

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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The Kitchen Before Christmas
With apologies to Clement C. Moore

Three hours to the big meal, and all through the kitchen
Everything was in motion, everyone had to pitch in.
The pots were all steaming, the glasses were gleaming,
Awaiting the egg nog and dishes of dressing.

But Mom in the kitchen was close to despair
There were carrots to peel, potatoes to pare.
The turkey was stuffed, but the ham needed glaze
Before the in-laws arrived soon to graze.

The cook was spinning with frenzied stirring,
The gravy must be without lumps or shirring.
Her apron was stained with cranberry juice
The sauce glistened ruby, jellied, not loose.

Aunt Lucy was chopping, parsley, basil and buns
Her casserole had veggies and buttered bread crumbs
Cousin Tonya was tasting the marshmallow topping,
The yams needed more, those puffs were a popping.

They were out of brown sugar, but white wouldn't do,
Send someone to the grocery, and hurry up too!
No time to waste, don't talk to the clerk
We're waiting for sugar or the dish just won't work.

The veggies were drowning in cream soup and butter,
Salad dressing too, the richer the better.
There were cookies galore, more than were needed,
Candy canes, nuts, chocolate, no calories heeded!

But maybe some sweetener, low cal would be good,
No one would notice, there's just so much food.
Use spray on the veggies, so they really gleam,
Thicken with cornstarch, not more sour cream.

Who could resist the red velvet cake?
No matter how many extra pounds it would make!

Apple pie, pumpkin, cheesecake, nut tassies
With all that sweetness no one should be nasty.

Put out some fruit salad, no diet it breaks!
It's easy to nibble on red and green grapes.
Only one kind of cookie, so each tries just one
No need try another, repeats aren't as much fun.

On the table the presents, were being ripped open,
The children were squealing, the gifts what they'd hoped,
Grandmother hovered, ready to gather,
But Grandfather's chair was drowned in torn paper.

Sister was modeling her newest tight sweater
Little brother's new dart gun was aiming to get her.
Dad was stuffing batteries into new toys
To keep the focus on blinking new joys.

When finally the table was filled to the brim,
And every chair seat had someone to sit in,
Uncle Charlie said blessing, Grandpa muttered Amen
Then every last person began to dig in.

Not much talking, all eating, No one was complaining,
The food disappearing, the belts began straining.
Then finally full, the talking began, That sure was right tasty!
I do love your recipe! How'd you make such good pastry?

Is there room for more pie? But you could say no
Have some fruit salad instead, it's better you know.
Give thanks for the family, the gifts and the food,
But think of the grandkids, and your health too.

If you want to be at the table next year
Then plan to go easy, keep the veggie tray near.
Fill up on the salad, leave the gravy behind,
Eat healthy today, keep tomorrow in mind.

It's a day to give gifts, to enjoy the pleasure
Of watching their eyes, a gift beyond measure.
But our health is a gift we give to ourselves
There's no magic wand, or little health elves.

So enjoy the meal, just keep it small.
Then go play a game or some exercise ball.
Walk 'round the block and burn calories off

Don't let them settle and make you all soft.

Enjoy the children, and grandchildren too
Be happy, be thankful. They're thankful for you!
Be good to yourself, you'll be glad, you'll be right,
No guilty conscience to nag you tonight.

Have fruit for dessert, with coffee or tea
Don't drink more calories that you really don't need,
Get out of the kitchen, avoid the temptations
So you won't need as many New Year's resolutions.

Merry Christmas to All, Have a Healthy New Year!

Ruby Baked Apples

4 Granny Smith apples	1/4 C whole berry cranberry sauce
2 Tbsp brown sugar or sweetener	1/2 tsp cinnamon
2 Tbsp chopped nuts	

Cut core out of apples, and peel just the top third. Set in microwave safe dish. Mix other ingredients and stuff into the centers of the apples, dividing evenly. Microwave on High for 7 to 10 minutes, until apples are tender. Serves 4.

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