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# from the editor



Visitors to the Sky Tours zipline course in Dubuque, including editor Sarah J. Gardner, far right, prepare to ride the Hawk's Nest line. (Photo by Mike Bradley / Radish)

Every so often you have to do something that scares you. Eleanor Roosevelt suggested trying it once a day. I'm on a slightly more relaxed schedule. But when I get around to it, I'd like to think I go all in — as happened last month, when I ventured up to Sky Tours in Dubuque twice to ride their zipline course for the article on page 10.

I haven't always found heights to be stomach-churning. In fact, quite the opposite. As a child I was always scrambling up trees and out onto roofs, and I worked weekends just out of college as a climbing instructor at a rock wall. I felt at home up high — so much so, a week after my mother's funeral, I woke up in the quiet of her house in Indiana and, though I was supposed to start paperwork for her estate, felt compelled to climb instead.

A little more than an hour later, I had driven to the shore of Lake Michigan, where I climbed the highest dune I could find, and once on top, up as high as I could go in a tree on the crown. I didn't come down for the rest of the day but sat instead in the thin, wind-tossed branches at the top looking over the blue expanse below.

I can't really explain that impulse entirely, except to say the most comforting place for me was as high as I could get above the earth my mother was no longer on — and for whatever reason, it worked. I had been shattered by the unexpected news of her death. I came down from the tree with a calm I hadn't felt since that phone call, and a sense of being back in my own mind. I returned to her home and began the paperwork.

It came at a price, though. The next time I went on a climb, I got a few feet off the ground and my stomach knotted. At first I was just confused. But then it happened again, and again, until finally I had to admit, though not exactly afraid of heights, I was no longer comfortable with them. The last time I tried a major climb, I made it to the top, but I had difficulty walking for three days after. I had succeeded only by pushing through a bad case of "jackhammer leg."

The thing about fears is that we can't think our way out of them. They only can be overcome by doing. I find it also helps to know you have a job to do, so I signed up for the article on ziplining. Can I say my stomach didn't lurch when the time came? No. But I remembered some good advice from my mother — "When looking down gets too hard, try looking up" — and with my eyes on the tree cover, I stepped from the zipline platform. It was a beautiful day.

— Sarah J. Gardner  
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## Radish

HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

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# the grapevine

## From our readers

**Out of fashion** (Sept. 2012): "What a great review and a thought provoker! Seven items in one year is impressive. I had heard about this book and will have to check it out now!"

— Ashley G., Palatine, Ill.

"Great article, Leslie ... I'll check out the websites ... you have me thinking."  
— Priscilla White Hull

**Artisan soaps 101** (Sept. 2012): "I have used soaps from Midnight Perfumery as well as J&J Honey, and both are magnificent! The feel and fragrance is unparalleled. And I love the fact that by purchasing their products I am supporting small business and free enterprise."

— Rachel, Milan, Ill.

**Hollow Maple Farms** (Sept. 2012): "A deep heartfelt thank you to Sarah, Jane and Paul for a great story and photos of our family and farm. Thank you for shedding some light on our little corner of the world!"

— Sean and Tracy Wright, Bennett, Iowa

"Thanks again for coming to First Friday on Seminary Street (in Galesburg) tonight. I do appreciate all the articles I've read in the Radish!"

— Rhonda Dyer Brady



Want more Radish? Thanks to Friends of Radish, you can find the magazine this month at the following events:

• **Palmer Chiropractic Clinics Community Open House and Health Seminars**, 1-7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 10, at Palmer Chiropractic Clinics,


1002 Perry St., Davenport, Iowa. For more information on this free event, visit [palmer.edu](http://palmer.edu).

• **Prairie Fire Bioneers Conference**, featuring keynote speaker Julia Butterfly Hill, Friday, Oct. 26 through Sunday, October 28, at the Knox College Ford Center for Fine Arts, Galesburg, Ill. For more information on this event, visit [knox.edu/bioneers](http://knox.edu/bioneers).

To discover more upcoming events of interest, see the events calendar at [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com).

## We need your nominations!

Know someone who is making a positive impact on local foods or agriculture, the environment or your community? Let us know about them! We are on the lookout for the next recipients of the Radish awards and you can help. Send an email to [editor@radishmagazine.com](mailto:editor@radishmagazine.com) with the words "Radish award nomination" in the subject line and tell us what your nominee is doing to promote healthy living from the ground up.



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1 large onion, chopped  
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2 teaspoons ground cumin  
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste  
1 16-ounce jar green salsa, green enchilada sauce or taco sauce  
1/4 cup water  
1 15-ounce can pinto or kidney beans, rinsed

**All you do:**  
Cook beef, bell pepper and onion in a large saucepan over medium heat, crumbling the meat with a wooden spoon, until the meat is browned, 8 to 10 minutes.  
Add garlic, chili powder, cumin and cayenne; cook until fragrant, about 15 seconds.  
Stir in salsa (or sauce) and water; bring to a simmer.  
Reduce heat to medium-low, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, 10 to 15 minutes.  
Stir in beans and cook until heated through, about 1 minute.  
**Source:** Adapted from EatingWell.com

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# healthy living from the ground up

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Tommy Lucas of Des Moines, Iowa, coasts through the canopy on a Sky Tours zipline in Dubuque. (Photo by Mike Bradley / Radish)

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## radishmagazine.com

Want to see more of our treetop adventure at Sky Tours? Lee Carroll of Ransomville, N.Y., who together with her pen-pal friend of more than 30 years, Lorene Anderson of LeClaire, Iowa, took the tour the day the Radish crew visited and kindly agreed to wear a video camera on her helmet. Get a bird's eye view of her experiences ziplining and hear more about their story at [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com).





healthy living

# Right brew for you

## Sorting through coffee labels and growing practices

By Leslie Klipsch

In a world where a grande no-fat-sugar-free-extra-hot-no-froth-with-whip-caramel latte is an actual drink order, it's hard to imagine that a cup of coffee could be any more complex. But factor in the origins of the coffee bean — with terms like fair trade, organic, direct trade, shade grown, carbon neutral, bird friendly, to name a few — and the search for a good cup of coffee leaves the conscientious quaffer with heaps of information to swallow.

As the most commonly traded commodity after crude oil, coffee has a big impact. For many people hoping to make sure that impact is positive, the fair trade certification has been a good place to start. It denotes support for farming families in the developing world through fair prices, community development and environmental stewardship.

However, not all fair-trade coffee is created equally. Becke Dawson, who sells fair-trade coffee beans at her downtown Davenport store, SiS International Fair Trade, is concerned with new labeling practices that might be misleading as a result of friction brewing within the fair-trade community.

At the end of 2011, Fair Trade USA withdrew from the global certification system led by Fair Trade International. Critics of the move worry that the more lax standards endorsed by Fair Trade USA may make it difficult for small, farmer-owned cooperatives to compete with corporate-sponsored plantations. The fair-trade community also is concerned that the Fair Trade USA standards provide an incentive to include only the minimum amount of fair-trade ingredients in a product, as companies will be allowed to use the Fair Trade USA label even if only a small portion of a product is from fair-trade sources.

It's a concern Dawson shares. "I am extremely sad to see a division

occur within the fair-trade movement. We have all worked hard to help bring awareness to the benefits of what fair trade means to the farmers and to the consumer. I want to see more fair-trade coffee become available, but not through the detriment of our small farmers," she says. She plans to continue to stock her store with fair-trade coffee produced by small farmers and certified by the International Fair Trade Federation.

Though the fair-trade label may be the most commonly recognized signifier of ethically sourced coffee, it's not the only standard for careful conservation of the land or fair wages for workers. Rozz-Tox, a Rock Island coffee house and music venue, has been serving coffee supplied by Chicago-based Intelligentsia since opening in April 2011. Intelligentsia coffee is direct trade, which is different in that direct trade coffee buyers have the freedom to stray from the market fair-trade price and pay growers more for premium quality coffee. Like

fair trade, direct trade ensures high-quality standards and a commitment by coffee growers to healthy environmental practices and sustainable social practices.

