

What's the Buzz at Reformation?

May 3, 2020

May 10	Sun.	Mothers' Day
May 25	Mon.	Memorial Day
May 31	Sun.	Pentecost Sunday

"Chicken" = "kitchen"? Here's a true story from Reader's Digest.

A five year-old boy was having a speech therapy session, and the therapist kept trying to make him say "chicken". But every time he tried it, the word that came out of his mouth was "kitchen." Although the boy was getting tired of the exercise, the therapist asked him to try one more time.

The little boy said, "Why don't we just call it a duck?"

In Praise of Parsnips

The parsnip, *Pastinaca sativa*, is a biennial grown as an annual. If left in the ground until it flowers, it could reach 5 feet in height. It is native to Europe and Asia, and was used as a sweetener in Europe before sugar was available. The parsnip wasn't introduced to North America until the 17th century.

As you can tell by looking at this pale cream-colored root vegetable, it is related to carrots. However, it is not related to the cow parsnip. Parsnips are full of Vitamin C, folate (whatever that is), manganese, potassium, antioxidants, and fiber. You can eat them raw or cooked. Parsnips are available year-round but more commonly sold in fall and spring.

Source: Web MD

Parsnip Cake

Time: 1 hour or less

Makes one 9x13" pan, tube pan, Bundt pan, or loaf pan, or two 9" round layers

Dry ingredients:

2 cups flour

3/4 cup sugar

1/2 cup (2 oz.) almond meal

1/2 cup shredded unsweetened coconut

2+1/2 tsp. baking powder

1 tsp. baking soda

1/2 tsp. ground ginger

1/4 tsp. nutmeg

1 pinch (1/16 tsp.) ground cloves

1/4 tsp. white pepper, optional but gives it a little tang

1/2 tsp. cinnamon

Wet ingredients:

1/2 cup buttermilk (or regular dairy milk + 1 tsp. vinegar or citrus juice)

1/2 cup maple syrup (grade B preferred)

4 eggs

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1/2 cup (1 stick) melted butter, allow to cool off a little bit

2 large parsnips, shredded

Preheat oven to 325F. Grease or spray cake pan(s). Mix dry ingredients slowly 3 seconds, then add wet ingredients, parsnips last. Mix well; it might still look lumpy. Pour into pan(s). Bake about 35-40 minutes, then test with a toothpick. Frost with cream cheese icing or this glaze:

Glaze:

1/4 cup maple syrup

1/4 cup (half a stick) butter

1/2 cup buttermilk (or regular dairy milk + 1 tsp. vinegar or citrus juice)

Combine syrup and butter. Microwave until syrup starts to boil and butter is melted or close to it. Allow to cool several minutes, then whisk in the buttermilk (poke holes in cake if you like). Pour glaze over cake.

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An Inspirational Mom: *The Prizewinner of Defiance, Ohio*

Immortalized both in a book by Terry Ryan and in a 2005 film, Evelyn Ryan wasn't one to let circumstances beat her. With ten children and an alcoholic husband, she put her journalism skills to work, writing commercial jingles and product testimonials in order to earn money (from \$1 on up to thousands of dollars)and prizes such as chewing gum, a washing machine, a clothes dryer, and a refrigerator.

Evelyn's biggest test was in 1965, when she found out that her husband had spent \$4000 on liquor and if they couldn't pay the bank in 30 days, they would lose the house. Dr. Pepper was running a contest, starting with the phrase "Dr. Pepper, the time of your life" and contestants had to finish it.

Evelyn beat out 250,000 other contestants with "There's no time like now to begin." She was able to produce the money and save her family's home from being taken away from them .

A poem by Ann Taylor (British, 1782-1824):

Who ran to help me when I fell,
And would some pretty story tell,
Or kiss the place to make it well?

My mother.

Trivia: Ann Taylor is also credited with writing the words to "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"!

