

TAKING TIME

by Rebecca Escott

Penn State
Extension Home Economist
For Lehigh County



Discovering Spring With A Child

I don't know about you, but I've been looking for signs of spring any place I can. I had a bet with my family that we would have snow on our property on April 1, I won. In fact, we took pictures to document it, but now that I won the bet, I'm ready to usher in spring with flurry. One of the most enjoyable ways I've found to do this is to explore this season outdoors with a child. A youngster's sense of discovery can really inspire the adults around her.

First, go on a walk around your farm and yard and look for the baby animals that have been born recently — lambs, robins, ducklings, foals. Watch them play. Talk about how the mother and father animals care for their young. Follow this up with a story time where you read about animals, or browse through magazines and cut out pictures of baby animals to make your own story book. Help birds build their nests. Cut bright colored pieces of yarn into six-inch lengths. Place these in the crotch of a tree with other nest-building items like cotton fluff, string or small strips of fabric. After several days, canvas the area with a child to see if together

you can spy any birds that are using your materials to create a home for their babies.

If you have a pond or marsh nearby, wander by and listen for the frogs to croak. As the warm weather continues, revisit the spot to look for tadpoles. Catching a few in a bucket so a child can examine them closely will make you a winner in his eyes. While you're exploring, take a shoelace (or for less hassle, a 16-20 inch piece of string) and make a circle with it on the ground. Challenge the child to find as many different things in that circle as she can. Count how many items you find.

Encourage your child to learn about the trees on your property. Take paper and crayons along and do a bark rubbing. Check out the branches each time you pass by to see if the buds are opening into blossoms and leaves. Are all trees alike? What makes them different? As you explore, look up, look down, look around. When is the last time you carefully checked out a drying mud puddle to search for animal or insect tracks?

Don't let the rain showers keep your family from venturing outside. Dress in boots and raincoats. Walk, splash, laugh, and listen. A rainy day brings different spring

Spring's Bounty

(Continued from Page B6)

RHUBARB BREAD

- 1 1/2 cups brown sugar, lightly packed
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 1/2 cups rhubarb, finely diced
- 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 1/4 cups unbleached flour
- 1/4 cup wheat germ
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

In a large bowl, cream oil and sugar. Add the egg, salt, and buttermilk; mix thoroughly. Stir in rhubarb. Mix together the remaining ingredients and add them to the rhubarb mixture. Stir until dry ingredients are incorporated then spoon into greased bread pans. Bake at 350 degrees for about 1 hour or until tester comes out clean. Cool 20 minutes on wire rack before slicing. Bread tastes better the second day.

B.J. Light
Lebanon

sounds to your ear than a sunny day. Ask the child what he hears. Do you hear anything else? Look at the clouds. How quickly are they moving? Be sure to have an ample supply of dry clothes and a drying rack on hand when you return to the house.

Exploring outdoors with a child helps me to discover in a new way some of the amazing patterns of nature that happen every year. And after the long winter we all endured, it's nice to know that flowers still bloom and birds still sing. Happy spring.

RHUBARB-PECAN STRUDEL

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups chopped pecans
- 1 tablespoon grated orange peel
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup flour
- 8 sheets Phyllo
- 12 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 pound chopped rhubarb
- 1/4 pound butter, soft
- Bring 1/2 cup sugar and 1/2 cup water to boiling; add rhubarb; turn off heat and let mixture cool.
- Drain, reserving rhubarb.

In food processor, process nuts, 1/2 cup sugar until fine. Add butter, orange, egg; process until smooth. Add flour then fold in rhubarb. Layer Phyllo sheets, brushing with butter, overlapping sheets to make 18x38-inch rectangle. Place filling 2 inches from one short edge. Roll up, tucking in ends. Brush with butter. Bake, seam side down at 375 degrees for 40 minutes.

Kitchen Kettle Village
(Turn to Page B6)

You Ask ? ? ? You Answer

In response to readers' questions, this column is for readers who have questions but don't know who to ask for the answers. In the past many readers sent non-cooking requests to Cook's Question Corner, a column located in B 8.

"You Ask — You Answer" is for non-cooking questions. The concept is the same: When a reader sends in a question, it will be printed in the paper. Readers who know the answer are asked to respond by mailing the answer, which will then be printed as soon as possible in the paper.

Questions and answers for this column should be addressed to You Ask — You Answer, Lou Ann Good, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.

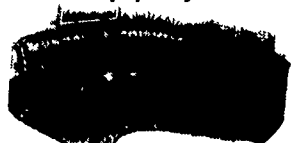
QUESTION — A. Nolt of New Holland would like to know the complete poem that was recited in the 1920s when her father-in-law went to school. The poem contains these lines: The carpenter's house is falling down. The preacher's kids are the worse in town....

QUESTION — Marie Lorah, Box 299 R.D.3, Tamaqua, PA 18252, is looking for water glasses with pictures of owls on them.

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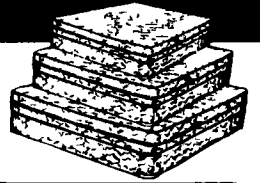
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