Rozz-Tox manager Benjamin Fauks says it's important to him to work with a supplier with a solid mission statement and admirable values. "I like that Intelligentsia works hand in hand with the people producing their coffees," Fauks says. "I like their ethics as far as helping the farmer, actually visiting the farms producing their coffee, getting dirty and knocking out the middle man. All of this really appeals to me." Intelligentsia supplies direct-trade coffee to a number of area coffee shops, including Davenport's Downtown Central Perk.

Organizational trust is key to direct trade. Because there is no outside organization enforcing standards, consumers must rely on company transparency. Intelligentsia, for example, builds this trust by sharing their



Photo by Mike Bradley / Radish



practices and priorities with customers. Customers are kept abreast of monthly visits to the farms from which Intelligentsia purchases coffee.

Owners of Bettendorf's Dunn Bros Coffee, Paula Martinez and Gina Bettini, went on one such coffee buying trip to Nicaragua earlier this year. After visiting several farms, touring facilities, talking with owners, watching the process from picking to drying, and tasting the coffee, the women purchased raw beans from a farm named Emerald Mountain to bring to the Quad-Cities to roast on-site.

"It begins with the farm," Martinez explains. "It's very important to us that the producer is avoiding herbicides and pesticides, not depleting its own resources and using harsh things that harm the environment, and treating workers well. Next, we taste the coffee. We want quality coffee, but even if your coffee is delicious, we want to see what's going on at your farm."

Dunn Bros doesn't often offer fair-trade certified coffee, which can be confusing for customers looking for that label. However, Martinez explains, in some ways the coffee roasted and served at Dunn Bros goes beyond the standards of the fair-trade label.

**'Even if your coffee is delicious, we want to see what's going on at your farm.'**

Similar to the direct-trade model, fair-trade standards are met, yet Dunn Bros is able to pay coffee producers more than the fair-trade market price. "If we think the coffee is worth \$4 per pound, that's what we'll pay — even if the same beans are \$2 per pound according to the fair-trade price," says Martinez.

In addition, Dunn Bros frequently partners with Rainforest Alliance, a certification that's main purpose is to teach growers how to protect their environment and the animals that live there.

When baristas explain the origin of the coffee, concerned customers are typically satisfied. Martinez says she gets a lot of comments, especially about their trip to Nicaragua. "Customers think it's great that we care, and that we've taken the extra steps," she says. "It's personal for us. It's a huge deal."

*Leslie Klipsch is a coffee lover and frequent Radish contributor.*

## Logos 101



**Fair Trade Certified:** Though this is the logo most people are familiar with, it is no longer being used due to the recent division between Fair Trade USA and Fair Trade International.



**Fair Trade USA:** Any group or company aligned with the new Fair Trade USA will have this logo attached to the product.



**International Fair Trade:** Corporations and groups who choose to stay within the original parameters of fair trade will display this symbol, which is used globally.



**Rainforest Alliance:** This logo symbolizes a commitment by coffee farmers to conserve biodiversity by promoting sustainability of natural resources.



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healthy living

# Astounding owls

## Night vision, silent flight — what can't these birds do?

By Laura Anderson Shaw

His large, yellow eyes looked like a full moon on a clear, autumn night. Perched on Wapsi River Environmental Education Center seasonal naturalist Aaron Askelson's hand, the great horned owl stood still. He looked adorable ... but a bit intimidating.

The great horned owl is one of nearly a dozen species of owls that pass through or live in the Radish region, said Askelson and Mike Granger, a naturalist at the center in Dixon, Iowa. The owl is kept at the center, along with an Eastern screech owl, as part of the center's educational programs.

As the large bird balanced itself on Askelson's hand, its giant talons gripped onto the leather glove. Askelson said owls are birds of prey with three "sharp" characteristics: sharp talons; sharp, hooked beaks; and sharp eyesight. Those talons are not just sharp — they're extremely powerful and used to crush its prey.

Owls' ears also are set in two places, one lower than the other. This helps to give them "incredible sense of hearing," Askelson said.

Even the owls' eyelids are made for hunting. As the great horned owl blinked its wide, yellow eyes, it exposed two sets of eyelids; its inner eyelid blinking shut slightly quicker than the outer. Askelson and Granger said the inner lid is translucent, and meant as protection for owls' eyes as they go swoop in for kills.

Although an owl's anatomy allows it to do some pretty amazing things, there are limits. A common myth, Askelson said, is that they can turn their heads completely around. While they can't make it the full 360 degrees, they can come fairly close — up to a staggering 270 degrees, Askelson said. It's all in the vertebrae. Askelson said most mammals — humans included — have seven vertebrae in the neck. But owls? "They have 11," he said.

With a slight twist of Askelson's hand, the great horned owl's wings spread and flapped. They were large, powerful, and nearly silent.

The front of its fluffy feathers were lined with



The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center's great horned owl. (Photos by John Greenwood / Radish)

tiny splits that made the feathers look like combs. This, Granger said, is a silencing mechanism, which definitely comes in handy when it's time to hunt. Granger said owls are "ambush hunters;" they perch on a branch, survey their prey, swoop down and snag it with their talons.

Owls' hunting practices are in part what earned them the nickname, "tiger of the sky," Askelson said, as they are "fierce hunters." Askelson and Granger said great horned owls tend to eat anything smaller than themselves, which include insects, birds, rabbits and skunks. The fact that they can carry about twice

their weight makes for quite a diverse menu.

Although they have many sharp instincts, owls have a poor sense of smell, Askelson said. This, however, probably helps when you're dining on skunk.

So what exactly makes owls good neighbors? Granger and Askelson suggest that it's all in their diet. With an owl hanging around your neighborhood, you can count on fewer rodents and fewer snakes. They also keep the crow population down, Granger said.

Great horned owls tend to be cavity-nesting forest dwellers, Granger said, and often take over abandoned hawk and crow nests.



As for other owls commonly found in the Radish region, Eastern screech owls tend to hang out in shrubbery during the daylight hours, but they also enjoy pine trees, which protect them from the wind and the elements, Granger said. They typically dine on birds, mice and insects such as grasshoppers.

Barred owls, named for the bar pattern on their wings, are found in forested areas and hunt small mammals, reptiles, amphibians and more. Like great horned owls, they tend to nest in tree cavities and in abandoned nests.

Want to spot an owl in the wild? JoAnn Whitmore, vice president of the Quad City Audubon Society, said many members hear these creatures in the early hours of the morning.

In the Quad-Cities area, Whitmore suggests visiting Duck Creek Park in Davenport, Crow Creek Park in Bettendorf, Wild Cat Den State Park in Muscatine, Camp Loud Thunder in Illinois City, and Black Hawk State Historic Site in Rock Island to catch a glimpse of one.

Folks may also spot barn owls in the area, but they are very rare, Whitmore said. These birds have heart-shaped faces, according to [illinoisraptorcenter.org](http://illinoisraptorcenter.org), and their calls sound more like hisses than “whos.” Whitmore said barn owls are scarce due to the lack of nesting areas.

In the winter time, Whitmore said to keep an eye out for the small, saw-wet owls and the white, snowy owls. For the Christmas counts, Whitmore said counters head outdoors around 5 a.m. and play owl calls. “If the owl answers, then they can identify it by the kind (of call),” she said.

She said if you are successful in calling owls — especially in the winter time — keep it short. Birds use a lot of energy in cold weather, and must conserve it to hunt and keep warm.

Whitmore said she has barred owls in her Moline neighborhood — even though she doesn’t live very closely to a wooded area. It “sounds like a couple of chimpanzees out there, (as they) chatter back and forth,” she said.

Sometimes, “it’s a spooky sound,” she said. “It’s just interesting.”

