Radish

HEALTHY LIVING FR GROUND UP

High adventure

at Langwood Challenge Course

radishmagazine.com

SEPTEMBER 2014

Edible forests

Almond apple cake

Green Lane Farm

from the editor

Nora Schroder and Radish editor Sarah J. Gardner at Green Lane Farm. (Photo by John Greenwood / Radish)

Many years ago, my grandfather, a farmer, built himself a short table using some salvaged window frames. It was not much to look at — somewhat rickety but serviceable — and was kept in an outbuilding to use as a small work table. After my grandparents passed, my uncle considered throwing it away, but offered it instead to my mother. "You know your mom," he told me with a wink. "She'll love it because Grandpa made it." And sure enough, she did.

Later when I asked my mother about the appeal of the table, she said matter-of-factly, "Nothing gets wasted on a farm." In other words, my grandfather could have scrapped those window frames, but instead he found a way to extend their usefulness. It was, to Mom, one of the chief virtues of farm life.

This conversation came back to me on the day we visited Green Lane Farm to take pictures for the article on page 8. Nora and Alan Schroder showed us proudly around their vegetable plots and talked about their work. Every hour had a purpose — there were weeds to pull and beans to harvest, excess sweet corn to cut and freeze — and so did every object. Nora pointed to things Alan had built, including a greenhouse made from cattle panels, long rows of tomato cages constructed from concrete-reinforcing wire, and even a gorgeous pond made from a hot tub liner picked up down the road.

Farmers are among the original recyclers. This is true not just in that scrap pieces of wood and wire often are given second and third lives on a farm, but also in the way things are grown. As I was admiring the size and plenitude of the cabbages and squash at Green Lane Farm, Nora credited the chickens and goats they kept. Their manure is worked into the ground each spring, resulting in abundant vegetables, while the animals get to munch on scraps as plants are harvested. As if on cue, Alan tossed a bucket of corn leaves and silks to the goats, who happily devoured them.

When I think about the challenges we face going into the future, it is encouraging to consider that in many ways we already have the skills to meet them. Just as you can find examples of recycling on a farm, you don't have to look far to come across methods of energy conservation and resource management. Those same values and skills that grow our food also can grow solutions for the 21st-century.

— Sarah J. Gardner
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Radish uses soy-based ink and recycled content in its newsprint and is 100 percent recyclable.

the grapevine

From our readers

"Organic and sustainable agriculture, that used to mean natural and responsible growing practices. The meaning of both is now weak and diluted.

"We need to get back to 'wholistic' agriculture, whether we have acres of land or a small garden plot. We must realize that everything we do in our fields and gardens has a domino effect, whether it is good or bad.

"We must look at the whole picture and truly see what has been done, not only to the land, but also to our health. Look around you. Even in a forest it is not only trees that are growing but also fungi, bacteria, flowers, etc. We need to follow nature in our growing practices (and) to realize the symbiotic relationships if we are to grow healthy food and keep our 'dirt' healthy and producing vegetables, grain, hay, etc. We must start now, before it's too late, if we are to continue to feed not the world, but ourselves, and we must teach others to do the same. …

"We are all part of the whole and must always think about what reaction our action will cause. We must teach and encourage those wanting to go into farming or those who want to learn how to start a garden to think of the whole.

"Our food system is in trouble, and as growers and gardeners we can and we must do something about saving it!"

— Cordelia Kaylegian, Henderson, IL

Beg your pardon

In the article on Codfish Hollow in the August issue of Radish, Tiffany Biehl's brother Jared was incorrectly identified as Sean. We regret the error.

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:

• **Culinary Ride-Quad Cities,** 9 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 14, beginning at the Quad Cities Food Hub, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport. This 25-mile bicycle tour will feature local farms, foods and chefs, and will end with a porch party back at the QC Food Hub. For tickets and event details, visit culinaryride.com.

• **Wild Alaskan Salmon Bake,** 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 20, Sustainable Business Center, 2900 W. Main St., Galesburg. A community event celebrating this unique Midwest connection to sustainable fishing in Alaska, this event will feature food, music and live cooking demonstrations in the kitchen at En Season. For more information, visit sitkasalmonshares.com.

To discover more upcoming events of interest, see the events calendar on the Radish website, radishmagazine.com.

Like us on Facebook

Become a fan of Radish on Facebook and get updates on your favorite articles plus sneak peeks at issues before they hit the stands. Discuss the stories you like with other readers, suggest future articles and post upcoming events for your community group or nonprofit.

RIVER ACTION'S

taming of the SLOUGH™

9.13.14

The Quad Cities' most exciting adventure race is back! Saturday, September 13th at Empire Park/Hampton Park in East Moline & Hampton, IL

bike

8.3 mile ride, including a challenging 4.5 mile mountain bike course with 400 feet of elevation change through Illiniwek Forest Preserve.

paddle

3.8 mile loop around Campbell's Island in the Mississippi River and Campbell's Island Slough

run

2 mile cross-country run on the paved Great River Trail and off-road trails through McNeal's Reserve

Tune Up For Taming

Thursdays - August 21st & 28th, September 4th
5:00-7:00 p.m.

