

## Ladies of the Lake – November 2017

by Barbara Galvin

The Ladies of the Lake met on November 1, a lovely afternoon to celebrate an early Thanksgiving Day. Hostesses for November were Darlyne Ackers and Barbara Galvin, who were also helped with setting-up tables and chairs by Darlyne's husband Charlie. Thank you, Charlie!

The Pavilion was decorated in traditional colors for the Fall---orange and yellow with a dash of red. Of course, the main attraction for November is the turkey, so there were turkeys, big and small. Likewise the floral arrangements repeated the fall colors to add to the season.

The potluck luncheon never fails to please with variety and some "tried and true" recipes. Beginning with Stuffed Pepper Soup, the ladies warmed up from the brisk winds. Then the menu included Apricot Glazed Chicken, Chicken Pasta Salad, Watergate Salad, Caesar Salad, Hamburger and Noodle Casserole and last, but not least, Zucchini and Carrot Casserole.

Since there is always room for dessert, the ladies enjoyed festive cookies decorated for the season, tapioca, an old traditional dessert, raspberry and white chocolate scones, scalloped pineapple and two truly traditional dishes: Pumpkin Pie and a scrumptious Pumpkin Dessert.

Hot coffee tasted even better to wash down all the tasty treats. Then Barbara Jonckheere reminded everyone that the December Ladies of the Lake Luncheon will be held at Lake Bracken on December 6. Ladies will be able to order "whatever their little hearts desire" right from the menu. Please let us know if you are planning to join us. Reservations are necessary.

The Christmas luncheon will be followed by "what else?"... Christmas cookies! If you have a favorite cookie recipe you would like to share with the ladies, we will be happy to sample your baking treat!

A fun-filled Grab-Bag exchange will follow. Please wrap the gift which should not be more expensive than \$10.00. Maybe we will even have a little "stealing" going on. Join the fun!

Best healing thoughts and prayers are sent to Peggy McGrew, from all the Ladies of the Lake. We love you, Peggy. We miss you. We pray for you.

A gigantic thank you goes to Cora Lee Douglas, a visiting Lady of the Lake. Thank you for being so generous and especially for always remembering the Ladies of the Lake.

To keep with the Thanksgiving Day theme, Barbara Galvin asked the ladies to think about either their BEST Thanksgiving Day or their WORST. Then, we shared our memories or our "nightmares." Barbara Galvin began the trip down memory lane with the tale of the 23 lb. turkey that was still completely frozen on the day before Thanksgiving, when the in-laws were coming. Of course, Barbara was only married five months and had never before prepared the WHOLE turkey dinner alone! A phone call to her dear Dad and tears made it all happen. A huge frozen bird thawed and soon things were looking much better. Each year Barbara has her handwritten directions from her Dad to follow. No more tears!

Carlene Adams went back to Arizona State and never-to-miss football games. A dear lady friend offered to cook the entire Thanksgiving dinner for 25-30 people, while Carlene went to the football game. What could be sweeter? Wait, the story sours---another "gentleman" had his own idea of what made a Thanksgiving Day dinner. He commandeered the kitchen for his Italian meal, as the dear lady worked on turkey, dressing and mashed potatoes. Too many cooks can certainly spoil the stew---oops, I mean turkey!

Jane Stevens announced to everyone's amazement she never cooked a turkey dinner! We were all listening closely.... Jane has a dear friend Al Waggy, who has invited her for turkey dinner for years. Now, Al has home health care, but the tradition continues. Everyone only makes ONE dish for the Thanksgiving Day feast. Lucky Jane!

Barb Jonckheere is anticipating a wonderful Thanksgiving Day, because her daughter is having the celebration in Kentucky for the family. To add to the festive occasion, Barb's 11 year old grandson has been practicing his pie-making skills, so he will be making the pumpkin pies. How sweet is that?

Darlyne Ackers remembered Thanksgiving day with love and gratitude for her dear husband Charlie, who not only conducted the traditional pumpkin carving activity, but also cooked the entire sit-down Thanksgiving meal for the family. What a sweetheart!

