



Puppy Tails

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*As the moon goes to bed,
the sun comes up
And here we meet a sleepy pup,
Who was walking through
G-ville one bright sunny day,
Then saw The Villager
and decided to stay.*

Just a little bit farther and the pencil would be just in Doodle Dog's reach. The little floppy-eared puppy stretched his neck as far as he could and barely, just barely, touched the tip of his wet nose to the tip of the pencil's pink eraser. Gently he nudged the pencil sideways until it rolled out from under the desk. Doodle Dog had spent all afternoon hunting down strewn papers and scattered pencils. They sure did skitter into all the tiniest of crevices!

As Doodle Dog wiggled out from under the desk, dirt and grime covered his paws and the specks of dust floated up into his nose. ACHOO! With one rather large sneeze from one rather small puppy, all the papers Doodle Dog had gathered went flying this way and that, and all the pencils that had been on top of those papers went rolling that way and this. It was definitely going to be an even longer afternoon! Doodle Dog was getting quite good at cleaning up – he'd had a LOT of practice! – so chasing down the pencils wasn't too hard to do. Within no time, he'd found all of them... all of them except one.

Sitting back on his hind legs, Doodle Dog took a moment to look this way and that, peering from under the desk to under the filing cabinet to... ah HA! In the corner of the office sat the bookcase, empty because all of its books were now stacked neatly next to it, and rolling just past the stack of books and under the empty bookcase was the very last pencil. The little floppy-eared puppy made his way over to the bookcase and tried to scoot under it, but he was JUST a bit not-little-enough. He tried to stretch his paw under the bookcase to fish out the pencil, but his leg was JUST a bit not-long-enough. So Doodle Dog decided he would have to squish his whole self under the bookcase and maybe, just maybe, he would be able to reach the pencil with his nose. Doodle Dog soon found out he was indeed just squishy enough to squeeze into the narrow space where he expected, or at least hoped, that he would be able to grab the pencil with his teeth and be on his way. Once under the bookcase, however, Doodle Dog also soon found out it was much easier to get into the small area than it would be to get back out. The dirt and grime that covered his paws from the space under the desk also seemed to have found a home under

the desk's neighbor, the bookcase. In the shadows it was hard to see much of anything let alone a tiny stick of an object that could be stuck in any corner or crevice it wanted.

Trying to see past the gloom, Doodle Dog squinted and squinted some more and soon the pencil came into focus. Then, from around the bright yellow pencil, came floating two little white fluffy balls of dust, hopping toward the floppy-eared puppy. Doodle Dog was more curious than afraid as he eyed the tiny spheres of fuzz wafting his way. The dust bunnies hopped happily along from the edge of the pencil to the side of the bookcase leg to the puppy's paws to the stack of books piled neatly just outside their shade-covered home.

Doodle Dog turned one floppy ear curiously to listen as the dust bunnies began to tell him of the great adventures in the storybooks stacked neatly there. They chattered about the fast ships sailed by explorers and the grand castles ruled by adventurers. Doodle Dog knew some of the stories, but others he'd never heard before. Then to his amusement they chattered about all the things they hear living under the bookcase in the office. What an interesting life they must have! Doodle Dog always wondered what the walls would say if they could talk, and the dust bunnies were even better than the walls – if they were bored all they had to do was take a ride on someone's shoe, paw, or a particularly intriguing gust of wind to take a new journey. Doodle Dog was so very much entertained that he quite forgot he had been sort-of-stuck. He didn't want to stop chatting with the friendly dust bunnies and their so-very-much-interesting tales, but he knew he really had to get back to work, so he carefully wiggled this way and that way until he was sort-of-unstuck and the pencil came rolling out with him. Besides, if the floppy-eared puppy ever wanted a talkative visit, he knew just where to find them and he was quite sure he would again someday soon!

Rotary Report

IVA WALKER

Garrettsville-Hiram Rotary Club continues to gear up for their signature project, Family Week. Forms have been distributed to Garfield and Windham schools for student participation in various competitions. Musicians of many genres have been --and continue to be--invited to the Family Music Festival kicking off the activities. The Family Fun Day culminating event continues to take shape. Stay tuned; mark your calendar.

