HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

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She graduated with an Associate Degree in Nursing in 1976. She attended the Advanced Women's Health Care Program at the University of Texas in Dallas, receiving her Nurse Practitioner Degree in Women's Health. JoAnn was N.C.C. certified in Women's Health Care in 1983. She has been working as a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner since then and joined the Group in 1990. JoAnn enjoys roller blading, cross country skiing, and working in her flower garden.

JoAnn Neilson, A.R.N.P.

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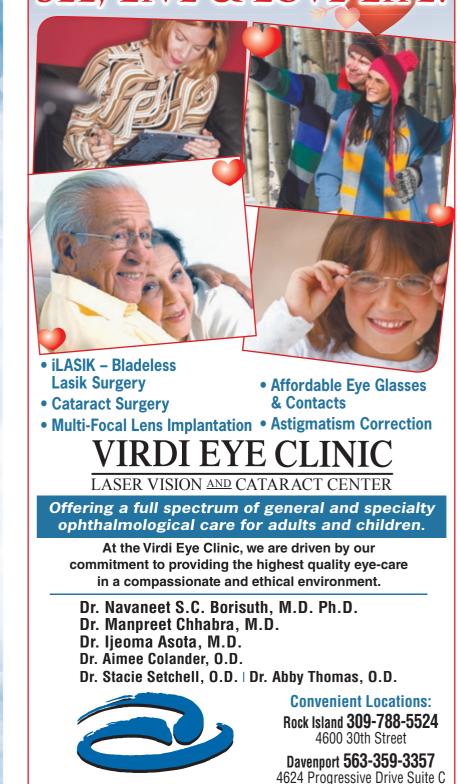
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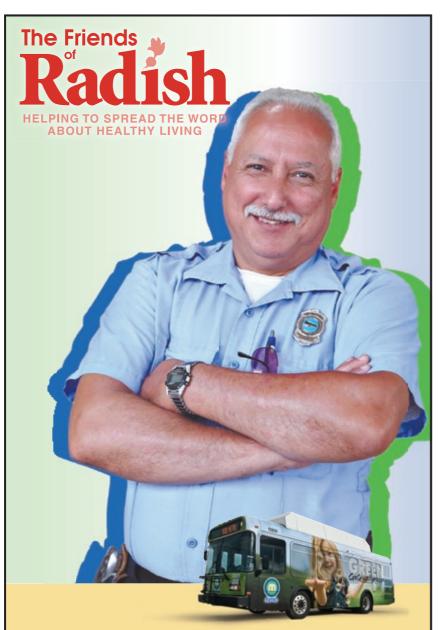
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from the editor



A bridal bouquet arranged by Jan King for a wedding at Walnut Grove Farm. (Photo by Rich Wood)



⁶C ve is the last thirty-pound bale," wrote the Persian poet and theologian Jalal ad-Din Rumi in the 13th century. "When you load it on, the boat tips over."

I suppose you could attribute it to having lived near rivers all my life — and toppled, laughing, out of more than one overloaded canoe — but of all the things Rumi wrote about love, this is easily my favorite. Who hasn't experienced at some time or another that feeling of love's abundance, like so many riches piled on at once? Or, for that matter, its tumult?

Although it's easy to associate the chaos of a boat tipping over with the heartache and drama of our teenage years,

all those sleepless nights and tortuous breakups, I think Rumi was getting at something deeper here — the way love sweeps you up into life's current. There's no bobbing along at the surface. To accept all that love has to offer often forces us to take a plunge.

When Rumi wrote his love poems, he had something very big in view: the yearning human beings feel toward the divine. But I think his ideas work on more earthbound levels as well. There is the heady moment in a wedding ceremony when you say, "I do," but also the first time when a baby yawns in your arms. The end of a long trip when you step from the airport terminal and see an old friend grinning to welcome you. The warm memory of a hug from your parents. Even those moments of pausing on a hike in a forest clearing or on a mountain overlook and feeling the rush of love for the Earth itself — all instances of the boat tipping over. When that happens, love leads us to something larger.

From a roundup of farm wedding destinations to a recycling program that supports children's therapy and delicious recipes to share with family and friends, you'll find many things done with love in this issue of Radish. Looking for more ways to show others you care? As Rumi would say, "Let the beauty we love be what we do."

— Sarah J. Gardner editor@radishmagazine.com Facebook.com/EditorSarahJGardner



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> Gerald J. Taylor PUBLISHER

Sarah J. Gardner EDITOR (309) 757-4905 editor@radishmagazine.com

Val Yazbec ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Terry Wilson NICHE PUBLICATIONS MANAGER (309) 757-5041

> Rachel Griffiths ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE (309) 721-3204

> George Rashid ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE (309) 757-4926

> > Spencer Rabe LAYOUT & DESIGN

PUBLISHED BY Small Newspaper Group

Deborah Loeser Small DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

> Joseph Lacaeyse TREASURER

Robert Hill VICE-PRESIDENT

Thomas P. Small SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT

> Len R. Small PRESIDENT

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the grapevine

From our readers

"I so enjoy your magazine. It stretches me intellectually and gives me new insights into 'sustainable' living. It mostly helps me to enjoy and appreciate all the wonder and beauty that God created on this earth. ... Thanks for the wonderful work your crew does and for all the writers that you give a medium for their work. It is great reading!"

— Charlie Farrell, Davenport



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

• Mindfulness for Busy People, a free public talk with visiting American Buddhist monk Gen Kelsang Jampa presented by Lamrim Kadampa Buddhist

Center from 2-3:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 2, at the Quad City Botanical Center, 2525 4th Ave., Rock Island. Receive simple and practical advice about how find peace in this busy world, enjoy mental clarity, and be calm in every situation. The talk will be followed by a light reception with tea. For more information call 563-322-1600 or visit meditateiniowa.org.

• Heirloom Seed Exchange, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22, at the QC Food Hub, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport. Gardening and seed-saving experts will be on hand to share insights and seeds to get you started. This event is free and open to the public. Participants are invited to share seeds saved from their own gardens as well. For more information call 563-265-2455 or visit qcfoodhub.com.

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



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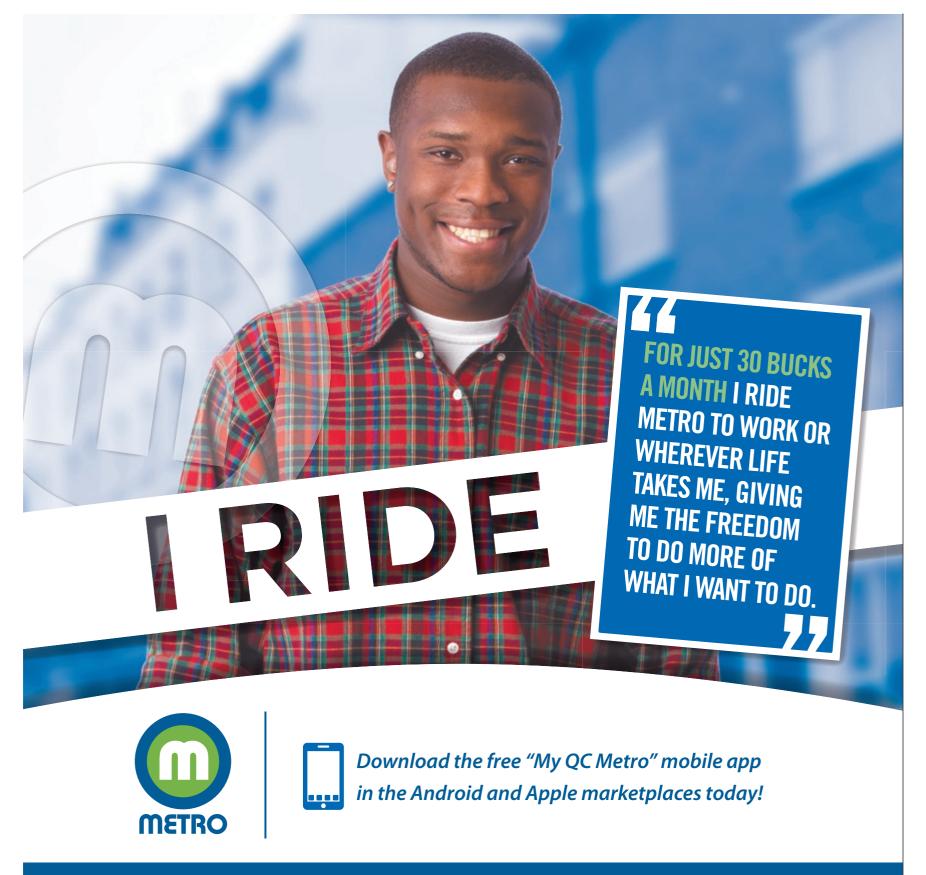




