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from the editor



Radish editor Sarah J. Gardner and artist Kristin Quinn on the lookout for warblers. (Photo by John Greenwood / Radish)

One of my favorite things to do at the end of a good hike is turn around and hike it in reverse. I do this even when there are other trails in the park I have yet to try. Why? It never ceases to amaze me how different a trail can feel when you walk it in the other direction. Invariably I see things I hadn't noticed on the first pass, and from a second approach, the landscape features that had caught my attention before take on new dimensions. Often it feels like being on a different trail entirely. Of course, the trail itself hasn't changed, only my perspective. That, it turns out, can make all the difference.

Inspired by this practice, I found myself wondering what else could render an otherwise familiar trek into a new experience. Out of this grew the special feature for this month's issue, an article about taking three walks in the woods with three different people. You'll find the story on page 10, and if you visit radishmagazine.com, you'll find a video we put together from the walks. To say it was a treat to share an hour in the woods exchanging observations and ideas with people with such different backgrounds and experiences would be an understatement. The only difficulty was editing down the conversations to fit the space we had for it. Each walk produced a wealth of insights.

Whenever I walk a trail in reverse, it serves as a valuable reminder to me that as much as I believe I know and understand about this world, there is much more yet to discover — even right where I'm standing. It's a thought that is both humbling and exhilarating. On the one hand, we should never get too smug about what we believe to be the final word on anything, and on the other hand, we get to keep learning and growing our whole lives long. Isn't that marvelous?

To take a fresh look at something familiar and seek a new perspective is as valuable a practice off the trail as on it. In many ways, each of the articles in this issue of Radish explores this very idea. From an article on Thanksgiving desserts that re-imagines traditional side dishes as sweet treats (page 8) to a story about a historic department store redesigned as an environmentally-friendly office building (page 18), you'll find these pages packed with articles that celebrate the joys of finding something new where you least expect it.

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

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the grapevine

From our readers

Cemetery Stroll (Oct. 2013): "As someone fond of cemeteries, I enjoyed your article very much. Good for you — and good for Minda Powers-Douglas! Thank you.

"We in Rockford have one hilly cemetery where many of the numerous Swedish immigrants and their descendants rest. Although many of them prospered in the U.S. the markers and monuments at Scandinavian Cemetery are almost all modest, as opposed to Greenwood Cemetery on the other side of town where one can find monuments of the kind described in the article. Greenwood is huge and lovely."

— Caryl Barnes, Rockford, Ill.

Despair is a luxury (Oct. 2013): "Sandra Steingraber has been brilliant in her efforts to fight fracking. May she continue these as well as her wonderful poetry."

— Victoria F. Harris, Bloomington, Ill.

Storage Savvy (Sept. 2013): "For anyone who doesn't want to go to the work of making their own wraps, there is a Canadian company, Abeego, that makes a very similar product. They use only natural ingredients and are family operated. I have been using these wraps for over a year and have been very pleased with them. They are available online at abeego.ca."

— Erika, Davenport, Iowa

On the Road with Radish

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

• **Quad Cities Birth Conference,**

9 a.m.-noon Saturday, Nov. 2, at the Center for Active Seniors, Inc. (CASI), 1035 W. Kimberly Road, Davenport. For

more information, visit quadcitiesbirthconference.com.

• **The Galena/Jo Daviess Quilt and Fiber Arts Show,** 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 8, at Historic Turner Hall, 115 S. Bench St., Galena, Ill. To learn more about this event, which continues through Sunday, Nov. 10, turn to page 16.

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



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healthy living from the ground up

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A cranberry-apple dessert that pairs the tartness of cranberries with the sweetness of a cornmeal crust. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)

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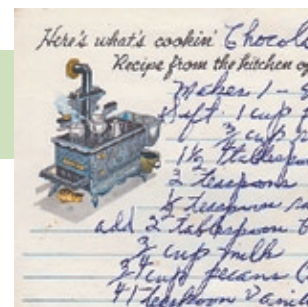
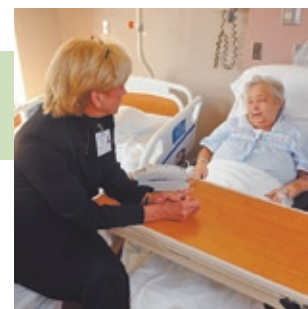
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In "A Commonplace Book of Pie," poet Kate Lebo offers 10 rules of thumb for baking pies. Number six on the list: "When making crust, the butter must be cold. This bears repeating." Number seven? "The butter must be cold."

Full of whimsy and tips, recipes and prose poems, Lebo's book is a warm and welcoming collection that revels in the delights of making poetry and pie. On Nov. 15, Lebo will share her enthusiasm for both pursuits at a reading from the book beginning at 7 p.m. at Prairie Lights, 15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City.

Read more about her baking and writing projects, both of which, she says, have taught her "to show up, pay attention, and have faith in the process," at radishmagazine.com.



healthy living

Cooking up a storm

Retreat director advocates food for the whole person



By Leslie Klipsch

“Food is not only an ethical act, but it tells a lot about your values. It’s a spiritual act because it connects you back to your soul,” says Sister Kathleen Storms, the director of Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat outside Wheatland, Iowa, and the woman behind the wholesome meals that the retreat center is notorious for serving.

She wouldn’t really have to say it out loud, though. One meal at the retreat center and you would know that Storms, who grew up as one of 12 children in rural Minnesota, is serious about healthy, delicious food. This is a woman who practices what she preaches.

Two years ago, Storms came to Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat, a center run by the Sisters of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary that welcomes groups for retreat and reflection. Upon her arrival, she saw the potential for a ministry that nourished both body and spirit centered on the bounty of the Eastern Iowa landscape.

After being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001 and then spending years working with small farmers in rural Minnesota, Storms made a commitment to eating “better” food, not only for her health but also for the health of others. She gained a passionate appreciation and respect for food that could be grown without intense intervention and in earth-friendly ways.

“The food we serve is raised in our garden or comes from local producers. It’s mainly vegetables, though we do serve local meat, and it’s low on the food chain. Food is prepared without preservatives and is higher quality, so, of course, it tastes better when you serve it,” she explains. The center’s large garden, which master gardeners from the community helped establish, is planted with heirloom seeds and has a wide variety of herbs and vegetables. Much of the food that lands on retreat-goers’ plates is plucked from the ground shortly before it’s prepared and served.

Storms also buys both eggs and meat from neighboring farmers and speaks with wonder when describing the generosity of the community. Not only do volunteers help her and a colleague prepare meals, but farmers offer excess fruit, like apples and cherries, when they have an abundance.

The food, she says, is prepared on site and comes from a deep respect for the spiritual energy that the land and water hold. “We prepare food mindfully. We plant the seeds and gather the vegetables. We wash them with care so that the way in which we prepare a meal makes it spiritual.”

Food to nourish the soul

Guests of the center have varied experiences depending on the type and length of the retreat they engage in — some stay for just one day, others longer.

Submitted

One experience is common, however, and it revolves around the dining room: Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat's dining space seats 34 people and many of them, Storms says, come hungry for a new understanding of how to enjoy food.

Meals served at the retreat center are organic, healthy, and rich in grains and proteins. Menus are determined by what is in season, and everything from meal preparation to table presentation is part of Storms' plan to make coming together for a meal a sacred act.

