

COLUMN

Easter bunnies again already?

I used to do a super-duper job of celebrating all the holidays.

Have you ever noticed how quickly they come around?

Every month has special day that requires mothers to cook, clean, and entertain house guests.

For freedom from impending holiday work, I now turn to my favorite trivia book.

Did you know that Easter is also the name of an ancient Saxon festival and of the pagan goddess of spring and offspring, 'Eastre,' according to "Panati's Extraordinary Origins of Everyday Things."

Panati is full of interesting info:

■ The Easter Bunny also comes to us from Anglo-Saxon roots because Eastre's earthly symbol was the hare.

■ Eggs had been used by the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans before the time of Jesus as a symbol of fertility. German immigrants brought them, to America as part of the celebration.

■ It was the Council of Nicaea, in A.D. 325, who established that Easter would be celebrated on Sunday instead of Friday or Saturday as it had been on occasion before then.

■ Observance of Easter was not widespread in the U.S. until after the Civil War when the Presbyterians resurrected it (sorry about the bad pun) as a "source of inspiration and hope for millions of bereaved Americans."

Knowing the history of traditions helps give me freedom to pick and choose what I will spend my time preparing for.

We have a tradition at our house that you might consider folding into your festivities next year.

An archnemesis to the Easter Bunny, the Egg Snatcher

CATHY KRAFVE



Checklist Charlie

steals our breakfast at almost any excuse throughout the year.

He leaves clues in Easter eggs all over the neighborhood. Easter eggs make terrific clue containers any time.

Fortunately, after a brisk walk, we always find breakfast in some place that is perfect for a picnic, usually the tree fort.

Yes, it is original, maybe downright strange.

Still, no stranger than Easter Bunnies.

I can't help but think that the early Christians would be surprised to discover the way we celebrate the Resurrection.

For example, my Dad survived open-heart surgery 13 years ago and we've been celebrating ever since, but not just once a year on the anniversary.

Surviving surgery is one thing.

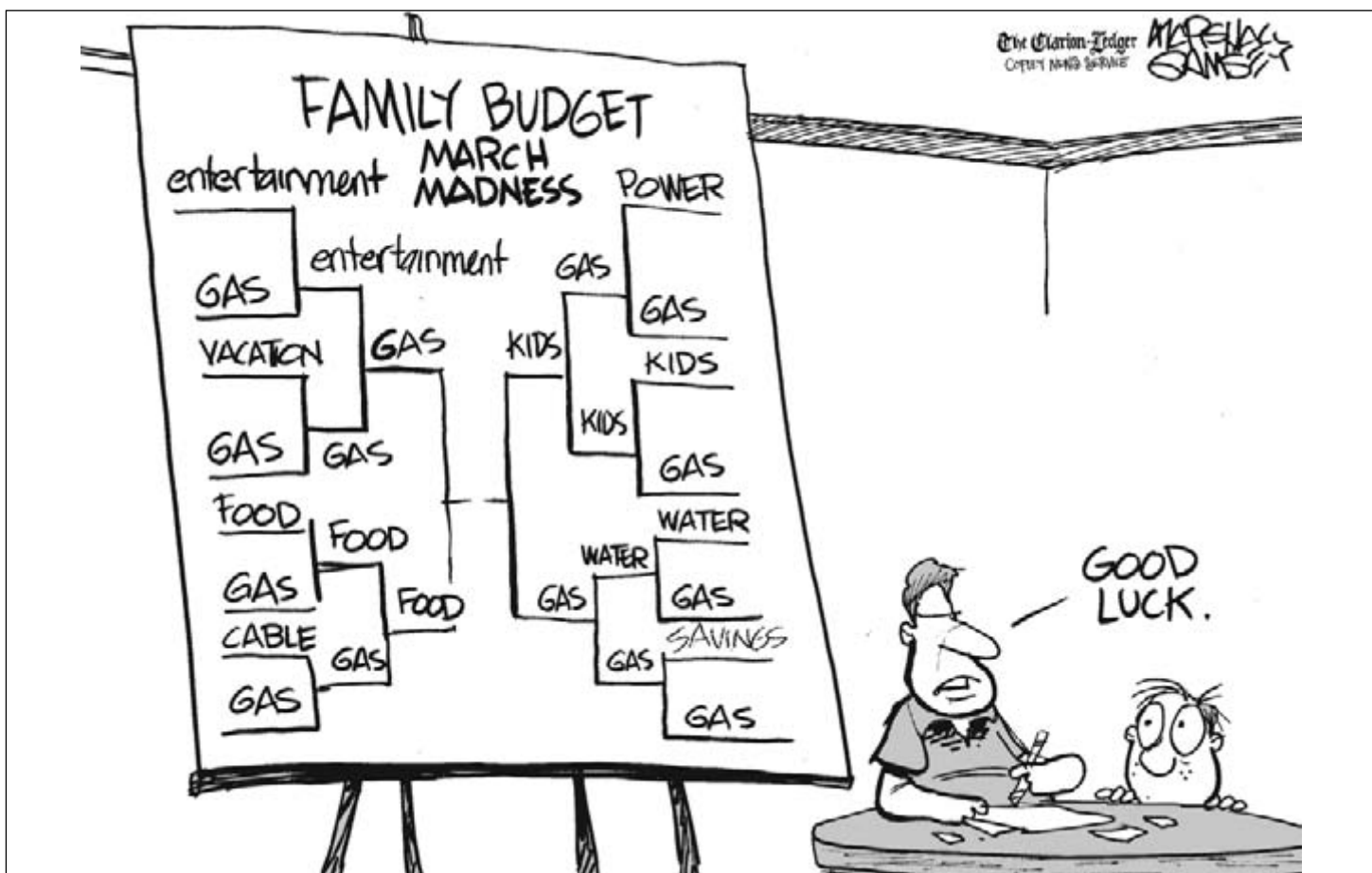
Dying for our sins and rising back up to talk about it is another.

