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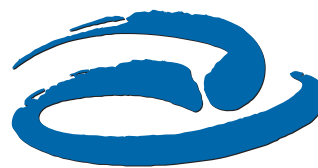
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from the editor



From left, Sharon Wren, Tyler Wren, Sarah J. Gardner, and Logan Wren. (Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

Long before the first campaign to change our light bulbs to CFLs, before reusable grocery sack goodie bags started popping up at events, before even the first Earth Day celebration, Aldo Leopold wrote in his 1949 essay “The Land Ethic,” “In our attempt to make conservation easy, we have made it trivial.” It is a sentence that haunts me.

At Radish we try always to bring you ideas for healthy living that are within reach, believing in the cumulative power of small changes to make a big difference. Since we’re all in this together, it only follows that the most effective changes are the ones we can all implement. At first glance, swapping out light bulbs may seem trivial, but a million households using more energy-efficient lighting has a larger environmental impact overall than a dozen households going off the grid.

Of course, thanks to Leopold, I’m constantly aware of the fine line between an idea that seems easy enough to do and one that seems so simple as to beg the question, “Why bother?” So, in honor of Earth Day, we at Radish decided to stretch a little and challenge our writers with ideas that required just a bit more effort and commitment.

Just what were these challenges? We asked some of our writers to cut their shower time in half. We tasked another with restricting her household waste for one week to what the average American home produces in a day. And our food writers were asked to come up with recipes that draw most of their ingredients from the bulk bins. Each challenge had the potential for a larger payoff in terms of energy, water and landfill use — but we were even more interested to see if rising to the challenge would lead to useful insights and ideas that could be applied more broadly.

I am happy — and quite proud — to report not a single Radish writer turned down a challenge. In fact, they each responded with enthusiasm and creativity. Of course, it’s one thing to be a Radish writer who at least gets paid to take on the assignment. It’s another matter to be a family member of that writer and do it gratis. Because of this I was particularly moved by the Wren family. When Sharon Wren, a longtime Radish contributor, signed up to limit her trash for a week, her sons and husband did as well. In fact, her sons added their own twist, challenging each other to see who could produce the least amount of trash. In thinking about the resources that may be limited in the future and the challenges that will present, it gives me hope to know that kind of “can-do” spirit is a resource each of us has the power to renew.

— Sarah J. Gardner
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Radish
HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

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the grapevine

From our readers:

"I read Radish for the first time today. Loved it!"

— Brittany Atwood, Springville, IA

Begin at home (March 2012): "I write as a fan of the Radish. My husband and I were just reading the March 2012 issue and happened across a piece on the last page, an excerpt from a book published by Rodale Books. ... In this excerpt, there was a glaring error — the statement, 'In the kitchen, flour, water, and bacteria mix to make bread.' In fact, it is the combination of flour, water and yeast that makes bread. And yeast is not a type of bacteria but rather a fungus."

— Dr. Allison Beck, Rock Island, IL

A lady weights (March 2012): "I enjoyed this article very much, and it was nice to hear the other side of the story. It seems that the myth of 'women who do strength training will end up looking like men' is still out there, unfortunately, as evidenced by the unknowing sales person that your writer encountered."

— Brian Morgan, Davenport, IA

We love to meet our readers! Thanks to Friends of Radish, you can find representatives of the magazine at the following events:

- **Western Illinois University Environmental Summit**, green careers roundtable, 5:30 p.m., and keynote presentation by Peter Schwarzman, "Living Green: It's Happening but it Could Happen in a Much Bigger Way," 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 3, at the campus of WIU-Quad Cities, 3300 River Drive, Moline.

- A presentation by **"Four Fish" author Paul Greenberg**, 5 p.m. Monday, April 16, in the Ford Center for the Fine Arts at Knox College, 2 E. South St., Galesburg, Ill. Read more about this event on page 26.

- **Earth Week Fair**, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 21, at the QCCA Expo Center, 2621 4th Ave., Rock Island. For more information on this event, visit qcearthweek.org.

To discover more upcoming events of interest, see the events calendar at radishmagazine.com.



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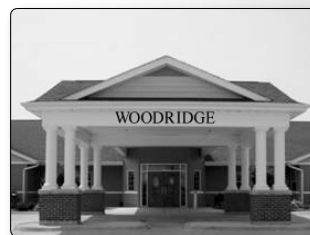
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healthy living from the ground up

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Lily Tressler of Iowa City holds a pair of eggs containing herb seedlings. (Photo by Todd Mizener)

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At En Season Café in Galesburg, Ill., an ever-changing array of daily dishes are made from ingredients predominantly grown within a 100-mile radius, many of them organic. Curious to know what comes from where? You can always ask the chef, who cooks in an open kitchen in the center of the restaurant — which is exactly what the Radish staff did on the day we visited the café to take photos for this issue. You can see a video of our conversation with Bartley Smith, head chef, and Peggy Wilke, kitchen manager, on radishmagazine.com, and you can read more about their restaurant endeavor on page 22 (but to try the food, you'll have to visit yourself).



healthy living

Pitching in

WWOOF farms offer visitors a chance to work and learn

By Annie L. Scholl

In 2008, Penny Peterson was already eating locally grown organic food, but she wanted to learn more about how the food was produced. So once a week, she left her three young sons with her husband and spent a few hours working on a nearby farm in exchange for fresh produce.

Through that experience, she met volunteers from all over the world who had come to the farm through a program called Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF). In exchange for room and board, the WWOOF workers assisted with farmwork, thus allowing them to experience daily life on an organic farm by being truly immersed in farm life. It made sense, then, that when Penny and her husband Nate started Wishful Acres Farm near Freeport, Ill., they, too, would participate in WWOOF.

"I had witnessed firsthand that the WWOOF program can be a good way for small, organic family farmers to keep their farms going," she says. "As a small, beginning family farm, we don't have the capital to hire employees. What we do have is the most delicious food in the world being grown and raised right here on this beautiful rolling countryside. We can offer an opportunity for people to eat that food, witness this beauty and take away the knowledge of how to grow, raise, cook and enjoy these delicious, healthful foods."

The Peterson farm has two mobile homes in addition to the farmhouse, creating the ideal place for farm intern housing. Summer 2011, just a few months after purchasing their farm, the Petersons offered their first internship. The recipient: Lenna Ostrodka, 24, who is studying environmental science with a concentration in applied ecology at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

"I always wanted to become involved in sustainable farming," Ostrodka says. "My grandpa has a big farm in Southern Illinois. I might try doing something with a parcel of it in the future so Wishful Acres was a great part to get a start." An



Chickens, Penny Peterson and WWOOF volunteer Lenna Ostrodka of Wishful Acres Farm near Freeport, Ill., (above, right) and volunteer Justine Trollinger at Wapsinonoc Farm near West Branch, Iowa (far right). (Submitted)



additional perk: She was able to use the experience for graduate credit.