For those interested in doing their owl watching indoors, the Wapsi Center has a webcam set up in its great horned owl habitat. The camera takes a picture every five minutes, and you can view previous days’ footage, too. Visit [scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/webcams.php](http://scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/webcams.php) to access the images.

*Laura Anderson Shaw is a frequent Radish writer and a big fan of owls!*

## Whooo's there?

If you're listening for owls, here's an easy guide to distinguish whose “whoo” you're hearing:

- **Great horned owl:** Listen for a softer, “Whoo-whooping.” You might hear a pattern that sounds like, “Who’s awake? Me too.”
- **Barred owl:** These guys tend to sound like, “Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all?”
- **Screech owl:** Just as their name suggests, these owls make more of a screeching noise than a “who.” Wapsi River Environmental Education Center naturalist Mike Granger said the screeches sound almost like a horse, but are more of an “un-Earthly” tone that “makes the hair on the back of your neck stand up.”

— Source: Mike Granger,  
JoAnn Whitmore and  
[illinoisraptorcenter.org](http://illinoisraptorcenter.org)





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# High adventure

Dubuque zipline course offers a unique woodland outing



Tom Lucas, on an outing with his grandchildren, rides a zipline (above); guide Silas Langlois attaches a pulley to the cable (right). (Photos by Mike Bradley / Radish)

By Sarah J. Gardner

Ask Kevin Hougham what he likes about Sky Tours, the zipline operation he helped get off the ground — quite literally — at YMCA Union Park Camp in Dubuque, Iowa, and he doesn't hesitate a moment before explaining it's "that families do it together, and it's multigenerational."

Since Sky Tours opened to the public last year, Hougham says parents, grandparents, even the occasional great-grandparent, all have come to the course with their youngsters to zip through the treetops in the historic park. "We get a lot of families with teenagers, and the teenagers have fun, and the parents have fun with them, and they're in the woods for two hours together. ... As a YMCA, we just really appreciate the fact that it's one thing that families can do together and everyone has a good time."

That certainly seemed to be the case on the day I was one of nearly a dozen people taking the two-hour, seven-zipline outing offered by Sky Tours. For Gabby Lucas of Des Moines, who was there with her brother, Tommy, and her grandparents, Tom and Ruth Lucas of Dyersville, Iowa, the reason for taking the tour couldn't have been clearer. "We all like being in the woods," she explained. "This is a way to experience the woods from new heights."

There was no arguing that's what they were in for: The ziplines, which range in length from 300 feet to a whopping 800 feet long, are as high as 60 feet off the ground.

## Taking the plunge

After a brief orientation in one of the camp's former bunkhouses, we all were outfitted in "sit" harnesses (fitted around your hips and upper thighs to allow you to sit as you coast on the line) and helmets. Then we walked a short distance to the platform with our two affable guides, Dusty Collins and Silas Langlois.

As we walked, it struck me how much this was like any other stroll through the woods — the dappled light, the crunch of leaves under foot, the rhythmic chorus of insects. But then there was also the steady metallic clank of carabiners and pulleys hanging at our hips, an inescapable reminder that this hike would end at the top of a bluff. At which point, we'd jump off.

The fact that she was there to celebrate her birthday didn't prevent Lorene Anderson of LeClaire, Iowa, from having a few pre-flight jitters. "My heart was going boom-boom-boom. My legs were wobbling," she said as she described stepping onto the first platform.

Not to worry, assured Collins. "Putting on the harness is probably the hardest thing you'll do today — at least on the tour," he laughed. After he affixed the pulleys and carabiners to the zipline, it was just a matter of "running off, jumping off, walking off, whatever you like," and then gravity would do the work.



One by one we each stepped to the platform, got attached to the line, and took off — disappearing in a blink through the canopy of leaves. We could tell when someone arrived at the other side by the eruption of laughter and cheers heard across the gap in between.

The next two hours passed in a whirl. Over the course of the tour, we zipped over ruins from the park's earlier days as a resort. Our guides talked about the history of the grounds and pointed out notable landmarks, including spots where once stood a dancehall and trolley station.

On the fifth line, we all were issued small beanie animals and invited to drop them in a bucket as we zipped over it — anyone who succeeded would get a free T-shirt. But it was the seventh and final line that Hougham told me was the most popular, and it was easy to see why. Two ziplines are strung parallel to each other for this final run, allowing visitors to pair off and “race” to the other side.

## Once more, at night

I had so much fun on the first tour, I couldn't resist returning a second time two weeks later with a friend to try the course at night. On full-moon weekends, Sky Tours takes groups of a half-dozen people on the same course. A small button light is attached to your harness to make you visible to the guides, and a headlight is put on the helmet to use on the hikes between platforms, but for the most part you run the course in the dark.

“It feels faster in the dark — it isn't, but it feels that way,” said Hougham, describing the night tour as a “totally different experience.” He was right. I couldn't see the ground below as I zipped through the trees, so the sense of being high up was muted, but in its place there was a heightened sense of velocity. When I broke from the dark cover of the canopy into the moonlit space of the valley,



**It was just a matter of  
'running off, jumping  
off, walking off,  
whatever you like.'**

the experience caused me to catch my breath. So did the deer we spotted walking across the path, and the owl we heard hooting off in the trees.

Sky Tours offers outings at 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturdays and at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays through October. (Tours run daily during the summer months.) It costs \$75 to take the tour, \$65 for Iowa residents, and \$60 for members of any YMCA. “The money it makes goes to the Y, which is good for the community,” Hougham explained. In other words, the cost of your adventure supports family health programs in Dubuque — something to feel good about as you zoom through the canopy.

*Sarah J. Gardner is editor of Radish. For more information on Sky Tours, visit [skytourszipline.com](http://skytourszipline.com) or call (563) 484-4248.*

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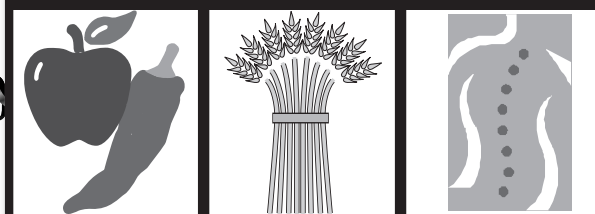
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eating well

# In verde veritas

## When life hands you green tomatoes, make salsa

By Sarah J. Gardner

It's a truth as old as gardening: there's no persuading a tomato. A green tomato, big or small, hanging heavy on the vine or in pert clusters, is simply going to ripen when it is going to ripen. Whether or not that fits your schedule is not the tomato's concern. And although in summer practicing patience as the tomatoes take their time feels meditative and virtuous, when October rolls around with its frosty promise that all things come to an end, gardeners get understandably twitchy.

Or I do, anyway. As someone with a community garden plot, I don't even have to play the first frost game of roulette, trying to guess when it will fall. My garden has a pre-ordained end date — this year, it is Oct. 19. As in years past, I will spend the weeks running up to then carefully harvesting and

storing back what remains in the garden. I'll blanch and freeze the leafy chard. I'll dig up the last of the potatoes and set them out to harden off. I'll hang the herbs to dry. And all the while, I'll have my eyes on all those unripe tomatoes.

"Please, please," I have thought many times. "Ripen before it's too late!" Neither pleading nor reasoning with the tomatoes makes a difference, though. They hang on the vine like serene bodhisattvas, free from any concern as to whether they end up in a compost bin or dinner dish. I imagine, from the perspective of the tomatoes, it makes little difference.

Far from being a small gardener's concern, this dilemma is universal. Even industrial-scale tomato operations have not found a way to hasten tomatoes to maturity. The most they can manage is to treat the underripe fruit with ethylene gas,

which turns the tomatoes red but does nothing for the flavor or texture — one of the reasons a grocery-store tomato bought in winter can never match the taste of a garden-raised tomato allowed to ripen in the sun.