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healthy living from the ground up

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Kelsi and Caleb Geuns celebrate their nuptials at Walnut Grove Farm. (Photo by Rich Wood)

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healthy living Gluten-free goods

Quad-Cities bakery takes up the wheat-free challenge

By Laura Anderson Shaw

It was a quiet but busy afternoon, and Carol Birkhofer had just pulled a giant pan of cinnamon rolls from the oven. She popped a few from the pan and onto a plate. They stood much like large muffins, stout on the bottom with an over-hanging golden cloud on top.

Quickly and effortlessly, the Ganson's Neighborhood Bakery & Café baker — who now bakes at Ganson's Inc. Gluten Free Manufacturing, too — drizzled a crisscross pattern of frosting over them, moving her hand this way and that. While they smelled and tasted just as sweet, they didn't look like regular cinnamon rolls because they weren't regular cinnamon rolls: these bad boys were gluten-free.

Gluten, a protein found in grains such as wheat, rye and barley, also can be laced into foods like bread, pasta, cookies and other baked goods, "anything made with flour," said Chrissy Watters, registered dietitian at Hy-Vee in Rock Island. It can be hidden in processed foods, too, such as lunch meat, cheese and salad dressing.

For many people, it wouldn't matter whether those cinnamon rolls had gluten in them. But for



Carol Birkhofer, baker at Ganson's Simply Gluten Free in Milan. (Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

people with celiac disease, gluten sensitivity or gluten intolerance, it makes a world of difference.

When someone with celiac disease eats gluten, it triggers an immune response in their small intestine, according to mayoclinic.com. Over time, this reaction creates inflammation, which "causes damage to the small intestine," Watters says, and it keeps it from being able to absorb nutrients.

It's an autoimmune disease, and "a life-long condition," Watters says. "The only treatment is a gluten-free diet."

People with a sensitivity to gluten, on the other hand, which is more common than celiac disease, can experience symptoms ranging from gastrointestinal problems such as diarrhea or constipation to migraines, fatigue and a "foggy mind," Watters says.

Anyone who is experiencing any symptoms related to gluten should talk to their doctor first to rule out celiac disease before they stop eating gluten, Watters says.

Ganson's owner Chris Thompson says that when the restaurant first opened in Rock Island in 2009, they were so focused on making it work that they didn't offer any gluten-free options at first. One of their customers, she says, would bring in her own bread.

The store then began carrying gluten-free breads to substitute ingredients in foods found on the menu, but they just weren't up to snuff. "When we'd make a panini ... it never got that crispy texture," Thompson says. "We couldn't cut it; it would just crumble."

So they decided to make their own.

After "many, many trials and errors," Thompson says, they got it right.

"We just wanted to make it the best for glutenfree customers, or those who just don't want gluten in their diet," she says.

Birkhofer says she tested several gluten-free flours and starches during her trials and errors, and found that they aren't all created equal. In the gluten world, things such as "all purpose flour" exist. Birkhofer found that isn't true of the gluten-free world.

"They all have different properties," Birkhofer

says, so creating the variety of gluten-free products took "a lot of trial and error to see what would match with what."

She was determined, though, she says, with a goal of trying to make the food "taste like it has gluten in it."

To keep from cross-contaminating the gluten-free items with the items containing gluten, Thompson says certain days at the cafe were designated to bake gluten-free products only. This, however, made it difficult to keep up with their supply. The restaurant would have to add more gluten-free baking days, which was difficult to do, requiring more sanitizing in the baking area to prevent crosscontamination and more.

The solution? Open a place to bake where everything could be gluten-free, all the time.

Thompson says they purchased all new equipment and began cranking out products in September in the newly-opened Ganson's Inc. Gluten Free Manufacturing, in Milan, Ill., a baking center that keeps the restaurant supplied. It produces items for the Rock Island cafe like brioche sandwich bread, herb parmesan focaccia, brioche hamburger buns, apple and cherry danish, cinnamon rolls, chocolate cherry amaretto cheesecake, chocolate raspberry tuxedo cake, pie crust and more, all gluten-free, and available to order and purchase through the cafe.

"We just wanted to make it the best for gluten-free customers, or those who just don't want gluten in their diet."

Thompson says the products are made using Ganson's recipes that are modified to be gluten-free.

Quad-Cities area Hy-Vee stores also carry the products now, "our whole line" of Ganson's Simply Gluten Free, says Thompson.

Originally, "we just wanted to do it for our store," Thompson says. But an apparent growing number of people being diagnosed with celiac disease, paired with the issues the restaurant ran into with other gluten-free products, made her think, "There's got to be something better than this (what's available on the shelves)."

The bakery also was designated kosher by Rabbi Tamar Grimm from the Tri-City Jewish Center of the Quad Cities, Thompson says. "We're pretty proud of that."

Watters says that as people embark on a gluten-free path, "it's kind of a pain." After someone has been diagnosed with celiac disease or a gluten allergy or sensitivity, Watters says she teaches people how to read ingredient labels in the store to spot gluten.

If someone is not experiencing any gluten-related issues and they stop eating gluten, Watters says there aren't any benefits "that we know of."

If people eating gluten-free do not choose a variety of nutritious foods, gluten-free diets "can lack certain nutrients," such as fiber, vitamins and minerals, which many wheat products are often enriched with, Watters says.

Just like diets containing gluten, Watters says that gluten-free diets can be "healthy, or not-so-healthy, depending on the foods chosen."

Laura Anderson Shaw is a writer on staff with Radish.



healthy living Time and tomatoes

15 minutes? 30? An hour? We've got a recipe for you!

By Sarah J. Gardner

Talk with someone who loves to cook and sooner or later the conversation will drift around to kitchen utensils that have won a special place of pride. The stand mixer that has its own affectionate nickname. The vegetable peeler that caused the owner to abandon all others. The skillet that changed the way pancakes are made. Whenever I find myself in these conversations, my mind inevitably drifts to the canned tomatoes sitting cheerily on my shelf.

True, they aren't appliances, but there's no denying they are veritable kitchen workhorses. Versatile and time-saving, canned tomatoes, I'd wager, can hold their own in any comparison against more mechanical kitchen conveniences. Hardly a week goes by in winter that I don't reach for a jar; I can't say the same of my lemon zester, love it though I do.

Then again, those canned tomatoes have another claim on my affection: I made them myself. Inevitably when I pop the top off a jar, the scent calls to mind the days in late summer when I stood in my kitchen putting up pint after pint of tomatoes, or even the afternoons in the garden, pulling tomatoes one by one from the vine. They are like a little gift I leave for myself on the pantry shelf — a tangible bit of August sunshine to be savored on a cold winter's night.