Having never taken business classes, Ostrodka says she was interested in seeing firsthand how intertwined sales were with activities on the farm. If something sold well at market or was well received by CSA customers, they responded on the farm accordingly. "There are always surprises," she says, noting weather, insects, blight and customer preferences. "That's what made the job so fascinating to me — that everything was so dynamic and that you could never plan for everything."

She says Peterson worked with her "on all the

tasks at first to make sure I felt comfortable with what I was doing, and then we worked independently. She pointed me to some great resources like where to get seeds and whose books to read."

Ostrodka says she didn't mind not earning a paycheck. "I was so grateful to have such a nice family to live with for the summer," she says. "I was totally humbled by their generosity and their willingness to include me as part of the family."

The only downside, she says: leaving the farm.

"Penny has so many incredible things planned for the future," she says. "I wish I could be part of all of it. After only a summer, I feel pretty invested in that place."

Lindsay Schmidt, 24, of Madison, Wis., wanted to learn a more natural, organic approach to growing medicinal herbs than she was learning at a job in a commercial, conventional-style greenhouse. She found what she was looking for by being a WWOOF intern at Nan Fawcett's Wapsinoc Farm near West Branch, Iowa.

"I learned that growing plants on whatever scale is so specific to the grower and their philosophies, resources, rhythms and the community they're marketing to as well," Schmidt says. "I learned that there is a vast amount of freedom and flexibility, but you also have to be smart. Really smart. I learned that this is what I'm going to be doing for a really long time."

Instead of living on the farm, Schmidt worked in exchange for meals. "I would have done it all for free," says Schmidt, who has also interned on two farms in California through WWOOF.

"With Nan, I enjoyed the conversations the most," Schmidt says. "People are our best resources in this field. Books do an OK job, but really getting to know the farmers and gardeners and learning by observation is so key."

Ayron Messerschmitt, 26, also interned at Fawcett's farm and through WWOOF in Montana. The Iowa City man says he gained not only knowledge about growing food, but also "a sense of how to live more realistically."

"Our popular global survival practices don't make any sense," he says. "I've become pretty fed up with the picture of life that's being presented to us. Standard living models need to change, and soon. I was given a fairly adequate picture of how different life could be."

He plans to get involved with WWOOF in the future, too. "Many WWOOF farms grow to sell and can be quite commercial, from what I understand, but there are many options available depending on one's preferences," he says. "To my way of thinking, working on small family farms would be the most rewarding. ... The possibility to stay with people and visit nearby scenery and attractions is a huge plus. In Montana, I was no more than a couple hours from Yellowstone, for instance."

Fawcett, 66, an herbalist and massage therapist, says she suspects she gets more out of the experience than the WWOOF interns.

"I enjoy the companionship in the farm-work the most," says Fawcett, who alone runs the land that was once farmed by her great-grandparents in the 1800s. "It feels good to be

working together on a big project and see the results."

Fawcett has had volunteers from as far away as Baltimore and several from states surrounding Iowa. So what makes a good WWOOF volunteer? Fawcett says an "authentic interest in the plants and an eagerness to learn."

"There is always something for a person to do, no matter what their physical abilities or previous experience. But of course it is important that volunteers don't have an aversion to work!"

Annie L. Scholl is a frequent Radish contributor. For more information about WWOOF, visit www.woof.org. Follow Nan Fawcett's blog at wapsinocgardens.blogspot.com. To learn more about Penny and Nate Peterson's Wishful Acres Farm, visit WishfulAcresFarm.com.



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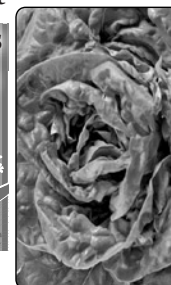
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healthy living

More or less

One family, seven days — and a lot of talk about trash

By Sharon Wren

When Radish asked me to try to limit my family's trash for a week, the first thing that came to mind was an article in *People* magazine about a family of four whose nonrecyclable, noncompostable trash for an entire year fit into a quart Mason jar. In contrast, the average American throws away 4.5 pounds of trash a day, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

I'd say my family falls somewhere in between. I've been composting for about 15 years and recycling for more than that, but we still generate our fair share of trash. As part of the challenge, we were given four large, empty cottage cheese tubs (the kind that hold 2 pounds each) to use as our trash containers — not quite a mason jar, but not far off. It was time to see how good we could be. I told my boys, Logan and Tyler, that this wasn't a contest, it would be OK if they each had

more than a full tub. "I'd rather do it," Logan said. "My conscience would rather have me do it."

What follows is a week in the life of trash at the Wren house. Of course, Murphy's Law kicked in and a nasty case of the flu ran rampant through the house that week. My tissues alone would have filled one of those tubs so I didn't include them in the experiment. I realize hankies seem more eco-friendly than tissues, but as one of the sickies, I didn't want to trade less trash for more laundry.

I also didn't include leftover food in the experiment for one simple reason: I have 12- and 10-year-old ravenous boys — we don't exactly have much in the way of leftover food. What leftovers we might have get "recycled" into my lunch the next day.

Sharon Wren is a regular contributor to Radish magazine.

Monday

I felt a little bit cocky; we could do this! Logan and Tyler were excited, too. We got off to a great start up through lunch, then the effects of the flu started to kick in and the idea of cooking didn't sit well. We ended up bringing home tacos for dinner. On the negative side, there were 20 taco wrappers to deal with. On the plus side, the cardboard taco carriers were recyclable!



Logan and Tyler Wren (Photos by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

Tuesday

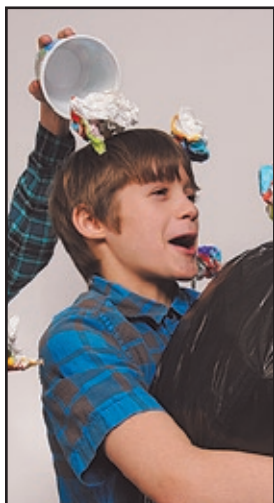
I have to keep an eye on the kids' tubs. They're rather competitive. I wouldn't put it past either one of them to put trash in the other's tub. We've been recycling since they were babies and they're pretty good at it, although sometimes their idea of keeping something out of the landfill means keeping it behind their dressers. They are still trying to get the hang of composting, though. That might change this summer when we get our chickens and the kids will be able to feed them scraps.

Tyler's flu has almost run its course, so he won't have any more medicine packets in his tub. I'm still putting mine in two or three times a day. Of course we would all get the flu instead of coughs. The cough medicine bottle is recyclable. Foil packets of medicine are not.



Wednesday

Somebody had a hot dog after school. That means a paper towel, which is wrapped around the hot dog before it goes in the microwave. I guess I can't complain; my cheese stick did come with a plastic wrapper.