"When you sit down to a meal here, you sit at a table that's been specially prepared. No matter the season, I go outside and find something to dress the table with — whether it's beautiful flowers in the summer or evergreens with berries in the winter," Storms says. She insists on cloth napkins and real dishes to cut down on waste and further set the mood.

Sitting down to Cuban spicy bean soup and freshly baked whole-grain bread, grilled turkey breasts, or quinoa with toasted almonds and cranberries, guests are never hurried and, as a result, people linger over meals. The mood and tone is such that the food becomes the binding element of the time spent together.

"We offer a prayer taken from one of many different traditions — not just Catholic — and we tell guests about where the food came from, what's in it, and how it's prepared. Because of this, people are more mindful about what they're about to eat," she explains.

All of this, Storms says, will often lead to the sharing of stories shaped by the food people are enjoying. "Our meals have a whole different feel to them because people are gathered around something whole and healthful. We take our time to enjoy the meal and the community gathered."

"It's not just about feeding bodies," Storms says emphatically, and anyone who has mindfully picked up their fork at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat to taste her fresh, local and seasonal fare will likely attest. "I believe the whole spirit has the chance to be expressed when food is the binder of relationships and community."

Leslie Klipsch is a frequent Radish contributor.

Simply delicious: Tips for your own gatherings

Formal or informal, preparing a meal for a large group can be tricky. With the holidays upon us, Sister Kathleen Storms shares her top tips for cooking for a crowd:

- Keep recipes simple and limit yourself to preparing a few well-chosen dishes.
- Buy local and shop early when availability is high. Squash, potatoes and onions are abundant after the frost, for example.
- Fresh turkey is better than frozen.
- Apples are plentiful this year — make a crisp rather than a pie — it has fewer calories and is just as good.
- Remember guests' likes and dislikes and do your best to cater to preferences when planning.
- Involve others in the food preparation — kids like helping in the kitchen, so make it an all-day affair with time for creativity and creating dishes they like.
- Use real dishes and cloth napkins — trash is reduced and the meal becomes very special. Washing dishes can be a great multigenerational activity.



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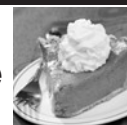
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healthy living

Dessert revelations

Rediscover the autumn glories of squash and cranberries

By Sarah J. Gardner

Pity the cranberry at the Thanksgiving feast. Pity the squash. Are there any perennials of the holiday table done more of a disservice? Inevitably, both foods are included on the roster of dishes served up to friends and family each November, but they never get top billing. That distinction goes to the turkey, the mashed potatoes, the stuffing. Fine foods all, simple and satisfying, but also — I'm just going to say it — a little on the bland side. There's nothing wrong with that, but isn't it strange that on the same table the colorful, complex flavors of cranberries and squash don't come to star?

It is a question that has perplexed me Thanksgiving after Thanksgiving. Part of the issue, undoubtedly, is the way these foods are most commonly served. Who witnesses a cylinder of cranberry sauce come slurping out of a can, after all, and thinks, "Sign me up for seconds!" Or squash. Poor squash. So often tucked away in soups or casseroles like it has something to hide.

I have brought these sides to the table many times in revitalized forms — squash lovingly roasted with honey and thyme, fresh cranberries minced with apples and oranges as a relish — and, although well received, they didn't quite elicit the excitement I hoped for. Maybe this is because after so many bad dishes, it's natural to harbor a bit of disinterest in cranberries and squash. Or maybe



Poor squash. So often tucked away in soups or casseroles like it has something to hide.

it's because people are rarely ecstatic about a side dish. Regardless, the question remains. How best to whip up some long overdue enthusiasm for these Thanksgiving staples?

The answer: dessert. When it comes to getting guests to stand up and take notice of a food, nothing gets quite the attention that dessert does. What better way to showcase the beckoning red of cranberries? The downright decadence hidden in a squash? Just don't be surprised if, served this way, your guests decide to forgo the pumpkin pie for the butternut mousse or cranberry-apple tart next to it — of if, like my Thanksgiving guests, they ask you to make these dishes again come Christmas.

Sarah J. Gardner is the editor of Radish.



Cranberry-Apple Tart

Filling:

2 cups fresh cranberries (or frozen but not thawed)
1½ cups sugar
¼ cup crystallized ginger
½ teaspoon orange zest
2 apples, peeled, cored and diced
Whipped cream (optional)
Candied lemon or orange rind (optional)

Crust:

1 cup cornmeal
1 cup all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons honey
½ cup butter, softened
1-2 tablespoons milk

For the crust, combine cornmeal, flour and salt. Using a pastry blender or food processor, cut in the honey and butter until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Work in a tablespoon of milk until the dough forms a ball; if it is dry and crumbly, add the second tablespoon of milk. Place dough on a sheet of wax paper and flatten into a disk, then place in a refrigerator for 10 minutes.

When dough is firm but not stiff, place on a floured surface and, using a floured rolling pin, roll the dough into a slab slightly larger than a 10-inch circular tart pan or 11x7-inch rectangular tart pan. Transfer and fit the dough to the pan, pressing it against the sides and patching and pressing it together where any cracks may appear. Trim the top.

To prepare filling, combine 1 cup cranberries with sugar, ginger and zest in a food processor and pulse until berries are coarsely chopped. Stir in the remaining whole cranberries and diced apples. Spread filling over crust in tart pan. Bake at 375 degrees for 35-40 minutes, until crust is golden and filling is bubbling. Allow to cool slightly before slicing and serving. Optionally, garnish with whipped cream and/or candied citrus rind.

— Recipe adapted from "The Northern Heartland Kitchen," Beth Dooley

Butternut Mousse

1 packet (2 teaspoons) unflavored gelatin powder
2 cups roasted butternut squash
½ cup sugar
½ cup light brown sugar
2 large egg yolks
2 teaspoons orange zest
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
½ teaspoon salt
2 cups whipped cream, plus more for garnish
Gingersnap cookies for garnish (optional)

In a small, heatproof bowl or double boiler, sprinkle gelatin over ¼ cup warm water and set aside for 10 minutes while the gelatin softens. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, mix together the roasted squash, sugars, egg yolks, orange zest, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla and salt.

Set the double boiler or heatproof bowl of gelatin over a pan of simmering water and cook until gelatin is a clear, smooth liquid. Immediately stir into the squash mixture, combining thoroughly. Then, fold 2 cups whipped cream into the mixture. Cover the bowl and allow mixture to rest in the refrigerator 4 hours or overnight.

When ready to serve, portion the mousse out into individual serving containers and garnish with dollops of extra whipped cream and optional gingersnap cookies.