As with most struggles with impatience, however, I have discovered the solution for this dilemma is to adjust my expectations. If I can't turn the tomatoes red, well, then, the way forward must be to eat them green. Nothing goes to waste that way — not the produce and not my energy. Instead of fretting about things I can't change, I can happily spoon salsa verde onto my tacos and into my soup and over baked potatoes. If only all the solutions to life's persistent obstacles could be so easily served with chips!

*Sarah J. Gardner is the editor of Radish.*



Todd Weivaert / Radish

### Green Tomato Salsa Verde

- |                                                          |                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 pounds firm, green tomatoes, cored and quartered       | 1 teaspoon sea salt            |
| 1 medium-sized yellow onion, peeled and coarsely chopped | ¼ teaspoon ground cumin        |
| 1 fresh green poblano pepper, seeded and quartered       | 1 tablespoon olive oil         |
| 3-4 green jalapeño chilies, quartered                    | 3 tablespoons water            |
| 3 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped                      | ½ teaspoon fresh lemon zest    |
|                                                          | 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice |
|                                                          | 1 teaspoon honey               |
|                                                          | ⅓ cup loosely-packed cilantro  |

Combine the green tomatoes, onion, chili peppers, garlic, salt, cumin, olive oil, and water in a stock pot. Bring to a boil and cook covered on a medium-low heat burner for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add more water only if needed to maintain the most minimal broth. Stir in remaining ingredients and simmer 5 minutes more. Taste the mixture and adjust the seasoning to taste by adding more lemon juice, honey, and/or salt.

Using an immersion blender or a food processor, pulse until the salsa reaches the desired consistency, chunky or smooth. Store salsa in the refrigerator or freezer until ready to serve. Makes approximately 1 quart.

— Recipe adapted from Barbara DeGroot, [moderncomfortfood.com](http://moderncomfortfood.com)





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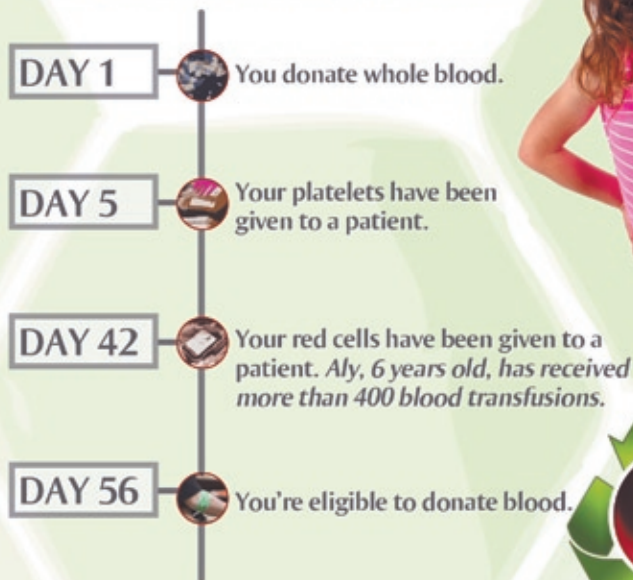
**9:30 – 10:15 a.m.:** Dawn Blocklinger, RD, LDN, a registered and licensed dietician will offer a variety of tips on healthy eating and preparing meals for those with special needs.

**10:30 a.m. – Noon:** Dr. Phillip Kent, neuro-psychologist, and Jerry Schroeder, Alzheimer's Association Program Specialist, will give an overview of dementia, the diagnosis process, its affect on behavior and coping skills followed by a question and answer period.

**12:30 – 1:15 p.m.:** David and Claudia Magill, Certified Instructors of the TM® technique, will present Transcendental Meditation®: A Non-Pharmaceutical Approach to Treating Stress and Anxiety.

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# Tone your bones

## Skeletal health begins with the right diet and exercise

By Chris Greene

So, the toe bone is connected to the foot bone, and the ankle bone is connected to the leg bone, but how is the health of all these bones connected to diet and exercise?

When “our diet lacks the key bone-building nutrients — calcium, magnesium, phosphorous and vitamin D,” we are at risk for losing bone density, says Neal Turner, certified fitness trainer and wellness consultant. “Additionally, if we don’t get enough physical activity, specifically weight-bearing exercises like strength training with weights, our body’s bone mass can deplete rapidly over a short period of time, in some cases a few short years.”

That has big ramifications. Our skeleton serves a number of functions in the body. In addition to providing a foundation for our muscles and protection for our organs, it’s also the place where hemoglobin is manufactured, explains Turner.

“All forms of safe and effective exercise can have benefits for the skeletal system, but some exercises happen to be more bone building than others,” he says. Beneficial weight-bearing exercises include using dumbbells, weight machines or barbells, as well as doing body-weight exercise training. Even walking can help, says Turner, “though we should make every effort to incorporate weight training in our own personal fitness plan.”

Not every form of movement falls into that safe and effective category, however. According to Turner, “movements we should avoid would be those that compromise the safe range of motion for our joints and those that are too high impact for our current skeletal condition.”

While most people know that calcium is needed to build healthy bones, the fact that the body cannot produce any calcium on its own is less well known. That means every bit of calcium you need, you need to eat. According to dietitian Jeni Tackett, “Good sources of calcium include dairy products — low fat or nonfat milk, cheese, and yogurt; dark green leafy vegetables — spinach and kale; also, calcium fortified foods — orange juice, cereal, bread, tofu, and nuts such as almonds.”

And although there has been some information that suggests that although milk contains lactic acid and will actually leach calcium from bones, Tackett says not to worry, the lactic acid in milk in no way depletes calcium.

You can boost your calcium intake by also consuming vitamin D, which helps with calcium absorption. Unfortunately, sources of vitamin D are less abundant than those of calcium. “Vitamin D is found in very few foods,” explains Tackett. “Food sources of vitamin D include fatty fish like tuna and salmon, liver, egg yolks and foods fortified in vitamin D, such as some dairy products, orange

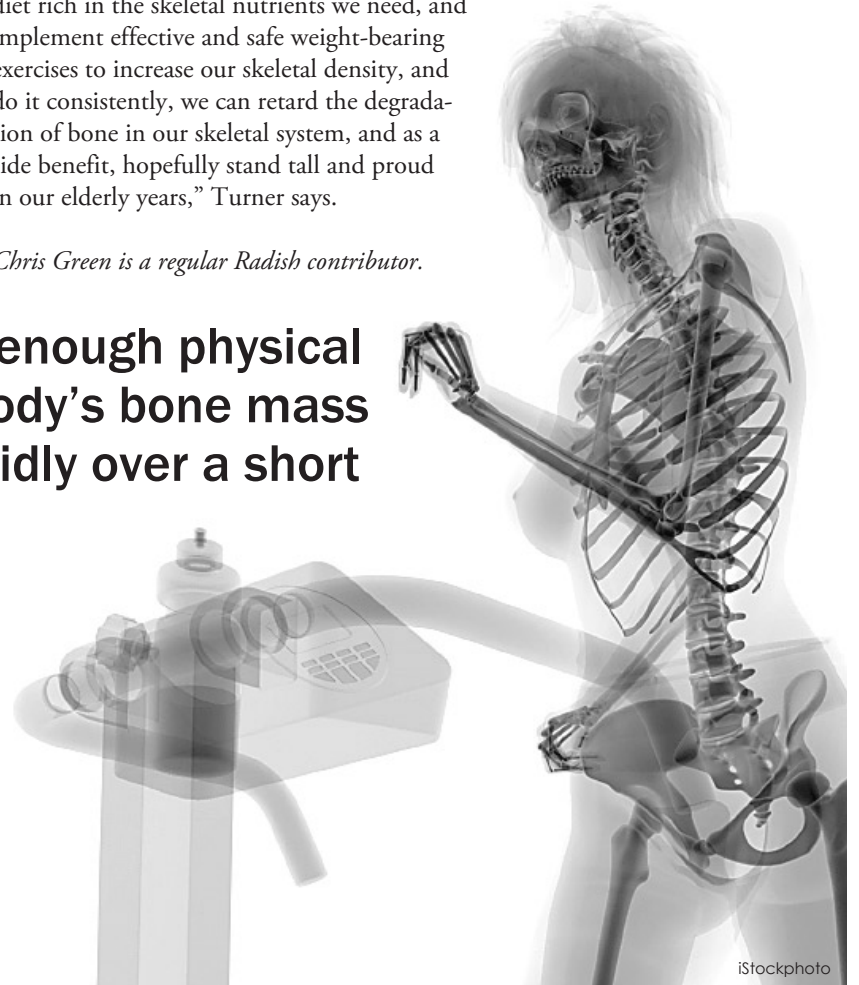
juice, soy milk and cereals.” Our bodies also make vitamin D from sun exposure, she notes.

