

Evans helped tell county's story

By CHARLOTTE KOVALCHUK

After visits to the National Holocaust Memorial Museum in middle school, Ann Evans became enamored with the idea of telling stories through objects, especially with a pile of shoes on display.

"It hit me hard that every single one belonged to someone. Almost everyone has some literal thing, an actual object, that tells part of their story. Like a beloved stuffed animal a special relative gave you or grandma's necklace," she said.

"I loved the idea of telling stories through objects, especially everyday ones, because it is a way of humanizing history."

Ms. Evans has been doing just that as a curator for the Williamson Museum since 2013, following her time as a teenage volunteer there. Originally from Kansas, she grew up in Georgetown.

She called her recent departure from the museum bittersweet. As an opportunity came up to stay in the community she loves, she said it was time for a different life experience as a reference librarian at the Georgetown Public Library. She has a library degree, so the job was a return to her roots.

During her time at the museum, Ms. Evans managed its collection of 15,000 items, which mostly consists of



After serving seven years as a curator at the Williamson Museum, Ann Evans now works as a reference librarian at the Georgetown Public Library.

documents and photographs that tell the story of Williamson County's history. No two days were alike, she said. She might do research, then find herself building a wagon in her backyard, a replica of the first Williamson County Jail — an overturned wagon the deputy had to sleep on so his

prisoner couldn't escape.

But her work extended beyond the museum limits, sometimes putting many miles on her car to obtain oral stories from residents all over the county who couldn't make it to the museum.

Her favorite part of the job was when a museum visitor

would find an ancestor or say, "I didn't know that."

"When kids are playing with hands-on things like the chuckwagon, they're making connections. You're telling them about cowboys and suddenly, they start building a relationship with the past," Ms. Evans said.

Library considers opening options

BIBLIOFILES

Dana Hendrix

Two weeks ago in this column, I wrote that in response to the county's Stay Home Stay Safe order on March 24, curbside pickup of materials at the Georgetown Public Library had to end. We quickly turned around and offered home delivery of materials for three weeks, delivering to an average of 70 homes daily.

This week, we resumed curbside pickup following Gov. Greg Abbot's Executive Order No. GA-16 "relating to the safe, strategic reopening of select services." We can check out well over twice as many items every day with

curbside pickup as we can with home delivery, so we curtailed home delivery and shifted our operation to curbside.

But on Monday afternoon, the governor's "Texans Helping Texans: The Governor's Report to Open Texas April 27, 2020" provided guidelines for reopening libraries and museums. As of this writing no decision has been made about when to reopen our library to the public. Whenever

we reopen, it will be with many restrictions, including limits on how many people can be in the building at a time and what they can do inside. It will primarily be a "grab & go" library where patrons can come in, pick up reserves or check out items from the shelves and check out.

All these changes may be hard to keep track of. We are adapting our approach in response to county and state level actions, so we are not certain about the duration of anything at this point — we're just doing our best in an uncertain time. Please

check our website and social media for updates.

The past few weeks have been a real whirlwind for the library staff, but our newest librarian has weathered it all and made significant contributions already. Ann Evans started work in the library on March 3 as our reference librarian. Ann previously worked as the curator at the Williamson Museum, where she served for seven years. In her new role in the library, she is responsible for the Texas History Room services and collections, coordinating service to library patrons at the

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Old columns stir great memories

When you're basically in isolation mode, seeing only a few family members occasionally, finding a project or projects is a good way to not go stir-crazy.

I have saved many of the paper copies of these cooking columns for 35 years (started writing *Cook's* in 1985), and also have 3-ring notebooks of clipped recipes from as far back as college. Both "collections" were in quite a state of disarray, so I have been going through every recipe and organizing, discarding some, filing in order, etc. etc. It has been so much fun reading the intros to the columns and remembering what was going on at the time.

Today, I thought it would be fun to go back and share a few recipes from long ago, when I was a young homemaker with three young children. It may not seem like it right now, but time does fly.

In the March 3, 1985 edition of the *Sun*, I did a column on typically Texan foods to honor Texas Independence Day (March 2). We did a photo shoot in the then-home of brother Stephen and sister-in-law Nancy with boots, pecan pie and a stone-inlay of Texas that was on their family room floor. This recipe was in that column, and has been a staple for me over the years.

The Perfect Beef Brisket

6 lbs. brisket (more or less)
Garlic salt, onion salt, celery salt, regular salt and black



COOK'S CORNER

Laurie Locke

pepper (a few good shakes of each)

1/2 bottle Liquid Smoke
1/2 bottle Worcestershire sauce

Line a baking pan with foil big enough to cover and seal beef, with shiny side in. Put meat in pan, fat side down, and sprinkle all liberally with seasonings. Pour Liquid Smoke and Worcestershire sauce over seasoned meat. Cover with foil and refrigerate overnight.

Next day, turn meat over and seal again with foil. Bake at 275 degrees for 5 to 6 hours. Cool before slicing, or you can take out, put on an outdoor barbecue grill and smoke, basting with barbecue sauce for a while if you like. — *Tam Hooks*

That October in 1985, I ran this recipe after going to a party at then-neighbors Mary Emma and C.W. Stewart, who had finished a restoration

project on their historic home on Walnut Street. They had a buffet dinner and entertained all of the participants in the restoration (builders, craftsmen, painters, etc.), so I'm not sure why I was invited, but remember it as a great time with wonderful food. This was Mary Emma's mother's recipe. As I recall, she was known for being a wonderful cook and hostess.

