

assessments.” It declares a 95 percent test participation rate is required or the district could lose its current accreditation rating.

However, the Colorado Association of School Board’s site (www.CASB.org) states: “the 95% student participation rate is not required by state law or State Board of

Education rule. Rather, both state law and the State Board rules implementing the Education Accountability Act of 2009 provide only that student participation rates will be factored into the assignment of a school district’s and school’s accreditation ratings”

Accreditation is given yearly and districts may ap-

peal to keep current accreditation under extenuating circumstances, such as a high refusal rate of assessments.

In addition, the CASB states: “Importantly, the state needs to reapply for its federal NCLB waiver in January 2015. CASB plans to strongly encourage CDE to modify the 95% student participation rate requirement in the state’s waiver application to only those assessments required by the NCLB and/or to eliminate the participation rate requirement altogether. In the meantime, CASB will work at the state level to ensure that CDE does not impose the 95% participation requirement on assessments beyond those covered by the state’s NCLB waiver. Finally,

CASB will provide support to its members as they seek reconsideration of any accreditation sanctions resulting from a district’s inability to meet the 95% participation rate due to students or their parents opting out of state assessments.”

We appreciate efforts to dialogue with parents but we also would like the recognition of full disclosure of the truth. In this area, we are very well informed families.

Melissa Rogers, Angela Leighty, Cheryl Darnell, Kristen McWilliams, and Amy Torrence

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Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Creative, healthy, and cozy cooking

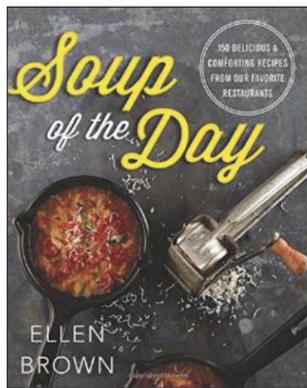
By the staff at Covered Treasures

Have you resolved to eat healthier in 2015, lose some weight, or be more creative with your meals? Maybe you and your family are simply ready for some good comfort food during these chilly winter days. Whatever your mood, there’s a cookbook for you.

Soup of the Day

By Ellen Brown (*Running Press*) \$20

Whether it’s a bowl of chicken soup when you’re sick, a thick and hearty gumbo in winter, or a refreshing gazpacho on a hot summer day, soup is a timeless favorite. Most of the 150 recipes in this book were collected from top restaurants across the country. Smoked salmon chowder, tomato and bread soup, curried pear soup, chicken soup with matzo balls, and many more tasty soups are included.



lots of amazing recipes that taste just as good—or even better—when they’re made in advance. Each recipe includes clear instructions and beautiful photographs, plus hundreds of invaluable make-ahead tips.

Everything Gluten-Free Slow Cooker Cookbook

By Carrie S. Forbes (*Adams Media*) \$16.95

Slow cookers are lifesavers for busy cooks. But if you follow a gluten-free diet, slow cooking can be a challenge because many recipes don’t thicken properly without our, noodles, or some other wheat-containing derivative. Complete with an array of gluten-free options, specialized slow-cooking tips, and advice on eliminating wheat derivatives, this fun and fresh cookbook has everything you need to create healthy, delicious meals—without spending all day in the kitchen.

Kale: The Complete Guide to the World’s Most Powerful Superfood

By Stephanie Pedersen (*Sterling Books*) \$14.95

One of the most nutrient-dense vegetables, kale is the versatile “superfood” featured in this book, which includes recipes for every meal to entice, satisfy, and boost your well-being. Kale shows up in soups, muffins, appetizers, smoothies, egg casseroles, sandwiches, and side dishes. A growing guide is also included, along with tips on choosing and storing kale, and a handy list of online resources.

Pizza Night!/Taco Night!

(*Oxmoor House*) \$15.95 each

These colorful books each include 101 recipes from thin-crust to deep-dish pizza, sauces, doughs and sides to quesadillas, burritos, tacos, drinks, and desserts. Each recipe includes a full-page illustration, and the ingredients and directions are in a large, bright, easy-to-read format. “Speed It Up,” and “Little Helpers” sections are also included, as well as options for vegetarian and gluten-free recipes.