Of course, you hardly need to have grown and canned your own tomatoes to enjoy them. There is such a wonderful variety of organic canned tomatoes available in the store these days, it's possible to find truly tasty tomatoes to add to your winter soups. And bake into casseroles. And simmer into sauces. And stew for chilies. So many possibilities! No doubt you have many dishes already that can put those tomatoes to good use, but if you're looking for a few more recipes for your file, here are three to try.





Quick Flatbread Pizzas

This no-cook sauce is a dream for an easy weeknight meal. Have more time? It works just as well with a thicker, homemade pizza crust.

Place tomatoes and garlic in a blender or food processor. Drizzle lightly with olive oil and vinegar, then season with salt, oregano and thyme. Blend until smooth. Place 2 flatbreads on a baking sheet or pizza stone. Using a spoon, spread tomato sauce across flatbreads, leaving a ½-inch margin at the edges. Top with pizza toppings and cheese. Bake at 450 degrees for 7-8 minutes, until cheese melts and bubbles and the flatbread is crisp. Slice and serve, repeating with remaining flatbreads. (Extra pizza sauce can be stored in a jar in the refrigerator for up to a week.)

- 1 pint (2 cups) canned tomatoes, drained
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 dash olive oil
- 1 dash balsamic vinegar 1 pinch salt and black

pepper ¹/₄ teaspoon dried oregano ¹/₄ teaspoon dried thyme 6 premade flatbreads Pizza toppings of your choice

1 cup mozzarella cheese

Sarah J. Gardner is editor of Radish.



Eggs Poached in Tomatoes with Chickpeas

There are many variations on this versatile Arabic dish, traditionally called Shakshouka, which comes together quickly in a single skillet. Omit the cheese for a lower-fat version.

In a large, shallow pan with a tight-fitting lid, begin by sauteing onion and garlic in oil over medium heat until they begin to soften, approximately 5 minutes. Season with red pepper flakes, salt and pepper according to your tastes. Add tomatoes and bring to a boil, allowing liquid to reduce slightly. Stir in chickpeas and then, using your spoon, make a shallow well in the mixture. Crack an egg over the indent; working quickly, continue to make 3-4 more wells, adding eggs to them as you go. When the last egg is in the pan, cover with the lid and allow to cook undisturbed for 6-7 minutes, until the whites are set but the yolks are still creamy. Sprinkle cheese on top. Divide eggs and tomato chickpea mixture onto dining plates; serve with slices of crusty bread.

1 medium onion, chopped 2 cloves garlic

- 1-2 tablespoons oil
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes, salt and pepper
- 4-5 eggs
- 1 quart (4 cups) canned tomatoes, in their liquid
- 2 cups cooked chickpeas
- (or 15-ounce can)
- 1/4 cup feta or Parmesan cheese



Photos by Todd Welvaert / Radish

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Baked Pasta with Tomatoes and Peppers

We like campanella pasta for this dish for the way the trumpet-shaped

noodles hold sauce and cheese, but really any shape of pasta can work. The trick is to boil it for ³/₄ the time called for on the package. It will continue to cook in the sauce in the oven, but will better hold its shape and texture.

In a large saucepan, heat the oil and saute the onions over medium-high heat until soft and starting to brown. Season with salt and pepper, then add chopped mushrooms and 1 or 2 cloves of garlic, thinly sliced. Continue to cook until the mushrooms darken and begin to give up their juices, approximately 5 minutes.

- sta1 tablespoon oilttoes1 medium onion, choppedtoes1 pinch salt and pepperers10 ounces crimini mushrooms,
 - chopped
 - 3-4 cloves garlic
 - 1 quart (4 cups) canned tomatoes, drained
 - 1 teaspoon pesto or dried basil 1 jar (12 ounces) roasted red
 - peppers (approximately 3 whole peppers)
 - 1 pound campanella or other pasta
 - 4 ounces neufchatel cheese
 - 2 cups ricotta cheese 1½ cups grated Romano
 - cheese
 - 2 teaspoons dried oregano

Drain the tomatoes and roasted red peppers; roughly chop both before adding to mushroom mixture. Reduce heat and continue to cook for 20 minutes more, as sauce thickens and tomatoes somewhat break down.

Meanwhile, bring water to boil in a large pot, add pasta, and cook 7 minutes until just shy of al dente. In a separate bowl, combine three cheeses, 2 cloves of minced garlic, and oregano. Drain the pasta and stir into the cheese mixture to coat.

Finally, ladle half of the tomato mixture into a large casserole dish. Spread pasta over it evenly. Top with remaining tomato mixture. Bake for 20-30 minutes until piping hot.

Rustic elegance

Area farms share their acres as wedding venues

By Becky Langdon

healthy living

Country weddings with a dash of elegance are a popular trend for couples getting married today. They can range from stylish and sophisticated to quirky and rustic, with a lovely pastoral landscape to enhance the atmosphere either way.

Above: The barn, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, at Walnut Grove Farm. (Photo by Rich Wood)

Radish 10

For a handful of Radishland farm owners, opening their barns and hearts to area brides and grooms is an opportunity to share what they love about where they live with people who prefer their special day be a little off the beaten path. From dancing in a barn loft to bouquets made from homegrown flowers, these destination weddings offer plenty of charm.

Walnut Grove Farm

KNOXVILLE, ILL. 309-289-4770, WALNUTGROVEFARM.COM

Barn weddings were still an unusual concept when Walnut Grove started hosting them more than 15 years ago. Since then, they've had ceremonies and receptions of all varieties on their grounds, from champagne brunches to cowboy boots and blue jean affairs, even Civil War re-enactment weddings.

Jan King, who owns Walnut Grove, says what's fun about weddings is that no two are alike. Hosting about 15 weddings per year, she enjoys seeing what the next group will come up with.

The main attraction at the Knoxville farm is the historic 19th-century barn, one of the largest of its time. For a dinner reception, King says the barn can comfortably seat 160 people at tables, though they have had more. Larger events usually rent a 40-by-80-foot tent to extend the covered area.

The setup is rustic, but King says she finds that people like the idea that it's a real barn and not something that has been altered much. "We clean it up and leave it as a place that's open to people's creativity and imagination," she says.

Typically, Walnut Grove rents their space for three days, allowing setup and cleanup time, for a fee of \$2,250. One-day rentals are also available for lesser cost.

The fee includes rental of the barn, surrounding gardens and use of the Walnut Grove Guest House. For wedding parties who need extra space to dress and get ready, the Kings will rent out a parlor dressing room in their Victorian home for \$150, arranged in advance.

Sutliff Cider

LISBON, IOWA 319-455-4093, SUTLIFFCIDER.COM

Sutliff Cider began booking weddings for the first time in 2012. The centerpiece of the venue is a 120-year-old barn with a patio that has been renovated to provide two floors of space. The upstairs of the barn is a loft with a floor that was once a high-school gym floor from the 1920s. The site has hosted weddings as large as 400 people, though most are smaller than that.

In addition to the barn, the pavilion, apple orchard and pasture are available for use as well. Owner Pia Ervin says people find the rustic wooden picnic tables, cider barrels and western chandelier charming and elegant.

Sutliff Cider rents for \$3,000, which includes full property rental and tent rental. Customers also have the option of purchasing 5-gallon barrels of cider for the event for \$150 each. Because of Sutliff Cider's unique business hours, Ervin allows wedding crews to come in anytime between the preceding Tuesday and the day of the wedding to set up.

Ervin says in the past year of doing weddings she's seen a wide array of styles and decorating approaches, everything from hay-bale couches in the barn loft to elegant chandeliers hanging from the pavilion ceiling to a portable stone-pizza oven out on the pasture. The sky is the limit.

