along with determining routes to fires. Nine candidates vying for two openings made it to the interview. After passing all the requirements, she was hired and got the opportunity to attend the fire academy in Bell Buckle, Tennessee, where she again had to pass the tests. Viviana graduated, but not all of her class did.

Early in her time at the fire station, she faced another challenge, a personal one. Encountering the first fatality on the job brought back the "mental and emotional" trauma of her childhood, but it also taught her a valuable lesson about her new co-workers. She says her "fire family can tell if you need to talk. They have your back." She also learned how rewarding her new job is, because "we're there on people's



worst days." She finds strength in "being there for somebody in their darkest time because I remember not having anybody."

The people Viviana most wants to "be there" for most are Yamilet, who will be at Henry County High School this fall, and her son Matthew, who will be in fifth grade at Paris Elementary School, but she also knows that lots of little girls can now imagine themselves in a new role. Asked if that makes her children proud, she says "I can see it in their eyes."

Viviana looks back on the twists and turns of her young life and says that despite her various jobs she "was never really proud of myself." Asked if her new position has solved that problem, she says "absolutely!"

















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Wambles & Don McLain

You may not have heard about the Doll Baby Bed Factory of Pensacola, FL, but many children, all throughout the Southeast United States, are very familiar with the work of this one-man operation. Don McLain, a former Machinist Mate Chief Master (MMCM), a disabled decorated veteran, has made this one of his missions since retiring. McLain builds these items in his workshop that he has behind his home. He create beautiful doll baby beds, sturdy foot stools, and wooden tool boxes to give away to needy and sick children.

He was a career Navy man and used to always staying busy. Retirement was going to be no different for him. Despite his disabilities, he works in his shop almost every single day building toys to give away.

Recently, McLain was recognized for building and donating his 800th doll baby bed. He has donated his wood-crafted toys to local shelters that protect, house and teach children that have been abused and taken advantage. There isn't a youth program or daycare in Pensacola that doesn't include some of his handiwork. His craftsmanship can be found at St. Jude's Children's Hospital, Ronald McDonald House, the USO, Lutheran Services, Sacred Heart Hospital, the Autism Center, House of Prayers, Studer Family Children's Hospital, Sacred Heart Hospital, the Salvation Army, along with many other community organizations.

That doesn't even include all of the beds, stools and tool boxes he has given away to the parents and children that he meets everyday. His vehicle is always stocked and ready for a child to receive



a gift. He has toys as far out as Washington State and Las Vegas, NV, as well as, Tennessee, Alabama and all over Florida. And those are just the ones that he knows about.

Before the pandemic, McLain would give demonstrations and instruction on making the doll baby beds at one of the local shelters. "I would make it interesting for the boys and girls," he said. "They could see from start to finish on a project."

The former Master Chief has no plans to slow down. McLain is extremely active for an 85 year old disabled veteran. The secret to feeling good and getting things done is to keep moving. He definitely has no plans any time soon to quit working in his workshop. It won't be too much longer before he has made his 1,000th doll baby bed. That will be 1,000 little girls with a handmade wood-crafted gift that they will always treasure. We salute Don McLain retired Navy Master Chief, disabled veteran and builder of dreams for little children.

The story is not complete without mentioning my connection to Don McLain. My mother (Barbara Ann Wambles), is his caregiver. Ann, as he calls her, has been instrumental in distributing the tool boxes, stools and doll baby beds. She has delivered toys in Florida, Alabama and Tennessee.

As a current resident of Pensacola, every time she makes a trip home to Tennessee she brings toys with her. She will go up to random families that she sees with children and asks them, "do you want a doll baby bed or a toy tool box?"

McLain may be the crafter and creator, but mom is a big



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part of his mission. She loves seeing the joy on the faces of the children when she hands them a doll bed or a tool box. Mom even brought a stool to our little "nephew" Baby Will. He loves to stand on it and dance and we all clap for him. Without the work that my Mom does, no one would get to enjoy the toys her McLain builds. It is a team that knows how to make people happy and get the job done.





