

## Thanksgiving 2009

by Janice Quick Ashborn

This is a true story. I had Turkey dinner at my house on this last Saturday night and it is an annual ritual to have it the weekend ahead of Thanksgiving week. This was our family Thanksgiving Dinner for immediate and extended family and guests - about 15 people. When I was working and taught preschool, we always had a family potluck for the kids' families on the last day of school before Thanksgiving break. That's how I got into the ritual to begin with. I have always made an extra turkey for that event anyway. So, this year, when I planned the dinner I went ahead and planned the "back up bird" again, thinking that way we would have plenty for the river trip and for leftovers for the family to take home. Turkey dinner is our family's favorite meal. So last Tuesday I bought the turkey, a 23 lb Butterball at Vons and did my shopping so I could get the bird for \$10. On Thursday, I took it out of the frig and put it in the oven. No stuffing, just the bird. Then went back to Vons, got the last minute food and got another 23 lb Butterball Turkey. Used Walt's Vons card for this one because you can only get one per person per holiday. I put that one in the frig to thaw until Saturday. That evening I took the first bird out of the over, let it cool, and sliced it up and put it neatly in an oblong cake pan and covered it with foil to store easily in the frig until after the meal on Saturday, where I could use the meat for leftovers.

Saturday morning I woke up and got the 2nd bird out of the frig, prepared the stuffing, stuffed the bird and put it into the over to roast all day. It was done about 4 pm, so I let it cool for an hour, and started to slice off the meat. Got all the breast meat and then the dark meat until the carcass was picked clean enough to toss out.

Usually, I put the sliced meat on a big platter which takes up a lot of space on my counter. This time I spied a big rectangular corelle casserole and the sides were a little deeper but it would not take up as much space on the service counter. I decided that might be a better decision. So, as I sliced, I neatly packed it all into this nice casserole dish. It looked beautiful. The meat was juicy and was delicious - I tested a few little pieces :)

While this was all going on, my younger daughter had arrived, was baking her yams and finishing up her raspberry Jell-O with berries, pretzels and cool whip. It's delicious and a command performance to enhance the flavors of the meal, complete with gravy, potatoes, stuffing, etc.

It was five minutes before time for the other family to arrive. I was setting up the gravy and potatoes in crock pots to serve. Then I went over, picked up the casserole of sliced turkey to serve. I took one step and dropped the whole thing onto the ceramic tile floor breaking the casserole and completely contaminating the meat with slivers of glass from the corning ware.

This is not a joke. It really happened to me this year. My daughter and husband both said, "Thank God I wasn't in the room!" They distanced themselves and didn't want any blame. Just them the others showed up, watching the last of the turkey and glass go into the waste basket.

The moral of the story? Always use a platter for turkey that you can get your whole hands under and always make a "backup bird". It took me less than 20 minutes to take that first bird out of the frig, put a wet folded kitchen towel over the top, and warmed it up for a few minutes.

The meal was delicious and my poor worried granddaughters who were starving and seriously worried about what they would do were full and we all enjoyed the meal. I think next year I will go back to the oversized platter...even though there will be less excitement and hopefully no story to tell.