



ALLYCE'S ATTIC

Welcome To Winter

by MARY ALLYCE

I guess that title should have read “Welcome To Winter – Texas Hill Country style.” Winters here are merely a pale reminder of those of my childhood in Wisconsin. Thank heaven! I love my home state, I love snow storms (as long as I can watch them from indoors with a nice fire and a hot toddy). No one loves the bone biting cold of upper Midwestern winters, however, which is the reason I’m here and so many of our Winter Texans arrive this time of year. Greeting many of those familiar faces and welcoming the new ones feels a bit like seeing favorite family members again who live at a distance.

Welcome all and, wow, do we have a lot for y’all to do this winter!

By the time you read this, we will have staggered through another Thanksgiving, full of turkey, stuffing, pies and gratitude. I know I’m thankful to be putting a cancer diagnosis behind me. I’m also grateful to the PT’s who are helping me get back to my full strength and hopefully putting those fanny (and ego) busting falls in the past! You really don’t appreciate what a blessing it is to be able bodied until you aren’t. There’s always something for which to be thankful, even if you have to sweep out the corners and beneath the rugs to find it.

My apologies to those of you for whom winter is merely something to be endured until those “lazy, hazy days of summer” roll around again. I find winter energizing and I can get positively gushy about it. I mean how bad can a season be that has Christmas in it? Ok, so we have to try to ignore all the décor and music since just after Halloween skitters out the door, but it’s a small price to pay for the glory of the season and all the activities throughout the Hill Country to enjoy. Might I mention it’s a nice change of pace to indulge in those activities in temperatures more suited to Santa and his sleigh than the Tennessee Williams-es-

que sultry summer and fall we just left behind.

We hardly take a breath after Christmas and it’s time to ring in the New Year. For some of us, that potentially happy event can’t come too soon. Whether your New Year’s Eve is a quiet evening spent with friends or family or a joyously noisy affair at one of the many Hill Country venues with some of the best live music to be found anywhere, it’s definitely yet another reason to celebrate the joys of winter. Don’t let it slip your mind that we celebrate, with only the rarest exceptions, without the snow and ice plaguing much of the rest of the country.

Am I rhapsodizing a bit too much for the curmudgeons in the crowd? Maybe we’ll have one of those unusual winter storms that make everyone forget how they carped about the heat and long again for the return of warmer weather. But wait – winter isn’t over yet. Bandera still has to roll out the purple, green and gold carpet for Cowboy Mardi Gras and it’s one of the, if not the biggest weekends of the year!

Gumbo, etouffé, crawfish, wildly colorful and just plain wild costumes, tons of activities and live music from country to rock to zydeco, a parade to die for – it’s impossible to get into a post-Christmas funk with all that to anticipate come the 1st- 3rd of February. As the revelers say, “Laissez les bons temps rouler”.

So, smile. It’s winter and all that it brings here in the Hill Country. Too cold? Put on a sweater, have a bowl of soup and “Let the good times roll” - right through this jam packed season. See you next Spring!