Seems like the Resurrection is worth more attention than one day a year -- just a thought.

Anyway, in spite of the fact that they only became popular in the late 1880s, I feel free to buy lots of chocolate bunnies. And you better believe I will eat my share.

Happy late Easter to all. And Happy Resurrection, too, all year long.

Cathy Primer Krafve, aka checklist Charlie, celebrates holidays at home with her family in beautiful East Texas. Comments are welcome at CaeKrafve2@aol.com.



COLUMN

Easter holds warmest memories

One of my favorite photographs is the one taken of my brother and me on Easter Sunday, April 21, 1946.

Daddy posed us in our backyard, just a few feet in front of our chain link fence.

In the background, across the street is the three-story frame Highland family house.

Next to it is the brick bungalow belonging to the Stylers.

Easter Sunday in Chicago could be a beautifully warm spring day or completely iced over.

Mom never knew how to dress us until the Saturday before the holiday. This year must have been fairly warm.

In this photo, my brother John is 3-1/2-years-old and properly dressed for Church.

He's wearing a light blue suit with short pants over a crisply starched white shirt.

On his feet are the brand new Buster Brown high-top shoes Daddy bought just for today at the Red Goose shoe store on Kedzie Avenue.

Johnny's hair is all smoothed over with an extra dollop of Vitalis to hold down his cowlick

Standing next to him is me--his seven-year-old big sister.

I'm wearing a puffy sleeved, silky blouse under a yellow-and-gray plaid wool vest and a pleated skirt that is just above my knees.

We're proudly clutching the treasures the Easter Bunny hid outside in between the lilac and peony bushes.

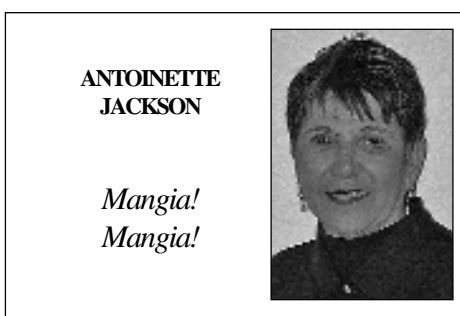
The baskets are overflowing with the coveted chocolate bunny, chocolate-marshmallow eggs, jellybeans, cream eggs and straw.

Daddy took this memorable photo with his trusty Brownie 616 box camera.

We wiggled restlessly as we watched him methodically place his left hand at the front of the camera, focus us in the shaded viewfinder, snap the shutter, and then wind the film to the next frame.

While Daddy was keeping us busy recording another precious Kodak moment, my mother was in the kitchen starting our traditional leg of lamb Easter dinner.