Fillet of Beef

1 large whole fillet of beef, wrapped in fat by the butcher
2 T. butter
1/4 cup soy sauce
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 1/2 T. fresh lemon juice
1 T. sugar

Melt butter in small saucepan and add remaining ingredients, except beef. Simmer 5 minutes to blend flavors. Place beef in shallow glass dish (like a Pyrex baking dish) and pour sauce over meat. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

The next day, place meat in baking or roasting pan with sauce and put in oven as far from the heating element as possible. Broil for 15 minutes, turning three times and basting each time with the sauce. Remove fat from the fillet (it should come right off when strings are cut). Broil another 10-15 minutes, basting and turning three times.

Remove from oven, tent with foil and let sit for about 15-20 minutes. Slice and serve. This will be rare, so increase cooking time if you want it

medium. Serves 4-6 depending on size of fillet. — *Mary Emma Stewart*

This recipe shows up in more than one column through the years, and is great this time of year. In columns from 1985-89, I made it for Easter one year, for a birthday dinner another time. Just be sure to really squeeze all the liquid from the cooked squash before continuing with recipe.

Squash Souffle

2 cups yellow squash, steamed, drained and mashed
1/4 cup softened butter
2 T. brown sugar
1 t. salt
1/8 t. black pepper
1 1/2 cups whole milk
2 large eggs, separated

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Beat egg yolks and then whisk into milk. Beat egg whites until stiff. Combine squash (that has been squeezed dry in dishtowel after draining) with butter, brown sugar, salt, pepper, and milk/egg yolk mixture. Fold egg whites into squash mixture. Spoon into a buttered 2-quart deep casserole dish (a souffle dish if you have one), and bake 45-60 minutes until firm and lightly browned. Serve hot. Serves 6.

I love to get things in order, especially when it involves going back and remembering many wonderful moments with cooking. What projects are you working on these long, less-hectic days? Stay well!

Pandemic: precarious predicament

Lately I've been thinking about a giant ball of yarn dumped into a basket of kittens.

It would soon be a mess of frayed ends and tangled snarls, and the very devil to get sorted out. The kittens would not be to blame. They only did what came naturally. The yarn is passive, so it couldn't be blamed.

Perhaps the hand that tossed the yarn

(or allowed it to fall, unretrieved) into the basket would be the most logical culprit. No matter at the moment who was to blame. The first order of business is to get the mess sorted out and then, after several deep breaths, there would be time for reflection.

The quagmire in which we presently find ourselves stranded is like that ball of yarn. No beginning, no end and a big mess in the middle. What now? And please don't respond with that line about "we're all in this together." We're not.

The cavalry ain't coming. Not because it doesn't want to, but which way does it go first? And whichever way it chooses, how long and how far can it travel to overcome a moving target?

Most of my experience deals with simple, familiar things. The doe that kidded last night isn't eating or drinking, Papa says. We run through the most likely reasons for her problem, on to what might be going on, down to the — unlikely but if nothing else works we can try — department.

If we're lucky and our guardian angel is on duty, we figure it out and treat her correctly, which happens often enough to keep us comfortable. We don't hesitate to call the vet, but usually try to work off past kiddings and get things straightened out. Papa makes a good doctor, never squeamish or hesitant, and he's seen a lot. We can do this because there are most usually certain definite symptoms to go on; if she does this and this, it's probably that. When we're stumped is when nothing adds up and the circumstances don't match past experience.

As far as I'm concerned, that's where we all are right now. Nothing adds up. Every day the information is different. Stay at home, don't let anyone in, and keep washing your hands every few minutes for 20 seconds. You can slip out to the grocery store, where you (wearing a mask) will be kept at a safe distance from other masked and befuddled humans.

Wait, last week the direction was no masks. They did no good and health care workers need them. (Why, thought I, do they need them if they don't do any good?) It really didn't matter; there were no masks available for anyone, anywhere, anyhow. However, we are now directed to wear something over our faces if it's only a kitchen towel. My previous jibe about the cowboys' wild rags was actually invoked, while good hearted people everywhere have been sewing masks like mad to donate.

Papa does the curbside pickup thing, an exercise in frustration. You make your order online and then try to find a day you will be permitted to pick up, often a week away — 2 a.m. is a good time to search. Few people are awake and the latest set of pickup times apparently comes out in the wee hours. Then you get the list of "unavailable" coupled with the list of substitutions for such items — if the substitution is available.

Once the groceries are home, have a "clean" counter and a "dirty" counter, set the bags on the dirty counter, wipe down each item and place it on the clean counter; throw away the bags and any outer packaging, and wash wash wash your hands. (No word on whether you must wear a mask for this.) Better yet, leave the blamed groceries in the car for a few days, (excluding cold stuff), before you drag it in.

The argument can be made that even though this seems ridiculously excessive activity for a few groceries, what else have you got to do? Netflix, of course. Their subscriptions have mushroomed. But have you wiped down the popcorn, or is it still in the car? If so, dare I make a mad dash outside to get it?

We are told that 80% of people who catch this thing are barely sick, so anybody can be contagious, but ghastly numbers have died, mostly old dudes like you. What? The methods of transmission have changed so many times I now feel pretty much like Custer probably did on that high, grassy knoll.

The media pumps out torrents of terrifying information and pronouncements by "experts," relentlessly reminding us that in a matter of weeks the greatest nation in the world has gone to its knees.

That's probably not a bad place to be just now.



EGGS IN MY POCKET

Mary Fenoglio