— Recipe adapted from "Barefoot Contessa at Home," Ina Garten

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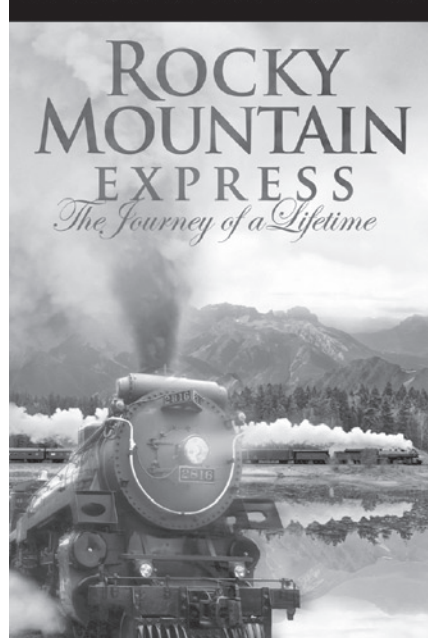
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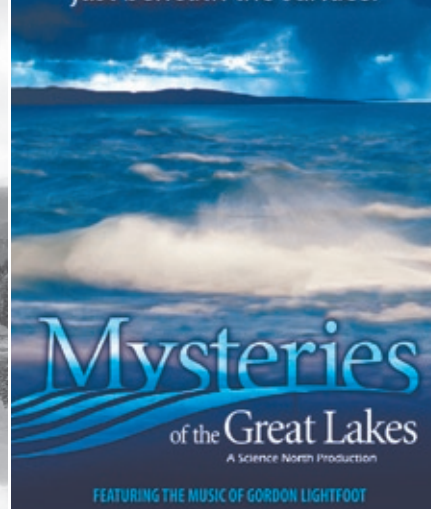
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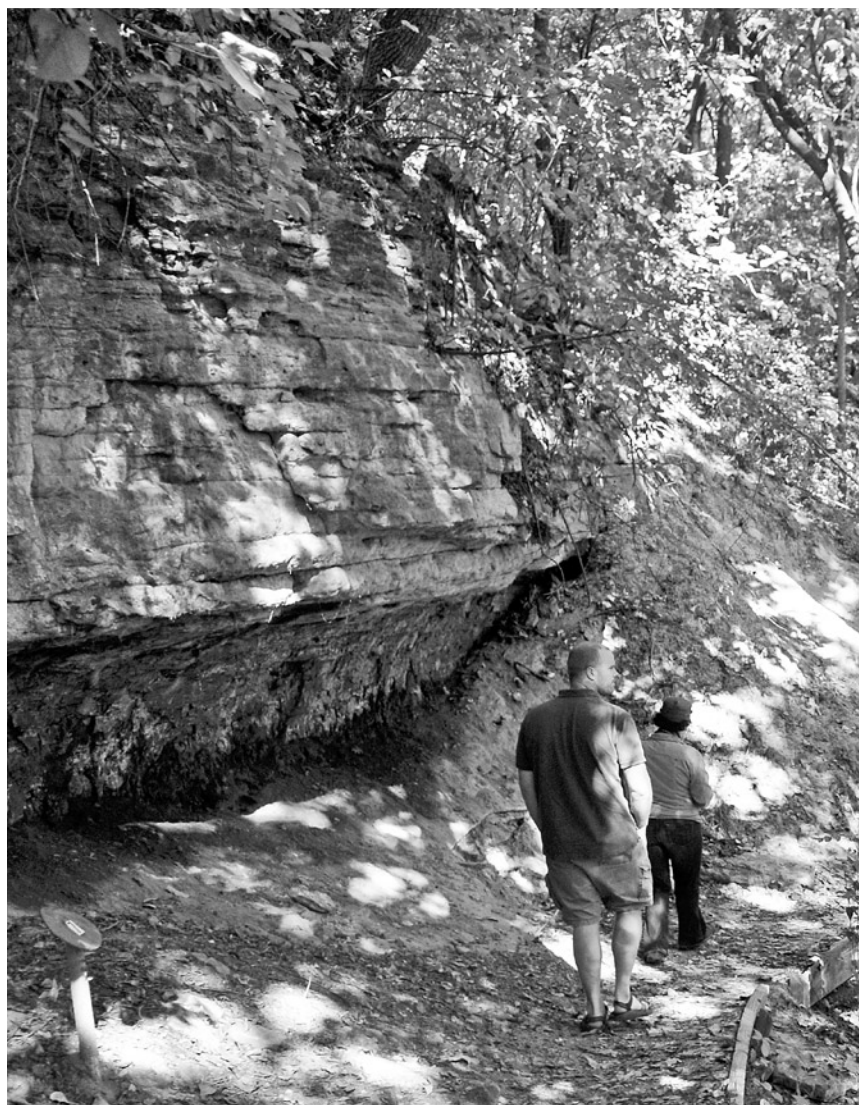


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healthy living

Into the woods

A familiar trail, seen anew



By Sarah J. Gardner

There are trails we walk many times in life. They change with the seasons and the passing of years. We notice what is different as we hike: the leaves that color and fade, the gullies that erode into gulches, the flowers that spring up. All the while, we are changing, too. As time passes we bring new experiences into the woods and new abilities to perceive.

Lately, it's what I don't see that entrances me. What is right in front of me in the woods that I simply pass by, out of habit or inclination or lack of vocabulary? What do other people notice when they enter this same woods? Out of curiosity, I decided to invite three different people — a meditation instructor, a biologist, and an artist — on a walk for an hour at Black Hawk State Historic Site in Rock Island. The idea was simple: Follow the same trail each time, but allow the conversation to go where it will. What would we see?



Joe Gauthier,
meditation instructor.

Don't take everything else with you

"I love how it gives your mind space to think," says Joe Gauthier, who teaches meditation at the Lamrim Kadampa Buddhist Center in Davenport. Gesturing at the canopy of trees overhead, he adds, "There's enough here to keep you occupied, but there's space, too."

It's a Monday, sunny and warm. I feel especially lucky to leave the office for an hour in the woods. Gauthier, too, who talks about retreats he has attended where the opportunity to spend time outdoors has come as a welcome break in the meditation schedule. "When you're spending six to eight hours in meditation, you need to move. It helps everything synchronize," Gauthier explains. "We forget the mind and body are connected."

The trick, he says, is not to take everything else with you. As human beings, we love to bring distraction with us, and that can prevent us from seeing and experiencing what is happening in this woods in this moment.

Mulling the thought over, I say, "I've never really done this in an interview before, but do you think we could walk in silence for a few minutes and then share our impressions?" Grinning, Gauthier agrees.

We proceed down the trail. I take time to note the sandstone outcroppings we pass, the dusty spider webs hanging between layers of rock, the crunch of the same stone under our feet. We come at last to a bridge by the river, where we pause and Gauthier points to a bit of graffiti scrawled on the handrail. "The world is its own magic," it reads.

It seems uncanny, in more ways than one: even though my hands were

Continued on page 12

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Photos by Paul Colletti and John Greenwood / Radish



Continued from page 10

resting next to the words, I had not noticed them. Instead, I had been thinking about another bridge on another trail. Gauthier, too, had been letting his mind wander, thinking about another time he had been on this same trail. “It’s true that we have associations with everything,” he says.

If you leave all that behind, I wonder, what takes its place? “The distraction gets replaced with a more direct experience of life,” replies Gauthier.

I close my eyes and take in the crosstalk of crickets. Sounds good to me.



Tim Muir, biologist.

See a complexity you’ve never seen before

The moment a thin, dark garter snake slithers into a clump of grasses overhanging the boardwalk just ahead of us, it is clear which one of us is the biologist used to collecting animals in the field. Gingerly, I nudge the grasses with the toe of my boot, hoping to get another glimpse. Dr. Tim Muir, meanwhile, drops down into a crouch and begins moving the grasses aside with his bare hands.

