

Library Highlights Craft Projects



Participating teens at the Durant Public Library celebrated end of the summer programs with a week of crafts. On Tuesday, July 17, they made hand puppets with Mrs. Anne Land of Kosciusko. Pictured above (from left): Caitlin Conner, Jerealyn Clay, Leah Conner; Back row: Julie Farmer, Antonio Grant, Ellise McGee, Colin McGee and Anne Land. (Photo submitted)



On Thursday, July 19, local readers ended summer with Christmas in July craft projects. Pictured above (clockwise front left) are: Jerealyn Clay, Martha Killebrew, Kay Whitehead, Gwin Buckley and Julie Farmer. Teens made Christmas ornaments and were each given a Christmas gift as a prize. (Photo submitted)

Conservation Corner

by James Cummins
Executive Director
of Wildlife Mississippi

Most people think that during the summer there is an ample supply of browse for deer to eat. Many people think that since the sweetgums, hickories, and oaks are green again, deer will be healthy. Everything that is green is not food for deer and may not meet a deer's daily nutritional needs.

Deer are similar to people in the manner in which they feed. There are certain foods that we love to eat, those that we will eat, and those that we would eat only if we were starving. The trees above are in the last category—just good enough to fill them up. If you hunt in an area that shows a lot of browsing on these trees, your herd is probably in need of management.

Several foods that fit into the middle choice category are American beautyberry, dogwood, elm, maple, and magnolia. These species provide moderate nutrition but your deer herd will have a hard time maintaining proper

nutrition on these foods. One of the reasons these low and moderate foods become a main ingredient in deer diets is due to overbrowsing on first choice foods. A reduction in the number of animals of the deer herd is usually needed when this type of overbrowsing occurs.

There are many desirable foods for deer. These include honeysuckle, yellow jasmine, greenbriar, and blackberry.

If you've read many articles about food plots or if you farm or like gardening, you may be aware of the nutrient deficiencies in soils in Mississippi. Calcium, and more importantly, phosphorus, are the primary elements for proper antler growth and are both generally low in our soils. Soil tests are an inexpensive method to determine nutrient needs. Applications of essential nutrients can produce a hidden food plot that only you and the deer are aware of. Fertilized vegetation, such as the

first choice items described above, grows more vigorously, are more palatable, and will be visited more.

However, with fertilizer, more is not always better. One nutrient that is often recommended for food plots is lime. You can and should apply lime to planted and native foods so the fertilizer will work properly. Again, a soil test will help.

You will often see a benefit of better native vegetation growth on the edge of food plots due to the extra sunlight hitting their edges. Direct sunlight is the key to good forage production. With that in mind, you should try to grow your vegetation in areas that are more open, such as, roadsides, right-of-ways, and newly thinned plantations. A little fertilizer in these spots will increase plant growth and provide the nutrition required by deer.

James L. Cummins is executive director of Wildlife Mississippi, a non-profit, conservation organization founded to conserve, restore and enhance fish, wildlife and plant resources throughout Mississippi. Their web site is www.wildlifemiss.org.



House Sounds

After spending the first week in our new house, I realize that homes have their own personality and what I like to call "house sounds." First of all, our ice maker has got to be the loudest ice maker in the world. It dumps ice out at all hours of the night, never during the day.

We live closer to the railroad than we did before and I would swear that the train track actually goes through our bedroom just on the other side of the end of the bed if I didn't know better. I can't figure out the need to blow the whistle at two o'clock in the morning when the gates are down and the lights are flashing, but apparently they feel the need to do so. Haven't slept through a train yet and at least three come through town every night.

My cats haven't adjusted very well to our move. We let them out in the morning and they return to our old house where we have to go and retrieve them the next day. They are getting a little better. We only have to go get them once a day as opposed to several times a day. I remembered that God took a week to make the universe, so maybe after a week the cats can adjust to their new home.

The day we moved in the electricity went off about three o'clock in the afternoon and stayed off until the next day. Twenty-four hours without electricity can be brutal – especially in July. I hoped that wasn't a bad omen. The next day my sister-in-law came over to help me cover the bottoms of my dining room chairs with

new fabric. We had finished two of the six chairs when I realized we were using the wrong side of the fabric – Oops!

Looking for the simplest items can be quite challenging. Steve almost bled to death yesterday while I searched for band-aids. I am learning to live with stairs – the hard way. Today I went through the carport to the laundry room to avoid climbing the stairs. My knees and ankles are feeling the steps in the worst way.

We are still a work in progress. Slowly, but surely, things are getting moved over and we have a new normal. Just trying to convince my cats.

I hope you will give this week's recipes a try. Thanks for reading.

BAKED GREEK SQUASH and FETA

2 medium zucchini squash
2 medium yellow squash
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 Tbsp. Greek seasoning
1 cup crumbled Feta cheese
Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Cut squash in slices and toss with olive oil; place on a cookie sheet in a single layer. Sprinkle with Greek seasoning and cheese. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until lightly browned on top.

PEANUT BUSTER BAR DESSERT

Crust:
1 stick butter, melted
1 (15 oz.) pkg. Oreo cookies, crushed
½ gallon vanilla ice cream, softened
1 ½ cup chopped peanuts
Mix margarine and crumbs together and spread into a 13 x 9 inch pan. Spread ice

cream on crust and sprinkle peanuts on top. Put in freezer to set.

Topping:

1 (5 oz.) can evaporated milk
1 stick butter
2/3 cup chocolate chips
2 cups powdered sugar
Combine all ingredients and boil for 4 minutes, stirring constantly. Cool and pour over peanuts and ice cream. Freeze before serving.

ROTEL POTATOES

1 onion, chopped
8 medium potatoes, boiled
1 green bell pepper, chopped
1 (4 oz.) can sliced mushrooms, drained
1 can chopped Ro-Tel tomatoes
1 lb. Velveeta cheese, sliced
3 Tbsp. butter

Brown onion and bell pepper in butter; add mushrooms, cheese and Ro-Tel tomatoes. Stir over Low heat until cheese has melted. Slice cooled, boiled potatoes and place in a greased casserole dish. Pour cheese mixture over potatoes. Bake at 350 degree for about 30 minutes or until heated through.

*Lee Ann Fleming is a Holmes County native, food columnist and has garnered fame for her recipes featured in the film, *The Help*. Fleming can be reached at lafkitchen@hughes.net.



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