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With Halloween we turn the page to November, a dreary month with icy rain and slushy snow. The kayak has been put away until spring but the chairlifts are still sitting idle on the mountain. Thank goodness for Guy Fawkes, Al Capp, Sarah Hale and the Philadelphia Police Department. Wittedly or not, this quartet brought us reprieve from the dark days of November. Each in their own way gave us something to celebrate during this lackluster month.

Guy Fawkes Night on November 5<sup>th</sup> commemorates the failed attempt to blow up the English House of Parliament by Fawkes and friends in 1605. It is celebrated with bonfires and fireworks. Having heard a few pops over the Columbus Day weekend, I know that many of you re still have a stash of fireworks. Cocktails on the deck around an outdoor fire pit and few bottle rockets sounds like a delightful way to

spend an hour or two. I'm betting your neighbors will be happy that you set off your fireworks during the cocktail hour instead of the middle of the night!

If it wasn't for Al Capp we wouldn't have Sadie Hawkins Day. In case you don't remember him or missed his satirical hillbilly tales, humorist, Al Capp had a forty year run in the funny papers. Capp is generally applauded as one of the top ten cartoonists of all time. Lucky for us, he invented Sadie Hawkins Day and set it in November. November 13<sup>th</sup> to be exact. I'm not sure if anyone celebrates it any more but I do remember Sadie Hawkins dances in college. Why not invite your sweetheart (or that cute guy you met last month) out for a romantic dinner?

Thanks to Sarah Hale we have Thanksgiving Day in November. With not much else going on, I spend a fair amount of time anticipating and planning the big feast day. My dad is also a fan and has already reserved the turkey. (Which I will cook, deaf to his running commentary and advice.) Born in Newport New Hampshire (yes Newport), Mrs. Hales was the author of *Mary Had a Little Lamb* and editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*, a wildly popular and influential women's magazine in the 1800's. It was Mrs. Hale who urged Abraham Lincoln to proclaim a national day of Thanksgiving.

Although he did not decree turkey and cranberry sauce, the President declared Thanksgiving on the last\*Thursday of November. Known to suffer from melancholia, Lincoln might have picked November as a way to brighten an otherwise dull month. The pilgrims celebrated the first Thanksgiving in July but I'm glad it was moved to November. It just wouldn't be the same if we celebrated with a chicken barbecue.

The day after Thanksgiving has been a big shopping day for decades but was not dubbed Black Friday until the mid-1960s. Frazzled by massive traffic jams, the Philadelphia Police Department gave it the name. The frenzied shopping day is fueled by deep discounts and predawn opening hours. Without a doubt, it is the most glorious day of the year for shop-till-you-drop-aholics. I think a quiet day at home making a big pot of turkey soup sounds like a much better idea.

Enjoy November and bon appétit!

\* Congress moved Thanksgiving to the fourth Thursday in November in 1941.



### Roasted Carrots & Pearl Onions

*Throughout November I'll be passing on recipes and advice for that feast of feast, Thanksgiving. I'm pretty sure these carrots will be on my menu. The leftovers\* make a great soup! Enjoy.*

Serves 6-8

3 pounds carrots, peeled and sliced on the diagonal  
 1 pound frozen pearl onions  
 Extra virgin olive oil  
 Apple cider vinegar  
 1/2 tablespoon fresh thyme or 1/2 teaspoon dried  
 Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Put the carrots and onions on baking sheets in a single layer. Using a 2-to-1 ration, drizzle with enough olive oil and cider vinegar to lightly coat. Sprinkle with thyme, salt and pepper, toss to combine and re-spread the vegetables in a single layer.

Bake uncovered at 375 degrees, stirring once or twice, for 30 minutes or until the vegetables are browned and tender.

*Can be made ahead. Cool to room temperature and store covered in the refrigerator. Transfer to a baking dish and reheat at 350 degrees for 15 minutes or until piping hot.*

*\* I always make enough for leftovers and roast a few stalks of chopped celery for the soup.*

### Roasted Carrot & Onion Soup

*A wonderful use of the leftovers!*

Leftover roasted carrots and onions (and celery – optional)  
 Chicken, turkey or vegetable stock  
 Cream – optional  
 Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste  
 Garnish: fresh chopped chives

Toss the vegetables in the blender with enough stock to cover. Process until smooth. Add more stock until you reach the desired consistency.

Put the soup in a pot with a bay leaf and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10-15 minutes. If you like, add a touch of cream season to taste with salt and pepper and reheat to steaming. Serve garnished with chopped chives.

*Like many soups, this one is best made ahead of time. Cool, cover and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Reheat over low heat until steaming.*



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