Train and get familiar with the courses! River Action will provide canoes and kayaks free-of-charge. Anyone can participate, no registration necessary. Registered racers may reserve boats in advance at RiverAction.org or by calling 563-322-2969!

Post-race Party!

All racers are invited to a post-race party and awards ceremony with pizza, refreshments, and locally brewed craft beer, courtesy of Front Street Brewery. The party is free to all register racers.

Register online at RiverAction.org/Taming or call (563) 322-2969

Corporate Challenge
This special three-employee relay pits local businesses against each other for a travelling trophy!

3 Classes:
Novice
Sport
Racing

3 Ways to Compete!
Individually
Two-Person Team
Three-Person Relay

RIVERACTION

healthy living from the ground up

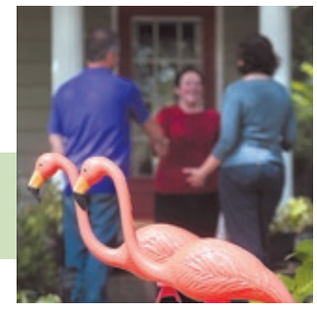
features

in every issue

on the cover

Ayana Eaton, 12, is assisted by Brittney Tiller as she prepares to ride the zipline at the Langwood Challenge Course. (Photo by Leah Klafczynski / Radish)

departments



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Last year organizers of the annual Taming of the Slough, River Action's popular adventure race along the Mississippi River, had a hurdle to contend with as they put the event together: Sylvan Island, where they had staged the mountain bike portion of the race previously, was no longer accessible from land.

Just like well-trained athletes running the course, the event organizers took the hurdle in stride. Taming of the Slough was shifted upriver to East Moline and Hampton, and the mountain bike segment was staged in Illiniwek Forest Preserve — a change that proved so popular, they are doing it again this year. Read more about the upcoming Sept. 13 race at radishmagazine.com.

Flour power

Former Radish writer explores home-milled creations

By Sarah J. Gardner

Regular Radish readers who have perused newly-released cookbooks this year may have come across a familiar name: Erin Alderson. Originally from Galesburg, Illinois, Alderson is a recipe developer, photographer and blogger who has shared some of her kitchen creations in Radish articles featuring such mouth-watering recipes as chickpea and spinach burgers, honey banana muffins, and whole wheat sweet potato gnocchi. She has since moved to California and written for other publications, including Bon Appétit and Food and Wine.

But her biggest recent project has been creating a cookbook, "The Homemade Flour Cookbook: The Home Cook's Guide to Milling Nutritious Flours and Creating Delicious Recipes with Every Grain, Legume, Nut and Seed from A-Z," released this year by Fair Winds Press. It will come as no surprise to Radish readers that Alderson's recipes and photographs look delicious. We recently caught up with her to find out more about the project and what she's been up to.

Radish: How does grinding your own flour fit into your overall approach to cooking and eating?

Erin Alderson: Ever since I shifted away from eating processed foods, home-milled flours were a logical step. I keep a small bulk-bin section in my house (many of the grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds in the book) and instead of buying another set of ingredients (flour) I can mill the items I already have on hand. It's freeing and I think a lot of fun to play with the different flavors (because no flour/grain is the same).

R: What kind of equipment does someone need to try this at home?

EA: There are actually a few household appliances you can use to mill flour. If you're looking to dip your toe into the milling process, I recommend a cheap coffee grinder or manual grain mill. The coffee grinder can only be used in small bursts (10 to 15 seconds) of grinding, which I alternate with sifting to remove large particles. A manual grinder is great for everything and gives you a workout! Both options can be purchased for $50 or less.

Also, some appliances you might already have on your counter will work. Food processors are great for nut and seed flours, while a high speed blender, like a Vitamix or Blendtec, is great for pretty much any grain, legume, nut or seed. And of course, if you're really into grinding grains and legumes, an electric grain mill is the way to go (but caution, don't grind nuts or seeds because the oil will clog the motor).

R: Did any of the flours surprise you when you started baking with them?

EA: Some of the nut flours completely surprised me. I don't often create recipes based on 100-percent nut flours but pistachio and almond flour make great nongrain flours. One of my favorite recipes in the book is a lemon cake made from pistachio flour.

R: Who do you look to for cooking and baking inspiration?

EA: I'm constantly looking everywhere. I talk with the produce growers at the markets for suggestions, I'm a cookbook hoarder, I have more blogs in my feed reader than I can count, and I am always wanting to try new restaurants to scope out what flavors they are working with. It's so much fun to pull inspiration from every facet of life.

R: Of the 100 recipes in the cookbook, do you have a favorite?

EA: I didn't when I was creating the book but after making a few recipes again, I'm in love with the gluten-free angel food cake. I worked hard to get the texture just right and I've been told by friends and family that they couldn't even tell it was gluten-free.

R: Creating an entire cookbook seems like a lot of work! Can you tell us about the process?