Muir is a biologist on faculty at Augustana College in Rock Island who studies the physiology of animals. Only minutes before we had been discussing his suburban upbringing outside of Detroit, in which “time outdoors” generally meant being out on an athletic field, not in a woods catching animals.

Now raising two sons of his own — Liam, 4, and Jude, 2, — he often brings them to Black Hawk to visit the nature center and take walks in the forest. He’s come to appreciate how such direct experiences of our natural surroundings can foster a sense of place. “Even just to know what kind of tree is in your backyard gives you a sense of rootedness; I hope our boys have that sense,” he says.

His research into how cold-blooded animals, turtles in particular, function in low temperatures often brings him and his students out into nature, including to a spot not far from where we are walking. They gather turtle eggs to monitor the hatchlings in later months. “Turtles hibernate above the frost line, and as a result their blood turns to ice,” he says, a fact so amazing, I repeat it back to him to make sure I understand it correctly.

As we follow the trail, Muir pauses from time to time to point out insects — a braconid wasp with a long, thin ovipositor that Muir explains is used to deposit eggs, a large shield bug that belongs to an order of insects known as “true bugs.” I let it crawl onto my finger and we admire the hind legs, which look like bits of torn leaf.

Even though the insects aren’t directly in his field of study, or the plants we pass that he points out along the way, Muir derives a clear sense of pleasure from being able to give a name to each. “If you stay out long enough, you’ll see something you’ve never seen before,” he offers. “Then it’s more than just a walk.”

It’s an experience that isn’t just restricted to being in the woods, either, he says. The unexpected can arise in our own backyards as well, if we take time to notice. Sometimes, while in his own yard with his children, Muir will give himself a few minutes to identify bird species.

“You only expect three or four (birds), but it’s so easy to get to eight or nine

Continued on page 28

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Want to talk?

Hospital ‘Befrienders’ programs offer a listening ear

By Ann Ring

“I really believe that people underestimate the power of listening,” says Patty Tillman, a chaplain with Genesis Health System’s spiritual care department and its Befrienders program coordinator. For nearly 50 years, Genesis’ Befriender volunteers have extended hospitality to the ill through the art of listening. “Being hospitalized in an upheaval, and having someone there to listen promotes healing — physically and spiritually.”

The Befriender ministry was originally founded in 1966 by the Rev. Canon Marlin Whitmer, 83, of DeWitt, Iowa. Back then, lay people listening to the sick in a hospital setting was unconventional. Whitmer, who was a hospice chaplain at the time, and three people from Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Davenport, who were also members of the former St. Luke’s Hospital’s auxiliary, thought listening to stories of the sick could make a difference.

Esther Baker, a retired nurse who turned 87 in October, remembers when the Befriender program was exclusively for hospice patient. She began volunteering more than 25 years ago after her husband passed away. “Back then, we saw hospice patients in their home,” she says, “and you could go as often as it worked out (with your schedule).” Esther’s hospitality visits with the terminally ill flourished, turning acquaintances into long-term friendships — 14 years, seven years, and over a year with her current patient. “I look forward to the visits,” she says. “It’s a deeper type of satisfaction.”

Today, Genesis’ Befrienders program and its hospice program are independent of one another. Befriender volunteers attend 40 hours of training, two hours a week for 20 weeks. After the first 10 weeks, from September through May, with the support of Tillman and other chaplains, volunteers circulate throughout various hospital units once a week, practicing what they learned about listening, grief, chronic illness, crisis, life review, family systems theory and more. Says Tillman, “The ideal volunteer is someone who’s compassionate and able to sit down and listen to others. But we don’t try to fix things.”

Whitmer also introduced the Befriender program to pastoral care staff and volunteers at the former Moline Lutheran Hospital (now UnityPoint Health-Trinity). Its Befriender program consists of 30 hours of training, three hours a week for 10 weeks, which runs from March until May. After training is complete, bimonthly education classes are available. Says UnityPoint Health-Trinity’s staff chaplain, “Our Befrienders are trained to be listeners and a friend to patients and their loved ones. For many, they’re the first face of our pastoral care department.”

Whitmer says for the sick and their families, sharing stories about their lives with a good listener has a definite healing effect — physiologically, emotionally and spiritually. “But,” he says, “listening requires more discipline on the lay person because you don’t want to interject yourself. It’s not counseling, it’s not problem centered — it’s story centered.” Whitmer says true listening is difficult because of



Patty Tillman, left, coordinator of the Befrienders program for Genesis Health System, talks with patient Betty Davis. (Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

our need to interject or “leap frog” by telling an even greater story. “It happens all the time,” he says.

Leanne Belk, on her third year as a Befriender, is more comfortable than ever with her involvement in the program. “The Befriender program intrigued me because no matter where I am, I’m the kind of person who always ends up running into people and hearing a story about their life.” Initially she was hesitant about talking to individuals who were strangers and who were very ill. “I had to remind myself that they’re scared, too.”

Both Belk and Tillman marvel at the amount of trust strangers grant them, although Tillman concedes that part of people’s confidentiality is based on never encountering their confidant again.

Because listening to someone share intimate details can be fatiguing, volunteers are never alone in the process. “We don’t want our volunteers to be burdened when they go home,” says Busch. Both hospitals offer volunteers a team of support staff and a debriefing session after patient visits.

Ann Ring is a frequent Radish contributor. If you are interested in becoming a Befriender volunteer, contact Genesis Health System Chaplain Patty Tillman, at 563-421-7971, or UnityPoint Health-Trinity Chaplain Andy Busch at 309-779-2989.

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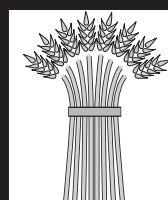
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By Chris Greene

Just like the various pieces of our lives tell our story, the pieces of a quilt tell a story, too. No one knows this better than a quilter, many of whom will be traveling to Galena, Ill., to share their stories and their quilts at the third annual Galena/Jo Daviess Quilt and Fiber Arts Show.

The event, which will run Nov. 8-10, will feature classes, vendors and more than 100 quilts. Presentations will include a bed turning by experienced quilter Joyce Guenzler and a keynote address by author Laurie Aaron Hird.

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Organizer Rita Wadman, a member of the Bed & Breakfast Innkeepers of Galena, which puts on the event, says the show is about a year in the making. "We put one quilt show to bed, and we start working on next year's," she says.

An experienced quilter herself, Wadman finds quilting to be very relaxing. She says she is always pleased to see new quilters trying the craft, and says she hopes to see some younger faces at the show as well.

"Quilting is addictive! Once you get the bug and find out it's not as hard as you thought, you find yourself jumping in and wanting to do more," Wadman says.

Revealing stories, one by one

A bed turning, for those new to the term, is a presentation of quilts and their stories. Typically, Guenzler says, as you feature each quilt, you tell who made it, when it was made, what pattern it is or if the design is something self-styled. "You set up the bed by piling the quilts you want to show on it. You explain each one as you show it, usually starting with the oldest and working your way to the newest," she explains.

For the Galena event, Guenzler says she'll "be showing a quilt made by each of my grandmothers, one by my mother, and the rest are mine. The oldest quilt was made in the late 1930s."

