

Wild Flower

GROW INSPIRED

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Fall Swing

One of my fondest memories as a little girl was how I acquired my collection of dolls. I loved dolls, and my grandmother was an accomplice in supporting my habit of collecting them. She'd purchase dolls on vacation—and she and my grandfather traveled pretty extensively—bringing dolls home from all corners of the world. I had a doll from Alaska, a doll from Mexico, a doll from Holland—plus handmade dolls from her friends and neighbors living back home. My great-grandmother in Colorado Springs also sent me crocheted dolls that she lovingly made—and I still have many of them.

One of my earliest favorite dolls was the 'My Friend Mandy' from Fisher Price. This doll was so cute with her soft body and brushable hair. I loved Mandy! I think a friend of mine had Mandy's dark-haired sidekick, "Jenny." There was also "Becky" and "Mikey," the boy version of the doll.

My mom was a seamstress—still is—and she made lots of our clothes and costumes. She had this book full of patterns to make clothes for Mandy. There were outfits for every season, and the page for fall had this picture of Jenny standing on a swing amid falling leaves wearing this ultra-long, heavy skirt. It was so *fall*. That image, to me, was what fall should be: standing on a swing in a long, wool skirt. I'm not sure why I liked this concept of autumn so much—maybe I just really wanted a long skirt—but I think it was more the idea of being *chilly* in September. As a native Southern Californian, I just have never had the opportunity to feel cool weather in September. Maybe once or

twice. I'll admit I do get chilly these days in the evenings because we home thermostat still set pretty low for summer weather. Chilly!

I continued to collect dolls throughout my childhood. There was Patty, the huge life-sized doll. Here is a picture of me with Patty—this was right after it was decided that I should chop my waist-length, golden blonde hair into a Princess-Dianna-inspired pageboy cut. Then, there was Jocelyn Sylvia, my Cabbage Patch doll. I remember receiving her for Christmas in 1983. My mom had waited for hours in the pre-dawn cold at Toys R Us, where the CPK dolls were being doled out in strict, DMV-

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Mandy and Jenny show us the perfect image of fall.



Patty, the life-sized doll. I am rocking a new Princess Di haircut



My mom made Jocelyn and I matching dresses.

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office fashion to avoid customers swarming and exchanging punches for that season's "must-have toy." As my mom tells the story, the boxed dolls were sent down a chute one by one to the next customer waiting in line, and "you got what you got." And she got Jocelyn. Even though I had secretly, wanted a CPK with long, yellow braids, and Jocelyn had short, beige curly hair, she was still the best Christmas present I had ever received! I was so excited to get her. Once I opened her box and "adopted her," it was true love forever. I recently rescued Jocelyn from years-long entombment in a box in the attic. I gave her a bath and washed her clothes, and now she's on



display in my closet, along with my other dolls: Strawberry Shortcake and friends, 17" bisque dolls, tiny 7" mignonette bisque dolls, and a red-haired, freckled Blaire Wilson, my American Girl Doll named after my daughter. I'd be happy to show you my doll collection anytime—just ask. What about you, do you collect anything? Is there any item from your childhood that brings you joy?

This month I interviewed a favorite friend of mine who is a life-long artist and gardener. Pat Orr is the bees' knees when it comes to amazing projects. I hope you enjoy hearing from her! 🐝



Inspiration: Poetry

Silence

Lynda Collins

Silence is dusk,
Silence is dawn,
Silence is the heat
Rays of the sun.
Silence is a secret,
Silence is the wind,
Silence goes out and
slips back in.
Sing a song of silence,
no words, no rhyme,
Just sweet thoughts
In the silence the mind.

Microcosm, Winter 1976

Fall

Fisher-Price Toys, *Four Seasons of Fashion*

Fall is the season of change and color
The green of summer gives way
to an explosion in the hills of red and orange
and yellow and brown

It's also a time of celebration and harvest
The freshly picked apples
glisten in their basket, plump and juicy
and sweet to the tongue

The days are a little shorter now,
and the sunsets are brilliant
The glow at twilight calms the land
and bathes highways in a beautiful light

The stillness of early evening
casts a spell over everyone
It's the perfect time to think things over
to rest and plan

It's also back-to-school time,
and that means new clothes and a new teacher
Plaids, wools and corduroys
are right for this time of year.

Eighty Degrees

Harriet Monroe

October swoons in the arms of
summer—
August comes back and kisses her
eyes.
Dressed all in gold, like a gorgeous
mummer,
She smiles at the sun and dreams
and sighs.
Forgotten is all the autumn's
bluster—
September's rains, the cool white
frost,
The old dark wind, unmannerly
duster,
Sweeping away leave burnt and lost.
The sun in the cobalt sky boils over,
The trees are melting in crimson
flame—
Oh, summer has wandered bad, the
rover,
To fling a farewell in autumn's name.

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WildFlower is a monthly publication
featuring writing, interviews, stories,
designs, observations, recommendations,
encouragement and reflections on faith
and creativity.