EA: I wrote this book in the span of about six months and worked about eight to 10 hours per day on the recipe development and testing, photography and editing, and the writing. Typically I would make and shoot three to four recipes per day, tracking what I liked and what I didn't like. I think a person definitely needs to be organized to write a cookbook — so many facets to control. There were times I felt over my head but once the book was finished, it was a proud moment to hold the finished product.

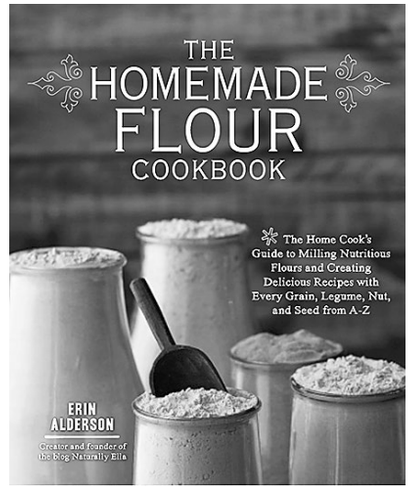
R: What would be your best advice to someone else interested in undertaking this kind of project?

EA: A couple things: make sure you really want to commit to this amount of work and come up with an organizational system that works for you. I fall into Type A, over-organized personality and I couldn't imagine trying to write a book without that!

R: What would you like to work on next?

EA: I just turned in my manuscript for my second book, a vegetarian/seasonal book that's due out spring 2015 and I'm looking at the potential of a third book. Other than that, I'm hoping to keep up with my site (naturallyella.com) and sharing recipes weekly!

*For a longer version of this interview with **Erin Alderson**, visit radishmagazine.com. Her book, "The Homemade Flour Cookbook" (2014, Fair Winds Press, $24.99 paperback), is available in bookstores and through online retailers.*

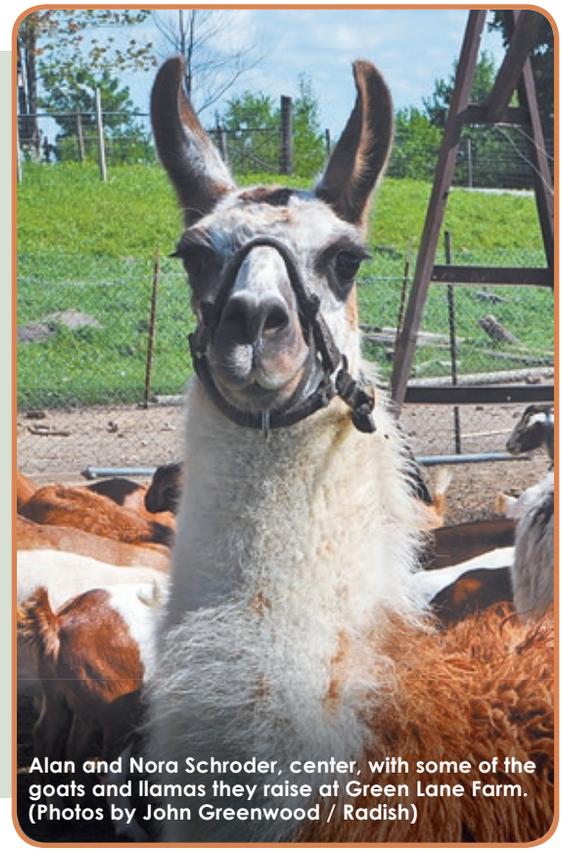


Erin Alderson, left, author of "The Homemade Flour Cookbook." (Photos courtesy of Fair Winds Press, 2014)

grower of the month

Green Lane

Life on the farm keeps Blue Grass couple bustling



Alan and Nora Schroder, center, with some of the goats and llamas they raise at Green Lane Farm. (Photos by John Greenwood / Radish)

By Becky Langdon

Nora Schroder's friends like to tease her when they see her out crouching between a row of crops, sweating in the sun, and painstakingly harvesting vegetables by hand. "You're really living the dream!" they joke.

But like all good comedy, there's truth behind it. For Nora, this life growing vegetables on 3 acres of farmland in Blue Grass, Iowa, is a long-held dream that's finally come to fruition.

"My husband grew up a farmer," she says, "but I was a city kid, and I always wanted to live on a little farm."

Nora and Alan Schroder are the owners of Green Lane Farm, where they grow a huge variety of vegetables to sell at farmers' markets. Both are in their 60s and held previous jobs before retiring. Alan was a tool and die maker for the Rock Island Arsenal, and Nora was a school bus driver. When Alan's mother passed away several years ago, he bought out his brother and sister, and the Schroders moved to the farm.

While Nora has always had a vegetable garden, she never anticipated expanding it to the large variety and acreage of crops that it is now. "I don't know how we ended up doing this," she says with a laugh. "Our families think we're nuts. But what else would we be doing? We're both retired. We'd be sitting on the computer playing games. This gives our life a purpose."

Nora says they started out small, just in Blue Grass. "It was all new to us. We started investigating the market, and put in an application to get down there. The next thing I know, I look around and I've got all this. Every year I keep growing more."