Miss Effie's Country Flowers & Garden Stuff DONAHUE, IOWA 563-282-4338, MISSEFFIESFLOWERS.COM

The first wedding Cathy LeFrenz held at her flower farm was her own. Then in 2009, a couple with their heart set on getting married at Miss Effie's approached her about the possibility. LeFrenz agreed to the request and since then has been hosting a handful of weddings per year.

"It's an Iowa landscape and there's something quiet and peaceful about it that you don't get in town," says LeFrenz.

Weddings at Miss Effie's have to be small, intimate gatherings of 20 to 50 people because of the size of the space. A 120-year-old farmhouse that "looks every bit its age" and a worn barn provide a lovely, rustic backdrop for the event. A covered corn crib LeFrenz calls the "cornzebo" will comfortably seat 20 people for dinner. The rental cost is \$250, which includes a wedding bouquet and a small space for the bride to get ready.

LeFrenz says it takes a special type of person to get married at Miss Effie's, and not just because of the size. She says, "We don't have covered areas to speak of, so if it's pouring down rain, we're in a bit of trouble. A cat may wander through your wedding because it's on a farm."

LeFrenz says she wants to help brides-to-be see that weddings don't have to be expensive to be lovely events. She says, "I tell every bride before they leave, 'Remember, it's one day in your life. It's an important day. But it isn't the most important day. The most important day is going to come some day when you don't have on a long white dress.'"

Becky Langdon is a frequent Radish contributor.

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Three great ways to target and tone your ab muscles

By Chris Greene

A washboard stomach. Six-pack abs. A ripped midsection. The ways we have of describing toned core muscles are many. And yet it begs the question, are we serving our vanity or our overall health to focus so much on one part of the body?

According to Evan Harris, owner of Tapas Yoga Shala in Rock Island, the abs serve a variety of functions that contribute to our overall sense of wellbeing. "The abdominals acts as support, structure and protection for the internal organs of the abdomen. The deep layers of the abdominals connect the torso to the legs, determine posture of the pelvis and lower spine, and drive locomotion. A weak abdomen leads to a weak back (and vice-versa), which can cause a collapse in posture and various symptoms from chronic back pain to sciatica," he says.

There's more, Harris explains. "Modern science recognizes the abdomen as home to crucial organs, dense nerve clusters and the body's center of motion and mass. By keeping the abdomen strong but also flexible (not just a superficial 'six-pack'), all the systems of the body are improved."

The good news is that getting healthy abdominal muscles doesn't have to mean doing thousands of crunches. There are many options to maintaining a fit core across a variety of disciplines. Whether you prefer yoga, strength training or an aerobic exercise routine like Zumba — or even better, a combination of these — there are plenty of ways to keep these muscles fit and promote a healthy, active lifestyle.

Strength training

If strength training is your bag, Rock Island Fitness and Activity Center personal trainer Tina Long has some suggestions for you. "If you typically sit in a chair for long periods, try using a stability ball instead. This helps strengthen your core. And believe it or not, walking is good for this too. The plank (pictured below) may be the single best exercise you can do — start by holding it even 15 seconds and working up to more from there," Long says.

Long's personal favorite is using an 8.5-pound medicine ball with two handles. "Sit and lean back and do side to sides with those — it helps your obliques as well," she says.

Zumba

If you prefer to dance your way to healthy abs, Zumba is the perfect choice for you. This fitness program combines dance and aerobic movements.

"Zumba incorporates lots of movement," according to Carmen Peterson, wellness coordinator for the Knox County YMCA. "Some of that movement is fast, some of it is slow. All of that movement helps strengthen your core." Although you may find yourself having a lot of fun with Zumba, Peterson says the key is to make sure you are concentrating on the movements. "Focus on proper form. If you are just trying to fly through a class, you don't get the benefit you should. There is A LOT of ab work in Zumba, especially in the sideto-side movements, but you have to concentrate on doing the movements correctly to get the benefits."

Yoga

Although it can look very calm and serene, this discipline also is a great way to build core strength. According to Harris, many of the poses put the abs through their paces, including planks, boat pose, leg lifts and pendant pose.

And what is Harris' favorite? "Navasana (boat pose) — isn't it everyone's? In this posture, the abdomen and lower back must rely on the strength of each other to properly work. In other words, the back and belly are strengthened and balanced through and through, with even the deepest levels of muscles working. Betcha' can't do just one."

Chris Greene is a writer on staff with Radish.



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body, mind & soul Side by side

Couples massage offers a way to relax, connect

By Leslie Klipsch

Maybe it was the increase in oxytocin, serotonin and dopamine brought on by the relaxing massage. Maybe it was the awareness that we were decadently off the grid for a few hours. Or maybe it was the uninterrupted time that we unapologetically made for our marriage. Whatever it was, after receiving a couples massage, I think my husband and I both felt a few years younger; our conversation was light, our laughter was easy, and the stress of the everyday, at least for a moment, melted away.

Couples massage — an experience in which two people simultaneously receive a massage from two different massage therapists in the same room at the same time — often is billed as a romantic opportunity for couples seeking love and luxury that wish to relax together and let go of mutual stress. In the midst of massage, it's easy to let go of past and future concerns and engage in the present — a state of being that allows couples to dismiss futile conflicts and reconnect with one another during the moment and beyond.

There are other benefits for physical health as well: Massage has been found to relieve pain and tension, decrease stiffness, improve blood circulation and promote better sleep and a healthier immune system. And the American Massage Therapy Association found that 88 percent of individuals surveyed view message as beneficial to overall health and wellness.

This is exactly what my husband and I found. After enjoying the anticipation of pursuing a new experience together and the giddiness of greeting the babysitter and then taking off on a new adventure, we found ourselves on two separate massage tables, tucked under warm blankets and listening to the crackle of a fireplace in the corner. As our massage therapists rubbed, cajoled and caressed the tension from our muscles, we didn't say a word to one another. But when we got up and prepared for dinner — each of us in a blissed-out state of relaxation — we found that the energy of the massage lingered and became a part of our interaction.

Relationships, of course, are not exclusive to romantic couples, nor is couples massage reserved only for romantic partners. Amy Jo Soeken, the massage therapist who owns and operates Turning Leaf Massage and Day Spa in Moline, says she loves to see mothers and daughters and pairs of friends enjoy the shared experience offered at her spa as well. "Every relationship needs nurturing," she says. "Quiet time together with people you value is important. And really, I think there can be a 'romance' within friendships as well. The quiet, the dimmed lights ... even when it's not a romantic relationship, you can still celebrate one another in a tranquil setting."

Part of the appeal of couples massage is simply the intention behind the appointment. Making an effort to spend time together is significant in our often hyper-charged and over-scheduled state of existence and the gesture itself can be seen as special and meaningful.



Tables set up for couples massage at Turning Leaf. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)

Since opening four years ago, Turning Leaf Massage and Day Spa has offered a package for couples that offers a quiet, customizable dinner following the massage in an adjoining room. Ms. Soeken and her husband orchestrate the evening with the intention of offering an opportunity to disregard distraction and connect in a quiet, serene setting.

"Quiet time together with people you value is important."

"I've always done couples massage," says Ms. Soeken, who has been a massage therapist for 17 years, "but I got interested in really focusing on couples and the relational aspect of massage when I started offering my clients the Turning Leaf Signature package which includes dinner after the massage. It's nice that people can lie side-by-side and enjoy their massage, but it's really nice to feel so relaxed and then get up and have private time together."

Leslie Klipsch is a frequent Radish contributor. Read more of her musings at leslieklipsch.com.



healthy living

Veggie cents

A guide to which garden plants pay dividends

By Sarah J. Gardner

Less than a dollar. It was a thought that stopped me dead in my tracks. Standing over a steamy pot on the stove last summer, pulling a quarter of cabbage from the boiling water within, I thought to myself, "I grew this cabbage. And I blanched this cabbage. And now I'll freeze this cabbage, so that when winter rolls around, I'll save myself a purchase at the store of, hmm, well ... less than a dollar."