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Four Seasons of Fashion for My Friend Dolls, 1978

Spotlight on Artist Patricia Orr

Where did you find inspiration for creativity when you were younger, and where do you find it now?

When I was five years old, I made doll clothes with my grandmother. In junior high, I took a sewing class and found that I loved sewing. I sewed for my daughters, Angie and Mindy, up through their mid-teens—until they wanted store-bought outfits. Later, I got into needlepoint. I opened a needlepoint store in Temple City—we sold everything. We offered the largest selection of needlepoint and

embroidery patterns in the San Gabriel Valley. Pretty soon, I started designing needlepoint patterns. I got to where I could map a pattern from a picture. I also collected fabric. We had some cool fabric places in Rosemead, and every New Year's Day, I would go to their sales. I developed a whole second bedroom filled with fabric!

What are some projects you're working on currently? Please describe some of your hobbies.

I have a quilt that I'm piecing together. I love making jewelry, taking care of my horses, and playing pinochle. Last year for Christmas, I needed something to give my pinochle friends. I thought of this idea while I was standing in line at the pharmacy. There was a display of stretchy bracelets with beads that were dedicated to certain themes—like dogs, or seashells. I got one and sent it to my granddaughter. Then I thought, "I need a deck of cards on a stretchy bracelet."

And I found the charm I wanted. It wasn't a pinochle hand, but a run. So I made each of my friends these beaded bracelets that had a tiny fan of playing cards on them, and added their initials. They were a hit!

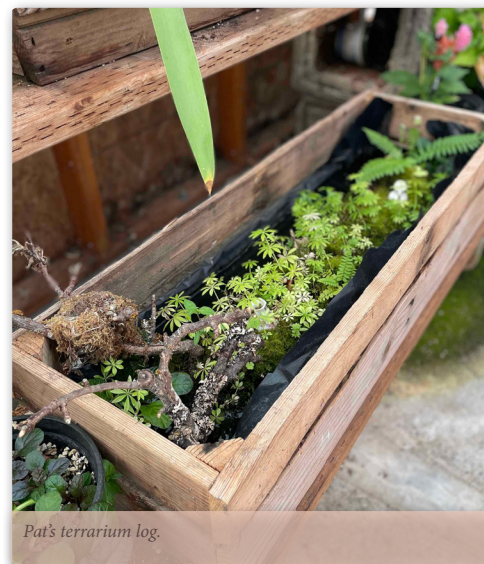
How do you nurture creativity?

I have a problem where I don't have enough time. I finally got the senior center to get me a used card table, and I put it in my work room to work on

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Me and my friend Pat, with her greenhouse behind us.



Pat's terrarium log.



Pat's London Broil

Ingredients:

2 pounds London broil roast such as top round or sirloin
French dressing

Kidney beans

Red wine

Salt and pepper to taste

Fresh-cut parsley

Soak the meat in French dressing for at least two hours, or up to 24 hours. If you purchase your cut of meat from a butcher counter, Pat recommends asking the butcher to put the meat through the tenderizer in both directions. Preheat the broiler to medium (450 degrees F). Place the meat on a sheet pan coated with cooking spray. Broil for approximately 7 minutes per side, or until a thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the meat registers 135-140 degrees F. The cook time may vary depending on the thickness of your meat. Let the meat rest for 5-7 minutes. Thinly slice the meat, then sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Side dish: empty and drain two cans of kidney beans. Mix with some red wine, some brown sugar mix, let it warm—you'll get to know how much. Serve with a green salad and some French bread. This was one of our favorite meals growing up!

my bracelets. I also started spending time in the greenhouse. For a long time, I wanted to try raising plants, but I killed every one of them! Then I started bringing in plants to the greenhouses—marigolds, heuchera, button fern, lamb's tooth fern—and I had found this really pretty log. I said, "I know what I want to do with that." I set the log in a pan of water, and it grew all by itself. It was like a little terrarium. If found something along the road, I'd bring it and plant it in the log—like, bulbs, seeds, roots—I never knew what I would have growing in the log, but you live and learn! Pretty soon a family of tree frogs moved into the log. They loved it! I also started planting some rhubarb out in the garden, and some lavender—but the deer got the rhubarb. (Pat lives on Vashon, an island in the Puget Sound).

Do you have projects and interests in more than one type of artistic expression?