Thursday

It was a bad day at work and I was ready to relax. I pulled out the detoxifying mask I got at the drugstore, but it wasn't one out of a tube. It was sort of a moist towelette you put over your face for 15 minutes. So my relaxation added the towelette and packaging to my tub. Dinner that night ended up being frozen breaded chicken patties out of a bag (not recyclable) and mashed potatoes (peels were compostable).

Friday

We started running out of lunch-packing supplies, meaning there was more trash. The wrapper from the tomato juice cans went into a tub. The package from the lunch meat was about to follow when I happened to notice the recyclable plastic logo on the back. Score one for the recycling bin!

I cooked ground deer for dinner, which added plastic wrap and butcher's paper to the tubs, but no Styrofoam. I wonder what Ms. Mason Jar did with her meat packaging. The article in People said that she takes glass containers to the store to hold deli items. I can't help but wonder if that meets health codes. Even if she skips the Styrofoam trays for meat, there's got to be some sort of packaging.

Saturday and Sunday

These two days were when the experiment imploded. It started when the boys had a friend spend the night. We ordered pizza, and unfortunately you can't recycle that kind of cardboard. Three boys in the house meant that bags of chips were emptied at record speed. Also, I indulged in one of my favorite pastimes, baking. You can't recycle butter wrappers, though you can recycle the containers from the stuff that comes in tubs (but doesn't taste like real butter).

Overall, I think we did OK but Tyler was more optimistic. He even seemed to grasp a way we could do better in the future. "Maybe we should eat stuff that doesn't have wrappers and just eat stuff with wrappers when we're really hungry," he suggested. It may not be a year's worth of trash squeezed into a Mason jar, but it's a victory. I'll take it.

TNG 2012 Calendar of Events

Cave Concerts

Denny Garcia • May 26
Big Blue Sky • July 14
Dave Moore • August 25
Switchback - TBA

TNG Events

Poker Run - The Wheelers Band
(Horseback-Kayak-Hike) • June 9
3rd Annual YakFest - The Ramblers • July 21

Horse Events

Spring TuneUp • April 28-29
Confidence Clinic • May 10-11
Mother-Daughter Days • May 12-13
TNG NEISCA Horse Show • May 25-26
Moonlight Ride • June 1
Training on the Trail • June 3
Versatility Clinic • June 10-11
Training on the Trail • June 16-17
Doc Hammill's Driving Clinic • June 21-24
Riding Dynamics • June 29-30
Moonlight Ride • July 6
Versatility Clinic • July 7-8
Training on the Trail • July 27-29
Moonlight Ride • August 3
Mother-Daughter Days • August 6-7
Riding Dynamics • August 12-13
Women's Retreat • August 19-20
IRHA Show • August 25-26
Blue Moon Ride • August 31
Riding Dynamics • September 4-5
Fall TuneUp • September 8-9
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healthy living

Shower power

Conserve more than just water with shorter showers



iStockphoto

By Radish staff

The average American household uses a staggering amount of water: 400 gallons per day for a family of four, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Because much of that goes quickly gurgling down our drains, it can be difficult to grasp just how much water we are using and where we might cut back. But if we think of it in terms of time — how long the tap is left running — ways we might conserve water quickly become apparent.

Take the shower, for example. Nearly one-fifth of our residential water usage happens there, so even small changes in how long we spend sudsing up and rinsing off can pay big dividends. Shortening your average shower time by a single minute can save as much as 1,825 gallons annually.

Although this has an obvious impact on water resources, it also has implications in terms of energy usage. Purifying and distributing all that water takes energy, as does heating it up once it arrives in your home. Thus, cutting back on water usage is also an effective means of conserving fossil fuels.

With that in mind, three of our Radish writers agreed to spend a week cutting their showers in half as a way to discover which techniques for a shorter shower really work.

Soap in one hand, shampoo in the other

I'll admit it — I love long showers. I love relaxing in the hot water, watching the steam rise above my tranquil, rectangular space and roll into the rest of the bathroom. At the start of this challenge I clocked a semi-fast (for me) morning shower at 12 minutes. Cutting that in half, then, would be about six minutes. Uh-oh.

My first attempt at a speed-shower clocked just over seven minutes, and that's about as fast as I'm ever going to get. Sorry, Mother Earth. That shower was spent lathering shampoo with one hand while scrubbing my body with the other, and putting conditioner in my hair without first washing out all of the shampoo. I should also note that I spun in slow circles throughout those seven minutes for maximum rinsing power.

Bottom line? I found if I'm shooting for a quick shower, the key is to take them at night. I'm not fast or steady enough in the morning to remain upright while washing like a speed demon, and I most certainly would leave the shower either with a head full of shampoo or a knot on my forehead from slipping and falling.

It was a fun challenge, though, racing against the clock. Perhaps I'll try for faster showers from now on, reserving only one day a week for a special shower that lasts as long as we have hot water.

— Laura Anderson Shaw

Rise to the challenge

I would never dream of asking anyone good enough to visit my home to keep his or her shower short, but somehow guests over the years have discovered the small plastic hourglass in our shower — the kind you would find in a board game — and have figured out its purpose. I've been surprised by the number of visitors who have come to our breakfast table eager to tell us they've "beaten the sand."

It's no small feat. Turn the hourglass over and you have roughly four minutes to shower. Then again, maybe I shouldn't be surprised. Truth be told, we first discovered the sand timer at the home of a friend, which is how we came to own one ourselves. Maybe we all just like a good challenge to start the day.

Since I'm already in the habit of taking four-minute showers, I decided to shake up my routine with a "Navy shower" — get wet, cut the water, lather up, turn the water back on, rinse. To help, I consulted my brother, an actual Navy veteran. When asked if he and his crewmates really did this, he said, "Oh, yeah. We had to. You only have so much water on a ship. We called the other, longer kind of shower a 'Hollywood shower.'"

Then Nathan told me about being at sea off the coast of Alaska on a ship on which the boiler had broken. The shower water was icy cold, and the minutes the water was off were equally frigid. "I had this little chant to help before jumping into the shower: Hot warm beach. Hot warm beach. Hot warm beach," he said.

When it came time to cut the water for my own Navy shower, I thought of my brother's story and tried a chant of my own: "It could be worse." And really, it could have been. I was pleasantly surprised. Now I think I'm going to continue using this technique from time to time — just, you know, for the challenge.

— Sarah J. Gardner

Make the shower work for you

My typical shower is about 10 minutes, and for the first shower of my week-long experiment I completed a five-minute wash. No big deal, really. I just had to "speed up" my enjoyment of the warmth.

On day two I did a Navy shower. That was more of a big deal. Bit chilly — not something I would want to do on a regular basis, certainly not in winter.

