

A Turkey Day to Remember

Holidays. Some people love them, some hate them, but with the holidays comes all that wonderful food. All the years I spent at home, we always had a feast, and every relative and friend we had always ended up at our house on those special occasions. Great memories and great food.

After my Grandmother passed away and my Mom remarried the love of her life and moved away, my brother and I found ourselves on our own as Thanksgiving was approaching. It appeared we would be fending for ourselves this year but closer to the big day we found we had three dinner invitations to choose from. After a little thought, I quietly thanked everyone for the invitations, but told everyone I had decided I wanted to attempt to cook my own dinner this year.

A couple of days before the occasion, I collected tried and true recipes from friends and went grocery shopping. I got all the usual, traditional goodies including a small turkey. I was so excited. The day came. Actually, the early morning before, as I had set the alarm to get an early start.

I got out my recipe collection and soon had my friend's chicken and dressing cooking while I whipped up a green bean casserole and put the potatoes on to cook. The turkey was now roasting in a slow oven and getting basted occasionally with white wine. The smell was heavenly.

My neighbor, a sweet little lady that lived across the street called to tell me she had baked me a pie. She laughed and said she wanted to contribute to Thanksgiving history. Looking back this was almost prophetic. I thanked her and told her I would come over as soon as my turkey was done.

It was getting pretty warm and stuffy in the kitchen by now so I raised the glass panel on the storm door to let in the nice cool breeze.

Soon the potatoes were done, mashed and set aside. The turkey crisp and brown was ready to come out of the oven. I took him out and placed the roasting pan on a big, fluffy towel on the table. I couldn't believe how well it had come out. Grandma would be so proud! I left everything on the table to cool a bit and headed out the front door and across the street to get my pie. Turned out there were two, a pecan and a chocolate. My brother and a couple of his friends would be home soon so I needed to get the table set.

As I came in the front door I heard a strange noise. It was a banging noise like something beating on metal. I moved toward the kitchen to put my pies on the counter, and that's when I saw what was making the banging sound. It was the sound of my roasting pan banging up and

down on the floor. I took a moment to register the large dog with the turkey in his mouth, but there it was. I think I screamed to the top of my lungs. I do know that's when the swearing started. Words came out of my mouth that even I didn't realize I knew...

Thump, thump, thump; with every one another bite was gone. Uppie, my black fuzzy, part Labrador dog was standing by the table paws deep in the roasting pan devouring Thanksgiving. He had already eaten so much his sides were pooching out. When I had left through the front door, he had jumped through the screen in the storm door that I had raised earlier, the screen material poking out in a confirmation.

I grabbed the broom and went after him. Out the door, down the steps he was waddling with every move. Fortunately for him I still couldn't catch him but he finally stopped anyway. But I was too tired to kill him so I just sat down where I was and started blubbering and feeling extremely sorry for myself. Neighbors said later there was a lot of swearing in the yard too. I don't remember a lot about that part.

My brother was home by now with our friends and they were ready for dinner. I thought about the three invitations I had turned down for this and I had to smile.

We all sat down around the table and had pie. I was good pie. It was Thanksgiving pie. And it was the best pie I had eaten in a long time.

Poor Uppie was forgiven. He didn't want very much to eat for a couple of days but he came around. I was worried about him at first. He ate almost an entire turkey.

After the mess was cleaned up and the drama was over I made a note to shut the back door and leave it shut while I was cooking at Christmas. And I think ham sounds good this time.

Do you think a dog could eat a whole ham? I don't think I will chance it.

Joyce Burns
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