

# *Habernews*

*Diane Voge, Editor   Regina Carmel, Layout*

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# Just Another Year

Diane Voge

This past year we survived a hurricane with less damage than could have been, and one Habersham family suffered a devastating fire. As in all years, many of us lost loved ones, others joyously welcomed new family members, and some of us did both. We pulled together in adversity, cried together when necessary, and laughed together whenever we could.

Sometimes we forget how often we rely on one another, how many neighbors arrive for help whenever it's needed. Twilight Run, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Harvest Festival, Halloween, Shanklin Yard Sale, Light Up The Night—all peopled by neighbors. Neighbors take us to medical appointments, provide food when we're ill, visit us in the hospital, look after the kids in an emergency. They feed our pets when we're out of town, grab a few groceries when we're under the weather, provide comfort when we've suffered a loss.

We are not perfect. Sometimes we forget that quiet person down the street, we drive faster than 18 mph, we don't take the time to listen to neighbors who may just need to talk to someone. We don't always remember to tell the maintenance crew how much we benefit from their hard work. Mostly, though, we try to be caring neighbors.

We all know life is a cycle of good and bad, and each year contains some of both. I've never understood why we celebrate the end of one year and beginning of another, except that we know the days will be getting a little longer, soon the beach or the marsh will beckon, and the ebb and flow of life will drift like our lowcountry tides.

Regina and I wish all of you a New Year of life, because we can ask for nothing more. May your sorrows be small and your joys many.

# A New Year Reflection

On New Year's 2003, Leo Gannon arrived at my front door with a cat. The cat had been abandoned in Habersham right around Christmas. We were a small community then; we all knew every cat and dog in the neighborhood. Although friendly, this wasn't one of ours. She was living under a house being built on Collin Campbell. Several neighbors had been feeding it, but for one reason or another, they were unable or unwilling to adopt it. I had never had a cat, never particularly wanted a cat, but I thought I'd give it a try. She walked in, found a comfortable spot on the lower shelf of a side table, and fell asleep as if this had always been her home.

A grey tuxedo tabby with just a hint of peach, her color reminded me of the little periwinkle snails that cling to spartina. Much to my dog's distress, Periwinkle loves canines and wants to be near them. Callie literally turned her back on me for a couple of weeks but finally resigned herself to the reality of a cat in the family.

Peri had likely been an inside/outside cat in her previous life, as she was a great hunter when given the opportunity but enjoyed the pleasures of an inside existence. After being blessed with a live squirrel in my house, much to the rodent's displeasure and mine, Peri became an inside only cat.

And a good thing, as our first visit to the vet indicated she was FIV positive, the equivalent of AIDS in cats. I knew then I needed to keep her, as no one else would likely adopt her. I also expected her to live no more than two years.

Peri joyfully welcomed foster dogs into our home, repeatedly attempted to befriend Callie, who was having none of it, and after a few years, took a new puppy under her paw and raised Trifle as her own. When Callie finally started to fail, Peri crept quietly into the dog bed with her and cuddled against her as she slept.

The year I took her in, I started volunteering at the county animal shelter. They put me in the cat adoption room, a test for any new volunteer. Yes, you get to play with cats, but you also must clean twenty or so litter boxes, wash all those cat dishes, and scrub the floor before the shelter opens. I stuck with it for nine years; helped found Tabby House, an all cat adoption center; and made some life-long friends I would otherwise have never met. I might well have done none of that if this little grey cat had not come into my life.

At the time I took her in, Peri was between 3 and 5 years old. Today would be Peri's declared 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. She is failing fast as I write this and may well not be asleep in her bed when this is published.

Someone threw her away 14 years ago. She became an unexpected joy. Why would anyone throw away love?

Diane Voge





**GOURMET NEXT DOOR**  
by Debbi Covington

*Feeling Kind of Cheesy*

*If these yummy-looking sandwich photos have caught your fancy and you're thinking that you might be feeling kind of cheesy, before you even start to read this column, take a stick of salted butter out of the refrigerator so it can come to room temperature. Go ahead and do it. If you don't, when your stomach starts growling and you have to wait, you'll wish you had. I'll explain why later.*

*Recently, I was at the salon with my beloved hair guru, Michael Petorock, and we were talking about one of our favorite restaurants (which shall remain nameless) in the North Carolina mountains. I was telling Michael that when Vince and I lunched there last August, I had ordered a simple grilled cheese sandwich and was served the most wretched sandwich ever. EVER. Seriously. I mean it was really bad. Two slices of dry toast with a miniscule amount of semi-melted cheese on the inside. Completely disappointing. Michael's response was something like, "why would you order a grilled cheese sandwich in a gourmet restaurant?" I mean, I figured since it was a fine dining establishment, and since grilled cheese was on the menu, that the sandwich would be at least as good as mine – or even better. No such luck.*

*The truth is, you don't have to be a chef to make an amazing grilled cheese sandwich. You just have to know the three secrets. First of all, you have to use room temperature butter. Soft butter makes all the*

*difference. Some chefs use melted butter. I just don't think it gives the same result. You want the butter to flavor and toast the outside of the bread making the sandwich rich and crispy. You don't want bread that's been soaked in butter. Plan ahead and give the butter time to soften. You'll be glad you did, it's totally worth the wait. Secondly, a good-quality white bread is a must. Don't ruin a perfectly good sandwich that's loaded with cheese and slathered in butter thinking you can make it semi-healthy by using whole wheat bread. Just don't do it. Thirdly, and most importantly, you need to understand that there's an art to making a grilled cheese sandwich. It has to be cooked on low heat, low and slow, in order to toast the bread evenly as well as melt the cheese inside. Never cook a grilled cheese sandwich on anything higher than medium heat or you'll end up with over-toasted bread and unmelted cheese.*