My brow furrowed and my mind raced back to the garden, where the sprawling cabbage plants took up a sizable corner and above-average attention. What if, I suddenly wondered, I had left growing the cabbage to the folks I visited at the farmers' market instead, and planted something else in that space?

Bell peppers sprang to mind. Averaging \$1.50 apiece at the market, I could easily fit six pepper plants in the space taken up by my cabbages, each plant producing six peppers apiece, adding up to \$54 of homegrown produce. Now, that sounded like the kind of payoff I could invest some sweat equity in.

Don't get me wrong. There are plenty of reasons to grow your own cabbages, not the least being for the fun of it. But if you have limited garden space and want to maximize your investment of time and money, some vegetables make more sense than others. As you leaf through all the alluring pages of seed catalogs and think ahead to the spring, here's a little guide to which vegetables really pay off.

Sarah J. Gardner is editor of Radish. Have some thoughts of your own on the cost/benefit of certain vegetables? Post it to Facebook.com/ RadishMagazine, or tweet it with #VeggieCents.

Asparagus BUY FOR NOW, GROW FOR LATER

Once established, asparagus is a gem, sending up tender shoots when the rest of the garden is still trying to get a toehold in the growing season. And

at \$3 a pound in the supermarket, asparagus can really pay off. The bad news? It takes three years to get established. So, plant it this year and plan on enjoying it at the farmers' market for a few years more.

Onions BUY IT,

WITH SOME EXCEPTIONS

Onions are notoriously difficult to grow from seed to maturity, but cheap



at the store and readily abundant at the farmers' market. Save yourself some frustration and put onions on your shopping list. However, if you can get your hands on shallot bulbs, those pricey little cousins to onions, you could grow a chic little row of them at considerable savings over buying them at the store.



Green beans

GROW IT ... MAYBE A good crop will deliver an abundance of beans that will more than pay

off on your investment. But they take up a lot of room, which means an ill-timed visit from Japanese beetles or marauding deer can leave a big chunk of your garden empty. Even so, your garden can yield something the supermarket rarely will: exciting heirloom varieties.

And if the worst comes to pass, your friends at the farmers' market have your back. Worth the risk? You decide.



Don't just restrict yourself to bell peppers, though. Hot peppers like jalapeños are relatively easy to grow and incredibly productive,

generating dozens of peppers per plant and just like their bell pepper relatives, they are easy to freeze for the winter, so all that bounty won't go to waste. Just give them a rinse, chop them up when dry, and toss in the freezer to add kick to your chili later.



Tomatoes GROW IT

Few pleasures in this life quite compare to plucking a sun-drenched tomato in the garden and eating it right from the vine. For this reason alone, even if tomatoes weren't costly in the store (which they are, especially vine-ripened and heirloom varieties), it's worth it to plant a tomato or two. Have a favorite vendor at the farmers' market? There's no need to step on toes by growing your own tomatoes — with so many varieties to choose from, pick ones to have fun with in the garden and feel free to supplement at the market stall.

Carrots

BUY IT

All those cartoon depictions of rabbits whisking arrow-straight carrots out of the ground deceived us. Unless your soil is very loose or sandy, carrots are a lot of work to dig out. A LOT. And the seeds can be quite fussy to start. But the varieties of carrot on offer at the farmers' market? Hello, delicious! Save yourself some frustration and pick up a bunch or two at your favorite stall.

Eggplant BUY IT

Eggplant plants are like the little girl in the nursery rhyme: when they're good, they're very, very good, and when they're bad, they're bard One flea

horrid. One flea beetle infestation can wipe out your entire crop for a season. A bumper crop, on the other hand, can wipe out the goodwill of the neighbors you foist it upon. That's one of many reasons to leave eggplant to the farmers' market pros, who bring an increasing variety of eggplants to market each summer and sell it at reasonable prices.

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Turnips and beets GROW IT

Unless you don't eat these root vegetables, that is. Not only are beets and turnips

shockingly easy to grow from seed, they are one of the garden's great two-for-one deals. You can eat the greens in stir fries and salads, then roast the roots to eat separately. Plus, because these vegetables are so fast growing, it's possible to succession plant them to get more than one crop in a season.

Herbs

GROW, GROW, GROW!

If there were champion plants in terms of cost/benefit analysis, they would have to be herbs. Hardy little plants that are easy to grow, some herbs can even help protect other garden plants by repelling pests, like borage, which repels tomato hornworm, and dill, which repels aphids, squash bugs and spider mites. A few sprigs of fresh herbs at the store can cost upwards of \$3; a thriving herb plant will produce at least as much each week all summer. Need I say more?

not ji but



Lettuce, spinach and other leafy greens GROW IT & BUY IT

A bag of mixed greens at the store will set you back \$4 easily, all for a plant that is among the easiest to cultivate. Pick two or three varieties of greens to grow (or buy a bag of mixed seeds) and plant them in succession. Then, when the height of the summer comes and your own greens bolt, look to the growers who will have special sun screens to allow them to keep bringing to market the greens you love to eat.



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environment

Cans for Children

Volunteers sort recyclable goods to help therapy center

By Ann Ring

For several years now, the Children's Therapy Center of the Quad Cities has been successfully raising money by recycling cans and bottles. As they say, necessity is the mother of invention. "We had to find something to generate revenue year-round," explains W.K. Juncker, resource development for the CTCQC.

The idea is simple enough: A team of volunteers collects cans and bottles from area businesses and residents. Then the volunteers bag, sort and deliver the goods to a recycling facility, and thanks to Iowa's five-cent beverage container deposit law, the therapy center collects a check.

The program, called Cans for Children, functions in conjunction with the Waste Commission of Scott County and Eastern Iowa Recyclers. Through Cans for Children, the therapy center is able to raise about \$20,000 a year. Funds are used to provide occupational, physical, speech and feeding therapy for children.

Juncker notes that the key to the success of Cans for Children lies in the dedicated volunteers. That, and the number of other pieces that had to come together to make the program profitable.

It all began in 2005 with a three-day weekend in which Quad-Cities Hy-Vee stores in Iowa collected cans and bottles in their parking lots that were then cleaned, sorted, and sent to recyclers, with the profits going to the therapy center.

The first year's efforts caught the attention of the Waste Commission of Scott County, which asked Juncker if he would consider a year-round program. Knowing not to look a gift horse in the mouth, Juncker immediately agreed while silently asking himself, "How in the world am I going to do this?"

"Adrian Carriers in Milan donated semis from the very beginning. They still do, but to do this on a regular basis we needed a place to sort," says Juncker.

As it happened, CTCQC board member Tom Pasmore, owner of Office Machine Consultants, had relocated his business to another building after the Cans for Children began. Pasmore not only donated his former building to CTCQC, but a van as well, allowing drivers to provide curbside service.

Today, volunteers collect cans and bottles two days each week from 60 residences and businesses like John Deere Harvester Works, iWireless, APAC, Lee Enterprises, S J Smith, MidAmerican Energy, and various Iowa school districts. Fifteen more businesses and a handful of residents are on a waiting list to participate in the recycling program, pending additional volunteers to help sort more cans.



Through Cans for Children, the therapy center is able to raise about \$20,000 a year.



W.K. Juncker and volunteer Jody Spies pose for a picture at one of the CTCQC recycling sorting tables. (Photo by Todd Welvaert / Radish)

At the sorting facility, volunteers divide the five-cent deposits (Iowa) from the nondeposits (III.). Then, they deliver the nondeposits to the Waste Commission of Scott County, where the therapy center receives 75 percent of what the cans and bottles sell for, and transport the nickel deposits to Eastern Iowa Recyclers.