For the rest of the week, however, I settled on a third alternative to saving water, something anyone can do if they have a low-flow showerhead with a regulator. After getting wet, I turned the regulator down to a mere trickle, then turned it back up to rinse at the end. The trickle provided just enough warmth to ward off the chill.

I have a Gaiam Energy Saving Showerhead. It only costs \$10, and the Gaiam website claims it cuts water use by 50 percent to 70 percent, saving a four-person family up to \$250 a year. (My four-person family includes 18- and 21-year-old sons, which equates to a six-person family when it comes to things like water and food consumption.)

Using just a trickle easily reduces by over 50 percent the water usage compared to a fully open regulator. Conceivably I still could take a 10-minute shower and use only as much water as a five-minute shower at full force. Now if I could just convince my sons to do the same.

(To order your own Gaiam showerhead, visit gaiam.com and type in "energy saving showerhead" in the search field.)

— Joe Payne

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healthy living

Hit the bins!

Unsure what to do with bulk ingredients? Here's help

By Radish staff

Pity the bulk bins. They sit in the corner of the grocery store, a powerhouse of possibilities with an impressive environmental resume. Purchasing ingredients in bulk eliminates unnecessary packing that ends up in the landfill and streamlines the transportation needed to deliver goods to market, reducing the carbon footprint of the store. They also allow consumers access to a broad range of natural and organic ingredients that might be hard to find otherwise, and home cooks can purchase these ingredients in small amounts with which to experiment rather than prepackaged amounts that may never get fully used. The savings even go beyond eliminating waste: according to the Bulk is Green Council, purchasing ingredients from the bulk bins typically costs 30 percent to 50 percent less than buying the same ingredients prepackaged on the shelves.

For many shoppers, though, the bulk bins are a conundrum, one that leaves them scratching their heads. Sure, the bins are handy if you are looking to try a new kind of granola or want to bring some yogurt-covered pretzels home for a snack. But as for all those beans and grains and flours (let alone strange-sounding ingredients like carob chips and nutritional yeast), what exactly do you do with them?

Plenty, as our food writers were quick to demonstrate. In honor of Earth Day, we asked them to come up with recipes in which most of the ingredients could be found in the bulk bins. As you'll see from the asterisks in the recipes (denoting ingredients that can be found in the bulk-bin aisle), this included spices and seasonings, which may just be the best kept secret of the bulk-bin aisle. Most of the flavor in spices come from volatile oils that evaporate within six months of being ground, and most jars of spices don't get used before that happens. But purchased in small quantities from the jars in the bulk-bin aisle, your spices will reward your environmental consciousness with vibrant, full-flavor dishes at every meal.



With the ingredients layered in a quart-size jar, this curried lentil soup can be given as a healthful, tasty and environmentally friendly gift. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)

Curried Lentil Soup

½ pound red lentils*
½ pound green lentils*
2 teaspoons salt*
3½ tablespoons minced dried onion
1 teaspoon garlic powder*

1 tablespoon curry powder (or more depending on taste)*
½ cup dried apple rings cut into small pieces*
1 or 2 tablespoons dried parsley*
7 cups water

This soup is easy and delicious — pair it with bread and a salad and it makes a great meal. It's also a great recipe for the benevolent chef: The dry ingredients can be layered in a quart-size Mason jar and delivered (along with cooking instructions) to a family with a new baby or to the home of a sick friend. Nothing could be simpler.

Add all dry ingredients to a large saucepan and cover with the water. Heat to boiling on high, then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer the soup for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes 8 cups.

— Leslie Klipsch (recipe adapted from *Good Housekeeping*)

Cherry Tarragon Breakfast Bowl

I've been making various versions of this for years, but now that I really look at it, I realize it's vegan. Bonus! Everything except the olive oil, vinegar, water and fresh orange zest can be found in the bulk bins. To make this recipe gluten free, you can substitute rice- or corn-based couscous.

1 cup French (small grain) couscous*	¼ teaspoon medium or finely ground sea salt*
½ teaspoon dried tarragon*	
1 teaspoon organic turbinado sugar*	1 cup boiling water
½ teaspoon fresh orange zest (from about half an orange)	1 tablespoon olive oil
½ cup roasted salted almonds, chopped rough*	1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
½ cup dried cherries, chopped rough*	3 teaspoon nutritional yeast flakes*
	Coarse (ground) sea salt to taste*

Combine couscous, tarragon, sugar, orange zest, almonds, cherries and salt in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Pour boiling water into the bowl and cover with plastic wrap, tin foil or a tight fitting lid. Let mixture rest for 15 minutes.

Once the mixture has rested (couscous will have expanded and soaked up all the water) break up any chunks of couscous with a metal spoon. Drizzle with olive oil and red wine vinegar. Sprinkle 2-3 teaspoons of nutritional yeast flakes and season with salt to taste. Enjoy at room temperature or cold from the refrigerator.

(The nutritional yeast is a replacement for Parmesan cheese and allows this recipe to be vegan without sacrificing the nutty goodness of real cheese.)

— Rachel Morey Flynn

Three-Grain Breakfast Bake

This breakfast bake is perfect for Sunday brunch or for a weekend in. The versatility of the grains and fruit makes this easily adaptable for whatever you may have on hand.

⅔ cup rye flakes*	1 tablespoon cinnamon*
⅔ cup barley flakes*	2 tablespoons maple syrup
⅔ cup rolled oats*	2 cups milk
½ cup pecan, chopped*	2 eggs
¼ teaspoon salt*	2 tablespoons butter, melted
1 teaspoon baking powder	3 cups seasonal fruit (blueberries, raspberries, strawberries)
¼ cup flaxseeds*	

Preheat oven to 375. In a large skillet over medium-low heat combine rye, barley, oatmeal and pecans. Lightly toast for 5-6 minutes. Remove from heat and combine with flaxseeds, cinnamon, salt and baking powder.

Prepare an 8x8-inch baking dish by lightly buttering the surface. Place half the fruit in the bottom of the dish and cover with grain mixture.

In a separate bowl, whisk together milk, eggs, melted butter and maple syrup. Pour evenly over grains and fruit. Finish by sprinkling remaining fruit on top.

Bake for 45-50 minutes. The grains should be set and the top should be golden brown. Serve immediately with milk, heavy cream, extra sweetener or more fruit. Serves 4.

— Erin Alderson

* denotes ingredients that can be found in the bulk-bin aisle

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Eyes on the eagles

Website gives a bird's-eye view of a Q-C raptors' nest

By Lindsay Hocker

It's not every birth that has a worldwide audience numbering in the thousands. As unusual as it might be for human beings, it's even more rare for wild eagles. Thanks, though, to a webcam installed above a nest built by the two bald eagles that call Alcoa Davenport Works home, the eaglets born there have more watchful eyes on them than just those of their parents.