Today, the Schroders grow just about every kind of vegetable you can imagine, including potatoes, green and yellow beans, lettuce, sunflowers, zucchini,

peppers, squash, onions, broccoli, cucumber, peas, cabbage, carrots and more. "About the only things we don't grow are celery, cauliflower, or artichokes," she says, adding that celery takes a certain kind of soil to be successful. What they don't grow themselves, they trade for with another farmer in Muscatine, Iowa.

Among their best-selling vegetables are tomatoes. They grow numerous varieties, including heirlooms, Roma, and hollow tomatoes that have all the seeds at the top like a bell pepper. "People like to stuff them with tuna salad or cottage cheese," Nora says. Also popular are the sun sugar tomatoes, which are small yellow tomatoes that are surprisingly sweet. Nora says if she lets customers try one, she easily sells the entire box.

Full acres and full hours

Besides vegetables, the Schroders also grow pears, peaches, cherries, apples, raspberries, blackberries and walnuts. Nora says there are more than 100 walnut trees on their property that have grown there since before she and Alan were married. "Last winter he cracked 45 bags of cracked nuts for 10 bucks a bag," says Nora. "He says, 'It probably comes out to 50 cents an hour, but it's cold outside, and what else am I going to do?' Me, I sit and crochet towels and dishrags."

Nora admires Alan's handiness around the farm. His background and experience as a tool and die maker can be seen throughout the farm in his innovative, do-it-yourself approach. He designed his own greenhouse using plywood, wire, a double-layer of plastic, and a hog house ventilation fan. Nora starts all of the seeds from scratch in the basement under shop lights and then moves them to the greenhouse when they're ready. "I started 10,000 onions down there this winter, and now they're all coming up," she says.

Alan also has built a number of machines to pull behind his tractor. One of them is a cart for Nora to ride on to make planting more efficient and less physically taxing as the farm has expanded. It has a special seat that allows her to straddle the row and drop the seeds in the groove as the tractor pulls her along. Much work on the farm they still do by hand, though, including all the harvesting.

Crops aren't the only business happening at Green Lane Farm. The Schroders also keep chickens for eggs, and they raise and sell goats. They have a regular stream of customers who buy eggs, right off the farm. "My regular customers know to call ahead before they come by so I'll hold them for them," Nora says. "Otherwise they might be gone. Sometimes they're still warm from the chicken when people come get them."

To help with the goats they keep, the Schroders have seven llamas at the farm, which help protect the herd from predators. Nora got to see the protective llamas in action once when a strange sound was coming from the habitat. "It was really weird," she recalls. "The goats just got in one big group and headed straight for the barn. Then Fernando, the llama, started for the back fence, like 'come on.' We said, 'look at him go!' "

Nora's favorite part about having the farm is meeting the people, especially ones who appreciate what they do and realize what it takes. Recently she even had a group of kids from a church come out to the farm to feed the goats and pick some vegetables. Beyond that, she also enjoys the feeling of accomplishment her work brings her. She says with a smile, "I love my life. It's work, but I love it."

***Becky Langdon** is a frequent Radish contributor. **Green Lane Farm** can be found at the Freight House Farmers' Market in Davenport on Tuesdays and Saturdays under a checkered tent. For more information, call 563-381-3025.*

Area organizations maintain unique lending collections

By Christine Darr

Librarian Theresa Carmack holds one of the cake pans available on loan from the Rock Island Public Library. (Photos by Todd Welvaert and John Greenwood / Radish)

Trips to the public library always make me giddy. I feel as though I'm getting away with something — I can take all these cool books home? For free? Now that many libraries have expanded to include audio books, magazines, movies and video games, my family and I can entertain ourselves indefinitely, without spending any money at all (except for the occasional overdue materials fine, of course).

Checking out books and movies from the library seems natural to many of us, but often our borrowing stops there. And yet, from the standpoint of shrinking your footprint, borrowing is a valuable tool. When I only need something for a short period of time, I can borrow it rather than purchase it. Doing so reduces waste, saves money and even helps build sustainable communities by forging relationships between borrowers.

Fortunately, there is a growing movement of people and organizations who want to expand our ideas about what kinds of materials can be shared. Whether it is a bike or a backpack, a chainsaw or a cake pan, borrowing rather than owning can be a freeing experience.

A KITCHEN CONNECTION

For those who are looking for a way to spice up a party by making a fancy cake, the Rock Island Public Library, 401 19th St., has a collection of pans available for library patrons. Made possible through a generous donation, the pans range in shape from books and bunnies to recognizable characters like Precious Pony and the Pink Panther.