*These are some of my favorite grilled cheese sandwich combinations. Be sure to use top quality ingredients. Grilled cheese is not something you get to eat everyday. Or, at least not something you should eat everyday. Make it count. P.S., use a non-stick skillet.*

**Grilled Cheddar, Bacon and Tomato Sandwich**

*I prefer extra-sharp cheddar cheese in almost everything I make. Mild, medium or sharp are also delicious. A ripe tomato is a must!*



2 slices hearty  
white or sourdough bread  
2 tablespoons salted butter,  
divided  
2 slices extra-sharp cheddar  
cheese  
3 slices bacon, cooked  
2 slices ripe tomato

Preheat skillet over medium heat. Generously butter one side of a slice of bread. Place bread, butter side down, onto skillet. Add 2 slices cheese, bacon and tomato slices. Butter a second slice of bread and place, butter side up, on top of sandwich. Grill until bottom side of sandwich is lightly browned. Flip sandwich over and continue grilling until lightly browned and cheese is melted. Serves 1.





### **Grilled Roast Beef, Gruyere and Bleu Cheese Sandwich**

*Use the best quality of beef that you can find – none of that deli stuff. Leftover pot roast or steak would be delicious!*

1 tablespoon mayonnaise  
1 teaspoon prepared horseradish  
2 slices hearty white or sourdough bread  
2 tablespoons salted butter, divided  
2 slices gruyere or Swiss cheese  
Roast beef, thinly sliced  
¼ cup bleu cheese crumbles

In a very small bowl, combine mayonnaise with prepared horseradish; set aside. Preheat skillet over medium heat. Generously butter one side of a slice of bread. Place bread, butter side down, onto skillet. Add 2 slices gruyere cheese, sliced roast beef and bleu cheese crumbles. Spread mayonnaise mixture on one side of the second slice of bread and place it face down on top of sandwich. Butter the other side of the bread. Grill until bottom side of sandwich is lightly browned. Flip sandwich over and continue grilling until lightly browned and cheese is melted. Serves 1.

### **Grilled Goat Cheese, Pesto and Tomato Sandwich**

*If you make your own pesto, use it! If not, prepared pesto will work just as well.*

2 slices hearty white or sourdough bread  
2 tablespoons salted butter, divided  
¼ cup goat cheese, softened  
2 tablespoons basil pesto  
2 slices ripe tomato

Preheat skillet over medium heat. Generously butter one side of a slice of bread. Place bread, butter side down, onto skillet. Add goat cheese, pesto and tomato slices. Butter a second slice of bread and place, butter side up, on top of sandwich. Grill until bottom side of sandwich is lightly browned. Flip sandwich over and continue grilling until lightly browned and cheese is melted. Serves 1.

*The writer owns Catering by Debbi Covington and is the author of two cookbooks, Celebrate Everything! and Dining Under the Carolina Moon. Copies of Celebrate Everything! are for sale in Habersham at Pearls Before Noon. Debbi's website address is*

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by email at  
[dbc@cateringbydebbicovington.com](mailto:dbc@cateringbydebbicovington.com).*







## **Birthdays**

- 4     Jean Brown
- 5     Carole Drexel
- 9     Ann Elizabeth Floyd
- 19    Maureen Turner
- 29    Leo Gannon
- 30    Avery Thomas
- Kaylee Turner
- 31    Kate Zalusky

## **Anniversaries**

- 1     Jim and Lorraine Shapiro



# February



## Birthdays

- |    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 2  | Dorothy Reid     |
| 3  | Terry Connor     |
| 7  | Mallory Baches   |
|    | Kris Hebert      |
| 10 | Jim Shapiro      |
| 12 | Greg Drexel      |
| 13 | Jeff Thomas      |
| 17 | Bob Turner       |
| 23 | Ann Marie Bowden |
|    | Demitri Baches   |
| 25 | Mary Becker      |
| 27 | Diane Voge       |

## Anniversaries

- |    |                                   |
|----|-----------------------------------|
| 20 | Ivie and Steve Szalai             |
| 29 | Connie Valimont and David Aldrich |





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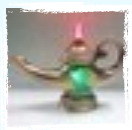
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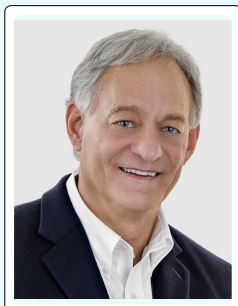
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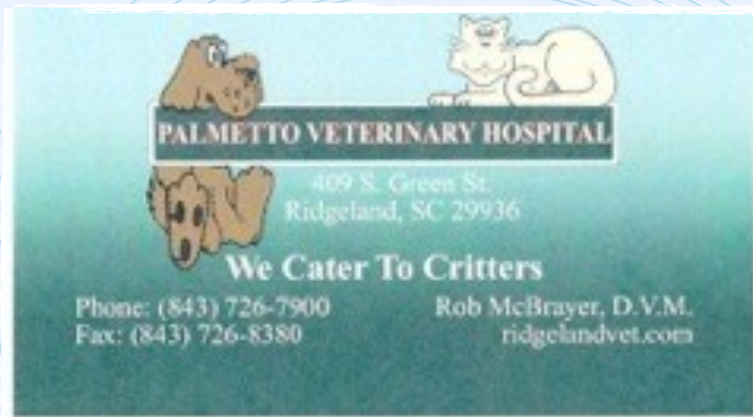
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