How many watchful eyes? At any given time, hundreds or even thousands of people could be checking in on them through Alcoa's online EagleCam, which streams live video on the website alcoa.com/eaglecam. Alcoa spokesman John Riches, who writes the blog posts on the EagleCam website, says that in 2011 the EagleCam had about 1.5 million hits.

The adult eagles are known as Liberty and Justice. They made their nest in a tree at Alcoa in 2009, on a portion of the property that is in Riverdale, Iowa. Their first eggs at Alcoa hatched in the spring of 2010, with two eaglets surviving and fledging that year.

The original EagleCam at Alcoa Davenport Works was installed in early November of 2010. Before it began streaming live, videos and still photos were posted. In March 2011, the EagleCam went live. "We were able to get the streaming started just before the eggs hatched last year," Riches says.

That year two eaglets were born but only one survived. The viewers mourned the loss of the eaglet who didn't make it, with many posting sympathetic comments. They had hoped to see both eaglets grow big enough and strong enough to fledge. The surviving eaglet, who did fledge, was named Freedom through an online poll.

Later, in the fall of 2011, an improved camera with better image quality was installed, giving viewers an even better look at the eagles and their eggs. The camera also has night-vision capabilities, allowing visitors to the site to check in on the eagles 24 hours a day.

Liberty laid three eggs this year — one on Feb. 11, the second on Feb. 14, and the third on Feb. 17. Eagle eggs generally have a 35-day incubation period. As Radish went to press, the eggs had begun hatching and the first eaglet appeared in the nest on March 19. After birth, eaglets grow quickly, typically adding one pound of body weight every four to five days. If all goes well, the eaglets hatched at Alcoa should be ready to leave the nest in late May or early June, according to the company website.

Riches says he's had to learn a lot about eagles since the EagleCam launch to write blog entries and to answer questions, but he's "been very interested in eagles for a very long time."

Riches was formerly a WQAD-TV8 reporter and then the station's news director. During that time, he was involved with news coverage about Elton Fawks, a champion for the national bird. The late conservationist, who lived in



One of the eagles nesting at Alcoa Davenport Works tends to its eggs. (Submitted)

Davenport at the time of his death in 1989, was world-renowned for his eagle studies and conservation efforts.

Fawks was among the environmentalists who first warned that the now-banned pesticide DDT was wreaking havoc on the eagle population. A report of his was mentioned in Rachel Carson's seminal environmental book, "Silent Spring."

Fawks fought to protect the refuge formerly known as Oak Valley Bald Eagle Ridge Refuge Nature Reserve near Hampton, Ill., and Mississippi River Lock and Dam 14, which was later renamed the Elton Fawks Eagle Refuge Nature Preserve.

Riches says Alcoa corporately has a "huge commitment to the environment and sustainability," and putting up the cameras and sharing the experience seemed like the right thing to do. "I think it's a very unique look into a part of nature people haven't seen much before," he says.

In addition to commenting on the site, Alcoa EagleCam watchers can tweet on Twitter.com using the hashtag #alcoaeaglecam to easily share their observations with others. Riches says the EagleCam connects people and eagles in a unique way. "I think people get an appreciation for just how special they are. They are a majestic bird."

Lindsay Hocker is a reporter for The Dispatch and The Rock Island Argus and enjoys spending her free time helping at animal shelters.

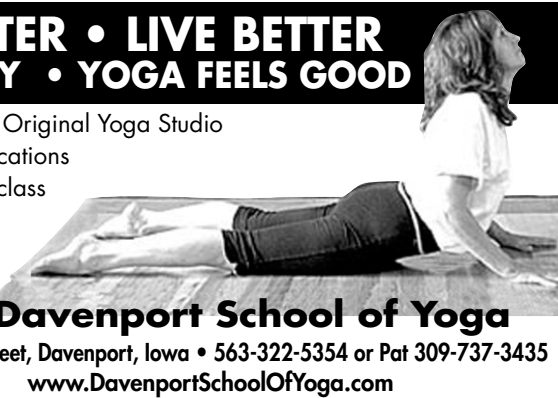
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food

Panna cotta

An elegant dessert garnished with a bit of wisdom

By Sarah J. Gardner

The lessons I learn in the kitchen by and large tend to be technical — what amount of leavening is needed to make a cake rise, how to know when you are done kneading bread dough — but every so often a dish slips in that has larger lessons to impart. I'm speaking now of panna cotta.

Italian for “cooked cream,” panna cotta is exactly that, a dessert that is as elegant as it is simple. At its most basic, panna cotta is made from little more than cream, sugar and gelatin cooked to a custardy consistency. It is, as one of my dinner guests once declared, like eating heaven by the spoonful. The truly miraculous thing about panna cotta, though, is how nearly effortless it is to make. It takes only a few minutes to assemble, requires no baking or special equipment, and can be prepared well in advance of a meal. The indulgent taste and texture of panna cotta belie its ease of preparation.

Easy, that is, until you try to unmold it. For years I was seduced by photos in glossy magazines and cookbooks of panna cotta inverted from a ramekin onto a dessert plate. The pictures fairly glowed with serene servings of cooked cream that, wholly without container, seemed to have achieved enlightenment as well as dessert perfection.

How I resented them. How I wanted them! Try as I might, I could never seem to unmold my own panna cotta. The directions seemed straightforward enough — dip the ramekin briefly in hot water, then invert — but somehow my panna cotta always broke in the process. Many was the dinner party that ended with me serving a heavenly dessert in a sour mood, aware all the while my guests praised their little dishes of cream, somewhere in the kitchen lurked the runny, jagged remains of the one dessert I had tried to unmold before serving.

And then one day it hit me: My guests were happy to eat panna cotta out of a custard cup. Ecstatic, even. And the dessert certainly didn't suffer from staying in the mold. Whether spooned from the cup or spooned from a plate, it made little difference. I had to ask myself, “Why complicate an uncomplicated dessert?” Panna cotta taught me, in a word, grace.

Do those cookbook stylists know something about unmolding I don't? Possibly. But I'd like to think what I learned from panna cotta is more valuable still. Call it the Tao of Dessert: When life gives you a simple task, don't get fussy with it. These days I embrace my panna cotta limitations joyfully, serving up the dessert in tea cups and champagne glasses, custard cups and finger bowls.

Sarah J. Gardner is editor of Radish.



Paul Colletti / Radish

Rose Water Panna Cotta

2 teaspoons (1 packet) unflavored gelatin	3 tablespoons rose water
3 tablespoons cold water	3 tablespoons honey, plus more for drizzling
1 cup heavy cream, divided	½ cup pistachios, chopped
1 cup plain Greek-style yogurt	Rose petals (optional)

In a small bowl, sprinkle the gelatin over the 3 tablespoons of cold water. Stir and set aside for 10 minutes so the gelatin can soften.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together ½ cup of the cream, all of the yogurt and the rose water. Heat the remaining ½ cup of cream in a sauce pan and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Remove the cream from the heat and whisk in the gelatin and honey to dissolve. Pour the hot mixture into the cold mixture and stir to combine.

