



IN THE KITCHEN
WITH
LeeAnn



Our Hummers

During the seven years I taught fourth grade at Cruger-Tchula Academy, one of the favorite units of study we had was a study of birds in our science class. We drew all of the different birds we studied and made a scrapbook.

Of all the birds we studied, the hummingbird always seemed to be the class favorite. They thought the funniest bird was the blue jay because he was the "bully" and would knock other birds off the bird feeders. The fact that the male cardinal was more beautiful than the female was always good for a laugh, too.

My husband loves the yard. I always tell him he took after his mama when it comes to loving a pretty yard and birds. His Aunt Carolyn is a wonderful artist from Natchez and we have several of her beautiful works of art that are some of his favorite birds. He particularly enjoys feeding the birds all during the year. My only contribution is to purchase the bird food and sometimes fill the feeders if he is away for longer than a day.

Several days ago, Steve came in and told me he had seen his first hummers at the farm. We dusted off the feeders, made some nectar, and prepared to feed them on their travels. This time of year, Steve always makes sure the hummingbird feeders are out and full of nectar for the migration to begin. I complain (under my breath) because I mix up the nectar and rinse out the feeders between feedings. We have never brought those feeders in that they didn't leak on my kitchen floor - usually after I have just mopped!

I began to notice one morning that a few hummingbirds were darting around the feeders. As I observed, I was able to quietly station myself near a window and watch several of them drinking the nectar. They are fascinating. I do think there are more numbers in the fall of the year, but we will enjoy them whenever they arrive.

I make sure there is fresh hummingbird nectar in the feeders - I don't want my "babies" to leave. Just after sunrise in the morning and in the late afternoon is when they are most active.

Sitting on the patio and watching them is such a treat. You can hear their little wings flapping as they seem to sing a little chorus for me. My cats like to lie under the feeders and watch them, too. However, I fear for a different

reason than I have to enjoy them. They have been sternly warned to leave our visitors alone. I quickly stopped using the commercial hummingbird food because it was so expensive and I couldn't buy it fast enough - it is also sometimes hard to find this time of year. I mix 4 parts water to 1 part sugar and my birds seem to like it just as well as the package - homemade is always better! You don't even have to add red food coloring, but I always do. I just like the way it looks.

After doing some research to refresh my memory about hummingbirds, I found some very interesting facts.

*There are more than 325 hummingbird species in the world. Only eight regularly breed in the United States, though up to two dozen species may visit our country.

*A hummingbird's brilliant throat color is not caused by feather pigmentation, but rather by iridescence in the arrangement of the feathers and the influence of light level, moisture and other factors.

*Hummingbirds cannot walk or hop, although their feet can be used to scoot sideways while they are perched.

*Hummingbirds have 1,000-1,500 feathers, the fewest number of feathers of any bird species in the world.

*The average ruby-throated hummingbird weighs three grams - a nickel weighs about 4.5 grams.

*A hummingbird's maximum forward flight speed is 30 miles per hour, though the birds can reach up to 60 miles per hour in a dive.

*A hummingbird's nest is about the size of a golf ball. They lay the smallest eggs of all birds - about the size of a pea. The eggs measure less than 1/2 inch long, but may represent as much as 10 percent of the mother's weight at the time the eggs are laid.

*A hummingbird must consume approximately 1/2 of its weight in sugar daily, and the average hummingbird feeds 5-8 times an hour.

*A hummingbird's wings beat between 50 and 200 flaps per second depending on the direction of flight and air conditions.

*The average lifespan of a wild hummingbird is 3-12 years, depending on the species, habitat conditions, predators and other factors.

*Despite their small size, hummingbirds are very aggressive and will regularly attack blue jays, crows and hawks if they infringe on

their territory. If you have a hummingbird feeder, I urge you to dust it off, fill it up and enjoy these fascinating creatures. Maybe you and your family will enjoy them as much as we do.

Grab one of those delicious rotisserie chickens you find at the grocery and try one of these quick ideas to help you save time in the kitchen. Hope you enjoy this week's recipes. Thanks for reading.

CHICKEN and SAUSAGE JAMBALAYA

- 1 deli-roasted chicken, cut chicken into bite-size pieces
- 1 lb. smoked sausage, cut into 1/4 inch thick slices
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cans Ro-Tel tomatoes
- 1 (14 oz.) can chicken broth
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. Cajun seasoning
- 2 cups uncooked regular rice

Cook sausage in Dutch oven over medium heat for about 5 minutes. Add bell pepper and onion; cook until vegetables are tender. Stir in Ro-Tel tomatoes, chicken broth, garlic powder, and Cajun seasoning. Add 1 cup of water and bring to a boil; stirring occasionally. Stir in chicken and rice. Cover, reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes or until rice is tender.

EASY CHICKEN and DUMPLINGS

*I have a confession to make - I don't like Chicken and Dumplings. There are very few things I don't eat, but this and Chicken Pot Pie are two things I will never prepare unless requested from a member of my family!