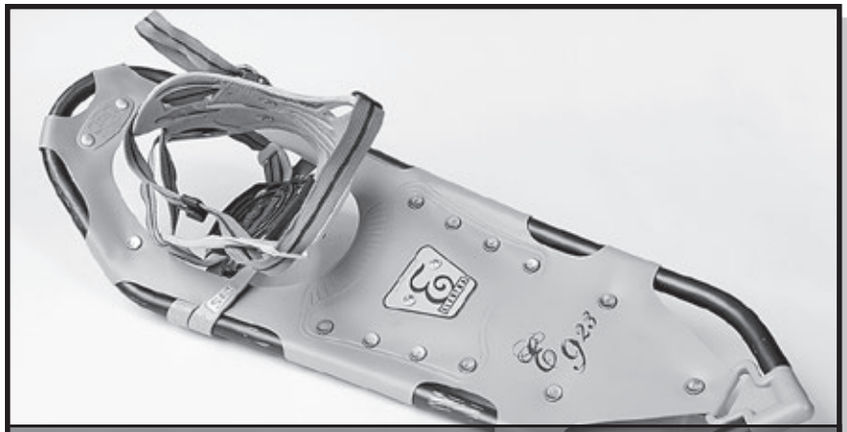
The pans also come with decorating instructions for some extra guidance. According to Kim Brozovich, director of technical services at RIPL, the pans are "housed at our main library, but can be sent via our delivery system to another Rock Island branch, or any other library in the RiverShare catalog." That includes libraries in Davenport, Bettendorf and Moline, among others. If you are interested in borrowing any of these items, simply search for the subject "cake pans" in the library's online catalog.

THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE TASK

Sometimes the only thing standing between you and a finished home-repair project is the cost of the equipment, especially if it's a tool you'll only use once. The Washington Tool Library, tucked into the Washington neighborhood in downtown Dubuque, is ready to loan out an arsenal of tools for just such an occasion.

What started in the basement of Saint Mary's Parish in 1973 has grown into a stand-alone warehouse stocked with hammers and circular saws as well as ladders, wheelbarrows and more. It is run by a crew of about 18 volunteers who do everything from granting library cards to mending the tools to updating their materials. While the library averages around 100 or more borrowers per month, "spring is definitely busier," says Tom Oberhoffer, the tool committee president.

Over its lifetime, the Washington Tool Library has made it possible for thousands of Dubuquers to borrow rather than buy and then store tools that might be used only a handful of times. Any Dubuque resident who is interested in checking out the tools should bring proof of residence (a water bill, for example) to 345 E. 18th St. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 1 to 6 p.m. to speak with a friendly volunteer who will set you up with a library card and show you around the warehouse. The tools can be checked out for three days or up to two weeks, depending on the item. Most items are free, although some larger tools require a small deposit that is refunded upon the tool's return.



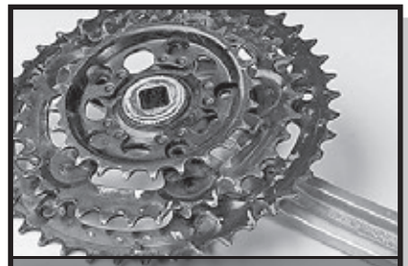
ALL SET FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

Thinking of heading out for a winter hike? Swiss Valley Nature Center at 13606 Swiss Valley Road in Peosta, Iowa, has snowshoes of many sizes (kids sizes too!) that are available to check out for your recreational pleasure either in the park or anywhere else you would like to have a snowy adventure. These high-quality snowshoes are easy to use and available for a two-week period, plenty of time for lots of outdoor exploring.

To enhance your outdoor experience, no matter the season, Swiss Valley also loans out park packs on a two-week basis. Each backpack is associated with a different theme, such as birding, camping/survival skills, insects and trees, to name a few. They also are stuffed full of handy materials such as reference manuals, binoculars, microscopes, identification tools and more. For additional information or to check out a pack, call 563-556-6745 or stop by the Nature Center between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

For adventure of another kind, residents of Iowa City can head over to the Iowa City Bike Library at 408 E. College St. One of the goals of the library is to enable more people to choose bike riding over driving; biking is better for the environment, better for health, and much more fun. The Bike Library makes it possible for a person to "try on" biking without making a substantial financial commitment up front.

Borrowing a bike for six months requires only a bike deposit, which ranges from $50 to $150 for an adult bike, with the average deposit between $45 and $75. Within six months the borrower either can return the bike and get his or her deposit back, minus damage beyond normal wear and tear, or choose to keep the bike for the cost of the deposit.



TWO-WHEELED TRANSPORTATION

The Bike Library also makes tools and workshop space available from 4 to 6:30 p.m. Fridays and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays so that bike owners (regardless of whether they have a library bike or their own) can tune-up or repair their bikes. The space and tools can be rented for $5 an hour.

Up with apples

A cake recipe crowned with autumn's affable fruit

By Sarah J. Gardner

Is there a friendlier fruit than the apple? I was pondering this question recently while sliding an apple cake into my oven. There are more exotic fruits, to be sure, and certainly fruits that are more showy — the pineapple comes to mind, with its mast of green leaves and rind that looks stitched and quilted — but the more I thought about it, the more I realized the humble, hard-working apple has a special place in my heart.

I suspect that all the things that make apples so wonderful also make them easy to overlook. They are inexpensive and easy to transport, and because they don't spoil quickly, you can buy an apple today and eat it next week without much worry. Apples can be enjoyed right from the tree or baked obligingly into any number of dishes, from desserts to roasts. But the chief virtue of an apple, to my mind, is that they are so easy to share.