Pour panna cotta into 4-6 small containers and refrigerate until cold. When the panna cotta is thoroughly chilled and firm, cover the containers tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

When ready to serve, garnish each container with chopped pistachios and a drizzle of honey or sprinkle of rose petals.



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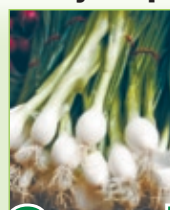
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health & fitness

Step by step

The right pedometer can help you find your stride

By Jeff Dick

Need to get moving? Purchasing a pedometer can be a step in the right direction. According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, more than two dozen studies have shown the use of pedometers — which tally the number of steps taken walking, jogging or running — correlates with increased physical activity, along with weight loss and a decrease in blood pressure.

“You walk and run a lot more because pedometers make you aware of what you’ve done,” says Coal Valley, Ill., resident Heidi Parkhurst, who’s been using the devices for two years.

In addition to a routine that relies on everything from trails to treadmills, Parkhurst opts for stairs instead of elevators, parks her vehicle away from building entrances, and walks around the office. These and other “moving” habits boost her daily step count to 10,000 — a number frequently recommended as a target goal, with 5,000 steps already an everyday part of most people’s typical lives.

There are several types of pedometers. Parkhurst has used more than one — sometimes simultaneously — but prefers an armband model that’s part of a Web-based system to track distance covered, calories burned and other information. She finds the armband more consistent than waist-worn types. Plus, she has used one tucked in a niche inside one of her running shoes.

Regardless of the type of pedometer you use, the key to getting an accurate step count is determining the length of your stride, which ranges between 2 and 3 feet in length; the average is 2.5 feet for men and 2.2 feet for women. Between 1,760 and 2,640 steps add up to one mile.

To measure your stride, mark a distance of 50 feet. Walk off the distance and count your steps. Divide 50 by the number of steps and that is your stride length. Then divide 5,280 — the number of feet in a mile — by your stride length to find your steps per mile.

Keep in mind, though, that for any individual stride, length is not very constant. Different kinds of walking surfaces, types of shoes and other factors can alter a person’s “regular” stride.

So, which pedometers are best? While dozens of models are available, most rely on one of two technologies: spring-leveled mechanisms that move up and down with hip sway, and cantilevered mechanisms that detect acceleration and trigger a tiny electrical charge when compressed.

Spring-levered pedometers must be worn at right angles to the ground to ensure proper step counting, which makes these less accurate for overweight people whose waistlines push them out of vertical position. Testing has shown these pedometers can undercount steps by as much as 25 percent. Piezoelectric pedometers cost more but can be worn at any angle.

First-time pedometer users may prefer to start with a modest unit, such as the Yamax SW-200 Digi-Walker or the Omron GoSmart Pocket Pedometer, before graduating to one with more bells and whistles. Buying one online may save a few bucks, but advice — and help with initial set-up — is best provided by retailers, especially those catering to runners.

Running Wild, located at Brady and 32nd Street in Davenport, carries a nice selection of pedometers, including the multi-function Accusplit Eagle (\$30), the chip-in-the-shoe Nike Plus Sportband (\$59), and the state-of-the-art GPS-based system, the Garmin Forerunner 610 (\$350).

Regular contributor Jeff Dick logged 4,157 steps (2.23 miles) in a half-hour on a pedometer provided for this article. For a longer version of this article, including reviews of three pedometer models, visit radishmagazine.com.



Heidi Parkhurst wears a Bodybugg pedometer on her arm when walking. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)

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gardens

A handful of hope

Eggshell seedlings inspire one family with their promise

By Sherri Gragg

For weeks, I collect eggshells. I collect them as the earth freezes hard, the snow falls, and the birds struggle to find a thawed place in the fountain for a drink.

I crack them carefully as the children shuffle sleepily from their beds to the kitchen. I slow down in my usual frantic breakfast preparations to delicately remove only the narrow top from the shell. Once the shells are empty, I rinse them carefully, scraping free the membrane that clings to the inside of the shell with my finger. Gently, I shake the water from them, and return them to their carton to air dry before hiding them away in the cabinet above the refrigerator.

All the while I gather these eggs, I plan. I research incubation times and the last frost date. I pour over seed catalogs and the Farmer's Almanac. I make lists, place orders, and dream of warm summer days and fresh tomatoes. I wait, and I wait, and I wait.

At last, planting day arrives. My youngest daughter, excited, dances in the kitchen as I pull the shells from their hiding place and open each carton on the kitchen table. One by one, I use a pick to punch a tiny hole in the bottom of each shell as my daughter reaches into the bag of sterile potting soil. She dips her small brown fingers into the warm, soft dirt.

She scoops up handfuls of it before allowing it to gently fall back into the bag. She, too, dreams of the day our garden shakes off winter's chill and becomes fragrant with spring. She will join me in the warm sun as I prepare the soil for our seedlings. My spade will awaken the sleepy earthworms, and my daughter will pluck one or two from the dirt to wiggle about in the palm of her hand.

"Earthworms are our friends," she will say as she reverently returns them to the soil. "They will help our garden grow."

This magic of growing, of bounty from bareness, will not be lost on her because she will remember the moment in the dark of winter when it all began — with the humility of eggshells.

Oh, there are much nicer seed starting systems on the market: biodegradable "cow pots" and peat pellets that magically swell to four times their size with a few drops of water. Some gardeners favor paper pots that arrive in a sensible strip but fan out into a large honeycomb shape with a few tugs at the corners. A technologically-advanced gardener might prefer a state-of-the-art self-watering miniature greenhouse.

But I love my eggshells. I love that they can be transplanted directly into the garden and that they don't cost me a penny. Sure, it is not a miniature greenhouse, but a strip of plastic wrap from the pantry stretched over the top of the carton will keep the seeds cozy until they sprout.

I love the fact that the eggshells provide more than just a safe place for my seedlings to grow; they provide nutrients like calcium carbonate and even a slight trace of nitrogen for my hungry tomatoes and peppers throughout the long summer while those plants do the hard work of providing food for my five



Cilantro and basil seedlings planted in eggshells. (Photo by Todd Mizener / Radish)

ravenous children. I love that what was destined to be refuse has found meaning and purpose once again. There is an enormous amount of hope in that.

"Fill them carefully," I tell my little girl as I leaf through brightly-colored packages of seeds. Sensible seeds with names like "Orange Bell" compete for attention with their more dramatic cousins like "Yellow Mortgage Lifter" and "Black from Tula Tomato."

"Which one do you want to plant first?" I ask her.

