

Mary shares favorite recipe for awesome pecan tarts, helpful hints from the readers

Last spring, I had the wonderful opportunity to visit the Arthur Hufnagel Public Library of Glen Rock, Pa., during National Library Week. I was there to give a speech about my books and my mission to help people get out of debt by living below their means. I received far more than I gave.

For such a small community, this place is big on involvement. Because the library was celebrating its founding, the place was filled with antique toys, books and other interesting objects that dated back to the library's founding. It was awesome!

Everyone from the library staff to the local residents who packed the library for this event were warm and welcoming. They even prepared a reception to follow my presentation, which brings me to the main event of today's column: tarts.

The librarian, Gina Mumaw, contributed the most amazing mini-pecan tarts to the array of cookies spread out on the buffet table. Now, I've had pecan tarts before, but these were above and beyond anything I'd ever tasted.



MARY HUNT

EVERYDAY CHEAPSKATE

Within a few days of returning home, I found a wonderful message in my e-mail from Mumaw, complete with the recipe for her tarts and permission to share it with you.

Pecan Tossies

Mini shells:
1/4 cup butter, softened
1 3-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1 cup flour
In a small bowl, cream together the butter and cream cheese. Mix in flour to form a stiff dough. Divide into 24 balls, about 1-inch each. Press each ball into the greased well of a mini-muffin tin to form shells. Set aside.

Filling:

2 eggs
1-1/2 cups brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup chopped pecans
1/4 cup melted butter

In a medium bowl, beat eggs with fork; add brown sugar, melted butter and vanilla, stirring to incorporate. Add nuts. Fill shells and bake at 350 F for 20 to 25 minutes.

Yield: 24 tarts.

Helpful hints from the readers

If you like to find new ways to use stuff you already have around the house, you are going to love today's collection of tips, submitted by my clever readers who know how to save time and money every day.

HONEY SKIN CARE: Just wanted to share a tip of mine regarding skin care: Mix equal amounts of honey and cornmeal. This makes an excellent exfoliant for the face, elbows and heels. And it leaves your skin feeling wonderful. Smells nice, too. -- Lee C., e-mail

BALANCE OF TOYS: I remember a family friend used a method to avoid an overabundance of toys that sat around their house not being used. Their children grew up knowing that after Christmas there would be a toy count of new toys they received as

gifts. They would then go to their rooms and find the same number of toys to get rid of. Of the toys they picked, one could be put away and kept in a memory box. They would then make a trip to a local charity as a family to give away the toys the children had decided they wouldn't be playing with anymore. This method helped to keep their house much cleaner than most other houses with children that I've seen. The kids learned a valuable lesson about keeping what's important and giving the other things to local charities. -- Beth S., e-mail

TREE STAND: Instead of buying a fancy Christmas-tree stand (they never fit the tree you buy) or struggling with a bucket and assorted bricks, I found you can take a large planter and fill the space around the tree's trunk with tightly rolled newspapers. Once the tree is pretty jammed upright, start to pour water into the planter. The newspapers expand, making the tree absolutely stable. (You'll struggle to remove it in two weeks time!) The tree has a water reservoir that lasts for the whole season. I will never put up a tree in any other way again. -- Jennie B., e-mail

STAIN REMOVAL: I tried Murphy's Oil Soap Household Cleaner (available in grocery stores and others like Target and Wal-Mart) to pretreat my laundry stains. It worked better than anything else I have tried. First, I used it straight from the bottle, until I discovered I could save money by diluting it 10 parts water to 1 part product in a spray bottle without sacrificing any of the effectiveness. Most of the time, I don't even rub the stain. I just spray and toss it in the washer. -- Lisa G., California

Mary Hunt is the founder and publisher of Debt-Proof Living newsletter and Debt-Proof Living Web site (www.debtproofliving.com). To send a question or tip, e-mail cheapskate@unitmedia.com or write to Everyday Cheapskate, P.O. Box 2135 Paramount, CA 90723.