Unfortunately, bone loss does not happen to both genders equally. “Women are typically at more of a risk when it comes to poor skeletal health, compared to men, specifically in regards to osteoporosis. A few reasons influence this trend. Women typically have smaller body frames with less bone mass. Among other factors, lower estrogen levels decrease calcium absorption. Heredity along with other dietary and exercise factors contribute to compromised skeletal health,” Turner explains.

But with the right diet and exercise, both women and men can create the perfect recipe for skeletal health. “If we focus on a diet rich in the skeletal nutrients we need, and implement effective and safe weight-bearing exercises to increase our skeletal density, and do it consistently, we can retard the degradation of bone in our skeletal system, and as a side benefit, hopefully stand tall and proud in our elderly years,” Turner says.

*Chris Green is a regular Radish contributor.*

**‘If we don’t get enough physical activity ... our body’s bone mass can deplete rapidly over a short period of time.’**





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gardens

# Antique blooms

## Heirloom bulbs bring color and variety to flower beds

By Sharon Wren

Chances are, if you're a gardener, you've encountered heirloom vegetables — either as the fanciful names bandied about by your fellow growers or in seed catalogs packed with the promise of flavor and variety. But the vegetable patch isn't the only place to find plants handed down through the generations, and for fans of old-fashioned flowers, fall is high season for planting heirloom bulbs.

"A lot of these flowers are just great garden plants: gorgeous, fragrant, unusual, adaptable, easy to grow and healthy. That's one of the reasons they're still around; if they last hundreds of years they have lots of oomph," says landscape historian Scott Kunst. "The new bulbs aren't time tested; they may have been great for a breeder in California, but when they get to Illinois, we find they can't handle the harsh heat. With heirloom bulbs they've weeded out the weak ones and left the most adaptable ones."

The fact that these bulbs have stayed around so long is just one reason why growers might consider heirloom bulbs. Another reason: They often are more fragrant, says Kunst. Old varieties of bulbs also tend to perennialize better, making it more likely they will bloom and multiply year after year. This is because, unlike modern strains of flower bulbs that are often bred for cut-flower operations or to be bloomed in a pot, heirloom bulbs are bred to fill out flower gardens.

A love of antique flowers is what led Kunst in 1993 to found Old House

Gardens, the only exclusively-heirloom mail-order source of bulbs in the U.S. Based in Ann Arbor, Mich., the company relies on small family farms scattered throughout 14 states, including Iowa and Illinois, to cultivate its bulbs. It's a practice that goes back to the earliest days of the company, when a limited budget for test gardens forced Kunst to get creative. A neighbor offered to let the company plant bulbs in his abandoned vegetable garden, and the first Old House Gardens microfarm was born.

The company continues to add "new old" plants and Kunst can't keep the excitement out of his voice when he talks about them. "We've got a new peony in the catalog called Frances Willard that was developed by the Brands, a big peony family in Minnesota. It has a strong Midwestern heritage (and is) named for a social activist in the early 20th century. She was a strong, inspiring woman. The peony is a beautiful, creamy white with white tones to it. By the time it matures, it's white but goes through pink and pearly white shades."

What began as three photocopied pages mailed to 500 people is now the Old House Gardens catalog packed with hundreds of bulbs dating back centuries. It's all part of the company's mission to research the history of bulbs, find varieties at risk of disappearing, and share them with gardeners across America.

*Sharon Wren is a frequent Radish contributor. To learn more about Old House Gardens, subscribe to their newsletter or get a catalog, visit [oldhousegardens.com](http://oldhousegardens.com).*



### Old-fashioned fall plantings

Tulips, daffodils, crocuses and hyacinths may be perennial favorites to plant in the fall, but in addition to the heirloom varieties of these common flowers, there is a wealth of other heirloom bulbs that can add color, diversity and a little history to flower beds. Here are just a few.

- **Winter aconite:** Dating back to 1578, these small yellow flowers bloom earlier than snowdrops and were called "Little Yellow Woolfess-bain" by Elizabethan growers.
- **Silver bells:** Brought to the U.S. by colonial settlers, these bulbs date back to 1629 in Holland and put out a profusion of sage colored blooms in late spring.
- **Siberian squill:** Originally cultivated in Holland in 1796, these shade-loving little blue flowers

From left, Mrs. Backhouse daffodils, Siberian squill and Grecian windflowers. (Submitted)

were at their peak popularity in turn-of-the-20th-century American gardens.

- **Snake's head fritillary:** Also known as the guinea-hen flower, these bulbs date back to 1572 and produce quirky flowers with checkered maroon and white petals.
- **Grecian windflower:** Dating back to 1854, these easy-to-grow bulbs produce a low-growing ground cover in a variety of colors including Old House Gardens's 'white splendor' variety.





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road food

# 'Honest food'

## Mount Vernon chef puts his philosophy on the plate

By Julie Barton

**M**att Steigerwald does not like to be defined. He is equal parts recalcitrant and easygoing, quiet and verbose, master and student. In his restaurants, his grimace comes as easily as his laugh, and his hands are equally adept at preparing pizza dough as they are at carving pork or harvesting honey. The one sure way Steigerwald can be defined? Hands down, he's a brilliant, innovative chef — one whose talents are on display daily at the Lincoln Café restaurant and the Lincoln Wine Bar in Mount Vernon, Iowa.

His Midwest adventure began in 2001, when Steigerwald moved with his then-girlfriend (now wife) from North Carolina to Iowa, where she had accepted a job teaching at Cornell College. A restaurant on the main street in Mount Vernon had just closed and was available for something new. Steigerwald filled that void in a myriad of ways, drawing on his previous experience cooking at and/or running restaurants in North Carolina.

"The basic idea of the cafe originally was to have a job making food that I enjoyed making and that would provide a paycheck," Steigerwald recalled. "That has evolved into promoting sustainable stuff and growing a food community in our part of the world."

Steigerwald's restaurants are both known for serving food that is sourced locally, and is organic whenever possible. He befriends local farmers and supports sustainability efforts in the area. He calls it "honest food." But what is honest food, exactly? Again, Steigerwald hedges.

"I try not to describe my food. I try to give examples of what we make," he explains. On any night at the restaurant, the specials board ranges from grass-fed New York strip steak to slow-poached monkfish to roasted pheasant with potato flauta. Or you could get a burger. Either way, the guests rave.

What inspires this range of plates? Steigerwald has a range of answers: shareable food, Japanese food, his family food, food that people think of as peasant food, the food of immigrants. He says inspiration comes from sitting with friends by the grill and from travel. He's inspired by high-end bar food, too.

In 2007, Steigerwald built upon the success of the cafe by opening the Lincoln Wine Bar up the street, which he expanded in 2012 to include a hand-built wood-fire oven from Italy used to bake a menu of four pizzas and two or three daily pizza specials. Steigerwald describes the offerings as "complicated

dough, carefully thought out pies." He loves this new addition to his small restaurant empire, and feels like it helps round out the customer experience.

