

RECIPE FOR NONA'S FROGMORE STEW:

Ingredients for The Yucky Stuff:

- 1 cup catsup
- 1 cup cooking oil
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup salt
- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- Hot water to fill a large canner cooker about ½ full
- 1 (3 ounce) package crab boil seasoning mix

Ingredients for The Good Stuff:

- 15 to 18 small red potatoes, left whole
- 1 bag baby carrots, left whole
- 2 pounds smoked sausage (or Little Smokies),
cut into 2-inch lengths
- 3 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breasts,
cut into bite-size pieces
- 2 (½ pound) packages of fresh mushrooms
- Small onions (as many as you wish)
- 1 pound medium shrimp, cleaned
- 2 green peppers, cut into large pieces

Mix all the ingredients for The Yucky Stuff except for the seasoning packet in a large cooker. Once all The Yucky Stuff is mixed well and the salt is dissolved, drop the seasoning packet into the cooker. Set a wire basket into the cooker. Once the broth is at a rapid boil, begin putting The Good Stuff into the wire basket in the order and for the times listed below. Lower the basket into the boiling mixture; then stir lightly after each addition so it mixes together.

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To Cook:

Bring broth to a rapid boil and make sure it keeps boiling all the time. Add potatoes and boil 5 minutes. Add carrots and sausage. Boil rapidly for 5 minutes. Add the chicken pieces and boil 5 minutes. Add mushroom and onion. Boil for 5 minutes. Add shrimp and green peppers. Turn off the stove burner, but keep kettle covered, and let it set for 5 minutes. Drain the liquid broth away from the food by lifting the basket out. Dispose of The Yucky Stuff, then dump The Good Stuff into a roaster or big mixing bowl. Take it to a table that's been covered with a clean, plastic tablecloth. (Make sure that no one is seated at the table yet.) Dump the food out on the table so there's a pile of food in front of each place where a person will sit. Pass around some barbecue sauce, shrimp cocktail sauce, sour cream, and melted butter so that everyone can put a glob of whatever they want in front of them on the table to drag their goodies through. Eat with your fingers and enjoy! Recipe feeds 8 to 10 people.

RECIPE FOR LYDIA'S MAPLE NUT COOKIES:

Ingredients:

- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 cup butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 ¼ tablespoons maple flavoring
- ¾ cup milk
- 4 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cups nut, chopped

Frosting:

- ¼ cup butter
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon maple flavoring
- 1 ¼ cups powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons water

To prepare frosting: Combine all frosting ingredients and mix well.

To prepare cookies: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream brown sugar and butter in large bowl. Add eggs, flavoring, and milk. Beat well. Combine flour, baking soda, and salt in separate bowl. Add to creamed mixture. Fold in nuts. Drop by heaping teaspoons onto greased baking sheet and bake 8 to 10 minutes. Frost cookies when cooled.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When Lydia and her son moved to Ohio, she felt lonely and missed her home and friends in Illinois. Sometimes due to unforeseen circumstances, people are forced to move from a place where they feel comfortable to a place that's strange and unknown. What specific ways might there be for someone to get used to living in a new place?
2. What are some things we can do to help others who are new to our neighborhood feel welcome and part of the community?
3. When Lydia and her mother faced financial challenges, many people helped, including someone who left anonymous gifts. Lydia and her mother, like many other people, had a hard time accepting help from others. What do you think is the reason for this? Is there ever a time when we should refuse help from others?
4. What are some ways we can help someone in need without making them feel obligated or embarrassed about their situation?
5. Some gifts are given directly to a person, while other gifts are given in secret. When is the time to give someone a gift without letting them know who it's from?
6. Some people are prejudiced against those who are different. What do you think is the reason for most prejudices? What does the Bible say about prejudice?

7. Lydia's mother was prejudiced against little people. Her prejudice came about because of a childhood trauma. Have you ever suffered a childhood trauma that affected you so much that you avoided someone you were afraid of or didn't trust? What advice would you give to someone who's dealing with a childhood fear?
8. Levi was worried that his parents couldn't run the store by themselves, and he tried to do too much for them, often sacrificing his own needs and wants. What are some ways we can help others without making them feel as if we think they're not capable?
9. Lydia's mother tried so hard to please her father that her own needs went unmet. How far should an adult child go in honoring or caring for their parents?
10. The loss of a child can be devastating. How can a parent deal with such a loss? What are some ways we can help someone who's lost a child?
11. What interesting facts about the Amish way of life did you learn by reading *Lydia's Charm*?
12. What life lessons did you learn from reading this book? Were there any specific scriptures that spoke to your heart?