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Contact Susan Nye at
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There are so many crazy, silly holidays out there. Leave Some Zucchini on Your Neighbor's Back Porch Night is among my favorites. As are Ice Cream Day, Waffle Iron Day and Teddy Bears' Picnic Day. May is a particularly busy month when it comes to celebrations. There is Lumpy Rug Day on the 3rd, National Candied Orange Peel Day on the 4th, Lost Sock Memorial Day on the 9th and Dance Like a Chicken Day on the 14th; the fun goes on and on. I think my favorite is Fly a Kite Day on May 12th.

When I was in high school I bought a button with the simple words Go Fly a Kite. I pinned it to my purse or backpack or whatever I happened to be carrying at the time. I bought it because I really liked the sense of fun and freedom that comes with flying a kite. Later it dawned on me that this message was actually a seemingly friendly request to anyone and everything that might have been bugging me to go away. (Take a hike was the preferred "leave me alone" expression in our household.) Anyway at fifteen or sixteen there are lots of people and things that bugged me so I was happy to sport this new not so double entendre.

When I realized that Kite Day was coming I remembered the button. I hung onto it for years. Long after I stopped wearing it, I stuck it up on bulletin boards at college, graduate school and at more than one major corporation. Since I am a bit of pack rat (and by the way Pack Rat Day is May 17th), I figured that the button might still be around. I surprised myself, not that I found it but that I found it in minutes. It is back in place over my desk. Once again it is a personal reminder to soar high and enjoy the day as well as a message to bores, blowhards or bullies to leave me alone.



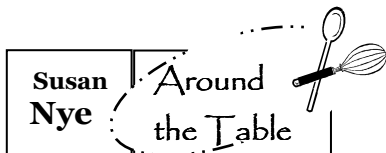
Getting back to kites, I have never been particularly good at making or flying kites but I still think they are wonderful. A bright, colorful kite flying high in the sky is such a joyful site. There is something about watching a kite bob and weave in a bright blue sky that just makes me smile.

Kites have always been one of my favorite gifts to give and receive and I have given them to kids of all ages. There have been Mini Mouse and Superman kites for nieces and nephews and godchildren. In my teens and twenties, long flowing dragons and rainbows were given to friends as well as my brother and sister. Of these many kites, a few have ended up in trees or suffered crash landings but most brought at least one afternoon of fun. Then again, not all had the joy of a highflying adventure. Rather than soar in the clear blue sky, they adorned college dorm rooms or brought a little color and whimsy to first apartments. A colorful kite wound its way around the walls of at least one or two of my dorm rooms and my first studio apartment. Long flowing tails make particularly good decorations.



The next time the sun is shining and a nice breeze is blowing, why not take your kids or grandkids, a niece or nephew or even the kid next door (ask his or her mother or father first!) to go fly a kite.

Bon appétit
 and enjoy!



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Contact me at

susannye@tds.net

603/526 7319

PO Box 1875 - New London

New Hampshire 03257

Black and White Brownies

Brownies are the perfect treat to take on a kite flying expedition. I made these brownies by happy accident. I was one cup short of chocolate chips but discovered a bag of white chocolate chips in the cupboard. I improvised and the results were delicious. Enjoy!

24 brownies

8 ounces unsalted butter
8 ounces semisweet chocolate chips
3 ounces unsweetened chocolate
3 large eggs
1 tablespoon instant coffee powder
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 cup sugar
1 cup white chocolate chips
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons flour, divided
1/2 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a 9-inch by 13-inch pan.

Melt together the butter, semisweet chocolate chips and unsweetened chocolate in a heavy pan over very low heat. Stir frequently and remove from the heat when the butter and chips are just about melted. Whisk to combine until completely melted and smooth. Cool slightly.

Whisk together the eggs, instant coffee, vanilla and sugar. Slowly add to the chocolate mixture, stirring constantly. Cool to room temperature.

Put the white chocolate chips in a small bowl. Add 2 tablespoons flour and toss to coat.

Whisk 1/2 cup flour with the baking powder and salt. Add to the cooled chocolate mixture. Fold in the white chocolate chips and any remaining flour. Pour the batter into the prepared pan.

Bake for about 30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean; don't over bake. Cool thoroughly and cut into squares.