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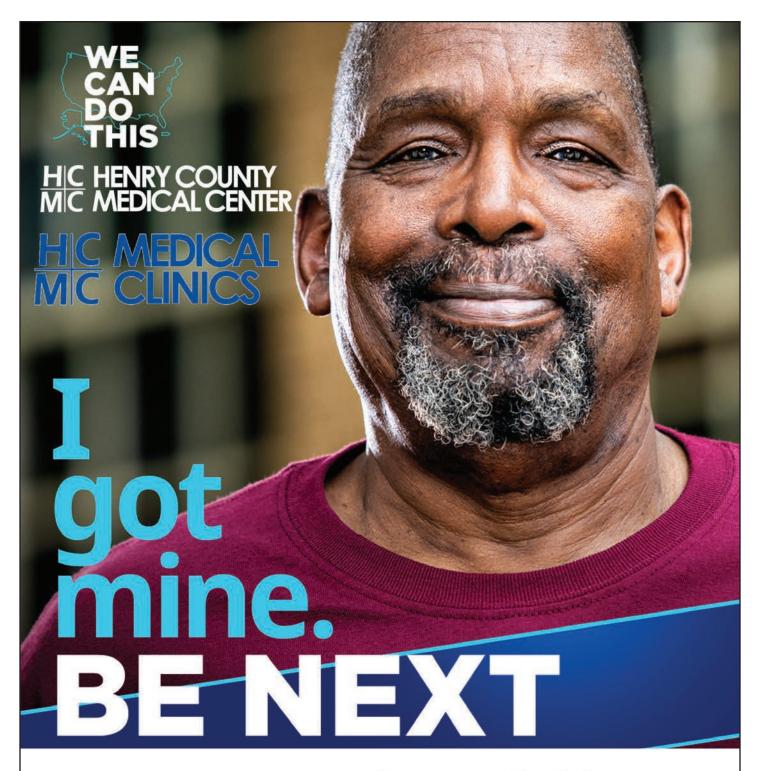
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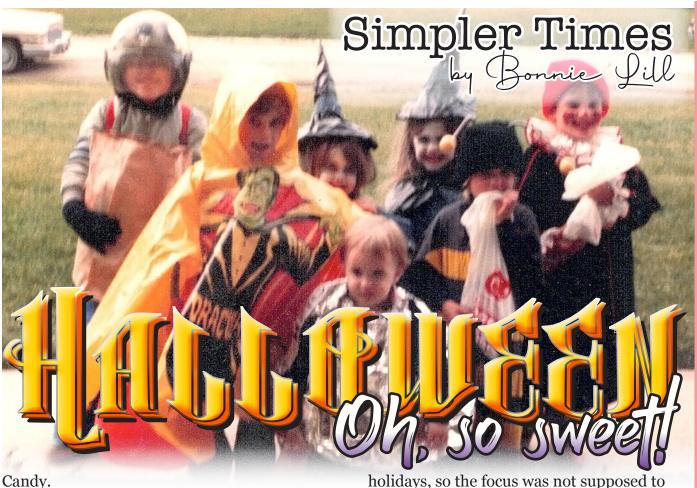


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That was the literal take-home of trick-or-treating on Halloween when I was growing up.

Candy was not a staple item in our home. It was only for special occasions, and there were rituals that preceded its appearance. On Easter, we put out baskets. At Christmas, we hung stockings (the only place where store-bought candy was seen during this holiday – the rest of the deliciousness was made from scratch). Those were religious

holidays, so the focus was not supposed to be on what we were putting in our mouths, but what we were putting into our souls.

But Halloween was different. It had no religious (or irreligious) connotations. It was just for family, fun, friends, and especially for candy.

A family affair

Halloween was definitely a family affair. For weeks, we would talk about "What I am go-



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ing to go as," and how we were going to construct our costumes. Back then, people never threw anything away in case they might need it later, so there was a ready supply of old garments, fabric, cardboard, old sheets and tin foil at our disposal.