May 10, 2020 (p. 2)

Piñata Cake

Time: 1 hour

Makes one 3-layer cake

1 box cake mix, prepared as 3 layers

Skittles or M&Ms (big bag)

Icing

Allow baked layers to cool. Level off the tops of two layers. Put one layer on serving platter, spread some icing on top, and lay the second layer on top.

Cut out the middle of the two layers as if you were coring an apple, and remove the "core". Fill center of remaining cake with candies.

Put icing on top of the second layer, and lay third layer on top. Ice top and sides.

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May 17, 2020

Ranine Swain - the Corroboree Frog

Of all the Frog Princes in the world, the corroboree frog of Australia has got to be near the top of any list, even though he is only the size of a quarter. Look what he does for his lady love: serenades her with sweet song, builds her a little love nest, and once the babies arrive, he froggy-babysits. This little guy is no slouch in the looks department, either; he color-coordinates with his Mrs. by sporting a natty black suit with bright yellow stripes and spots enough to make Converse want to bring out a new design. If ya gotta kiss a frog, this one might be a good investment!

As big as a quarter, the ranine (frog) Romeo starts out the mating season by using his back legs to scoop out a room and line it with a girl's favorite color of moss green. Then he stays near it and pours forth his melody promising free babysitting until a lady frog decides he is The One. She lays 15-38 eggs and then dumps him. He stays, sometimes building an addition onto the house if there are too many eggs. Usually he has to wait about eight weeks until the little tadpoles emerge with the fall and winter rains. He keeps up this cycle of advertising for a lady frog all season long, like a dedicated Kindergarten Cop.

This species is critically endangered by brush fires and a chytrid fungus disease, with an estimated population of only about 50 corroboree frogs in the wild in 2014, there are breeding programs at both the Melbourne Zoo and Sydney's Taronga Zoo.

Source: "A Prince of a Paramour", *Reader's Digest*, Dec, 2014.

May 17, 2020 (p. 2)

Maui Wowwie Shrimp (grilled or pan-fried)

Time: 20-30 minutes

Makes: 2 lbs

2 lbs. uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined (thawed if frozen)

All spices to taste:

1 pinch garlic salt or garlic powder

ground black pepper

1/4 tsp. cayenne powder

1 cup mayonnaise

1 lemon, cut into wedges

If grilling, preheat grill and brush some oil on grilling surface. Thread shrimp on skewers.

If pan-frying, put some oil in skillet.

In a bowl, mix mayo and spices, and generously coat shrimp.

If pan-frying, heat oil in skillet.

Grill or pan-fry shrimp until it is opaque in center and the mayo is golden brown. Serve with lemon wedges.

Bald Eagle

The bald eagle is the national bird of the United States. They inhabit Canada, the United States (including Alaska), and northern Mexico. Bald eagles living in Canada are more likely to migrate in the winter than southern-living ones, and they also follow Bergmann's rule, with larger eagles living farther from the Equator. With a wingspan of up to 7.5 feet, the bald eagle ties with the golden eagle for the largest wingspan of any eagle in North America (the California condor tops these by about an inch). Females are about 25% larger than males.

Bald eagles live close to water, since the mainstay of their diet is fish, followed by waterfowl and some mammals. They can fly with prey that equals their weight, although they might have to fly low and drag it. On at least one instance, a 130-lb. sheep was taken. Often, eagles will wait for an osprey to catch prey, then harass the osprey until it drops its food, then the eagle steals it. For this reason, Ben Franklin wrote that the eagle has bad moral character, not making an honest living. Bald eagles also eat the leftovers from the meals of bears, wolves, & people picnics. cs.

Nests are usually at least 20 feet off the ground, in old-growth trees dead or living. Some bald eagles in Alaska build their nests on the ground, and some in Mexico build theirs in cacti. Pairs mate for life; the mating pairs may use the same nest for years, repairing it until it falls apart. Nests are usually about 8 ft. in diameter, up to 10 feet deep, and weigh up to 2,000 lbs, although there was one nest in St. Petersburg, Florida, that was 20 feet deep and weighed over 4,00 lbs.