She thinks for a moment, and then chooses "Red Mini Bell," her favorite. She holds the package next to her ear and shakes it, listening to the tiny seeds rattle inside, imagining the day when the fruit hangs ripe on the plant and she can stop in her play to pluck a few to eat in the shade of the fig tree.

"I love this one," she says.

I rip open the package and shake tiny, dry flecks of hope into my hand. She drops each one onto the soil, tenderly covers it, and then sprinkles it with a few drops of water. We repeat the process many times, until the table is littered with empty packages, each shell has become an incubator, and all that is left is to wait for spring.

Sherri Gragg makes her Radish debut this month. You can read more of her writing on motherhood, adoption and social justice on her blog, everydaymiracle.wordpress.com.

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eating well

A better bite

En Season Café serves up a fresh, local lunch menu

By Ann Ring

There's always something in season at the En Season Café in Galesburg, Ill., a restaurant that serves up a full menu of locally-grown food and also offers a commercial kitchen, catering services, cooking classes, retail space and intellectual expertise for anyone who's thinking of starting a small food business of their own.

Located in a former Carhartt distribution facility, En Season is one of several businesses located within Galesburg's Sustainable Business Center, a mixed-use business incubator. Its chief executive officer, Gretchen Garth, was a majority owner of Carhartt and donated the building to the HumanLinks Foundation in Seattle, Wash., where she serves as president. HumanLinks owns the building.

"The biggest obstacle is getting the word out that we're here and what we offer. Almost the entire budget goes toward food, which doesn't leave a lot of room for marketing," says En Season chef Bartley Smith. "Just mentioning that En Season is located in a sustainable business center, people say, 'A sustainable what?'"

"The idea was to bring small businesses and jobs to Galesburg," he explains. Galesburg is reinventing itself and seeking new economic avenues after losing more than 2,000 jobs to factory and other business closings. According to its website, En Season's mission is "to promote organic, local food products, as well as assisting and developing early-stage catering, retail and wholesale food businesses."



Knox College student Yeojin Yi assists Chef Bartley Smith in the En Season kitchen. (Photo by Todd Welvaert / Radish)

En Season's three full-time employees, who are all food certified, have backgrounds connected to their jobs. Smith, kitchen coordinator Peggy Wilke, and local food and agriculture coordinator Lorelei Ullrich work together with area farmers, the West Central Illinois Food Co-Op, and other businesses to serve meals from locally grown resources all year long. Because of the area's climate, the menu changes frequently depending on which local foods are available — a challenge Smith loves. "I don't normally work off a recipe," he says.

Recent menu choices included a buffalo burger on a kaiser roll with onion marmalade, lettuce and homemade mayonnaise; spinach quiche with sundried tomatoes; gnocchi and sauce of the day; spicy Moroccan chickpeas and couscous; mashed butternut squash; grilled cheese sandwich; chicken and wild rice soup; and homemade pickles. Ullrich says that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's requirements for organically grown food is a long process and not easily feasible for a small grower. For this reason and more, while they purchase some organic foods, the three managers' main concerns are buying locally — in this case, within a 100-mile radius — nurturing entrepreneurs, rebuilding the local economy, and conserving water.

With the restaurant's open floor plan, customers can watch the chef in action. What you won't see are fryers, broilers or canned goods. "No cans — unless they're glass," says Ullrich, referring to the foods they have canned themselves. The café's free-range chicken and hormone-free beef are purchased locally as well, which means an economic boost for other small businesses.

En Season's commercial kitchen also is available for those who need large kitchen space, whether to reap profits from value-added food processing, host a large party, or start a food entrepreneurial business. Kitchen clients are charged only for the time they use the facility. "There are a number of applications you can use the kitchen for," says Smith. "One group came in over Christmas to make tamales for their large family gathering." What's more, food entrepreneurs can benefit from the technical knowledge that all three managers are willing to provide, including marketing studies and writing a business plan. But if you would rather pick up a cell phone than a whisk, the three managers also offer catering services.

Students from nearby Knox College have found opportunities to learn valuable business and kitchen skills at En Season as well. Yeojin Yi, a junior at the college studying English literature and environmental studies, works as a sous chef prepping dishes. It fits perfectly with her interests, she says. "I'm all about sustainable cooking, and this place is the hot spot for it."

Ann Ring is a frequent Radish contributor. As of this publication, the hours at En Season are 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, but Saturday hours (including a brunch) will be added before the end of the month. Check for Saturday hours on En Season's website, sustainablebusinesscenter.com/cafe, or by calling (309) 343-0736.

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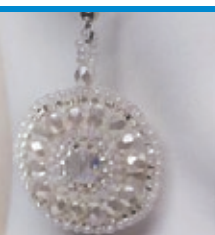
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eating well

Sustainable seas: Author of 'Four Fish' to speak at Knox College

By Sarah J. Gardner

Dr. Nicolaas Mink of Knox College in Galesburg, Ill., doesn't mince words in describing the book "Four Fish: The Future of the Last Wild Food" by Paul Greenberg. "I see (it) as an ocean counterpart to Michael Pollan's 'Omnivore's Dilemma.' Both are must-reads for anyone interested in sustainable eating," says Mink, who teaches environmental studies and has helped organize an upcoming lecture by Greenberg at the college.

Greenberg's talk, which is free and open to the public, will take place at 5 p.m. on April 16 in the Harbach Theatre in the Ford Center for the Fine Arts. It will be followed by a dinner in Knox College's Oak Room featuring sustainably harvested seafood. Three of the four fish discussed in Greenberg's book — cod, wild Alaskan salmon, and albacore tuna — will be prepared by the college's award-winning director of dining services, Helmut Mayer, and served at the meal. Cost to attend the dinner will be \$9.95 and can be paid for at the door.

Of the books he regularly assigns in his environmental studies classes, Mink says "Four Fish" is "without a doubt one of the most popular books, which is interesting since we have students from all over the country, but we're landlocked here. It speaks to Greenberg's skills as a writer and journalist to make oceans relatable to students and to help students understand why maritime natural resources are important to their lives."

"Probably the most important thing that can be learned from 'Four Fish' is that there are very real problems in our sea food system, but there are equally real solutions," says Callandria Nickelson, a first-year student at Knox College. Nickelson says she appreciates Greenberg's ability to consider fisheries from multiple perspectives — from fishermen to scientists to consumers.

"It's a very, very powerful book for people — balanced, thoughtful. Greenberg asks the right questions and answers them in a way that's fair," says Mink, who describes the book as a "meditation in what it means to eat right."

The lecture and dinner that follows are the opening events for Earth Week celebrations at Knox College. A number of student organizations are collaborating with the English department, journalism department and environmental studies department to bring Greenberg to campus. Part of his speaking fee also is being covered by the Knox College green fee — a portion of the student activity fee set aside to fund environmentally-focused events on campus.