Sandy Morrow remembered her first Thanksgiving Day celebration after her marriage. She was living in a little apartment in Galesburg. The in-laws were coming. All went well for a first!

Patty Anderson shared her story of a friend who grew up on a farm, so she assumed that since Patty was from Minnesota, she must know about turkeys. Wrong! This friend was going to raise her own turkey so she bought 12 baby turkey chicks, raised them in the basement until they grew to be large turkeys. Patty was of course promised her pick of a dandy, home raised turkey. Only one catch---the turkeys were still running around the yard. Bob had to catch the turkey before wringing the neck, cleaning the feathers and proceeding with preparation for cooking. Good news! It all worked! The turkey was delicious, almost as tasty as the funny memories of Bob chasing the turkey!

Barb Dunlap had just moved to Little Swan Lake. Thanksgiving Day was "iffy." If the folks were coming... Yes, they were and her grandson shared that this was the BEST--- celebrating at the lake house. More memories... the best ones, but Barb also remembered a bad one~ Barb's dad had cleaned the oven, and apparently something was disconnected after the thorough cleaning. That meant the turkey was not cooking! The guests arrived and commented on "where's the turkey aroma?" There was no aroma of turkey cooking because the turkey was not cooking. The guests ate all the trimmings and enjoyed without ever having turkey.

Pam Gaskill revisited the 80's, when Thanksgiving Day had brought a blizzard. There was "lots of snow" and it was deep. There was no one traveling anywhere but Pam had wonderful neighbors who thought to consolidate Thanksgiving. Pam and her family walked the quarter mile to her neighbors to celebrate, while all their guests had a postponed holiday.

Nancy Hoppes reminisced about her Grandma's oyster dressing for Thanksgiving Day turkey. Then, the new tradition begun by her dear husband is grilled turkey, because "the oven is way too small." Two years ago, her son sent plane tickets for his parents to join them for a traditional Thanksgiving Day meal with grilled turkey and oyster dressing. Yum.

Sharon Butler remembered travelling to Denver to visit her husband John's brother for Thanksgiving. All the kids wanted to ski, so they did it after putting the turkey in the oven. Upon arriving home, there was no turkey aroma to greet them. The timer on the oven malfunctioned, so turkey was methodically micro-waved in parts! Several years ago, Sharon also shared how she was attempting to be "jazzy" with a brand new punch bowl placed in a prominent place, and the new recipe for Spiced Hot Punch. When she poured the punch into the bowl, it cracked and her brother could have been badly burned except for Sharon's quick thinking--- She shouted, "drop your drawers!"

From turkeys, the ladies recalled how tradition also dictates what bowls, gravy boats, plates or platters are utilized for Thanksgiving Day specialties. Patty Anderson said, "we call the special things 'the precious.'"

Several other ladies regretted that young people do not use china or silver. Instead, paper plates and plastic are the order of the day! But, Lonnie Woodring saved the day by reminding all that even without special dishes, the tradition continues with special recipes. Her family gathers at Sterling-Rock Falls, where Lonnie's mother cooks turkey, while others are "assigned" sweet potato casserole, dressing and green bean casserole. Formal dining can be labor intensive or group-gathering to share the jobs.

Ladies of the Lake enjoying not only the luncheon, but also the memories, were: Darlyne Ackers, Nancy Hoppes, Carlene Adams, Sharon Butler, Pam Gaskill, Lonnie Woodring, Sandy Morrow, Barbara Galvin, Patty Anderson, Jane Stevens, Barb Dunlap, and Barbara Jonckhere.

Before wishing everyone a Blessed Thanksgiving, we would like to share with the Ladies of the Lake not present that Jane Stevens not only received the marker for Ed, but also placed the special remembrance stone in the Memorial Garden. Jane was truly appreciative and over-whelmed by the Ladies' generosity and thoughtfulness. We all knew Jane's Ed and loved him!

Happy Thanksgiving to you! May your Thanksgiving be filled with laughter, friendship, family and food. Don't forget to be thankful to the dear Lord.

"Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow." Melody Beattie said this, and if we remember it, gratitude can make our holiday even better. Enjoy and count those blessings.