The Naked Kitchen: Veggie Burger Book

By Sarah Davies and Kristy Taylor (*Lyons Press*) \$19.95

These recipes combine simple, wholesome, plant-based ingredients to create a wide variety of scrumptious vegetable and bean-based burgers and sides, such as a caramelized onion burger, sweet potato beer fries, and crispy sesame green bean fries. Colorful photographs and quick tips for easy preparation are included with each recipe, as well as symbols indicating whether it is gluten free, soy free, and/or grill friendly.

The Southern Living Community Cookbook

By Sheri Castle (*Oxmoor House*) \$29.95

Hailed as the ultimate Southern “community” for 50 years, Southern Living brings the best hometown cooks, recipes, and stories together to create a book with good things to eat and timeless tales to tell. With over 200 recipes and mouth-watering photographs, the book includes prized dishes of the region, such as shrimp and grits, creamy spicy cucumbers, and praline cheesecake.

True Food: Seasonal, Sustainable, Simple, Pure

By Andrew Weil (*Little Brown & Co.*) \$19

Every recipe in this book is not only delicious, but it also promotes the diner’s well-being. Showcasing high-quality ingredients and simple preparations with robust, satisfying flavors, the book includes more than 125 original recipes from Dr. Weil and Chef Michael Stebner, including spring salad with aged provolone, curried cauliflower soup, shrimp and Asian noodles, chocolate icebox tart, and, for a special treat, a pomegranate martini.

Pick up a new cookbook and enter the kitchen with some exciting new recipes for the New Year. Until next month, happy reading.

The staff at Covered Treasures Bookstore can be contacted at books@ocn.me.

Art Matters

Creativity: What the corporate world says it needs now



By Janet Sellers

“Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it.”—Maya Angelou

Is the MFA, Master of Fine Arts, the new MBA for the corporate minded? As a field in itself, pursuing the MFA points the way to creative problem-solving, which is one of the major needs of the global business realm, according to a recent study by IBM via the PEW Research Center. Can you imagine what they found out across 33 industries, asking over 1,500 CEOs in 60 countries, the single most-needed skill in our complex world? The number one need was not math, not science, not technology, but “creativity”.

With over 10,000 baby boomers turning 65 daily for the next two decades, our country is about to see a gigantic brain drain for experienced creative strength. The surprising findings of this study point to a hugely creative source for filling that void, and it just might surprise you who can do the job.

The arts’ unique position of generating thoughts and producing them, not just memorizing or repeating them, offers its unique and powerful skills and tools for creative problem solving to artists, and in that vein, to business, commerce, and society.

Artists must be good at what they do as well as superb at business skills in order to survive. We cannot say that about every job, but it is a vital factor for artists and craftspeople who live by their creative imaginations. They are adaptable, resourceful, and catch on quickly to what is needed in business and life challenges. They can powerfully think outside the box—even if they are in the box at any given time.

January is a time for new beginnings and new art work to make. So many creative people make their commitment to art at the beginning of the year. Artists of all ages tell me that in the new year, they most happily and consistently get and stay on track for seeing and making art by taking a class or coming together with other artists to rev up their art engines. Winter can be a time to go inward and cocoon and do nothing, or be calm and get a lot of inner work and exploration accomplished.

Let’s pick up a pencil or a brush for a spare hour with friends or in a class and support our own creativity right where we live—it could lead to something amazing! And to get us all in the groove, including kids, I found a number of local and international calls for artists. You don’t have to be a professional to win in the arts, you just have to put your heart into your art and go for it. So, let’s go!

Upcoming art events and calls for artists

Visions of Light Photographic Exhibition call for artists

This is a juried photographic exhibition. Photographers of all levels are invited to submit work. The mission of the *Visions of Light Exhibition* is to challenge photographers in the vision, interpretation, and use of light in photography. Jason P. Odella, photographer, will judge the entries. Final entries/registration due Jan. 16 to Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts; Exhibition is March 3-28 at TCLA, 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake.

Animal Rescue Kids’ Art Contest

Art contest for kids ages 16 and under. Students enter this monthly contest by submitting a drawing of their favorite animal. Winner and five runners-up will receive “animal rescue” prize package. Details online: www.animalrescuetv.com/kids-art.shtml

Colorado Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest

Call for student artists grades K-12. Time to start getting those great duck stamp artworks going! The 23rd annual student design contest is organized by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and each U.S. state. The due date for Colorado postmarked entries is March 15, and details about the program are available