Guenzler sews all of her quilts by hand from start to finish. Now, after 50 years of quilting, she rarely follows a pattern completely, choosing to design things that please her instead. One such quilt she calls "My Village Square," which consists of small cottages, pine trees, and a little country church in the center.

Among the quilts she will be showing at the bed turning will be some award winners, including a quilt that won Grand Champion at the Illinois State Fair. That particular work is a Celtic applique quilt in shades of purple, blue and white.

Connecting with quilters of the past

A big draw to the quilt and fiber arts show will be quilter and author Laurie Aaron Hird, who will be discussing her books, "The Farmer's Wife Sampler Quilt" and "The Farmer's Wife Pony Club Sampler Quilt."

Hird is proof that it's never too late to take up the needle and thread and learn to quilt. Although she had been drawn to quilting since she was a child, "by the age of 40, I had despaired of ever learning," says Hird. "I felt then that it was necessary for me to take a quilting class, but I simply couldn't find a way to make that happen. At the time, I had recently given birth to my ninth child, and I really doubted that it would be acceptable if I brought my young nursing boy to class with me. So in desperation, I taught myself to quilt."

The inspiration for both of Hird's books came from a popular magazine published between 1903-1939, "The Farmer's Wife." Her first book, "The Farmer's Wife Sampler Quilt," contains classic quilt blocks and letters in praise of life on the farm by readers responding to a question posed by the magazine, "Do you want your daughter to marry a farmer?"

Her second book also contains quilt blocks as well as letters written by children who won Shetland ponies in a Farmer's Wife subscription selling contest. The nearly 100 letters and more than 130 photographs "give a wonderful insight into American rural life through the eyes of well-educated children," says Hird.

"Full directions for making each block and for assembling the finished blocks into a sampler quilt are included in both books," says Hird, who will be selling copies of the book and signing them after her presentation at the quilt and fiber arts show.

Hird also maintains a blog at thefarmerswifequilt.blogspot.com, where she posts additional letters and photographs from "The Farmer's Wife."

Her writing endeavors have been a true learning experience. "Before my first book was published, I had no idea that there were quilters in every part of the world," says Hird. "In fact, the first person that contacted me about 'The Farmer's Wife' book was a quilt shop owner in the Netherlands. I have had great fun and have learned much by corresponding via the Internet with quilters from many different countries, such as England, Germany, Australia, Canada and Indonesia."

Hird's best advice for quilters old and new? "To the new quilters, I say be proud of your early quilts," she says. "Don't get discouraged if your seams don't quite match up and your color scheme wasn't to your liking after all. Keep practicing, and you will improve quickly, and before long you will be able to give advice to your new quilting friends. Most of all, have fun and enjoy the process. Perfection isn't required!"

Chris Greene is a writer on staff with Radish.



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Historic Roshek Building a model of green renovation

By Will Hoyer

When most people hear about a building with a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, the first thing that comes to mind is a newly-constructed building with all the latest whizbang energy-saving gadgetry around every corner. That is not always the case, though. Old buildings can be renovated to meet LEED standards, too, as was recently demonstrated in one of the most famous and recognizable buildings in Dubuque, Iowa.

The community of Dubuque itself is one of the oldest settlements west of the Mississippi River and has a rich trove of historically-significant buildings. Among them is the 84-year-old Roshek Building. Located downtown, the Roshek Building was once the primary shopping destination in the city, featuring six floors of retail shopping, and is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

Lured in part by Dubuque's focus on sustainability, IBM announced plans in 2009 to open a global services delivery center in the community. Rather than set up shop in a new office park on the outskirts of Dubuque, the company chose the Roshek Building to house its operations. Following the announcement, work began on renovating over 250,000 square feet of space on nine floors with an emphasis on making the building as green as possible.

Officials in Dubuque are proud of the city's history and the beautiful historic buildings in the downtown district. They also are proud of the national and international recognition the city has received for its sustainability initiatives; it is in the Roshek Building that the two come together. When the renovation was completed, the building achieved LEED Platinum status, the highest level possible.

John Gronen, of Gronen Restoration, the project developer, says "We wanted to do the restoration right and the community wanted it. For us it was a matter of walking the walk."

Prior to the restoration, roughly 400 people worked in office spaces in the Roshek Building, which was well below full occupancy. Now, more than 1,500 people work there. Gronen notes that utility bills, even with almost four times the workforce in place, are below what they were when the building was being minimally used.

Dubuque officials are fond of pointing out that the greenest buildings are the ones already built, but a little clarification is necessary. Existing buildings, even with extensive renovations, will very rarely become the greenest of the green. They simply were not built with things like passive solar gain in mind and cannot make use of some of the newest, most cutting-edge technologies. But renovating existing buildings does have many environmental advantages.

From an energy perspective, the amount of energy used to manufacture new materials, transport those materials to a site, and then actually construct a new building is huge. Specifics vary from project to project, but it may take anywhere from 10 to 80 years to offset the climate impacts of building a new "green"



The renovated interior of the Roshek building in Dubuque, Iowa. (Submitted)

building, even one that might be 30 percent more energy efficient, compared to an older building.

Older buildings have other advantages, too. They are often in older, established parts of town, closer to downtowns or other places where people actually live, and often are closer to public transportation options. They also are often important parts of a town's culture and heritage, and investing in them can increase the vitality of older parts of town that are becoming increasingly desirable places to live and work for many people.

All of that is true for the Roshek Building and for other Gronen Restoration projects such as the renovation of the Schmid Innovation Center, formerly known as the CARADCO Building, in Dubuque's Historic Millwork District, which is seeing massive redevelopment. Gronen says that his team has put to use there all that it learned in restoring the Roshek Building, although it has chosen not to pursue LEED certification and all the paperwork and documentation involved.

"It is a lot of extra work," Gronen says of both LEED certification and green-ing older buildings. "But I like the sense of adventure and bringing old buildings back to life. It's very fulfilling to see something old made new again."

Will Hoyer is a regular contributor to Radish magazine.

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Megadose?

When it comes to vitamins C and D, RDA is key

By Laura Anderson Shaw

Here we are again: the time of year when colder weather is driving us to spend more and more time indoors, and friendliness isn't the only thing we're picking up when we shake someone's hand. Many people turn to supplements such as vitamins C and D to help their immune systems up the ante. But like many things, these vitamins included, more isn't always better.

"Many people, during the winter seasons, start increasing their supplementation of vitamin C in hopes of staying well," says Jeni Tackett, a UnityPoint Health — Trinity dietitian. However, she says, studies have shown that taking more than the daily recommendation of 65 to 90 milligrams does not help ward off colds. That's "sort of a myth that's been spread," she says.

Karen Schultz, a pharmacist at Genesis Medical Center East, in Davenport, says in an email that taking vitamin C supplements regularly and not just at the beginning of a cold produces only a small reduction in the duration of a cold, about one day.

Tackett says that people "definitely want to get the basic," recommended amount, but "going beyond that isn't beneficial."

And hitting that 65 to 90 milligrams of vitamin C a day isn't difficult. "A cup of strawberries gives you about 165 (milligrams)," Tackett says. "You can easily get it (the daily recommendation) from your diet" without needing a supplement.

The two say taking vitamin C in supplement form in recommended amounts is safe for most people, but Tackett says she prefers vitamin intake through diet. "I think it's important to get your nutrition, your vitamins and minerals from foods, if you can," she says.

