

A Sunny Week For *Pumpkin Cheesecake*

Good morning, neighbors. This is the kind of week we wish we could bottle. The forecast calls for sunshine every day through Saturday. Afternoons sit between 70 and 73 degrees, with light winds from the northeast. Mornings and evenings will be crisp, with nights in the low to mid 40s. Open the windows after lunch to let the fall air through, and keep a light sweater by the door for the early hours.

On Wednesday, October 21, it's **National Pumpkin Cheesecake Day**, and the weather is perfect for celebrating. We're not asking you to turn on the oven. Try pumpkin cheesecake parfaits for two. Beat 4 ounces of softened cream cheese with half a cup of plain canned pumpkin, two tablespoons of brown sugar, and half a teaspoon of pumpkin pie spice until smooth. Spoon it into two glasses in layers with crushed gingersnaps or graham crackers, and finish with a few crumbs on top. It takes about ten minutes.

The parfaits keep nicely in the refrigerator for a couple of days, so the second one makes tomorrow's treat. If you're eating alone that evening, make it a small occasion: a good cup of coffee, a favorite chair, maybe a call to an old friend. If you're feeding a crowd, it stretches easily. Next Monday, October 26, is National Pumpkin Day, so the pumpkin fun isn't over yet.

With days this lovely, a walk feels like a gift. Ten or fifteen minutes around the block after lunch catches the warmest sunshine, which is good for the mood and for vitamin D. If you'd rather stay put, sit by an open window or on the porch, roll your shoulders, and circle your ankles a few times. Raking a few leaves counts as exercise too, and so does carrying the groceries in slowly. Do whatever feels good.

In the yard, this is garlic-planting time. In Kentucky, October and early November are the best months for it. Set each clove root end down, two to three inches deep and about six inches apart, then tuck mulch over the top. No garden bed? A deep pot on the porch works, and you'll have green shoots to cheer you next spring. Those fallen leaves make good mulch, so save a few bags' worth.

Look up while you're out there. Ducks and geese build toward their peak numbers late this month, passing overhead in long lines at dusk. Tiny kinglets and sparrows are moving through the hedges. Cardinals and chickadees lean harder on feeders as natural food thins out, so a suet cake or a handful of seed will be welcome. A

little millet scattered on the ground draws the sparrows that scratch beneath the feeder.

This week in Kentucky history: on Wednesday, October 23, 1844, the sidewheel steamboat Lucy Walker pulled away from the Louisville wharf around noon, bound for New Orleans. That afternoon, a few miles below New Albany, Indiana, her three boilers exploded and she sank in the Ohio River. At least 50 people died, and some accounts say more than 100. It was one of several steamboat disasters of that era that led to federal safety rules. Some passengers may have been talking about the coming Clay and Polk election. If your family has river stories passed down, we'd love to hear them.

If you're up for an evening out in this mild weather, the lantern trail in Iroquois Park glows through November 1. The Kentucky Center is staging a children's musical on Saturday and Sunday, a nice outing if grandchildren or neighbors' kids are visiting. Saturday, October 24, is also National Food Day, a good excuse to drop off a can of soup at a food pantry.

Here is our small encouragement for the week: you don't have to do everything. Plant one clove, take ten minutes in the sun, call one friend. That's a good week's work, and a good reason to enjoy a slice of something sweet on Wednesday.

Harvey & Dot's Scam Watch

Fake Sextortion Help Services

Someone threatens to share private images unless you pay, and a search for help turns up companies selling costly quick fixes that don't deliver. Before paying anyone, search the company's name with words like "scam," "review," or "complaint," and skip the paid results. Free counseling and support services exist.

Source: Federal Trade Commission

— *Harvey & Dot*

A weekly letter from your friends at Senior Bridge

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