Juncker repeatedly praises the program's volunteers, not only for the number of hours they donate but for doing the type of work the project requires. Certainly it's not glamorous work — old clothes come in handy — but the job means children are able to receive the therapy they need so they may reach their highest level of independence. Juncker says 56 percent of the therapy center's clients can't afford the services, but throughout its 64-year history, the therapy center has not turned anyone away due to an inability to pay.

"It's been a very positive program — a door opener for us," says Juncker. "It's the old win-win kind of thing. You're helping kids receive the therapy they need, and you're helping the environment at the same time."

Ann Ring is a frequent Radish contributor. Volunteers to help sort bottles and cans at the Rock Island facility are needed by Cans for Children year-round. For more information or to sign up, contact W.K. Juncker at 309-762-9552, ext. 103.



food

Yes to smoothies

An easy way to pack more nutrition into your day

By Annie L. Scholl

I'm late to the "smoothie" party. It seems people have been tossing their favorite healthy (and not-so-healthy) stuff into blenders for decades. I just finally got around to it — a new habit that's a great way to eat more veggies and fruits.

The idea to start drinking smoothies came to me last fall. A physician friend recommended it as a convenient — and tasty — way to get a big boost of nutrition. She recommended drinking one in the morning before I exercise and saving some of what I whipped up for a snack later in the day. Since I've got some belly fat, I took her advice to use nonstarchy vegetables and low sugar-content fruits. In the veggie department, I almost exclusively use broccoli, kale and cucumbers. On the fruit side, I favor blueberries, raspberries and blackberries.

My first order of business was buying a blender. While Vitamix blenders and the like are all the rage, I opted not to plunk down \$450 or more off the bat because I have a habit of starting and stopping good habits. Instead I bought The Ninja Professional Blender for about \$100. It has 1,000 watts and so far it hasn't met a veggie or fruit it can't rip to shreds. I will say, however, my smoothies are "chewy," so if you prefer really smooth smoothies, you might want to opt for a dif-

ferent blender — or maybe a different recipe.

While there are thousands of smoothie recipes on the Internet, I've never followed one exactly. With smoothies, you don't need to. My approach: Blend together good stuff.

I use fresh, organic vegetables but when it comes to fruit, I usually buy frozen because I don't want to deal with spoilage. I add a bit of hot water to bring the smoothie to room temperature, since my physician friend explained that cold smoothies can impair digestion. For that reason I also don't add ice. And while some people use protein powders in their smoothies, I've yet to find one I really like.

All of this has led to, hmmm, let's call it "Annie's Good Stuff Smoothie." While I like it, it's not perhaps to everyone's taste. But that's the beauty of the smoothie. It's endlessly adaptable. Add a different fruit here, substitute a preferred vegetable there, and before you know it, you've got your very own healthful concoction.

Annie L. Scholl is a frequent Radish contributor.

Annie's Good Stuff Smoothie

Put chunkier ingredients, like the frozen fruit, on the bottom. Blend for 2-3 minutes, starting on low and gradually working up to the highest setting.

- 1 to 2 cups frozen, organic mixed berries
- ¹/₂ medium cucumber
- ¹⁄₂ avocado (peel and pit removed)
- 4-5 large kale leaves 1 inch of fresh ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon Sencha ground green tea
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon flax seeds
- 1 teaspoon chia seeds
- ¹/₂ cup hot water ¹/₂ cup almond milk







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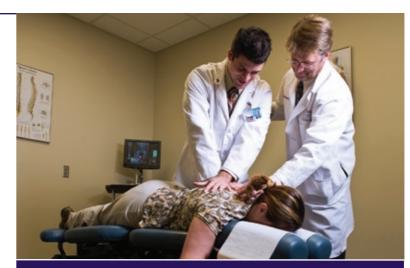
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Bobcats are back

Once threatened, bobcats have returned to III. and Iowa

By Sarah Ford

When I mentioned to my friend Linnea that I was writing about bobcats, she excitedly relayed a tale of a Quad-Cities sighting near Blackhawk Road in Rock Island. "I thought it was a tall raccoon, but it didn't have a tail, so I knew it wasn't a raccoon." By the time it occurred to her that she was seeing a bobcat, it had disappeared into the landscape.

A population once threatened, the bobcat is now thriving in Illinois and Iowa, though rarely seen by humans. Wildlife researchers in Iowa have confirmed the bobcat population has been re-established in the lower ³/₄ tiers of the state, and an estimated 2,220 cats live in the southern 13 counties of Illinois, according to an online wildlife directory maintained by the University of Illinois Extension. While not as abundant in the northern part of the states, they are slowly spreading and re-establishing their population.

When the Midwest was settled and land converted for agricultural purposes, the bobcats' preferred habitat of large forested tracts and dense understory was lost. Bobcats were also hunted for their fur, and by the mid 1900s, the population was basically extirpated. But enough bobcats remained, likely in southwest Iowa, to allow the species to rebound and naturally recolonize the states.

Bobcats were put on Illinois' threatened species list in 1977, but thanks to conservation efforts, they were removed from the list in 1999. To date, there have been bobcat sightings in 99 of Illinois' 102 counties, making it safe to say this is a feline adapting to a changed landscape.

Dr. Bill Clark, an Iowa State University professor and bobcat researcher, has been tracking the cats with the Bobcat Project, a collaborative effort with the DNR to gather scientific information for conservation and management of bobcat populations.

"It's a really beautiful predator, a stealthy predator, very aware of its surroundings, and very well camouflaged," says Clark.



While the perception of the bobcat may be one of a fierce cat, Clark says they're a small predator, with "lanky, long legs and thick fur." The males can weigh up to 30 pounds, while the females weigh about 20 pounds. Adult bobcats measure between little more than 2 feet and 3.5 feet long.

The cats are most active from dusk to dawn, and common homes include fallen trees, hollow logs or trees, caves and rock piles. Breeding season peaks in February and March, and gestation last 60 days, with two or three kittens born to a mother each year. The male bobcat lives a solitary and wandering life.

A common question Clark fields is what should a person do if he or she crosses paths with a bobcat? His answer: "Count your lucky stars! Stand still and be glad and watch your environment that supports an interesting native predator."

"A bobcat is not a danger to you or your pets," Clark explains, although common sense should prevail — a small dog shouldn't be left alone near a wooded area and a wild animal. Also, bobcats shouldn't be cornered.

"They're secretive and not likely to come to your backyard, but they do eat meat for a living," Clark says. An abundance of rabbits, squirrels, voles and mice in Iowa and Illinois make for easy catching and ample food options; bobcats rarely eat birds, but may occasionally eat carrion, small reptiles or fish.

As for urban sightings, namely in the Quad-Cities, Clark says bobcats are "not as abundant or common" because the metro population is a barrier for the animal. However, he suspects there is a small population in the area, or at least some bobcats who "hang out" while passing through the area.

The presence of wild creatures like bobcats in our landscape is "an indication of the quality of our environment, and diversity of our landscape, even with intensive agriculture," Clark says.

Sarah Ford is a frequent Radish contributor.

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health & medicine Project Lifesaver

Peace of mind for caretakes of those who wander

By Julie Stamper

I magine that you are cold. You are lost. Your surroundings may seem familiar, but you can't quite place the location. You don't know where you are going, and you can't seem to recall your name or where you live. As the panic begins mounting, you see a person walking toward you. It's a police officer, and as she begins talking to you, she clearly knows who you are. Relief sets in when she says, "Don't worry, I'm going to get you home."