Datebook

DECEMBER

- 11 — RED CROSS BLOODMOBILE**, 1-7 | Austinburg Town Hall, 2794 Route 307 E.
- 11-15 — SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday. Public Library Welcome Center, 3105 School St.
- 12-15 — CHRISTMAS GIFT SALE**, at Ashtabula Medical Center Gift Shop, 2420 Lake Ave., Ashtabula, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, no p.m. Saturday. 25 percent discount. Sponsored by Auxiliary Volunteers.
- 12-15 — BOOK SALE**, 9:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Thursday; 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday at Conneaut Library, 304 Buffalo St.
- 13 — "THE POLAR EXPRESS,"** 6 p.m. at Harbor Library, 1633 Walnut Blvd., Ashtabula. Meet the author, enjoy hot cocoa, see the elves and Santa at the Pole.
- 14 — RED CROSS BLOODMOBILE**, 1-7 | Chardon United Methodist, 515 North St.
- 14 — WINTER CONCERT**, 7 p.m. at Geneva School, 1301 S. Ridge East.
- 14, 15 — NISU BAKE SALE**, by order only. Call (Ray) Koski of Ashtabula, for orders. Sponsor: Bethany Lutheran Church.
- 15 — RED CROSS BLOODMOBILE**, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, 4317 Park Ave., Ashtabula.
- 15, 16 — 3rd ANNUAL LIVE DRIVE-THRU NATIVITY**, 9 p.m. Geneva Church of the Nazarene, 710 Cedar St.
- 16 — VINTAGE FILM FESTIVAL**, 6:30 p.m. at Kingsville Public Library Welcome Center, 3105 School St. is an old-fashioned Christmas. Concession stand sponsored by Friends of the Kingsville Library.
- 16 — CHRISTMAS CONCERT**, 8 p.m. at Lakeside School, 6600 Sanborn Road, Ashtabula. Ashtabula Orchestra in concert with Lake County Messiah and Lakeside High School Choir. Tickets at do Italian dinner 7 p.m. with orchestra. Reservations Dec. 14.
- 16 — 10th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SONGFEST**, p.m. at Conneaut City Hall, 294 Main St.
- 16 — WINTERFEST**, 5-8 p.m. at Cornerstone Church, 2300 Hubbard Road, Madison. Visit the 34th Street in New York City, caroling, horse sleigh rides, crafts for the kids, games, stories, liv ity. Free admission.
- 16 — BREAKFAST WITH SANTA**, 9-11:30 a.m. Post 8548, 7604 Lake Road E., Madison. Eat sausage and beverage. Bring your camera. Ch shopping; wrap your own gifts. Sponsored by Auxiliary.
- 16 — "HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS"**, a.m. at Harbor-Topsy Library, 1633 Walnut Ashtabula. Presented by "Story Weavers."
- 16 — HOLIDAY ROUND/SQUARE DANCE**, 8 p.m. at Jefferson Grange, 50 S. Chestnut St. Fe Encounter's Band, cakewalk and refreshments.
- 17 — HOLIDAY BENEFIT CONCERT**, 3 p.m. Conneaut First Congregational United Church of Main and Buffalo Sts. Part of the "Bit's and Pieces" program presented by The Madison Chorale-ation of Rabbit Run Theatre.
- 17 — HOLIDAY CONCERT**, sing-along, Christmas Hanukkah favorites, 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter Ep Church, 4901 Main Ave., Ashtabula. Featuring Ck Heritage Brass Quintet; Joseph Petros, organist; Melissa Sorohan, vocalist. Sponsored by St. Peter Arts Concert Committee. Free.
- 17 — CHRISTMAS CANTATA** with guests: Martinez, Courtney Fields and Lakeside Ch Singers, 5 p.m. at Hiawatha Church of God in 3417 Hiawatha Ave., Ashtabula. Free adn Donation requested for reception after concert.
- 17 — LIVE NATIVITY**, 7 p.m. at First United Me Church, 4506 Elm Ave., Ashtabula.
- 17 — BENEFIT AUCTION**, 2 p.m. at Expo Ashtabula County Fairgrounds, 127 N. El Jefferson. Sponsored by Ashtabula County Fairb new merchandise.
- 17 — 16th ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHOIR CON** 7 p.m. at Geneva Methodist Church, 89 S. Bro Free admission.



The Legal Aid Society
of Cleveland
Since 1915

Volunteer Lawyers Program
[vlp]

Legal Aid recognizes and thanks the attorneys from

ANDREWS & PONTIUS LLC

Mark Andrews
Philip Cordova
Jason Fairchild

Jeffrey Ford
Pamela Houston
David Pontius

for volunteering their time and talent for the
Inaugural Brief Advice & Referral Clinic of
The Volunteer Lawyers Program in
Ashtabula County.

Special thanks to

Pamela Houston for organizing this pro bono effort.

Exceptional price for a digital hearing instrument

AudioChoice®
digital contour
hearing
instrument from
Miracle-Ear

\$495*
only

