

January 2008 Newsletter



The Month Ahead

January 1-5 - The Remaining Twelve Days of Christmas

January 1st - New Year's Day

January 6th - The Epiphany/Twelfth Night

January 21st - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

As the Twelve Days of Christmas draw to a close, our inner focus gently shifts outward as we reflect upon the past and look ahead with anticipation to the future. January is a time of new beginnings, hope and resolutions. It is a time of both Stillness and Movement. We see these dualities as we observe Ice and its ability to transform from form (Stillness) to the formless (Movement). Nature has so many lessons to teach us if we would only listen. Let us look ahead with hope to a world filled of peace as we do our part to teach children the beauty of peace in our own homes each day.

In addition to my January guide, I have provided you with some fun verses and activities to do with the children below... Feel free to forward this newsletter on to those who you feel will find it of value.

XOOX
Eileen

Picture-Books in Winter

~Robert Louis Stevenson



Summer fading, winter comes –
Frosty mornings, tingling thumbs,
Window robins, winter rooks.
And the picture story-books,

Water now is turned to stone
Nurse and I can walk upon;
Still we find the flowing brooks
In the picture story-books.

All the pretty things put by,
Wait upon the children's eye,
Sheep and shepherds, trees and crooks,
In the picture story-books.

We may see how all things are,
Seas and cities, near and far,
And the flying fairies' looks,
In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise?
Happy chimney-corner days,
Sitting safe in nursery nooks,
Reading picture-story books?

The Twelve Days of Christmas

Open a Present on each of the 12 days of Christmas
for a new Random Act of Kindness (RAK) to perform



(click to go to site)

How the Robin's Breast Became Red

~ Adapted from Nature Myths and Stories for Little Children



Long ago in the far North, where it is very cold, there was only one fire. A hunter and his little son took care of this fire and kept it burning day and night. They knew that if the fire went out the people would freeze and the white bear would have the Northland all to himself.

One day the hunter became ill and his son had the work to do. For many days and nights he bravely took care of his father and kept the fire burning. The white bear was always hiding near, watching the fire. He longed to put it out, but he did not dare, for he feared the hunter's arrows. When he saw how tired and sleepy the little boy was, he came closer to the fire and laughed to himself.

One night the poor boy could endure the fatigue no longer and fell fast asleep. The white bear ran as fast as he could and jumped upon the fire with his wet feet, and rolled upon it. At last, he thought it was all out and went happily away to his cave. A gray robin was flying near and saw what the

white bear was doing. She waited until the bear went away. Then she flew down and searched with her sharp little eyes until she found a tiny live coal.

This she fanned patiently with her wings for a long time. Her little breast was scorched red, but she did not stop until a fine red flame blazed up from the ashes. Then she flew away to every hut in the Northland. Wherever she touched the ground a fire began to burn. Soon instead of one little fire the whole north country was lighted up.

The white bear went further back into his cave in the iceberg and growled terribly. He knew that there was now no hope that he would ever have the

Northland all to himself. This is the reason that the people in the north country love the robin, and are never tired of telling their children how its breast became red.

Twelfth Night Cake

Twelfth Night Cake or King's Cake is a pastry traditionally consumed on Epiphany, the "twelfth day of Christmas" (January 6th). Recipes for this famous cake abound, ranging from the typical medieval vagueness (taek ye a measure of flour, and a measure of almonds, mix them together with enough eggs, etc...) to the simple French Galette Des Rois (Three Kings Cake) in which there is a dried bean hidden in the almond paste filling that is simply sealed between two layers of puff pastry.

Twelfth Night is a festival worth celebrating, as it signals the end of the holiday season and can give us a last "hurrah" before emerging out of the magic of the season into to everyday life. Traditionally the cake was presented crowned with a gold paper cut-out crown and a dried bean or pea was baked in the cake. Whoever was lucky enough to find the legume in his or her piece would be crowned king or queen for the day.

Below follows one recipe for Twelfth Night Cake

2 eggs

Cup of sugar (use half a cup of honey instead)

Cup of sour cream

Teaspoon of vanilla flavoring

1/2 teaspoon of lemon flavoring

Round cake tin, (8 inches) across and (3 inch) deep
dried bean
Cake rack

Cream cheese icing:

Mix one package of cream cheese with 1/2 stick butter, some honey and lemon juice.

Beat the eggs and sugar until light and fluffy.

Add the cream and beat, then add the natural flavorings.

Lightly fold in the sifted flour.

Spoon the batter into the well-buttered tin.

Make sure you add the bean

Bake the cake at 325 Fahrenheit for 35 minutes.

Don't open the door. Be patient.

Cool the cake in the tin and then turn it out on to a rack to cool properly.

Instead of using the cream cheese icing you can simply sprinkle some powdered sugar or cacao over the cake. Consider making this cake a bit more nutritious by using half whole wheat (or even better sprouted spelt flour) and half all purpose flour and reducing the amount of sugar or sweetener used.

Recipe and Festival Background graciously provided by Tanya Carwyn.
Tanya is a Certified clinical Herbalist and Nutritionist and real food fanatic. She lives with her husband and their two young daughters in Colorado. To find out more about real food, home cooking, local and seasonal eating and to sign up for her real food newsletter and menu mailer, please visit her web site at www.KitchenMuse.net

Little Acorn Learning
January 2008 Guide



FIVE Weeks of Blessings, Verses, Nature Walks, Crafts, Recipes,
Children's Meditations, Caregiver Meditations, Outdoor Suggestions,
Stories, Fingerplays and More!

Week One, January
A New Year, Beginnings

Week Two, January
Evergreens, Stillness

Week Three, January
Ice, Forgiveness

Week Four, January
Snowflakes, Diversity

Week Five, January
Black Bears, Deep Rest

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