My favorite memories of apples, in fact, usually involve being given an apple by someone else — handed to me by my grandfather, fresh-picked from one of his backyard apple trees and still warm from the sun, or pulled from a backpack after a long hike and savored bite by bite on a rocky perch with a friend. In those moments, the fruit was sweet and crisp and nourishing to eat, all the more so because we were sharing it. Our lives are likely full of gifts like these, small and frequent enough such that we hardly notice them until the right, quiet moment comes along, and then they awaken the fullness of our hearts.

Isn't it a shame, then, that apple cakes are often humdrum affairs, the fruit hidden away as one of many anonymous ingredients? Because of the affection I have for apples, I'd rather give them a place of honor crowning the cake. It doesn't take much more work, and because the thin slices of apple look so beautiful arranged on top, friends always get excited when this cake arrives at the table. Which, to my mind, is exactly the reception apples deserve.

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

Gary Krambeck / Radish

ALMOND APPLE CAKE

¼ cup almonds
¾ cup flour
¾ cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
5 tablespoons cold, unsalted butter, diced
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 large egg, lightly beaten
3 Granny Smith or other tart, firm apples

Topping:
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 egg

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter and flour a 9-inch springform pan. Combine almonds and ¼ cup flour in a food processor, then pulse until almonds form a coarse meal. Add remaining flour, sugar, baking powder and butter, then pulse again until butter is granular. Add the almond extract and egg and blend well. Mixture will resemble wet sand. Spread it evenly in the prepared cake pan using a square of wax paper to press it down. Place the pan in a refrigerator to chill.

Meanwhile, peel and core apples, then cut into very thin slices. Retrieve cake pan and arrange apple slices on top of the cake batter, packing them tightly together and leaving a ¼-inch rim around the outer edge. Place cake in oven and bake for 45 minutes. While the cake bakes, melt the remaining butter and allow to cool, then whisk it together with the remaining sugar, cinnamon and egg to form a thick slurry. After the cake has been in the oven 45 minutes, pour the topping over the cake, starting at the center and working toward the edge of the apple slices. Return cake to oven and bake an additional 25 minutes. When the cake is done, allow to cool 20 minutes before removing the side of the pan. When cake has completely cooled, it is ready to serve.

Hey, Mr. Fix It!

Insights from a lifetime working in appliance repair

By Ann Ring

Gary Pond of Gary Pond Appliances & Coin Laundry, Rock Island, learned his trade in the appliance business the old fashioned way: from his father and grandfather and by experience. As a youngster, Gary would tag along with his dad and grandfather back in the days when women washed clothing with a wringer washer and one or two rinse tubs. "On weekends we'd visit my grandfather in Kewanee, and he'd pay me to assemble the rinse tubs," says Pond.

His father worked at Dobbler's TV and Appliance in Rock Island and did service work on appliances at home after Dobbler's closed. Then in 1970, his father, Jack Pond, along with Jack Strandlund, opened Jack's Maytag Home Appliance in Rock Island. They sold and serviced an entire line of washers, dryers, dishwashers, ranges, refrigerators, stoves and garbage disposals.

Eventually the two Jacks opened a second store in Davenport, and when they expanded to a third in Moline, Jack wanted his son Gary — who was working for Capital Records at the time — to come back to the Quad-Cities and run the Davenport store. Gary agreed, and has upheld his family's legacy in the appliance business ever since, particularly favoring the Maytag brand.

If it seems that appliances just aren't made the same today, you're correct. "Years ago companies were challenging each other for life expectancy," Gary explains. "They tried to do better than the next guy, which is why one was better than another."

They were also simpler to repair. Gary points out that years ago, for example, washers were engineered by individual switches. "We made one type, and it was simple, and it worked," says Gary. "And the parts remained the same from year to year." Today, appliances like washers and dryers are lighter because many parts are made with plastic, and Gary says that computerized boards have replaced switches. "Instead of having to replace one switch, today, you now have to replace the entire board."

In referring to washers, dryers, refrigerators and other appliances, Gary says that today "they are all the same product; their life expectancy is about five years, and parts are kept in stock for a shorter period of time than in the past." This can leave the consumer no choice but to purchase a new appliance when one gives out.

That doesn't mean repair is never an option, though. Gary suggests that when deciding whether to repair an appliance or send it to a landfill, "ask a repair person for advice. Most will be honest, and you can always get a second opinion."