While store-bought costumes existed, they were never seriously considered. Besides the fact that in those days we never bought something we could make, it was more fun to come up with our identity for the night and clothe it appropriately: hobos, ghosts, witches, or even a pumpkin. Sometimes Mom would go to the dime store to get some of those weird-smelling makeup crayons necessary to create beards or blood, but the costuming was pretty much up to us and anyone in the family we could get to help us.

Our dad was in charge of bringing home the candy that Mom would hand out to the couple hundred or so children who would come to our door on October 31. He always brought full-sized Nestle candy bars, the ones that cost a nickel apiece if purchased retail. We had quite a few ghosts and

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goblins who came around twice. My parents just rolled their eyes at the repeats, although we were forbidden to go to the "good" houses more than once. It just wasn't polite.

Fun with friends

Once our costumes were complete and the makeup applied, we generally waited until at least 6 p.m. to start cruising the neighborhood. Only the little kids went right after school. Once you were 8 or 9, you were too cool to go before it was getting dusky, although it was a rule that we did have to go out in the bracing fall chill in pairs or packs.

In the outlying Chicago suburbs, it was safe, and it was glorious. It was some years before we heard about razors in apples and weird people who would snatch a kid off the streets. Back then, it felt like a night of freedom. We would go from house to house, always saying "Trick or Treat" and holding out our bags or pillowcases, watching that magic piece of candy or gum fall in. We always called out, "Thank You!" for the treat. Every so often, some brave little boy would yell, "Trick or Treat, smell my feet," and everyone would laugh, including the homeowner. Often, the people doling out the treats would comment on our costumes, enjoying the ritual almost as much as we did.

Candy!

When we got tired – or it was 9 p.m. or so – we headed home, our sacks bulging with treats. We



would sit on the living room floor and dump our booty out. For that one night, we could eat all we wanted. It was ours. My brother, sister and I would make strategic trades to get the candies we liked the best, and we would swap stories about other kids' costumes and where we went and the house that had a real-life witch on the porch with candy in the cauldron (I was too scared to approach so I had to take their word for it.). Our parents would listen, and we would let them eat any of the candy they wanted. Fatigue would eventually overtake the excitement, and it was time to wash the makeup off, brush teeth and go to bed. The next day was All Saints Day, and Mass was early.

The rear-view mirror

Only in adulthood did I realize that every Halloween night, when we kids smugly thought we had unlimited freedom, we were actually under the gentle and quiet protection of the grownups of the neighborhood. They were all like an extended family. They would not hesitate to call out a miscreant ghoul or goblin, excoriate a boy caught soaping windows, nor would they let anything untoward happen to us as went from house to house in pairs or even groups of ten or more. And my parents were smart enough to realize that if they put no

limits on our candy consumption, we probably would not feel so compelled to gorge ourselves (at least not two years in a row!).

My prayer is that our kiddos growing up today, in our very scary world, have the opportunity to experience some "controlled freedom," where they can learn to make good choices and have a safety net when their choices are not so good.

And I hope they get to have one night when they get to eat all the candy that they want.



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As the Covid-19 pandemic showed signs of waning, we folks at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in rural Tennessee Ridge were at a crossroads. Should we remain in our cocoons, seeing one another at a distance at Mass but not really engaging? Or was it time to step out in faith and encourage the parish family to begin living in community again?

The answer was a resounding, "We are now open for the Lord's business!"

The Grand Reopening and Dinner on the Grounds, held in late May, began with Mass, continued with the blessing of the cemetery, and featured a short program on the parish's past, present and future.

This was followed by an old-fashioned dinner on the grounds and a chance to relax in the shade of the backyard's huge trees while children and young people played yard games and others played guitars and sang. A parishioner took family photos as well.

Loud and Clear...

The spacious grounds were fittingly bedecked with red and white balloons and red and white checked table cloths, and mercifully, everyone had a space at one of the many tables.

According to Pastor Father Zack Kirangu, the day was as idyllic as it sounded, and it sent a clear message.