Schultz agrees. "Taking in vitamin C through diet is ideal," she says.

If you do choose a vitamin C supplement or multivitamin, Tackett says to be sure it only includes 100 percent or less of the daily recommended values.

Eat your vitamins!

Foods that are sources of vitamin C: red bell peppers, broccoli, oranges, grapefruit, strawberries, kiwi

Foods that are sources of vitamin D: fatty fish, such as salmon, mackerel and trout; eggs

Sources: Jeni Tackett, mayoclinic.org and heart.org

Too much vitamin C, such as 2,000 milligrams, or 2 grams, or more, Schultz says, can lead to nausea, diarrhea and kidney stones.

Getting enough vitamin D also can be a concern for some, especially given the bone chilling, snow-covered Midwestern winters. Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to depression, heart disease and bone health, Tackett says, and because "a lot of us kind of hibernate in the winter," we may run the risk of not producing an adequate amount of vitamin D.

But don't grab for a bottle of supplements to catch up just yet.

"I do not recommend megadosing on vitamin D unless your vitamin D level has been tested and your physician prescribes vitamin D," Tackett says. It's "harmful if you just go out and take random amounts of vitamin D."

Unlike vitamin C, vitamin D builds up in the body, Tackett says, adding that too much vitamin D can cause bones to break down and more.

Tackett says it is recommended that people younger than age 70 get 600 international units of vitamin D a day, or 800 international units for those older than 70. That essentially translates into "10 minutes in the sun without sunscreen," Tackett says.

Vitamin D intake also can be supplemented with fortified foods, Tackett says, such as cows milk, some soy milks, some yogurts, salmon, and eggs.

But "really, we're supposed to get it from sun exposure," she says. "Going outside even when it's cold but sunny can help."

She says people are so often warned of the dangers of skin cancer that they put sunscreen on before doing anything outside. While that is a valid concern, it could be why many people have very low levels of vitamin D, Tackett says.

Before you take any supplements, talk to your doctor, advises the Mayo Clinic website: "There may be ways to modify your diet to get the vitamins you need without taking a vitamin supplement."

Laura Anderson Shaw is a writer on staff with Radish.



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Dr. Rebecca Bravard is a chiropractic physician and the owner and operator of Quad City Spine Clinic (QCSC) in Moline, Illinois. Dr. Bravard chose chiropractic as a second career. After serving in the Army for twelve years as a combat medic and Black Hawk helicopter crew chief, she herself had debilitating back pain and foot pain. After trying the medical model for a long period of time, her condition progressively getting worse, out of desperation she tried chiropractic and had immediate results on her first visit. She instantly knew this was her calling, and six month later she moved to Davenport, IA to begin her prerequisites for Palmer College of Chiropractic in 2001.

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Work out right

When it comes to exercise, success is in the mix

By Laura Anderson Shaw

Making time for fitness can be frustrating even for those who are regularly active, but keeping up with our daily activities depends on it, Radish region experts say.

Whether you're terrified to lace up your tennis shoes, or you're ready to throw in the towel with your current exercise schedule, don't fret — keeping in shape doesn't have to be difficult, just break it down, and then break a sweat.

Cardio: 30 minutes, daily

Aaron Washington, a personal trainer at Gold's Gym, Bettendorf, and a yoga instructor at One Tree Hot Yoga, Davenport, says 30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise a day is typically recommended for our health. This can include any aerobic activity “that increases your heart rate for a specific amount of time,” he says.

Such aerobic exercises can include running, jogging, swimming, cycling or walking, says Jamie Shoemaker, a personal trainer at Two Rivers YMCA in Moline.

As part of her own personal exercise routine, Shoemaker says she has been doing a lot of “track work,” which includes sprinting and running up and down bleachers. Taking an “aerobic approach” is “very important for our cardiovascular health,” she says.

Working interval training into your routine is “the fastest way to improve your cardiovascular fitness,” Washington says. Do this by doing an activity such as jogging or walking rapidly for a short period of time, then slower for a short period of time, and repeat.

Strength training: Twice a week

Shoemaker says adding strength training into your fitness mix also is important.

While lifting heavier weights can increase your overall fitness, keep in mind that it isn't necessarily



Personal trainer Jamie Shoemaker lifts weights at the Two Rivers YMCA. (Photo by Todd Mizener / Radish)

important for strength training, Washington says.

Generally, Washington says you should incorporate strength training into your fitness routine at least twice a week. If you choose to do so by lifting weights, Washington says to “remember everyone starts somewhere.”

Currently, Shoemaker says that weight lifting is probably her favorite exercise. Washington says that until you can control the pace of the weight you are lifting as you lower and raise it, “do not increase the weight or you risk injury,” he says.

If you feel like you are a “complete novice” when it comes to weights and strength training, Washington says, “it is better to start with body-weight exercises, including push-ups, planks, pull-ups and standing squats.”

Remember: Breathe, stretch

Washington suggests taking your time. He says that it takes weeks to break habits, and even longer to establish routines, so “take your time and listen to your body, because you are the only (one who) feels what's happening.”

To get started, Shoemaker suggests trying new fitness classes, or visiting your local YMCA or other gym for help in finding a jumping-off point.

Washington says that it's important to keep tabs on your body while you exercise, maintain good posture and watch your breath. “Consider your breathing the most important part of your overall fitness,” Washington says.

“Breathing effectively by inhaling (during) the ‘action’ of the exercise and exhaling on the ‘execution’ provides your body with the necessary gas exchange to increase energy and provide muscle stimulation during an exercise,” he says. For instance, when doing push-ups, inhale while you dip toward the ground, exhale when you push back up.

Stretching your muscles and working on your flexibility are also important for overall fitness. Washington says that flexibility is the range of motion, or ROM, around your joints. “Having good ROM helps prevent injury and provides lengthening of the muscles,” he says.

“It's never too late to start feeling better about your health and well being,” Washington says, “but take the time to set plausible goals over a period of time and find exercises and activities that challenge your limits without putting you at risk for injury or health issues.”

Laura Anderson Shaw is a writer on staff with Radish.



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A clean drink

Choose the water filter that is right for you

By Jeff Dick

Drinking water straight from the tap isn't everyone's cup of H₂O. For folks turned off by the expense and inconvenience of bottled water — to say nothing of the energy costs and landfill space represented by all those bottles — filtered water offers the best option. It often is recommended for pregnant women, young children and anyone with a compromised immune system.

Why? Water filters remove lead, arsenic, nitrates and other contaminants not completely eliminated by water-supplier purification. It also eliminates, in the case of copper leaching from corroding pipes, toxins introduced en route to the home.

There are several types of water filters, mostly falling into the “point of use” category, such as pitcher filters and faucet attachments. According to ConsumerSearch.com, an aggregator of product reviews from online sources and print publications, the best point-of-use filters include the following models.

Relatively inexpensive, pitcher filters are a popular option, but some models can take 10 minutes to sift water through their activated charcoal filter. Not so the **Clear2O Water Filtration Pitcher** (\$25), which relies on water pressure from a faucet-attached hose to force water through the filter. The Clear2O gets high marks for filtering out lead and organic compounds, plus it holds nine cups, exceeding the capacity of many other pitchers. The unit carries the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval.