"The perfect guest experience is to show up at the wine bar, have a pizza and some tuna belly, some wine, then go down to the cafe and be thoroughly surprised and excited by the thought put into the cafe experience: the downscale room ... the high end food. Go home ... spread the word ... and feel like it was your own," he says.

Interestingly, Steigerwald mentions two movies featuring chefs that he emulates: "How To Cook Your Life," about Zen cook Edward Espé Brown, and "I Like Killing Flies," about the famous Shopsyin's Restaurant in Greenwich Village. Steigerwald seems to have embraced the words of Shopsyin in his own restaurants: "Pick something, pursue with vigor, and it's the only way you can insert meaning into your life."

*Julie Barton is a regular Radish contributor. For more information on the Lincoln Café restaurant and the Lincoln Wine Bar, visit [foodisimportant.com](http://foodisimportant.com).*



Chef Matt Steigerwald in his restaurant kitchen with assistant Matt Melone, right, and a plate of fried shishito peppers with togarashi and grey salt, above. (Photos by Tommie Ouverson)





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# Food *frights*

Have a picky eater? So were our food writers, once

By Radish staff

If certain foods turn your table into the Thunderdome, your family is not alone. Picky eaters are pervasive. Take heart, though — as our writers demonstrate, even people who earn their bread penning praise for food once had a few mealtime hang-ups to outgrow. Learn what made the difference for them, and for expert advice on helping your picky eater, turn to page 30.





**Pickles.** They're warty. They're sour. They come floating in jars of liquid like science specimens. And they smell, well, *funky*. Is it any wonder that as a kid I couldn't abide pickles? Not only would I not eat them, I wouldn't eat anything that had touched them. The merest whiff of vinegar lingering on a bun earned a big "No."

**The turning point:** While reading a novel in which one of the characters, a chef, busied herself brining and fermenting foods, I was inspired to give pickles a second chance — and to make them myself, reasoning if I didn't like the flavor, I'd at least have a little fun concocting them. To everyone's surprise, I fell for pickles in a big way. Faster than you could say "wickedly delicious," I was licking my fingers over jars of bread and butter pickles, pickled green beans, pickled peaches — you name it, I pickled it. And then I wolfed it down. Now, pickles are among my favorite snacks (and favorite hobbies). I think both my home economics and English teachers can feel proud of this turn of events.

— Sarah J. Gardner

**Brussels sprouts.** During my childhood, vegetables were still being boiled to death and presented to wary children as soft, spongy, or stringy when they should have been crisp, dense and alive. The few times I was presented with Brussels sprouts, the dreaded tiny cabbages were army green with just enough slime on them to make piercing them with my fork impossible. Their texture was that of the inside of an eyeball. I imagined. Once, while trying earnestly to stab a Brussels sprout, it shot across the table toward my boyfriend's mother. She caught it in her hand before it hit her forehead. I wanted to die.

**The turning point:** In my early 30s, I was at a dinner party at the home of a dear friend of mine. She was cooking Brussels sprouts in butter. I had already eaten many new and strange things at her house, and trusted her tastes more than my own at that point. "I don't think I eat those," I commented. "Yes. You do. You love them," she replied. I reminded myself that it was a new millennium, and successfully stabbed my Brussels sprout with a fork on the first try. The tiny cabbage had its own little bright green attitude. It was nutty and buttery and not at all slimy. I love them dearly now, but when I cook them at home, I cut them in half first.

— Rachel Morey Flynn

**Tuna.** Have you noticed how we, as humans, associate specific tastes and smells with certain life moments? For years the mere thought, scent or texture of tuna fish made me recall a lively and vivid discussion of science that took place over lunch when I was a hyper-sensitive, perhaps overly-dramatic, pre-teen. I will spare you the details, but can tell you that though the discussion was oddly unrelated to what was on my plate, I did not finish my tuna fish salad sandwich on that particular day, nor did I allow the flaky fish to touch my lips for the next 10 years.

**The turning point:** It was actually a combination of other favorite flavors that led me back to the ubiquitous tuna fish. The red onion, black olive, Dijon mustard and pepperoncini — all mingling neatly with the offender, piled on a piece of lighted toasted onion walnut bread — that sat on my best friend's plate looked too intriguing not to taste. Redemption was savory, subtle and perfectly salted. By this time I was in my 20s and my unpalatable association was overcome. Today, I enjoy tuna raw, spicy, pan-seared, you name it ... perhaps making up for lost time.

— Leslie Klipsch

Left: Lilyan Powell stares down a Brussels sprout. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)

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# Second life

## ReStore finds new homes for used health equipment

By Leon Lagerstam and Laura Anderson Shaw

When her father passed away, Mary Slutz and her family couldn't figure out what to do with all of the medical equipment that was left behind. So it went to a landfill.

Now, families in similar situations have a better option. Medical goods such as used wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, hospital bed frames, bath benches, unopened prepacked supplies such as bandages and more can venture to new homes through the newly-opened Health & Home division of Habitat For Humanity's ReStore Quad Cities.

Co-manager Beth Laureijs says Habitat ReStore director Cindy Kuhn developed the idea for the health and home division after noticing an increase of donated walkers, canes and similar medical supplies.

Slutz, who also is a co-manager at the store, says Kuhn has a true passion for recycling everything she can. Health & Home "is in keeping with that passion," Slutz says. "She had wondered how much of this medical equipment got thrown away that could have been saved and recycled."

"Now, everyone benefits," she says. "People who need but can't find items can get them from us, and the people who donate these items will know they won't end up in a landfill, and can earn some tax credits."

Slutz says health care costs are rising and insurers are cutting back. "People needing this equipment are looking for ways to stretch their health care dollars," Slutz says. "At the same time, many in the community have equipment that is no longer needed, but is still in very good condition."

"It's a feel-good thing all the way around," Laureijs says.

Many items, too, such as the bath benches, also allow seniors to be safe and live longer in their own homes, Laureijs says.

Shoppers have been impressed with the store, Laureijs says, as they come in and look around. There has been a "very positive response," she says.

The co-managers say they have received very positive feedback from groups they have spoken to about the new store, too. "They see a real need for lower-priced medical items, and for used items to have a second life," Slutz says.

Slutz says that the new ReStore Health & Home division is not trying to compete with other durable goods manufacturers, sellers, agencies or churches that have their own loan closets. It just wants to be another source people can use to find medical supplies they need at low costs.

The ReStore Health & Home division has its own entrance and hours. Customers can enter from the west side of the ReStore building at 3629 Mississippi Ave., Suite B, Davenport. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Pick-ups also can be scheduled by calling (563) 391-4949.

Donations may be brought to the original ReStore division from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays; 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.



Beth Laureijs, Cindy Kuhn and Mary Slutz, at ReStore Health and Home. (Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

Wednesdays; and 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturdays. Donations are tax deductible.

Items must be in good, clean, working condition, Laureijs says. "If something comes in that, for even the slightest reason, we don't trust, we're not going to sell it."

Not accepted are broken, rusted or stained items, or those that are missing parts; oxygen meters, syringes or other items requiring a doctor's order; anything that needs calibrating, such as CPAP machines or electronic blood-pressure equipment; anything once inserted into a body or that carried bodily fluids, such as oxygen tubing, masks or catheters; glucose strips; and mattresses.

"We've carefully consulted with the Centers of Disease Prevention and Control," Slutz says, adding that one volunteer worker also completed a special electric-wheelchair-repair training program.

Profits from the Health & Home division go toward Habitat for Humanity, so not only are shoppers reusing items and getting good deals, Laureijs says, they're "supporting a great cause."

*Leon Lagerstam and Laura Anderson Shaw are reporters for The Dispatch and The Rock Island Argus. For more information about Habitat ReStore Quad Cities or the Health & Home division, visit [restoreqc.org](http://restoreqc.org).*





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handmade

# Leaf and twig

Easy craft projects transform common outdoor items

By Glorie Iaccarino

As colder weather approaches, many may be tempted to get cozy indoors, but maintaining an active outdoor presence is important and can be more fun with a little imagination.