"I am so thankful that we came together to celebrate our faith as a parish after a long time of the pandemic," he said. "We are back to do the Lord's business, and He is good to his people."

You would get no argument about God's goodness from the organizers of the event. The entire parish was asked to pray with confidence for good weather, and they were gifted with bluebird skies and warmth that came on the heels of a cold, rainy week.

Indeed, prayer formed the bedrock of the preparation, with specific saints being asked to intercede in various aspects of the event, and the entire Grand Reopening being put in the hands of the Holy Family and St. Martha, who was skilled at managing a houseful of guests.

Guests Galore...

In addition to parishioners, guests came from Father Zack's other parish, St. Patrick's in McEwen; Nashville and the surrounding area; West Tennessee; and Stewart County. It was truly a loavesand-fishes moment as parishioners and guests brought an abundance of sides and desserts to go with the hot dogs, hamburgers and chicken being grilled by the parish's seasoned grillmasters.

The day was made even more special as all were privileged to witness Joss Rye's First Holy Communion at Mass.

Where We've Been...

While the Grand Reopening was focused on the present moment and the opportunity to once more gather as a Christian family, Father Zack gave some perspective by bringing in the past. He spoke animatedly about St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, making her come to life for the listeners, and he followed with the founding of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish, dedicated in 1977.







When your family loses a loved one, we're here to help. We have helped a lot of families through these difficult times. We understand what you're going through. We have families. We lose loved ones, too.

A family's legacy is love. We're here to help you celebrate it with an appropriate setting and ceremony.







Kate Morris of Humboldt, who grew up at St. Elizabeth's, said she was fascinated with the parish history because she knew so many of the people who made it happen, but as a child, she just thought of them as part of the parish family, not as movers and shakers.

Today...

To give a sense of where the parish stands now, I gave a rundown of what programs and activities the parish engaged in pre-pandemic, and what folks can anticipate as we move forward.

High school graduates Carney Brown and Landon Arthon were honored, as were the three confirmandi, who each chose a new name, traditionally of a saint they admire for a particular reason: Lyndsey "Gianna" Broughton, Wyatt "Hubert" Brown and Esme "Francis" Rye. First Communicant Joss Rye was also honored.

A Look Ahead...

Pam Rye then captured the imagination of the crowd as she presented the parish's plans for the future, to expand the narthex of the church with a large portico.

"If it was raining, we could still have an event like this because we could put the tables under the portico," she said.

Rye acknowledged that lacking space for people







to gather as they enter and leave Mass consistently deprives them of the opportunity for weekly fellowship, too. She added that the parish was already two-thirds of the way to having the funds for the project.

Did It Work?...

Reviews of all aspects of the Grand Reopening and Dinner on the Grounds have so far been positive.

Josh Lill, who grew up at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and currently resides in Mt. Juliet, couldn't say enough good things about the event.

"It reminded me of when we were kids, running around and playing in the yard while the grown-ups all cooked or did Chicken Jamboree things," he said, adding that he was glad his children got to experience this as well. He also enjoyed catching up with childhood friends, getting caught up on the last 25 years of their lives and seeing their kids running and playing games in the same yard he played in.

Office Manager Valerie Brown also attested to the success of the day, remarking, "For me, I enjoyed seeing the kids playing again, watching our kids honored after such a long time of not being together. Seeing all the smiling faces, meeting new friends, rekindling old friendships – it was all so

good. The unity of the moment was overwhelming – we are ready to be together again."

While acknowledging that the parish is on the move, Kate Morris noticed something else about the gathering when it began to wind down.

"The kids of the parish did not need to be told to help, they just all started helping clean up," she noted. "That's an attitude of service, and it begins at home and gets reinforced at church and in the community. That's how we were raised, and that's how we raised our kids. It's good to see that service is still a priority in the families who attend St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. We were very impressed."

All in all, Father Zack may have summed the day up best.

"I loved this day," he said, "seeing kids play and make new friends, combined with good music and good food. We need to do this more often!"