Despite a poky flow rate — just over a half-gallon per minute — the **Culligan Faucet Filter FM-15A** (\$25) installs easily and is convenient to use. This unit has an auto-switch that turns the filter off when water flow stops. And it offers a long filter life with low replacement costs, excellent durability, and a two-year warranty.

The **Brita Basic Faucet Filtration System** (\$19) has a bit faster flow rate yet still provides effective filtering. Replacement filters cost about the same as the Culligan filters (\$12) but last for only 100 gallons, making the Culligan a better overall value.

The **Whirlpool Reverse Osmosis Filtration System WHER25** puts water through two activated charcoal filters and a semi-permeable membrane that removes 90 percent of more than two dozen dissolved contaminants and 95 percent of chlorine, producing water comparable to the best bottled brands.

Because reverse osmosis flushes away contaminants, the process creates three gallons of waste water for each gallon of drinking water, driving up water bills for municipal-water users. The dual filters need replacement twice a year and the membrane every 1-3 years for an annual cost of about \$100.

A few tools and a modicum of plumbing skills are required to install the under-sink filter in order to avoid leaks. Instructional videos and an owner's manual are helpful; however, customer service comes up short, according to a consensus of user postings.



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A less pricey alternative is the **3M Filtrete Under-Sink Advanced Water Filtration System** (\$37), which, besides reducing chlorine and odors, is certified to reduce microbial cysts like cryptosporidium.

In contrast to point-of-use filters, used primarily for drinking water, point-of-entry systems usually are installed in a basement or first-floor utility area and filter a whole household's water supply, allowing consumers to bathe and launder in filtered water. Sounds luxurious, but for homeowners dealing with rust or sediment in their water supply, such filters can be a big help. However, a supplemental point-of-use filter still would be needed for drinking purposes to take care of microbial contaminants.

To verify the claims of water-filter manufacturers and the features of a given model, check with an independent tester like the Water Quality Association. And watch for warranties of at least a year, or preferably two, for filters that require installation.

For more information, check out the July 2012 issue of Consumer Reports, which analyzes 47 filters in five categories, and “Home Water Treatment Devices,” an online article by the former National Sanitation Foundation (now NSF International) at NSF.org.

Jeff Dick regularly writes about consumer issues for Radish.



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eating well

Reel food

Recent films provide plenty to chew on

By Jeff Dick

In the month celebrating Thanksgiving, it seems only appropriate to consider the messages served up by films that take a look at food in America — from how we meet the needs of the hungry to the nutritional value of what we eat. Thoughtful and often eye-opening, these films have plenty to say.

Finding food for everyone at the 'Table'

"A Place at the Table" is a recent documentary about hunger in America made even more relevant because of protracted congressional wrangling over a new farm bill.

Fifty million Americans, including one in four children, aren't sure where their next meal is coming from. Due in major part to lingering damage from the Great Recession, those numbers have not abated. "Table" puts human faces — including a single mom and two grade-school kids — on cold data. And the film puts the lie to popular beliefs about the problem of "food insecurity" in a country blessed with bountiful crops.

The producers of "Table," who were responsible for "Food, Inc." a few years ago, would like this film to serve as a catalyst, too. And they have mounted a pretty persuasive case, offering facts and figures, as well as strong arguments from the likes of "Stuffed and Starved" author Raj Patel, "Top Chef" co-host Tom Colicchio, as well as a nutritionist, a politician, and others. Actor Jeff Bridges, founder of the End Hunger Now Network, also makes a passionate, if hyperbolic, plea for his longtime cause.

The current state of malnourishment is more a matter of access to healthful food and, even more importantly, its affordability. This dilemma helps explain a glaring paradox: the incidence of obesity among the currently malnourished. Because processed food is generally less expensive than fresh fruit and vegetables, diets favoring macaroni and cheese, hamburger-based dishes, and assorted canned and

frozen dinners are favored by cash-strapped consumers. While processed foods have declined in price by 40 percent since 1980, fresh produce has gone up by about the same amount.

Since kids learn better when they're not distracted by hunger pangs, "Table" advocates for a realignment of priorities, putting subsidized school meals ahead of agri-business subsidies that promote corn and wheat production that ends up in high-fructose corn syrup and junk food.

When the film weighs in on the reasons why the poor and lower middle class struggle to put decent food on the table — wage fairness, big-business lobbying, etc. — it may well cause indigestion for viewers with a distaste for its politics. But "Table" deserves thanks for putting a simmering issue on the front burner.

'Hungry' for more

Adapted from the book of the same title, the recent "Hungry for Change" is a sequel, of sorts, to "Food Matters" (2008), offering a buffet of self-styled health experts as well as diet and nutrition scribes, including David Vitalis, Jon Gabriel, Christiane Northrup and others. The failure of diet plans, the misleading term "fat-free," the addictive nature of junk food, identifying healthy foods and other topics provide plenty of fodder.

Unfortunately, nutritionists-cum-filmmakers James Colquhoun and Laurentine ten Bosch get into left-field corporate conspiracy theorizing that detracts from their otherwise solid information. Just as with their film "Food Matters," which beat the drum too loudly for mega-doses of vitamins as part of a nutrition therapy to cure cancer, heart disease, arthritis and more, take the far-reaching advice in this film with a grain of salt.

Jeff Dick is a regular Radish contributor. "A Place at the Table" and "Hungry for Change" are available from local libraries, Netflix and popular streaming services.



Second helpings

Have an appetite for more? A growing number of short films about food are available online. These digital shorts last only a few minutes but will give you plenty to chew on all day.

- "Planning for a Sustainable Local Food System" highlights the local food movement in northern Illinois: youtu.be/fbTxNkVdM38.
- "How to Feed the World" provides a global view of hunger and sustainable eating: vimeo.com/8812686.
- "Fast Food" gives a quick look at fast food statistics: youtu.be/tyVFGpg17hw.
- "The Hidden Cost of Hamburgers" details the costs of conventionally-raised beef: youtu.be/ut3URdEzIKQ.
- "Waste" explores the costs to consumers and the environment of food waste: youtu.be/VaouOWx3Bmo.

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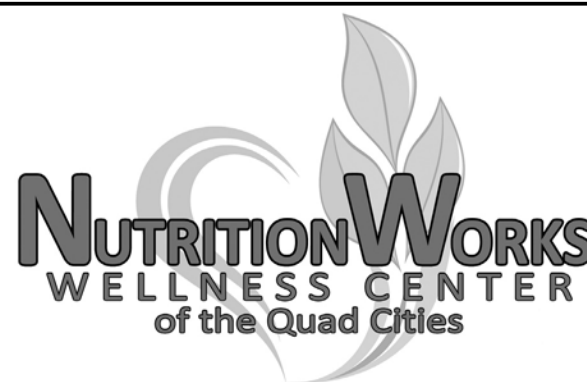
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Gauthier points to a bit of graffiti scrawled on the handrail. “The world is its own magic.”



Continued from page 12

species in a short time,” he says. “That’s comforting to me. Biodiversity is down worldwide, so to know it’s not one species of bird, it’s a community out there that is more complex than it is simple, that is a good thing.”



Kristin Quinn, artist.

Go slow, take it all in

Kristin Quinn, a painter and art instructor at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, approaches me briskly from the other end of the parking lot, her arm outstretched. She has brought along two pairs of binoculars, one for each of us, and has already been walking in the other side of the park. We’ve got our work cut out for us, she explains, enthusiastically.