This could be your mother with early onset Alzheimer's, or your autistic child, or your sibling with a traumatic brain injury, who has lost their way and needs someone to locate them quickly. Current statistics state that 60 percent of people with Alzheimer's will wander at some point. One in every 88 children in America has autism, and half of the parents of those children report their child has a tendency to wander. Finding them could be as easy as locating the signal on a transmitter worn on a bracelet. This is the work of Project Lifesaver.

Project Lifesaver International was founded by public safety officers to locate a wanderer quickly once they've been reported missing, a strategy that greatly increases the chance that the wanderer will be found alive. It is one of the fastest and most effective programs first responders can activate in the critical minutes after a person is reported missing.

The program is brought to Rock Island County residents by the Pilot Club of Moline, an organization that was named after the pilots of steamboats that traveled the Mississippi River who navigated troubled waters successfully. Over time, the club became part of Pilot Club International, and their service focus narrowed to brain-related research and activities.

Individuals enrolled in Project Lifesaver wear a personal transmitter about the size of a wristwatch that emits an individualized tracking signal. Once missing, the caregiver notifies an emergency response team to begin a search.

Through Project Lifesaver, search times are reduced from hours (or even worse, days) down to minutes: Recovery times average about half an hour, which is 95 percent less time than standard search-and-rescue operations. Thanks to this swiftness, most of those who wander are found within a few miles of home, before they have an opportunity to stray further off. This is especially critical at this time of year, when finding someone quickly in cold temperatures can make a life or death difference.

"A friend of my parents became confused while driving a few years ago and was located two days later, having had an accident with her vehicle and subsequently died. If she had been wearing a bracelet, this situation would have had a different ending," explained Carol Triebel, Pilot Club member.

Endorsed by law enforcement personnel, there is currently no cost to the participating families to subscribe to the program. A minimal cost for the initial transmitter bracelet and monthly battery replacement are underwritten by Pilot Club of Moline.



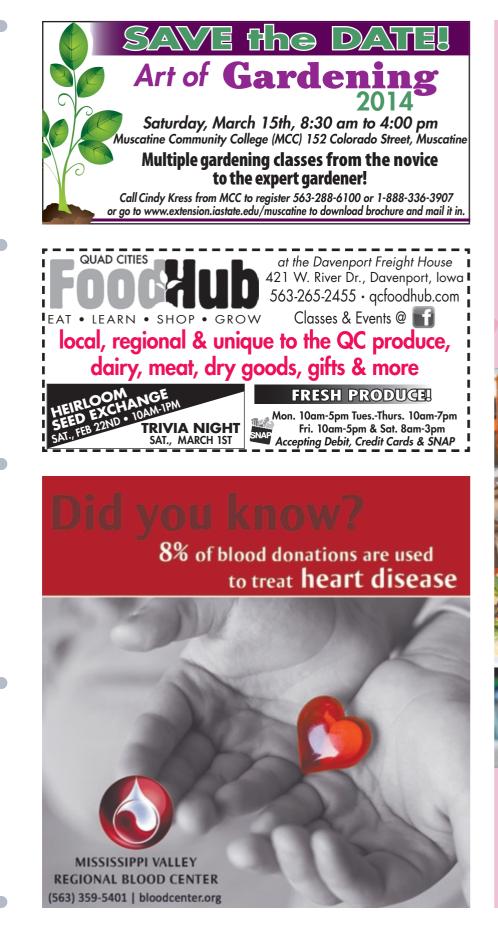
A Project Lifesaver transmitter bracelet. (Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

Triebel points out that the time to sign up for this program is now. Caretakers of persons diagnosed with Alzheimer's or autism, or any mental condition that leads to confusion or wandering, can have some assurance that their loved ones can be safely located if they are already registered.

Investigator Mindy Meyers of the Rock Island Sheriff's Department, who works with the Pilot Club to administer the program, agrees. "The success rate with this program is very impressive. It also cuts down on manpower and costs," she says.

For members of the Pilot Club of Moline, Project Lifesaver feels like a good fit with the original mission of the club: to enrich and make lives better for their friends and neighbors through service projects in their community.

Julie Stamper is a regular Radish contributor. For more information about *Project Lifesaver*, visit the international website at projectlifesaver.org or contact Mindy Meyers of the Rock Island Sheriff's Department at 309-558-3419.





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outdoors

Eagles, eagles everywhere: Record numbers flock to Radishland this winter

By Anthony Watt

A t Lock and Dam 15 on the Mississippi River, open water roils from beneath the roller dam, then smooths out to create a slate-dark sheet stretching a few hundred yards down river. Beyond it are sheets of white or gray ice.

Eagles crowd around the open water, clustered in nearby trees or standing on the ice. They glide on giant wings. Occasionally, one angles toward the open water, extends its talons, then dips them delicately into the water. If it is lucky, the eagle pulls out an unlucky fish.

Bald eagles are visiting the Quad-Cities area in greater numbers this year, likely caused by recent extreme weather, say area experts.

Samantha Heilig, a natural resources specialist for the Army Corps of Engineers, is responsible for recording eagle numbers at many of the Mississippi River Locks and Dams. She counted roughly 260 bald eagles Jan. 8 at Lock and Dam 15 between Rock Island and Davenport.

She also receives data from Locks and Dams 11 through 22, and the overall count for the day was 5,000. Lock and Dam 18, near Burlington, had 1,200 of those birds.

The open water around the locks and dams is what is drawing the eagles, Heilig says. As cold as it has been, the Mississippi and its tributaries have been freezing up, leaving little open river for the raptors to find the fish on which they depend.

Dick Sayles, who heads the Quad City Audubon Society, agrees freezing waters are likely pushing the bald eagles together. He says it's the largest number of eagles he's seen in some time. On a recent trip from his home in the Buffalo area to the Quad-Cities, Sayles counted 500 eagles.

Based on the fish remains found around the area, the eagles seem to be preying mainly on gizzard shad, Heilig says, explaining that as the shad get close to the surface, the eagles target them by watching for the glint of their scales.

Some of the many hundreds of eagles near the roller dam on the January afternoon bore the characteristic white head and tail of adult eagles, but many were dark-headed and dark-tailed juveniles.

Heilig says the juveniles appeared to outnumber the adults, which is a good sign that the raptors are breeding.

She says she doesn't know if the overall eagle population was larger. The numbers she collects at Lock and Dam 15 are simply a head count, and that count started climbing when the temperature fell dramatically. But other areas that report to her have shown high numbers of bald eagles all season, Heilig says.

In more typical years, there are normally 50 or 60 eagles present at Lock and Dam 15 at a given time, she says. "To see 260 is exceptional."

Anthony Watt is a reporter for The Dispatch and The Rock Island Argus and an occasional contributor to Radish.







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radish reads

A gluten-free cookbook the whole family can enjoy

Mini-review: "Cooking for Your Gluten-Free Teen: Everyday Foods the Whole Family Will Love," by Carlyn Berghoff, Sarah Berghoff McClure, Dr. Suzanne P. Nelson, and Nancy Ross Ryan (2013, Andrews McMeel Publishing, 192 pages, \$19.99)



As a parent of a teen recently diagnosed with

celiac disease, I've read everything I could about the disease: how to treat it and ways to cope, but most of all to figure out how we were going to eat gluten-free. When I saw "Cooking for Your Gluten-Free Teen" I knew I had to try it.

I found the book easy to read and well organized. The recipes are detailed enough so that even the most inexperienced cooks can follow along, but they also leave room for some individualization for those wishing to experiment. While some of the recipes are naturally gluten-free and can be found in many regular cookbooks (crispy oven fries, coleslaw and frosting among them), there are plenty of real GF dishes to make the book worth having as part of your collection.