The tables and chairs are put away for now, but the good memories combined with a renewed sense of mission linger. Creatively and safely putting that mission into action, especially now that Covid variants are rearing their ugly heads, is the next step.

Stay tuned, because St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church is officially open for the Lord's business!



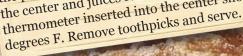
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Whisk hot coffee, milk, Irish cream liqueur, hot chocolate mix, and vodka together in a mug until hot chocolate mix has dissolved.



Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Pound chicken cutlets to spoon olive oil 1/4-inch thickness between two pieces of plastic wrap. Sprinkle both sides of cutlets with salt and pepper. Set aside. Mash cheese wedges with a fork in a small bowl and stir to a creamy consistency. Add broccoli and shredded Cheddar cheese and stir to combine. Spread broccoli filling evenly over the middle of each cutlet. Start from one end, roll cutlets up and secure edges with toothpicks. Combine flour and paprika in a shallow bowl. Dredge chicken rolls in the mixture. Heat olive oil in a oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Place chicken rolls into skillet and cook until browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Turn over and brown the other side for an additional 2 to 3 minutes. Place skillet into the preheated oven and bake until chicken is no longer pink in the center and juices run clear, 14 to 16 minutes. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read at least 165





Country Fried Squash

6 pounds butternut squash - peeled, seeded and sliced • 1 egg, beaten • ½ cup milk • ½ cup all-purpose flour • 1/2 cup cornmeal 1 pinch salt • 1 pinch ground black pepper 1 pinch garlic salt • 1 cup oil for frying

Combine egg and milk together in a small bowl, mix well. In a second bowl, combine flour, cornmeal, salt, pepper and garlic salt. Dip squash slices first in the egg mixture, then dredge the squash in the dry mixture. Heat 1/2 inch of oil in a deep skillet over medium heat. Fry squash until golden brown.







Twice Baked Potato Casserole

½ pound lean bacon • ¾ cup shredded mild Cheddar cheese • 1/2 cup sour cream • 1/4 cup milk 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted • 1 teaspoon dried chives • 1/2 teaspoon salt • 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper • 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder 3/4 cup shredded mild Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Grease a 9x13inch casserole dish. Poke a few holes into each potato using a toothpick. Bake potatoes in the preheated oven until fully cooked, about 1 hour. Cool for about 15 minutes. Place the bacon in a large skillet and cook over medium-high heat, turning occasionally, until evenly browned, about 10 minutes. Drain the bacon slices on paper towels and crumble. Cut a thin slice from one side of each potato; carefully scoop out the flesh and transfer to a bowl. Discard skins. Mix 3/4 cup Cheddar cheese, sour cream, milk, butter, chives, salt, black pepper, and garlic powder with potatoes. Spread potato mixture into the prepared casserole dish; top with 3/4 cup Cheddar cheese and crumbled bacon. Bake in the preheated oven until just bubbling, 10 to 15 minutes. Cool for at least 5 minutes before serving.

Caramel Apple Bundt Cake

Caramel Sauce: 1 cup heavy whipping cream • 5 tablespoons unsalted butter • 2 teaspoons vanilla extract 1/4 teaspoon salt • 1 1/2 cups white sugar • 1/4 cup light corn syrup • 1/4 cup water

Cake: 3 cups all-purpose flour • 1 teaspoon baking powder • 1 teaspoon baking soda • 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon 3/4 teaspoon salt • 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg • 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar • 3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened • ½ cup white sugar • 4 large eggs, at room temperature • ¾ cup unsweetened applesauce • ½ cup sour cream, at room temperature • 2 teaspoons vanilla extract • 3 cups Granny Smith apples - peeled, cored, and diced