Potential resources for art materials are right out the back door. Common outdoor items such as leaves, sticks and rocks can be used in a variety of ways to bring a bit of nature indoors and create homemade masterpieces. On your next walk or trip to the park, begin to gather items from nature that you and your family can use for memorable craft making. Spending time together as a family and searching for the items is half the fun.

*Glorie Iaccarino is the founder of the Eco Arts Council of the Quad Cities, which can be found online at [ecoartscouncilquadcities.blogspot.com](http://ecoartscouncilquadcities.blogspot.com). She makes her Radish debut this month. For an additional craft project to try, turn to resources on page 30.*

## Leaf Doodle Decorations

Multi-colored leaves  
Newspaper  
Construction paper

Variety of permanent markers  
Glue and/or Mod Podge adhesive  
Optional: Contact paper

As leaves change colors and blanket the ground, gather them to create artful masterpieces. First, choose to use leaves as is, or press and dry them between newspaper in between heavy books. Leaves should be intact and large enough to doodle on. Second, use colored or metallic permanent markers to draw doodles, symbols or words on the surface of the leaves. Third, glue the leaves to construction paper. Finally, coat with Mod Podge to seal and bring back the vibrant color of the leaves, as the drying process can cause a bit of fading. Optionally, you can also press the leaves between sheets of contact paper in order to create a sun catcher or a decorative placemat at a holiday dinner.



## Terrific Twig Vase

Ruler or measuring tape  
Recycled brown paper bag  
Paint  
Paintbrush  
Scissors  
Coffee can

Twigs (no thicker than your thumb)  
Pruning shears  
Hot glue gun  
Rubber bands  
Mod Podge adhesive  
Raffia or ribbon

Fallen sticks and twigs can be given new life by being assembled and transformed into a vase as a holiday centerpiece. First, cut a rectangular piece of recycled brown paper bag so that it will be slightly taller than the can and will cover it completely. Glue it to the outside of the can. Second, using a twig the same height of the paper as a guide, trim the rest of the sticks so that they are of uniform length. Remove any lateral branches or stubs. Third, when you have enough sticks to cover the can, glue them onto the paper by applying a line of glue from the top of the vase to the bottom and placing a twig on the glue. Align twigs side-by-side vertically around the entire outside of the can. Secure them in place with a strong, thick rubber band. You can keep the vase natural or coat it with paint and use Mod Podge for a sheen effect. Finally, tie a ribbon or raffia around the vase to finish your charming holder for garden flowers; or with extra sticks, decorate and paint them for a homemade stick bouquet to fill the vase for a longer-lasting alternative to cut fresh flowers.



Gary Krambeck / Radish



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handmade

# Bosom Buddies

## Caring hearts and hands knit breast prostheses

By Sarah Ford

When good deeds are happening, it doesn't take long for word to spread, especially when it concerns the compassionate and healing touch of the women of Bosom Buddies of the QC. The group of knitters meets weekly to craft breast prostheses, which they give to women who've had a mastectomy or other breast surgeries. Organizer Judy Brumbaugh, of East Moline, is finding that the project is taking on a "life of its own."

Her inspiration began in September 2011, when her sister-in-law Joan told her of her gift of a knitted breast prosthesis and how much she loved it. Brumbaugh found a pattern and began knitting with the hopes of bringing comfort to other women. Just two months later, she started a knitting group to make sure she could keep up with the demand she was already encountering.

Now the "pretty loosely woven" group of 15 women meet every Wednesday at the Edgewater Cafe at Trinity Medical Center in Moline, from 1:15 to 3:15 p.m. Each knitter provides his or her own supplies, and there are no minutes, dues or attendance records, just a welcoming atmosphere.

"These gals are so neat, so prolific, and so fun to be with — we leave our sessions wired and happy," says Brumbaugh with a smile.

Brumbaugh noted that the knitting circle is essentially a "gathering spot for the finished product," as the knitters work on their prostheses projects throughout the week to keep up with demand. At the circle, the stuffing is adjusted, fittings are completed, and their work is gifted to grateful women.

Barb Scott, one of two breast cancer survivors in the knitting group, feels blessed to share her skills to help other women. "As a survivor, I don't use the prostheses, but I know the emotions breast cancer survivors go through, and I know if anyone has something to help them feel normal, it's a miracle."

Scott says that the prostheses are great in the swimming pool, as they don't float like gel inserts often do. Since breast cancer survivors are encouraged to exercise regularly to boost their immune system, swimming, running or walking become more comfortable endeavors with prostheses. "It's life-altering for the person who's receiving them, and for the person who is giving them. I'm happy to be able to help women do what they love to do," says Scott.

The prostheses are lovingly made with soft baby yarn and polyester fiberfill, which makes them machine-washable, breathable and natural looking. They feel like a normal breast would, with the same softness as breast tissue. Comfort is key, as a size B knitted prosthesis weighs a mere 0.5 ounces, while a size B gel insert weighs 10 ounces.

Any woman interested in receiving a prosthesis is asked to show up at the Wednesday gathering with a bra for proper sizing and fitting. They'll have their own prosthesis within a week. All that's required is some feedback, so the group can create the most comfortable product.



Bosom Buddy Tove Cravens knits a prosthesis. (Photo by Mike Bradley / Radish)

"We don't know how many people we've reached with the prostheses," says Brumbaugh, adding that she's received requests from all over the nation, as well as Canada. Women in 18 states "for certain" have received the knitted prostheses, along with patterns, so the trend can begin in other states. "My husband supports my habit," she says, noting his enthusiasm to pay shipping costs.

Since demand continues to grow, Brumbaugh finds herself encouraging, consulting and nurturing other potential organizers at various sites to get their own group started. Brumbaugh has no interest in cornering the market, she just wants to make sure every breast cancer survivor has access to a free and comfortable product. "We'd rather help so everybody in need can have one."

The group's presence in the Quad-Cities, attending such events as health fairs or Relay for Life, or gathering referrals from oncology and mammography departments or Gilda's Club, has allowed for a lasting impact on many women in the area. And the group still hopes to grow in order to meet the needs of women, regardless of age, income or insurance coverage.

"We encourage knitters to come and spend time with us, and we'll get them rolling," Brumbaugh says.

*Sarah Ford is a regular Radish contributor. For more information, visit [BosomBuddiesoftheQC.com](http://BosomBuddiesoftheQC.com) or find the Bosom Buddies on Facebook.*



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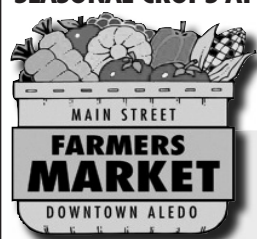
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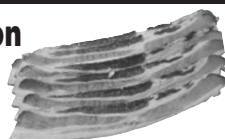


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## resources

### FOOD FRIGHTS

(Story on page 20)

#### Tips for picky eaters

The good news is that most kids manage to get enough nutrients throughout the course of a week despite food aversions at individual meals, according to children's health experts at the Mayo Clinic. The even better news is that there are steps you can take to reduce frustration and increase a child's willingness to try new foods.