It's heads up time for the approaching Four Way Speech Contest. District finals will be held this year in Aurora on March 31. Local competition will be on March 12. Local students are urged to step up and step out with their illustrations and illuminations, straight talk and sincere feelings to answer the four questions: Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build good will and better friendship? Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

The club decided to make a donation to the Blue Knights Shop With A Cop program

Program for the evening was presented by Elizabeth DeLuca, an exchange student from Findlay University with the Kake Summer Ambassador Program. She described her experiences with Japanese language and culture as well as the various locations and activities which were part of the program. These included the Takashiho Gorge, a volcano, the city of Hiroshima and a meeting with an A-bomb survivor. She displayed artifacts and memorabilia, photos and a keen appreciation of what the experience had done for her understanding of her American roots. She learned, for the first time, what it's like to be a foreigner.

Something to think about when one is safe at home.



Notes from the vineyard

AMANDA CONKOL

It's the season of flowers, fancy dinners and of course lots of hearts. Although if your Valentine's Day is anything like ours the night is filled with homework, a quick dinner and running out the door to the next sports practice or dance lesson. While Valentine's Day has never been a major event – even in college my husband would take me to the nearest card section, pick out a card, let me read it, say Happy Valentine's Day then place the card back on the shelf!

Even though Valentine's Day isn't a big holiday for us we have turned it around to be a time when we cook up something new to try. So in honor of this holiday I thought I would share a couple of our favorite recipes for you to try.

If you've been reading my column for a while you know that I love dry red wine, but even more so I love champagne! So when I found this recipe a couple of years ago it was truly love at first sip!

Pour a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon from Candlelight Winery into a decanter (if you do not have a decanter a regular pitcher works too). Add 5 tsp of lemon juice, 5 tsp of sugar and 1 can of soda water. Gently stir and serve! You get the hint of the red wine but with the effervescence of champagne.

Along with wine I am quite the chocoholic. I love all chocolates, dark, milk, white, truffles, I could go on and on. So when I came across a chocolate cake that had red wine

as a key ingredient I was in heaven.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (not Dutch process)
- 1 1/4 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 sticks unsalted butter, softened
- 1 3/4 cups sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 1/4 cups Sangiovese from Candlelight Winery
- Confectioner's sugar, for dusting

Whipped cream, for serving
Preheat the oven to 350°. Butter and flour a 12-cup bundt pan. In a bowl, whisk the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt. In a large bowl, using a handheld electric mixer, beat the butter with the sugar at medium-high speed until fluffy, 4 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat until incorporated. Add the vanilla and beat for 2 minutes longer. Working in two batches, alternately fold in the dry ingredients and the wine, until just incorporated. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan, and bake for 45 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the cake cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then turn it out onto a rack; let cool completely. Dust the cake with confectioner's sugar and serve with whipped cream.

No matter how you celebrate this season I hope you fall in love with some new wine recipes.

PFG BY THE NUMBERS

Invest • Insure • Retire

1. SMOOTHER - The S&P 500 reached its 2011 closing high on 4/29/11, the final trading day in April. Over the subsequent 8 months through the end of 2011, the stock index had a daily gain or loss of at least 1% (total return) on 81 separate trading days, an average of 10 per month. In the first month of 2012, there were just 2 days when the S&P 500 experienced a daily gain or loss of at least 1%. The S&P 500 is an unmanaged index of 500 widely held stocks that is generally considered representative of the US stock market (source: BTN Research).

2. STOCKS AND BONDS - In the last 25 years (i.e., 1987-2011), the S&P 500 stock index has produced a total return of at least +20% in 9 different years, most recently in 2009 (achieving a gain of +26.5%). Over the same period, long-term US treasuries have produced a total return of at least +20% in 4 different years, most recently in 2011 (achieving a gain of +29.9%). The Barclays Capital Long-Term Treasury index, calculated using US Treasury publicly issued obligations with maturities of 10 years or greater, was used as the bond measurement (source: BTN Research, Barclays Capital).

3. BETTER THAN MOST - The S&P 500 was up +4.5% (total return) in January 2012, its best January since 1997. The month's performance was better than 83% of the last 250 months (source: BTN Research).

4. SUPER PRICES - The most expensive Super Bowl ticket (face value price, not the price paid through a ticket broker) for Super Bowl # 1 in Los Angeles (1967) was \$12. The most expensive ticket for Super Bowl # 46 in Indianapolis (2012) is \$1,200. The increase in Super Bowl ticket prices from \$12 in 1967 to \$1,200 in 2012 is equal to +10.8% compounded per year for 45 years (source: Super Bowl).

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