- 1 (32 oz.) container chicken broth
- 1 deli-roasted chicken, shred meat with a fork
- 1 can Cream of chicken soup
- 1/4 tsp. poultry seasoning
- 1 (10 oz.) can refrigerated jumbo buttermilk biscuits
- 2 carrots, diced
- 3 ribs celery, diced

Bring first 4 ingredients to a boil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Cover; reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring occasionally for five minutes. Increase heat to medium-high, and return to a low boil. Place biscuits on a lightly floured surface. Roll or pat each biscuit to about a 1/8" thickness, and cut into 1/2" wide strips. Drop strips, one at a time, into boiling broth mixture. Add carrots and celery. Cover and reduce heat to low, and simmer for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent dumplings from sticking.

SMOTHERED CHICKEN

- 1 (8oz.) pkg. wide egg noodles
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 (16 oz.) pkg. fresh mushrooms
- 2 tsp. minced garlic

- 1 can Cream of Mushroom soup
 - 1 cup milk
 - 1/3 cup dry white wine*
 - 1 deli-roasted chicken, cut into serving pieces
- Prepare noodles according to package directions. Sir together paprika, thyme, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat; add onion and mushrooms and saute' for 10 minutes. Stir in garlic and paprika mixture and cook for 2 more minutes. Add soup, milk and wine; bring to a boil. Add chicken pieces; spoon sauce over top of chicken. Cover and reduce to low - cook for about 15 minutes. Serve over hot cooked noodles.

*If you prefer not to use the wine, increase milk to 1 1/3 cups.

*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.

IN AND AROUND LEXINGTON

BY LEONA (LENA) FIELDS

Keep Ms. Loretta Tidwell and Mrs. Jacqueline Saffold uplifted in prayer. The man that was missing from West, Mississippi and later found deceased was their father. Let's pray that there was no foul play concerning his death.

This time it's true, Elder Clemon Redmond did pass. Keep his wife and other family members uplifted in prayer.

Mr. Lee Henry Wright is doing good after his surgery. He can slip in the kitchen long enough to fry a slice of bacon and then go back at lunchtime and warm-up chicken and gravy in the microwave oven. Thursday he walked out on his front porch and fed his cat.

Watch out for spiders. I found one in my mailbox.

To get your news in this column, call 662-834-1489.

The following newspaper clipping was found by Mrs. Maxine Johnson Hays in her mother-in-laws' Bible. Her name was Mrs. Hattie Byrd Williams Hays. She was born in Chickasaw County in 1890 and died at the age of 76 in Tchula.

"In every life there is a cross. Some sink under the weight of their crosses, and lie still under them as if they were their gravestones; some carry them stumbling, often falling, but bravely pressing on; others carry their crosses with a straight back and a smiling face, not calling on anyone to come and pity them; and some there are who lift their crosses high and carry them gaily as if they were banners, and when the sun shines they gleam with light, flashing brightness, and men look and wonder how a cross can be so glorious."

IN MEMORY... ELDER CLEMON REDMOND, JR.



Sheila Jackson Lee, Congresswoman, Houston, Texas, and Willie Wright, Jr., MPA, Pastor

First of all, I wish to extend my condolences to his very beautiful, lovely, and supportive wife, Sis. Jo-eann Redmond; his children, family members, Church, etc. My prayers are with you all.

As a student, I knew Elder Redmond as a caring, confident, and competent teacher. He was always prepared for class. He challenged his students, both in the classroom and on the playing field, to aim high and dream big. He taught with so much vigor, vim, and vitality. This teacher was always full of energy

and enthusiasm. I served under his Pastoral leadership at Saint Anderson COG-IC located in Durant, MS, as a Sunday School Teacher, an Associate Minister, and as a church volunteer. During that time, I had recently accepted my calling into the Ministry. He gave me the opportunity and the platform to define, develop, and demonstrate my spiritual gifts.

At Saint Anderson, we were big in spirit and in giving. He and his wife always demonstrated to us how to give willingly, cheerfully, generously, and sacrificially. They never required of us to do anything they did not do first themselves. Under his leadership, our faith was fortified, saints were edified, souls were sanctified, and our prayers were answered. Whenever we met to worship, we celebrated Jesus Christ.

I will forever cherish the times he prayed for and with me and how he witnessed to me about inviting Jesus Christ into my life and living my life for Him. I will forever cherish all of the clean wholesome fun we had together. He will forever live on in my heart.

I am saved today because I saw Jesus Christ all in his life. His whole life radiated Jesus Christ. I thank him from the bottom of my heart and from the top of my mouth for being my flesh-and-blood saved, sanctified, and spirit-filled example. He is truly an expression, an example, and an extension of Jesus' message, motive, and ministry.

Love you and yours always,
Willie Wright Jr., MPA
Houston, TX

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