“It’s harder to spot birds now than in the spring. Because they aren’t mating, they aren’t singing. They aren’t in their bright plumage,” she says. “It’s a real detective time of year.”

And it’s true, as we head into the woods very few bird calls are audible. Instead, we hear the rattle and clang of machinery at a quarry across the river, which only seems to grow louder as we descend the bluffs. We see a few birds as we follow the path, but not many. Some vireos. A lone cormorant flying upriver. A rather drab cardinal.

Quinn, who describes herself as a “wannabe birder,” is drawn to the pastime because “I really like a puzzle. I love the idea of patterns and what’s coming through,” she says, sweeping her hand toward the trees. “It’s the hunt. It’s like painting. You never quite know what is going to emerge.”

The practice, she says, has had a big impact on her work, and not just because birds often appear in her paintings. “It helped me create a layered space, looking through a layered space to find a bird,” she explains. “Even the sounds, far and near, are layered.”

I think about this, and about the tangle of branches the birds must navigate, as the trail curves back around and brings us alongside the tops of the trees. Only a few minutes ago, we had been walking among their trunks, silent and stately. But up here, there is a sudden burst of chirping and fluttering nearby: warblers, chickadees, wrens.

“Oh, this always happens!” Quinn exclaims. “Always when you are about to leave you see something. My friend and I have this trick where we jingle our keys and say, ‘Leaving!’ — just to see what comes out.”

The challenge for painters is to take something two-dimensional and make it three-dimensional, she says. This is one of the reasons she loves to take her students to outdoor spaces like Vander Veer Park in Davenport. How do you get that depth? How do you suggest water and wind? Figuring it out can be a little overwhelming for students, initially.

Her best advice? It works for art students and hiking enthusiasts alike. “Go slow,” she says, and allow yourself to take in the sensory-rich environment.

Sarah J. Gardner is the editor of Radish magazine. Visit radishmagazine.com to see video, hear additional comments from Gauthier, Muir and Quinn, and look at more photos taken during these walks.

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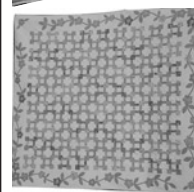
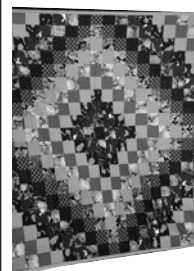
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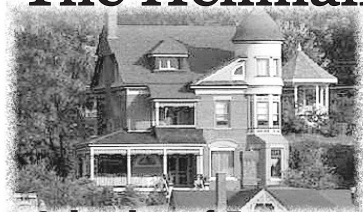
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Bed & Breakfasts Innkeepers of Galena presents a Holiday House Tour of some of the finest Galena B&Bs. (Tickets \$10.00 for admittance to all the participating B&B's) After the event, enjoy Night of the Luminaria in downtown Galena. On this magical night, you see over 5,000 candle-lit luminaries on streets, steps and sidewalks.

Saturday, December 7th

Taste of Christmas Progressive Dinner

Enjoy an evening of appetizers, salad, main entree, and dessert at Best of Galena Innkeepers homes. Celebrate the Season with Festive Christmas theme each innkeeper as they have decorated their homes for the Holiday Season. (Seating for this popular dinner is limited, make reservations early. Ticket price is \$45.00/person)

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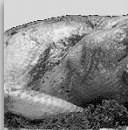

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food for thought

Comfort food

Connecting with a lost loved one through recipes

By Jane Carlson

We all know that eating food is a form of comfort. Blogging about it can be, too, as I learned after my mother-in-law, Marilyn, died in 2011.

Marilyn's death was swift and shocking. After a mastectomy in 2010, she was declared cancer-free at a check-up in the spring of 2011. Then, just a few months later, she got some devastating news. Not only had her cancer returned, but it already had spread to her lungs, liver, adrenal glands and brain. She passed away just nine days after the second diagnosis, on the morning of her 57th birthday.

In those last days of her life, and the days that followed, I stood in her kitchen accepting from neighbors and friends Tupperware and Crock-Pots of edible comfort, wholly Midwestern concoctions like "Pink Lemonade Salad" and "Porcupine Meatballs."

I discovered many of the same culinary gems in Marilyn's recipe boxes, which overflowed with the handwritten index cards and frayed magazine clippings she collected over the course of her 38-year marriage.

There, in old-fashioned handwriting on the cocoa-spattered card labeled "Chocolate Upside Down Cake," was the story of Marilyn's relationship with her maternal grandmother, from whom Marilyn inherited her love of cooking.

There were also the stories of feeding a family of four — herself, her husband and their two sons — on a tight budget. Stories of weird food trends of the 1980s. Stories of special occasions. And stories of days when recipes were traded on index cards in church basements and not on Facebook timelines and Pinterest boards.

Reading through those recipes, I knew I had to start making them. It would be a way to pay tribute to Marilyn, a way to fill her absence with some kind of comfort, and a way for me to continue getting to know my mother-in-law after she was gone.

Thus, a few months after Marilyn died, my blog "Sweetened and Condensed" was born. I scanned her recipe cards, documented the cooking process with photographs and text, and shared the finished products with family and friends. It was good therapy. And despite my state of grief, it was also good fun.

With Marilyn's vintage recipes as my guide, I did things in the kitchen that were far outside my repertoire. I baked bread in tin cans. I discovered Milnot. I made dessert bars using baby food and brownies using an entire can of Hershey's syrup. I conquered Jell-O molds.

For Thanksgiving, I braved her pumpkin torte. Come December, I was doing my best to replicate her impressive holiday baking routine, including her caramel bars and peanut butter goodies. On what would have been her 39th wedding anniversary, I made meatloaf from a recipe on a handwritten

card given to Marilyn by her mother upon returning from her honeymoon in Galena, Ill., in 1973.

Along the way, I told the stories of Marilyn's life — the things I already knew and the things I discovered by looking through this unique window into her life. I learned that food is comfort because it is memory.

Anyone who has lost a loved one knows the year of "firsts without" is rough — the first Thanksgiving without the loved one, the first Christmas, birthday, anniversary, and on and on. The blog helped me, and others, I think, get through that first year without Marilyn.

Exploring all those recipes and writing about them on the blog helped me figure out how to keep Marilyn's traditions alive. It made people laugh, cry and think about their own mothers' and grandmothers' recipes and stories, of how food connects us to each other even when we can no longer be together. It's a chronicle of a difficult time, written one recipe at a time, sweetened with good memories of a woman who will always be deeply missed.

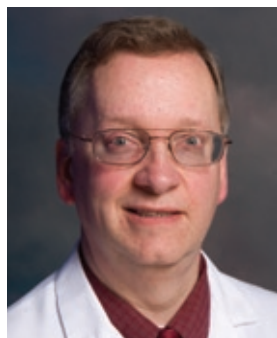
Jane Carlson is a frequent Radish contributor. You can read more about cooking projects using her mother-in-law's recipes on her blog at sweetenedandcondensed.com.



Marilyn Simpson and her recipe for Chocolate Upside Down Cake. (Submitted)

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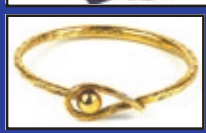
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