- **Bring kids on board before hitting the table.** Many experts, including those at the Mayo Clinic, advise getting kids involved in mealtime preparation as a way to build their curiosity and excitement for trying new foods. Whether they help dig the foods out of the garden, select them from the produce bins at the store, or help wash, slice and prepare foods for meals, kids are more likely to try foods they've had a hand in. Food Network star Melissa d'Arabian goes one step further, assigning a different child each night the job of "presenting" the meal to the family before eating, just as a chef would — saying what's in it, where it comes from, how it was made. This takes the mystery out of the food and often inspires the child charged with promoting it to give it a shot, too.
- **Pressure doesn't work, but patience does.** Saying "no" repeatedly to a food reinforces negative associations with a food in a child's mind. The effects linger well past that meal. One psychology study conducted in 2002 found that nearly three out of four college students who remembered being pressured to eat a particular food as children continued to be unwilling to try that food even into their early adulthood. In contrast, children who were repeated presented with a food — and allowed to observe adults eating it without being pressured to do so themselves — ate more of the food themselves when they finally decided to try it.
- **Be smart about sweets.** Believe it or not, pairing a new food with something sweet like sweet-and-sour sauce or ketchup can be a smart strategy in helping kids overcome vegetable aversions. In a 2007 study in which children were presented six times with vegetables that had been sweetened, the children showed an increased preference for the unsweetened vegetable upon being given the plain version as a follow up and asked to rate its taste. The key is to gradually lessen the amount of sweetener until the child is able to eat the vegetable plain. And if you're thinking of using dessert at the end of a meal as a reward for eating a "yuck" food, you might want to consider. That simply reinforces the idea that dessert is the more desirable food, say Mayo Clinic health experts.

### LEAF AND TWIG

(Story on page 24)

#### Stone Place Holders

- Rocks or large pebbles
- Pencil
- Scratch paper
- Tempera and or acrylic paint (Tempera appears chalkier but washes off easily.)
- Paint brush
- Permanent marker
- Optional: Googly eyes, glitter and Mod Podge adhesive

Stones, round or flat, can be transformed into personalized place holders for guests at a holiday dinner. First, sketch designs that symbolize each guests' personality. Good ideas include your guests' favorite animal, colors or designs that represent their interests. Second, thoroughly wash and dry rocks. Apply your design in paint. Once it has dried, write your guests' names in permanent marker on the rock. Add embellishments and seal with Mod Podge. The stones and artistic styling will be as distinctive as the people they are created for — a perfect decoration and gift combo.



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food for thought

# Bag habits

## Ready to make a change? Begin with the bag

By Edward Humes

Whether they are the crinkly white sacks at the local supermarket, the clear sandwich bags in kids' lunch bags, the flimsy baglets that protect newspapers even on sunny days or the bags for the carrots and celery in the produce aisle, plastic bags are ubiquitous. Frozen ravioli, cotton balls, socks, potatoes, jelly beans, pinto beans — you could fill a book with the items that come to us encased in plastic bags.

The average American touches plastic bags multiple times a day, hundreds of bags a year, many thousands in a lifetime. Even when, as their makers argue, disposable bags serve a second purpose at home — as a trash bag or a pooper-scooper or to wrap a school project in on a wet day — most still end up in a landfill. Others find their way into storm drains, rivers, oceans. They are mostly not recycled despite decades of efforts.

Even their biodegradable counterparts rarely make it to a facility that can actually recycle them. Their environmental footprint and cost are greater than the simple expedient of a reusable bag. Plastic bags are, as Andy Keller, founder of ChicoBag, is quick to point out, a product with a useful life measured in hours and a waste life measured in centuries.

That said, plastic bags are a comparatively modest part of the waste stream. They are part of the marine pollution problem, but how much remains unclear. They take up room at landfills, but other packaging forms a bigger part of the 102 tons of trash each American sends to the landfill in his or her lifetime. Why, then, are so many cities making bags a priority? Why is Keller so passionate about his efforts to undermine single-use plastic bags and persuade others to give them up for good?

Because, Keller says, as a symbol, few parts of our waste stream are more potent and visible in our daily lives. And few parts of the 102-ton legacy are easier for an ordinary person to change.

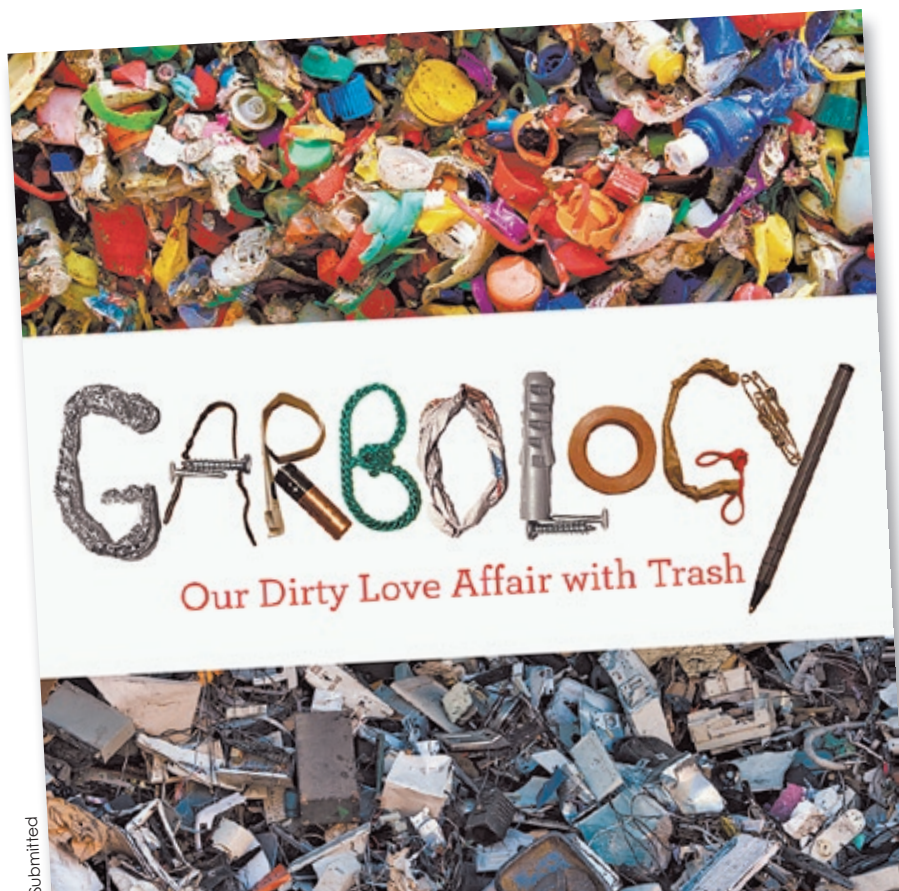
Keller believes that the single-use plastic bag habit “is the poster child for unnecessary waste.” Breaking the habit, he says, is the first step in moving our homes, our families and our communities into less wasteful, more reusable habits and consumer behavior. First, get rid of the bags, then move on to other disposables. At ChicoBag, he ditched paper towels next. Each employee was given a cloth towel with a hook to hang it on. It gets washed as often as necessary.

Keller next bought everybody a thermal container for drinks and a reusable clamshell for salads and sandwiches for casual meals and takeout at restaurants that usually serve on plastic, paper, foam or other single-use diningware. Restaurants that were willing to serve the zero-waste way got ChicoBag employees' business. Others that refused lost those customers, though the ChicoBag workers made it clear they'd happily return if the management reconsidered its position. When it dawned on restaurant owners that they were losing paying customers for no better

reason than habit and old thinking, that it was no harder to serve food without wasting paper and plastic — and, in fact, it saved packaging costs — several changed their minds.

These kinds of incremental changes add up, Keller says, altering the dynamic of the consumer culture, because each one gets easier than the last. According to the ChicoBag founder, the way to start that particular snowball rolling is with the plastic bag. “Bags are kind of like the gateway drug to all the plastics,” Keller says, “and if we can kick that habit, all the rest of our single-use habits will start to fall like dominoes.”

*Excerpted with permission from “Garbology: Our Dirty Love Affair with Trash,” by Edward Humes. Available from Avery, an imprint of Penguin focused on health, wellness, fitness, psychology and popular science. Copyright © 2012. Share your thoughts on waste and its solutions at the Garbology Facebook page. For more on this and other Avery titles, visit penguingroup.com.*





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