I especially like the gluten-free all-purpose flour that is used in many of the baking dishes in the book. I also appreciate the hints for working with the GF dough, as it can be challenging because it does not act like traditional wheat dough. The chocolate chip cookies turned out perfect, and I am willing to bet if you served them to an unknowing audience they would not be able to tell that they are GF.

— Dan Oltman, Port Byron, Ill.

BRIDGE OF THE GODS A Handbook for Ascending Humanity

REVEREND DR. LINDA DE COFF

Submitted

Questions and exercises designed to bring a higher consciousness

Mini-review: "Bridge of the Gods: A Handbook for Ascending Humanity," by Linda De Coff (2011, Balboa Press, 388 pages, \$23.99)



In "Bridge of the Gods," author Linda De Coff outlines solutions to real-world problems such as peaceful ways to respond in challenging situations. Her

objective is to help us become "Masters of the Spiritual Kingdom." All aspects of mental, physical, emotional and spiritual evolution are addressed.

There are pearls of wisdom applicable to everyone throughout the book. For practical advice, De Coff has created the 11th commandment, "Thou shalt mind thy own business," and also a 12th commandment to address control dramas and relationship issues. So, if you have any negativity in your life that needs to be removed, begin with reading and doing the exercises included in "Bridge of the Gods." It will positively help you obtain your own karmic release into the peace, power and wholeness of your divine self.

— Jan Franks, Geneseo, Ill.



health & medicine Sleepless tots

Body clock may be to blame when kids fight sleep

By Lauran Neergaard, Associated Press

"I need a glass of water." "Mom, I can't sleep!" When youngsters continually struggle to fall asleep at night, new research suggests maybe their body clock doesn't match their bedtime.

That doesn't mean tots should be up at all hours. "Just like nutrition and exercise, sleep is critical for good health," says sleep scientist Monique LeBourgeois of the University of Colorado, Boulder, who is leading the research.

The ultimate goal is to help reset a delayed sleep clock so that young children can settle down more easily, she says. Hint: It seems to have a lot to do with light.

We all have what's called a circadian rhythm, a master biological clock, that regulates when we become sleepy and when we're more alert. Those patterns vary with age: It's the reason teenagers are notorious for late nights and difficult-towake mornings.

But how does that clock work in preschoolers, who need more sleep than older kids or adults? A first-of-its-kind study tracked 14 healthy youngsters for six days to begin finding out.

As part of the study, researchers tested the tots' melatonin levels, a hormone that is key to the sleep cycle and also sensitive to light. At some point every evening, people's melatonin levels surge, and a while later they begin to feel sleepy. Among adults who sleep well, that melatonin rise tends to happen about two hours before whatever is their chosen bedtime.

For preschoolers, the new study found that on average the melatonin surge occurred around 7:40 p.m. The children tended to be tucked in around 8:10 p.m., and most were asleep 30 minutes later, LeBourgeois reported in the journal Mind, Brain and Education. When the melatonin surge was closer to bedtime, the youngsters were more likely to fuss or make curtain calls after lights-out. Two children in the study actually were tucked in before their rise in melatonin ever occurred, and it took them up to an hour past bedtime to fall asleep, she says.

"We don't know what that sweet spot is yet," LeBourgeois says, but the data suggest bedtime is easiest if the melatonin surge occurred at least 30 minutes earlier.

Parents don't have melatonin tests as a guide, so Dr. Jyoti Krishna, a pediatric sleep expert at the Cleveland Clinic, advises looking for cues when setting a bedtime — yawning, rubbing eyes — and then to adjust that bedtime as the child gets older.

"The melatonin onset and our body rhythms change," Krishna says. "You can't stick to what worked two years ago with this child, because this child is now a different child."

"Listen to your child's physiology," she advises.

Catching some Z's

Up all night with a sleepless youngster? Some steps that might help:

• Research shows that in adults, too much light in the evening delays the melatonin surge and subsequent sleepiness. While there's no data in young children yet, LeBourgeois says dimming the lights about an hour before bedtime makes sense.

• Avoid electronics near bedtime, because they generate a specific type of light that triggers wakefulness. LeBourgeois was horrified to hear one parent offer a sleepless youngster an iPad to play with as long as the child stayed in the bedroom.

• Make sure blackout shades aren't keeping your children from getting enough morning sunlight, says LeBourgeois. Light in the morning also is key to keeping the biological sleep clock on schedule.



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food for thought

How a midday chore became a welcome, loving act

By Sarah J. Gardner

"Love is not saying, 'I love you,'" my "Love is doing the dishes." She was no Buddhist practitioner, but you could almost call it one of her eight noble truths, falling somewhere between "If your feet are cold, you're cold all over," and "Worrying won't make it better."

Her wisdom about dishwashing was meant metaphorically, of course — love is not just something you say, it's behaving with consideration and care — but she also meant it literally, as in a great way to show her that I loved her would be to do the dishes. Now, not later. Certainly not after she's had to ask again.

As a rule, I was a pretty hop-to-it kid, one who didn't shy away from other responsibilities. Every morning when I woke up, I would go room to room waking up my two younger sisters and my little brother. I would get everyone dressed and fed and out the door for school, often helping with the last of the homework before we left. But do I need to tell you all our cereal bowls were left stacked in the sink, waiting to be washed later that evening? Or maybe the next day? Or maybe for someone else to do?

I hated washing dishes — so much so, even now I can list in specific order the dishes I disliked the most to wash: pots and pans with scorched bottoms to be scrubbed, followed by tedious pieces of silverware, followed by narrow glasses that cinched your hands.

On our walk to school, we would stop in at the bakery my mother managed, where she would already be hard at work, lifting 50-pound bags of flour into bins and loading loaves of bread into convection ovens that hissed whenever you opened them. Her work day began at 4 a.m. This was a woman who knew something about doing difficult tasks out of love. Her work at the bakery often was exhausting, but it kept us all housed and clothed and fed.

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Rinsing a dish can be a small, restorative act in the middle of the day. (Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

At the end of the day, bone-tired and smelling like the soup the bakery served, to come home to an empty sink and a clean counter symbolized for Mom no small gesture of affection. But to be honest, she really would have settled for a sink that was empty and all the dishes put away by the time the last of us went to bed.

Given my childhood reluctance, wouldn't Mom laugh to learn that, as an adult, washing my lunch dishes has become an important ritual in my day? It started simply enough, with some or another goopy container I didn't want to carry home to throw in the dishwasher. Washing and drying it before putting it in my bag seemed like a less messy way to handle the situation — and then when I got home, I discovered that I could simply refill the washed container for the next day, an added bonus. No need to wait on a dishwasher cycle before using it again.

But that isn't what really got me hooked. Rather, I began to embrace washing my midday dishes as a chance to get away from my desk covered, invariably, in many other projects that would not be finished by the day's end — and take care of one small thing from start to finish. Wash, rinse, dry. The five minutes I invested in it quickly became time in which I could clear my head, catch my breath, and reset for the rest of the day. Inevitably, I returned to the more weighty projects better for it.

Here's the funny thing. Up until I started washing my dishes at work, I understood this chore as an act of love toward other people. You did it so that they wouldn't have to. The realization that it could be something you did for yourself left me a little thunderstruck. And yet there I was day after day, standing at the sink, enjoying the smell of the soap, the warm water on my hands, and the sense that this would be one less thing to attend to at the day's end.

Would I love it more if these five minutes of "me time" involved getting a chair massage instead of washing my lunch ware? Perhaps. It's tough to say, as no one has yet come traipsing into the lunch room with a massage chair. But almost every day I have the opportunity to carry my dishes to the sink, relax my shoulders, and reflect a little on another one of Mom's great insights: You have to make the most of the time you're given. Sometimes, that time pops up in unexpected places.

Sarah J. Gardner is the editor of Radish.



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