I've always loved animals—horses, dogs, cats, bunnies—my first dog was a black Cocker Spaniel, then we had a collie, and then my mom got a miniature schnauzer. When I got married, my husband and I got a "Heinz 57." There's always been a pet in my house. My girls grew up with all sorts of pets: hamsters, rats—a variety. I raised mice for feed for a while. We had two dogs, one was Missy—she was a Heinz 57, and then I found out about guide dog schools. I worked for an organization

raising and training guide dogs—but I would get too attached. I still participated in the training program, but I had to have extra dogs of my own. The very first one I trained went to a woman in Northern California. She was a yellow lab named Vickie, and she remembered me when I would visit years later. I had a couple others I trained: one was a collie, one was a shepherd. The guide dog program would have me raise a puppy and train it for about 18 months, and then we'd go to graduation and I'd give the dog to her new owner. I loved that I could do it, but it was still difficult for me to part with a dog. So I stopped raising guide dogs for a while and was working for Cal Tech in the public relations office. During that time, I met a friend who

would show dogs—labrador retrievers, specifically. I was hooked at that point and started showing my own labs! I got stuck on labs—couldn't get rid of them. One time had five labs in my home. At one point I showed a yellow lab who reached 19th in the nation in one event, and I was pleased with that. Eventually, I started the So Cal Labrador Retriever rescue, and I managed calls from humane societies all around California.

Could you please share a favorite artist, album, playlist, or music genre that inspires you and brings you joy?

Classical music.
Country—but not western. Irish Celtic, Canadian Tenors, African music, Minnie Pearl, a lot of Dolly Parton. Grieg—I like the classical radio station. I was a Spanish major at Northern Arizona University, but I minored in music.

What's a place that inspires you, and why that place?

I get all my inspiration from reading books, DIY stuff, movies, and Jane Austen books. I love antiques, here on the island and on Ebay. I'm thinking of taking pictures of certain areas of my house and selling some of my items. I love themework. There's a round landing area in my home, so I made it 'the old general's place.' I got a collapsible camp chair, a paramedic bag, what looks like leather-bound books, an Army quilt—military stuff—and turned the area into a themed space. And then my bedroom is 'the old farmer's wife's bedroom.' Some of the decor came from many years ago when I found out my maternal grandfather was the first doctor in Bodie, Calif., a ghost town west of Sacramento.

But that's a story for another day! ✨

Keep scrolling to read Pat's music and shopping recommendations!



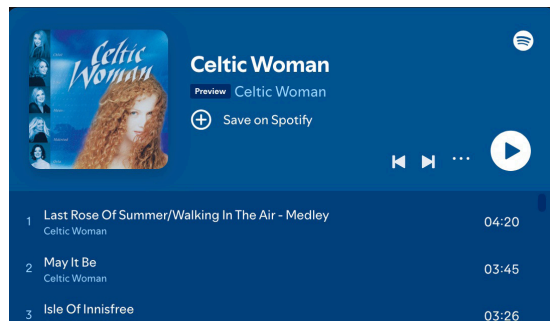
Pat's artistic display of her greenhouse plants.



One of Pat's begonia plants.

Recommended Listen: Celtic Woman

Pat loves Celtic Woman! Surely we can all benefit from a little Celtic Woman in our lives. This album includes ‘Orinoco Flow’ and ‘May It Be,’ both composed by Enya. It’s a fun take. Check it out!



Are there some days when you need a little extra rev? A little spark? A little kick start? I do. All the time! When I feel I need a jolt in my day, I listen to/watch this incredible live performance by The Who. The tambourine, the bass, the drums, Roger’s harmonica, Pete’s guitar windmills—it’s pure energetic inspiration, every time!



Encouragement: Allpoetry.com

I joined [Allpoetry.com](https://www.allpoetry.com) earlier this year, and, while I haven’t been very active yet in that community, I get communication once in a while from the founder. Recently, he sent this: “Here’s the truth: most art doesn’t resonate with most people. That’s not a failure of vision—it’s just reality. There’s no cosmic reason why anyone should care about your poem. You have to earn that attention, and sometimes, even great work goes unnoticed.” 🌱

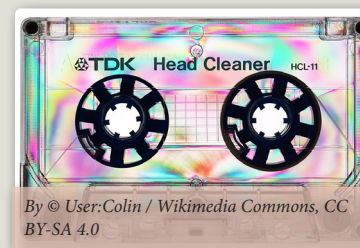
The End: Until Next Time



I hope you’ve enjoyed this issue of *WildFlower*. I’ll be back next month to share an interview with a super fun friend of mine, as well as some original essays, writings, and inspiration. If you’d like to submit content or ideas, please reach out to editor@wildflowerjournal.com. 🌱

Digital Detox: Printable Junk Journals

I have never been a “scrapbooker” —not at all— but recently I’ve been so inspired by these printable junk journals on Etsy. They are super fun to do! I like to put on



a movie and work on my latest. It’s calming and non-digital. You can buy an instant-download kit and either print at home, or save your ink and print at Staples or some other print shop. I just finished this [Edgar Allen Poe-themed](#) journal from SweetPeaCuriosities. It came together pretty quickly. I also enjoyed these easy [one-page mini folios](#) from [Emma Parrish](#). Next I’m going to do a [Halloween-themed journal](#) and then of course a [Christmas-themed](#) one. So fun! For now, these are just mind-calming projects, but I’m sure one could make them as gifts. Maybe you’ll like them, too! 🌱



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