Leaving Mom to tend to the dinner



ANTOINETTE JACKSON

Mangia! Mangia!

preparations, Daddy walked us down to the other end of our block where his side of the family lived.

Daddy's Uncle Onofrio and his wife Marietta, their son John and his wife Clara and their daughters Marietta and Betty made up the three generations sharing their home.

We girls -- Betty, who was my age, Marietta, who was two years older and I -- all got along well and played together.

In addition to the baskets the Bunny left them, their Northern-Italian born grandmother baked them Easter bread woven around a colored egg.

As a child, I was inquisitive as to how the nested egg got into the loaf of bread.

As an adult, when I learned the dyed egg is raw when it goes into the oven, my curiosity peaked.

I e-mailed my cousin Marietta, who--with her many other talents--grew up to be a good cook.

She was happy to share the family recipe and wrote back, "This is the recipe my Grandmother Marietta Luparello made for us every Easter when we lived with her and my Grandfather.

"Nonna used Parmesan cheese and olive oil to flavor this traditional Northern Italian rustic bread.

The whole family loved it, especially when it was served warm just out of the oven and with lots of butter."

It's been many decades since I've tasted Easter bread, hunted for baskets of candy or shared roast leg of lamb with my aunts, uncles and cousins around our family's dining room table.

But no matter how many years pass, the memories of those childhood days growing up surrounded by family, are my warmest of

all.

Mom's Leg of Lamb

Mom punctured the whole leg of lamb with several pockets and stuffed each slot with whole garlic cloves and parsley. She put it on a rack in a roasting pan, seasoned it with salt and pepper and a little flour.

She put the lamb in the oven set at 325 degrees and basted it with its own juices or some red wine until the aroma was heavenly and the lamb was done to perfection, about three to four hours.

- Zia Marietta's Italian Easter Bread
- 1 package active dry yeast
 - 1 / 3 cup warm water (105-115 degrees)
 - 3 to 4 cups flour
 - 3 / 4 teaspoon salt
 - 1 / 2 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 1 cup grated Parmesan or Romano cheese

- 3 eggs, beaten
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 dyed egg, uncooked
- Sprinkle yeast onto warm water; stir until dissolved. Sift 3 cups flour, salt and black pepper into a large bowl.

Add grated cheese, eggs, olive oil and dissolved yeast; beat until smooth. Stir in enough additional flour to make a stiff dough.

Turn out onto a lightly floured board; knead until smooth and elastic, about 8-10 minutes. Place in a bowl that has been greased with olive oil, turning to grease bottom. Cover; let rise in warm place, free from draft, about 2 to 2 1 / 2 hours.

Punch dough down and let rise again until doubled in bulk, about 1 1 / 2 hours.

Reserve some of the dough for strips to hold egg.

Shape into a smooth round ball. Place in a greased 8 inch round cake pan. Cover; let rise free from draft, about 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place egg on top with strips. Brush bottom of dough with olive oil. Bake for 40 minutes or until done. Remove from baking pan and cool on wire rack.

Antoinette Jackson is a Bullard-area resident. You may reach her at Antojxn@aol.com.

City Information

City of Bullard:

Mayor:
A.W. Hines

Police Chief:
Gary Lewis
903-894-7788

Council:
At-Large Seats:
Lindsay Bradley
Pam Frederick
Rodger Johnson
Stacey Thompson
Teresa Adams-Wilks

Utilities Director:
Mark Barker
903-894-6048

City Hall:
114 S. Phillips St.
Bullard, TX 75757
903-894-7223
903-894-8163 fax
Hours of Operation:
Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

City Manager:
Larry Morgan
903-894-7223

TAKS Science Objective

A soft drink bottle is opened for the first time, and you notice that bubbles of carbon dioxide quickly escape from the soft drink. What is a possible explanation for this observation?

- A 2.6 g
- B 13.8 g
- C 25.0 g
- D 154.5 g

The answer will be published in next week's edition of the Bullard Banner News.
The previous TAKS Science Objective answer is C.

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phone 903-894-9306 fax 903-894-9308
114 N. Houston Street, Suite 1, Bullard, Texas 75757



Bill Woodall
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Lori Mellinger
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Cheryl Wells
Advertising Director
Kelly Griffith-Fields
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Dot West
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To be considered for publication, letters should be original, bear the signature of the author and include an address and telephone number for verification. (Address and telephone number will not be printed.)

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