Combine heavy cream, butter, vanilla, and salt for caramel sauce in a small saucepan. Cook over medium-low heat until butter is melted and mixture begins to bubble, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and keep warm. Combine sugar, corn syrup, and water in a large, light-colored saucepan with high sides. Cook over medium heat, swirling occasionally, until mixture is amber in color, 15 to 20 minutes. Reduce heat to low, and very carefully whisk in reserved cream-butter mixture; stir constantly as caramel mixture will bubble up and steam. Continue cooking over low heat, stirring occasionally, for 5 more minutes. Remove from heat. Set out 1/2 cup of caramel sauce for the cake, and reserve the remainder for the topping. Allow to cool to room temperature. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour a 10-cup bundt pan. Prepare cake: Whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, salt, and nutmeg in a bowl until combined. Beat together brown sugar, butter, and white sugar in a large bowl until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, 1 at time, mixing well after each addition. Mix in applesauce, sour cream, reserved 1/2 cup caramel sauce, and vanilla until thoroughly combined. Add in 1/2 of the flour mixture, and mix until just combined. Mix in remaining flour mixture until just combined. Fold in diced apples. Pour batter into the prepared bundt pan and smooth into an even layer. Bake in the preheated oven until a bamboo skewer inserted into the cake comes out with a just few moist crumbs, 55 to 60 minutes. Allow cake to cool in the pan for 30 minutes. Gently run a knife around the edge to loosen and remove cake to a wire rack and cool completely, 15 to 30 more minutes. Just before serving, pour remaining caramel sauce over the top of the cake. If needed, reheat the caramel slightly to make it a pourable consistency.

12) Even More Summer 1) Hunting

- 2) Spring of Deception
- 3) The Pollening
- 4) Second Winter
- 5) Tornado
- 6) So Much Pollen
- 7) One More Winter
- 8) Another Tornado
- 9) Attack of the Mosquitos
- 10) Summer
- 11) More Summer

- 13) Please, Lord! Make This Summer End!
- 14) Football
- 15) More Tornado
- 16) Fall
- 17) Just Kidding, Here's Some More Summer
- 18) Winter
- 19) Christmas
- 20) Maybe One More Summer





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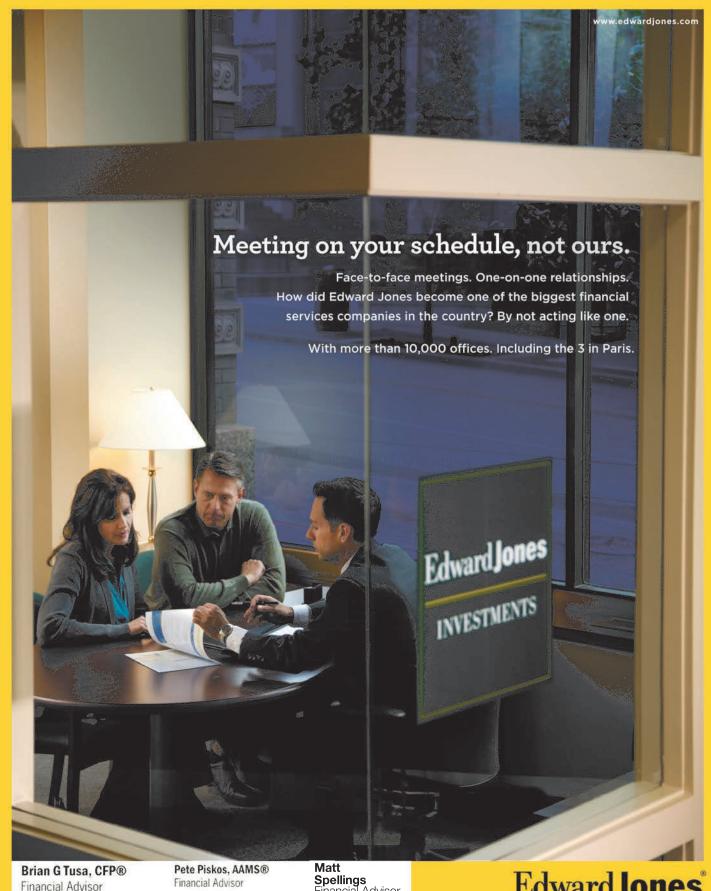
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