

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



A large turkey is traditionally the centerpiece for our Thanksgiving table (*except for that one year when bandits stole the guest of honor from the freezer under my parent's carport*).

Fortunately, we made it through that crisis with sliced ham, a rotisserie chicken from Food Lion – and a great story of “*How the Grinch Stole Thanksgiving.*”

This year's turkey is secure in the oven, four pies are prepared on the kitchen counter and there is ice cream in the freezer. William is home on leave from Coronado, California and my parents are visiting from Lumberton. In just a few hours, the Collins family will gather together to ask the Lord's blessings. Corn-bread dressing, brown gravy, cranberry sauce, and all manner of assorted side dishes will flank that gracious bird as we give thanks. Thanks for family, thanks for friends, thanks for freedom, and thanks for the food that will probably last the entire weekend. I am sure that there will be sufficient leftovers to keep us stuffed like that old tom turkey himself.

It is uplifting to realize that this same scene is being repeated across the country and around the world as people pause to thank God for his presence and his provision.

Thanksgiving Friday has risen to holiday status in American culture with door-buster specials and red-tag deals for those willing to rise in the wee hours of the morning. It's mano-de-mano, and I imagine that Nancy & Krystle intend to join the fray. Me? I plan to sleep in. I can not bring myself to begin Christmas shopping until December. And, besides, I'm saving myself for Saturday!

There is nothing better than a turkey sandwich and a bowl of Turkey Carcass Soup while watching a football game. I like mine on a bed of mayonnaise, liberally sprinkled with black pepper.

I am looking forward to preparing a huge pot of turkey carcass soup, a plate of turkey sandwiches, a bowl of chips & salsa, a bag of pistachios and a pitcher of iced tea. Have you seen the line-up of football games for Saturday? I can't wait ...

Saturday, November 29, 2008

12:00	South Carolina at Clemson	ESPN2
	Virginia at Virginia Tech	ESPN
	Georgia Tech at Georgia	CBS
3:30	North Carolina at Duke	ESPNU
	Auburn at Alabama	CBS
	Florida at Florida State	ABC
6:30	Kentucky at Tennessee	ESPN2
7:00	Vanderbilt at Wake Forest	ESPNU
8:00	Oklahoma at Oklahoma State	ABC
	Notre Dame at So. California	ESPN

It has been a challenging year for me personally. It has been a year of change, of uncertainty and, in some cases, a year of disappointments. At times I have felt that I was aimlessly wandering, lost in the desert. Thankfully, we don't roam alone. At I time when I needed it most, I came across this passage from Isaiah. It gave me hope and inspiration.

Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something new. Now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness; rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43:18-19

Whatever your plans for the day and the weekend, I hope that you have a **Happy Thanksgiving!** May the Lord direct your paths – providing a roadway in the wilderness, May he nurture and sustain you with water in the desert.

TOM'S TURKEY CARCASS SOUP

Take all that remains of your featured Thanksgiving fare, after everyone has had their fill of turkey sandwiches, (e.g., 1 Turkey Carcass). Place in a stock pot with about 6 quarts of water (use your instincts here, cooking is art – not science). Add the key ingredients:

Chopped Onion (1 large)
Chopped Celery (3 stalks)
Sliced Carrots (3 large)
Diced Tomatoes (1 can)
[Feel free to add corn, peas, beans as your tastes and leftovers allow]
Chicken Broth (1 or 2 cans)
Black Peppercorns (as you please)
Cavender's All-Purpose Greek Seasoning
A generous pinch of Garlic Powder
A sweeping dash of Salt
A couple shakes of ground black pepper

Bring the pot to a boil while adding the key ingredients. Cover, reduce heat, and allow the broth to simmer for about an hour. Return broth to a boil and add one package of egg noodles. Reduce heat to medium and allow noodles to cook for 10 to 15 minutes.

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