In the wild, two or three eggs are laid in February, they hatch in March or April, and the eaglets fledge in June or July. Either mom or dad stays with the net nearly 100% of the time for the first 2 or 3 weeks, and have been known to fiercely defend the nest, even knocking a black bear out of the tree. Fledglings are brown with white streaks. They usually are not ready to reproduce until they are 4-5 years old. Bald eagles share common roosts and may use these to find mates or for other social communication. By the way, their call is weak and wimpy once they leave the nest, a chirping whistle with rhythm similar to that of a seagull. Usually the call of a red-tail hawk is dubbed in!

Sources: Heimbuch, Jamie, "5 surprising facts about bald eagles", *MatherNatureNetwork.com*
Reader's Digest North American Wildlife.
Wikipedia.org.

May 24, 2020 (p. 2)

Eagle Brand 7-Layer Bars

Time: 30 minutes

Yield: one 9x13" pan or baking dish (24 bars)

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs

1 can Eagle Brand (or other) sweetened condensed milk (not evaporated milk)

1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

1 cup butterscotch chips

1 1/3 cup coconut flakes (packaged, frozen or fresh, sweetened or not)

1 cup chopped nuts

Preheat oven to 350F. You do not have to grease the 9x13 pan.

Melt butter and combine with graham cracker crumbs. Press firmly into the bottom of the pan. This makes the crust.

Pour sweetened condensed milk onto the crust. Spread evenly over crust.

Sprinkle chocolate chips, then butterscotch chips, then coconut flakes, then nuts. Press each layer down.

Bake 25 minutes, remove from oven, and allow to cool before cutting into squares. Store in covered container at room temperature.

Watermelons

It just wouldn't be summer without watermelons. Watermelons grow in tropical and sub-tropical areas. They originated in southern Africa, were grown in Egypt as early as 2000 BC, reached India by 700 AD, Spain (courtesy of the Moorish invaders) and China by 1000 AD. By the 1500s, they were grown in the New World.

The Japanese invented a way of containing the growing fruit in glass cubes to grow square watermelons in 1939, both as a concession to small Japanese refrigerators, and as an expensive status-showing treat. Since then, the Japanese have also figured out how to grow watermelons in the shape of a pyramid.

Biologically speaking, the watermelon is a modified berry, called a *pepo*. It has a hard rind, and the flesh can be red, pink, white, orange, or yellow. Seeds can be black, dark brown, or in the so-called "seedless" varieties, they are soft, white, and digestible.

The plant itself is a large annual, with stems that are weak, trailing, and five-sided. At first there are yellow-brown hairs on the stem, but these disappear with age. Wild plants can have fruits up to 8" in diameter, but cultivated varieties can reach 24" in diameter. Sometimes they have one at the Circleville Pumpkin Show in the Art Tent which fills a red wagon. Leaves are large and coarse, and get rough as the plant ages. Many cultivars have mature fruit within 100 days of planting.

Watermelon plants depend on bees for pollination, and the US Dept of Agriculture recommends at least 1 beehive per field. For the seedless varieties, a "pollinator" row is planted every few rows with viable pollen, and the recommendation is at least 3 beehives.

Watermelon fruit can be eaten raw or pickled. Some people like to put salt on it. The rind is edible if it is cooked, and is often sold pickled. If you have chickens, they love raw watermelon rind!

Sources:

Wikipedia.org, "Watermelon".

About.com, "Watermelon".

May 31, 2020 (p. 2)

Watermelon - Strawberry - Mango Smoothie

Time: 5 min.

Serves 4

5 c. chopped watermelon (not the rind), divided

1 c. frozen strawberries

1 c. frozen mango

1/2 c. plain yogurt

Put everything in the blender except just about half of the watermelon. Whirl until smooth. Then add the rest of the watermelon, and whirl again until smooth.