If Nickelson's enthusiasm is any indication, it is student money well spent: "I'm really thrilled to hear him speak. It will just be really neat to hear what he has to say."



Paul Greenberg
(Submitted)

Sarah J. Gardner is Radish editor. To read a review of this book previously published in Radish, visit radishmagazine.com, and to find more information on Greenberg's lecture at Knox College, visit knox.edu.

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gardens

Pest prescription: Wash well behind the leaves

By Lee Reich, The Associated Press

For centuries, savvy gardeners used soap sprays to combat bugs. Andrew Jackson Downing, a gardening celebrity of the 19th century, wrote in 1845 that a "wash of soft soap is very good for many purposes ... penetrates all the crevices where insects may be lodged, destroying them."

Then, DDT and other harder-hitting, longer-lasting pesticides developed during World War II left soaps on the sidelines.

Yet here we are in the more environmentally conscious 21st century, and soap sprays are back in vogue — for the same reasons they fell out of favor. Soaps biodegrade quickly and are relatively nontoxic to most creatures (including us).

Soaps act by disrupting cell membranes. Insects most affected by soaps are soft-bodied, slow-moving ones such as aphids, mealybugs, scale and mites. Caterpillars and beetles are not generally bothered by soap sprays. Beneficial ladybugs and lacewings hanging around houseplants and garden plants usually have enough time to up and fly away before being doused with a soap spray. Once the spray dries, all harm has passed and they can return.

To apply the soap, you could simply douse your rose bushes with leftover, soapy wash water, an aphid remedy once popular among British gardeners. Or you could use soap more deliberately, dissolving some tincture of green soap or ivory soap shavings into water to make up your own mix.

Add one to several tablespoons of soap per gallon of water or enough to make suds. Test a little of the solution to make sure it won't damage the plant as well as the bugs. (Note that soaps and detergents are not equivalent; soap is one kind of detergent, but all detergents are not soaps.)

The best water for mixing up a soap solution is soft water, just as for bathing; rainwater is ideal. And once the soap is dissolved, no more shaking is needed — further shaking might cause too much foaming.

These days, you can buy soaps specially formulated for garden use. Garden soaps, like washing soaps, are made by combining naturally occurring fats with an alkali such as sodium or potassium.

Soaps are contact poisons, effective only as long as target organisms are wet. Repeated treatments are needed to kill insects that hatch from eggs on treated plants to get each flush of hatchlings as soaps have no effect on insect eggs.

For maximum effectiveness, spray either weeds or garden plants with soap when the weather is overcast or cool and drying is slowed. Avoid spraying a stressed or blooming plant. Finally, thoroughly douse whatever plant you spray so that, to reiterate Downing's advice of 167 years ago, the soap "penetrates all the crevices."



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food for thought

Finding balance

In a high-tech age, we need nature's power to nurture

By Sarah Ford

Less than a mile from home in Port Byron, Ill., my boy and I wander along the banks of the Mississippi, seeking balance, fresh air and connections. We laugh at the gaggle of geese that honk and take flight as we draw near, and we gaze at the bald eagles searching the water for fish. Isaiah discovers a chunk of rock containing a fossilized coral colony, thrilled to have spotted it. I sit on a shoreline log to snap some photos while he meanders on in solitude, observing the scenery of the wild through his child's eyes.

Sensing his preteen blues and my need to rekindle a desire for outdoor leisure, I have prescribed us this walk. It is, if nothing else, a technology break. Having a worldwide web of knowledge at our fingertips has been both a blessing and a challenge, as distractions abound in our high-tech society. It's easy to lose sight of simple pleasures, such as afternoon strolls, that bring fulfillment and inspiration.

In Richard Louv's latest work, "The Nature Principle," he offers a guide for rediscovering ourselves through our environment. As he so eloquently states, the nature principle "holds that a reconnection to the natural world is fundamental to human health, well-being, spirit and survival — and that the more high tech our lives become, the more nature we need."

Louv powerfully presents his philosophy on coexisting with nature. By adjusting our attitudes and recognizing our manifold connections to the Earth, we open ourselves up to possibilities not easily attainable in a digital age. Louv argues for "the power of living in nature — not with it, but in it." While we must work to support ourselves, and a myriad of other obligations add to the pressures on our time, we can restore balance by stepping outdoors and simply being a part of this intricate world.

Nature can be our greatest teacher, if we allow it. It imparts magic that resonates within our lives and challenges us to simplify our perspective as we exist day to day in a spinning world. We may fret over bills to be paid, appointments to make or commitments to be honored, but in the grander scheme of things, we must come to recognize that this is the system humans have created, not necessarily the whole truth to our existence.

Technological innovations offer us more and more ways to entertain and unwind, but as we stray from our natural connections, we sense that the virtual world only fulfills one aspect of our existence. When we live our lives in front of a screen, we're disconnected from a vital source of our power. There is a whole world of wonders for us to see and experience, and it's up to each one of us to cultivate a personal connection to Mother Earth and mold our lives into a reflection of her model.

We must create our own experiences in what I like to call "nature's treasure hunt." No matter the outdoor scenery, entertainment can be abundant. It can be



Sarah Ford and her son Isaiah walk along the Mississippi River. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)

as simple as looking upward to see what's flying by, or listening for the sounds of chattering creatures, or inhaling the alluring scents of the flowers.

Attuning to the natural world facilitates spiritual healing in our own lives, and inspires us to cure ourselves of frenzied living. In nature, we learn to act when the time is right, and when little action is required, to accept tranquility. Nature gently nurtures us and grounds us so that we can acknowledge the essence of our being. Calmness, peace and patience are its antidotes to the 21st century mind-set of always doing. By broadening our perspective to appreciate the world around us, we get an infusion of what Louv calls "vitamin N"—nature.

Louv believes that a nature-balanced existence is possible, and necessary, for the human species to continue to thrive. His wisdom urges us to rethink the way we live and make the necessary corrections so our awareness of the world goes beyond what's on the television. Personal responsibility for this transformation is our new role, and reconnection is our greatest task.

Ultimately, Louv reminds us that the ability to restore our spirits is readily available, even with a simple walk outdoors. We just have to remember that the uplifting and restorative power of nature is at our fingertips, ready to engage all of our senses.

Sarah Ford lives in Port Byron and works at the QC Collective.



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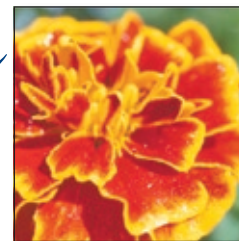
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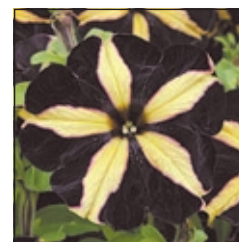
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