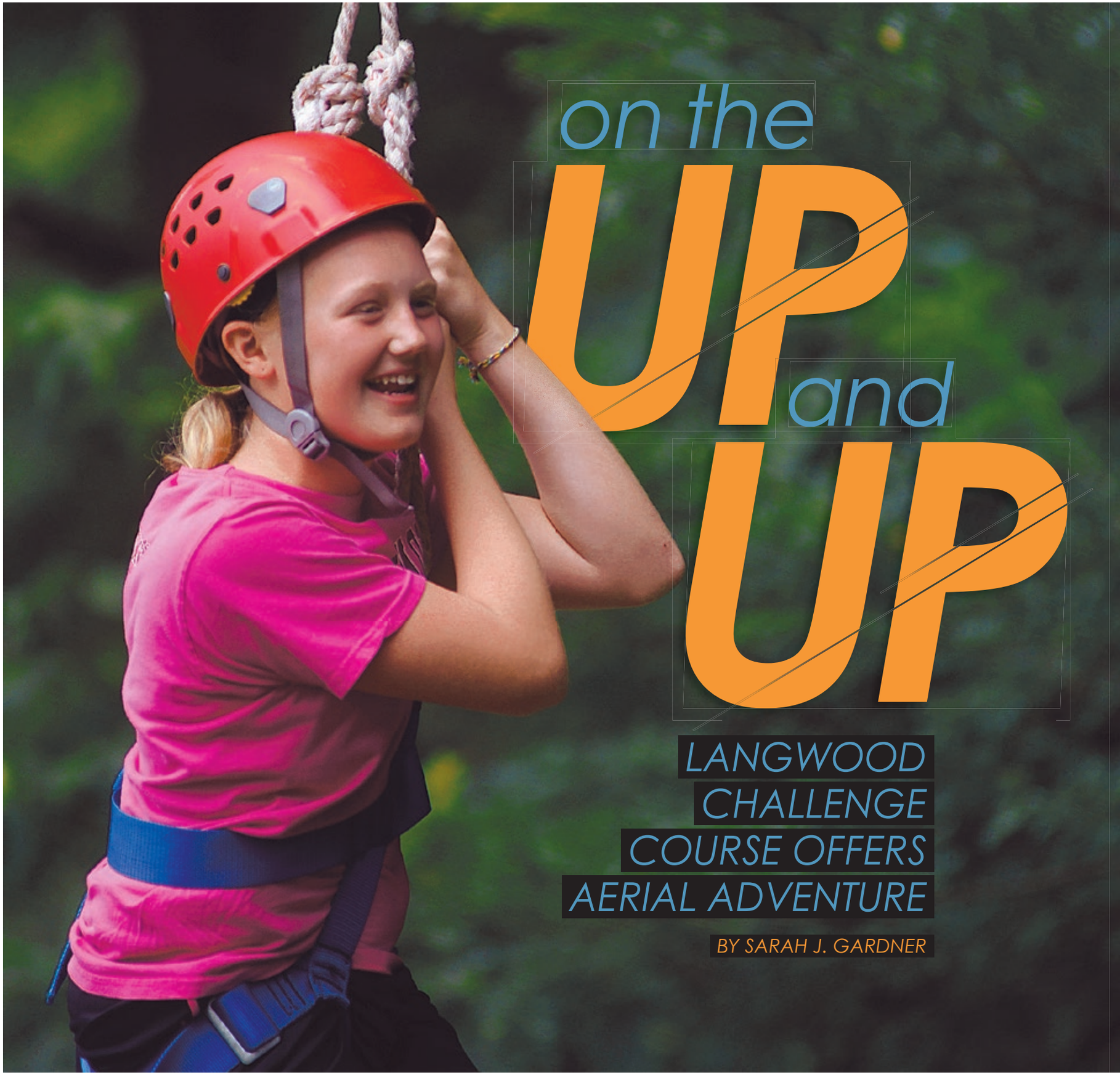
Appliance repairman Gary Pond. (Photo by John Greenwood / Radish)

__Ann Ring__ is a frequent Radish contributor. For more information about __Gary Pond Appliances & Coin Laundry,__ call 309-737-1664.

Extend the life of your machines

To keep those appliances out of the scrap heap and in your home, here are some tips on keeping them working for years to come:

- Do not overload the washer with clothing.
- Clean out your dryer's lint filter after every load of clothing.
- Fine lint can get trapped in your outside dryer vent. Check this twice a year and clean if necessary.
- Keep your refrigerator grates clean.
- Do not overfill the dishwasher with detergent — less is more.
- Do not rinse or clean dishes before loading them into the dishwasher.
- To loosen dirt and grime in the microwave, boil a small cup or bowl of lemon juice occasionally.
- Regularly manually clean the floor of the oven; built up food particles could become a fire hazard.



on the UP and UP

LANGWOOD CHALLENGE COURSE OFFERS AERIAL ADVENTURE

BY SARAH J. GARDNER

For outdoor enthusiasts in the know, Louisa County is an Iowa gem hidden in plain sight. Between the Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge; the confluences of the Cedar, Iowa and Mississippi rivers; and a number of hiking, biking and equestrian trails dotting the county, there is plenty to see and do. And then there is Langwood, a 92-acre outdoor education center outside Wapello maintained by the Louisa County Conservation Board that includes opportunities to fish, hike, boat and — thanks to the Langwood Challenge Course — climb.

The challenge course is a series of high-ropes elements that allow visitors to get a bird's eye view of the surrounding natural wonders from 30 feet in the air while, just maybe, testing their own resolve at the same time. The course consists of four poles set along the wooded north shore of Langwood Pond with wires strung between the poles. With the help of Langwood staff and volunteers, visitors to the course don harnesses and helmets to climb the poles and then ease themselves out onto the wires. Each configuration of wires requires slightly different skills to navigate.

