



The Rainbow Bridge

I have often written of my love for my pets. My husband, Steve, falls into the same category. About 10 years ago, he rescued a tiny black puppy and took her to our farm. We just referred to her as Lucy, the farm dog. She loved to run and play in the woods. Every afternoon, Steve would ride out and feed her. Even on late nights after ballgames, he would ride out to feed her no matter how late it might be.

As soon as the truck entered the gate, she would run to meet us every single time. We have some hunters from the Jackson area who have a camp house on our property who would adopt her during hunting season. Lucy would hang out with them, but would always come to greet us when we arrived.

Last week we had to have her put to sleep due to kidney failure. I reminded Steve how lucky she was to have had the last 10 years of being loved and taken good care of by our family – and extended family. Everybody knew Lucy.

Our very kind and caring vet, Dr. Blane Cooper, sent us a sympathy card and an essay entitled The Rainbow Bridge. This is for all you pet lovers out there who have ever lost a pet.

The Rainbow Bridge

Just this side of heaven is a place called the Rainbow Bridge.

When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to the Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water, and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor. Those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing; they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance. His bright eyes are intent. His eager body quivers.

Suddenly he begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, his legs carrying him faster and faster.

You have been spotted, and when you and your special

friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your pet; so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross the Rainbow Bridge together...

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

SAVORY HAM CHEESECAKE

3 cups oyster crackers, crushed
1 cup grated

Parmesan cheese
1/3 cup butter, melted
4 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
4 large eggs, lightly beaten
2 cups finely chopped fully cooked ham
2 cups shredded Swiss cheese
1/3 cup minced chives
1/4 cup minced fresh basil
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. white pepper

In a large bowl, combine the cracker crumbs, Parmesan cheese, and melted butter; set aside about 1/4 cup for topping. Press remaining cracker crumb mixture onto the bottom and 2 inches up the sides of a greased 9-inch springform pan. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth; add eggs one at a time until creamed together. Add the ham, Swiss cheese, chives, basil, salt and pepper and mix until combined. Pour into the crust and sprinkle with reserved crumb mixture. Place pan on baking sheet and bake at 325 degrees for

60 – 75 minutes or until filling is almost set. Turn oven off and leave cheesecake in oven with door ajar for 30 minutes. Cool and refrigerate; serve with your favorite crackers or toast points.

CAJUN SAUSAGE CHICKEN & SPINACH PASTA

16 oz. Smoked sausage, cut into 1/4 inch rounds
2 cups chopped, cooked chicken
2 (15 oz.) cans diced tomatoes, drained
16 oz. Campanella pasta
2 (8 oz.) tubs chive and onion cream cheese
1 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen, chopped spinach, thawed and drained well
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
3/4 cup heavy cream
2 cups shredded Mozzarella cheese
3 Tbsp. Cajun/Creole seasoning

Preheat oven to 350 degrees; lightly spray a 9 x 13 inch baking dish with cooking spray. Cook pasta

according to package directions; drain and set aside. In a skillet cook smoked sausage in a little olive oil until lightly browned. In a bowl, combine the cooked pasta, drained spinach, sausage, chicken, tomatoes, cream cheese, Creole seasoning, Parmesan cheese, heavy cream and 1/2 cup Mozzarella cheese. Spoon into prepared baking dish, and sprinkle with remaining Mozzarella cheese and bake, uncovered, for 45 minutes.

*You can substitute plain cream cheese with chopped fresh chives and onion if you need to.

DUMP CAKE

1 (28 oz.) can cherry pie filling
1 (15 oz.) can crushed pineapple

1 box yellow cake mix
12 Tablespoons butter
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Pour crushed pineapple into the bottom of a 9 x 13 inch baking dish; top with cherry pie filling. Dump the dry cake mix over the fruit; then slice the butter into thin pieces on top. You may top with chopped pecans if desired. Bake for 35 – 40 minutes or until golden brown and bubbly. Top with whipped cream or a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Keep these pantry items available for a quick and easy dessert.

*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.



The Greenhouse of the Heart

Proverbs 4:23 advises us, “Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” Think of your heart as a greenhouse and consid-

most valuable commodity after poultry. Regeneration is what makes Mississippi forests a renewable resource.

You may have noticed that these public interests align with a forest landowner's goals in using prescribed burning. Forestry is important in Mississippi, and the sound and sustainable management of that forest resource is a benefit to everyone.

For those interested in learning more, there will be a Prescribed Burning workshop in Pontotoc on March 30. Contact James Shannon at 662-489-3910 or by email at james.shannon@msstate.edu to register by March 21.

Fall scholars named at Hinds Community College

Hinds Community College has announced the Deans' Scholars for the Fall 2018 semester. Deans' Scholars are those students with a cumulative 3.5 to 3.9 grade point average.

Among those recognized as a Fall 2018 Dean's Scholars are: Matassa Mitchell of Lexington; Regine Powell of Lexington; Brady Wilson of Lexington; Jasan Sanders of Pickens; and Zharia Johnson of Lexington.

Hinds Community College President's Scholars have been named for the Fall 2018 semester. President's Scholars are those with a cumulative 4.0 grade point average.

Among those recognized as a Fall 2018 President's Scholars is Rachel Burwell of Lexington.

er your thoughts as seed. We must be selective about the seeds we allow to come into the greenhouse.

To have a pure heart, we must submit all thoughts to the authority of Christ. You see, your mind is the doorway to your heart. The Holy Spirit stands with you on the threshold, helping you manage and filter the thoughts that try to enter. If Jesus agrees with the thought, then let it in. If not, kick it out. How do you know if Jesus agrees or disagrees? You open your Bible. Armed with the opinion of Christ and the sword of the Spirit, guard the doorway of your heart. The more selective you are about seeds, the more delighted you will be with the crop.

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This Max Lucado devotional offers wisdom and insight for applying Biblical truths to the ups and downs of everyday life. Reading daily devotions provides strength and encouragement in your daily walk with Jesus Christ.

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Bridal Registry

Jordan Pratt
Drew Trehern
June 15

**Howell & Heggie
Drug Co.**



389 N. W. Depot St.
Durant
662-653-6441



A Mississippi Forestry Commission technician sets strip backing fire for fuel reduction, vegetation management and wildlife habitat enhancement on a tree farm near Aberdeen.
(Photo by MSU Extension Service/John Kushla)