Left: Amelia Thomas rides the Langwood high-ropes zipline. **Above:** Sydney Roseburgh, Sophia Moore and Amelia Thomas help steady each other on the "Acid River" low-ropes challenge. (Photos by Leah Klafczynski / Radish)

Setting sights high

On the day we visit Langwood, a group of boys and girls ages 12 to 13 from a Rock Island Arsenal day-camp program have come to try the high-ropes course. It is a gorgeous summer afternoon. A few clouds dot the sky overhead, while below dragonflies with blue-tipped wings hover among the arrowhead plants at the edge of the pond. For the moment, though, all eyes are on Brittney Tiller, an environmental education coordinator with Langwood, as she explains the basic climbing procedures.

First and foremost, she says, this course is "challenge by choice only," meaning no one has to climb who doesn't choose to, and anyone can choose to come down at any time. Also, only positive comments from those on the ground are allowed. This includes a prohibition against saying "don't look down," since a person's first impulse when someone shouts that is to look down, she says.

After a demonstration as to how to put on a harness and a discussion of the different ways to assist on the ground — from holding ladders to coiling rope — everyone is double-checked to make sure their harnesses are on securely and the climbing begins. Although you can see varying levels of trepidation as each person approaches the ladder for his or her turn, it's not long before the jitters are replaced by jubilation.

For Jeremy Oepping, a volunteer who assists at the high-ropes course, this is one of the big differences he sees between groups of adults and youth. Adults tend to approach the course in a more restrained way, he says, while "with kids there's a lot more excitement. You can see it on their faces when they overcome that fear."

Youth in a Rock Island Arsenal day-camp program tackle several Langwood low- and high-ropes challenges. (Photos by Leah Klafczynski / Radish)

As Oepping lowers a climber, Dalton Hout, from the element called the "Burma Bridge" — one wire strung between two poles and two more wires to hold as you walk across — fellow camper Kaleb Roberts, who has been holding his arms out to help steady Hout as he nears the ground, jumps up and gives Hout a big high-five.

It had been Hout's first time on a high-ropes course. His best advice for other beginners? "Make sure you stay calm and breathe," he says. Then he breaks into a grin and adds, "And keep on going!"

For fellow camper Ayanna Eaton, being up so high on a wire made her feel like a ballerina, she says. The hardest part is "getting across without looking down."

"No, no, that's wrong!" chimes in Katie Swesey, seated nearby. "It's getting up."

Whatever part they each find most difficult, it's clear they are proud to have met the challenge.

More earthbound adventures

Earlier in the day, the campers had participated in low-ropes exercises closer to the Langwood lodge. These were a series of challenges like "Acid River," an exercise in which the group had to move across a series of five concrete cinder blocks using three planks of varying lengths. They had to stay together, passing the planks forward as they went — in other words, working as a team.

Some of the groups that visit Langwood only sign up for the low- or high-ropes challenges, but Tiller, who led the group in both activities, says she likes it best when groups do both. Each challenge offers something different, she explains.

"I really like it when we start with low ropes. It works on teamwork, communication, leadership and respect," she says. "High ropes is much more high energy and geared toward the individual. It's about meeting your goals, conquering fears."

For Katie Hammond, executive director of the Louisa County Conservation Board, part of the value of the ropes course is that it brings groups to Langwood that might not otherwise come. The high-ropes course gets used roughly 30 times a year, she says, largely in the spring and fall by school groups.

Other groups that rent the Langwood facilities include youth groups, scouting groups, sports teams, family reunions and corporate groups. Some come to use the ropes course, while others make use of Langwood's other offerings, including the lodge, an A-frame cabin that sleeps 21, canoes, a bird-viewing blind, and several miles of hiking trails.

Prices vary depending on the number of people in the party, the type of group and the time of year. "We try to make it as affordable as possible for youth groups," explains Hammond.

Most ropes programs fall between $200 and $600, she says, while rental fees for the grounds range from $96 to $186 for a one-night stay during peak season and roughly half that in the off-season. Reservations can be made by calling the Louisa County Conservation Board at 319-523-8381.

Groups visit Langwood daily, says Hammond. And there is one group this fall that Tiller is particularly looking forward to: her own family. "I convinced them to come," she says with a smile. "It wasn't very hard."

***Sarah J. Gardner** is the editor of Radish. For more information about **Langwood Education Center**, visit lccb.org/langwood.htm.*

The hardest part is "getting across without looking down."

"No, no, that's wrong! It's getting up."

Edible forests

Initiatives take root in Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, Q-C

By Cindy Hadish

Rhonda Dunn is interested in growing food, but not the way her mother gardened. "She'd till every spring and hoe it and weed it," said Dunn, an Iowa City nurse practitioner. "That was the way she knew and it worked for her, but I don't want to be out hoeing and weeding."

Dunn is among a growing number of people seeking a more harmonious approach through edible forests. "This seems to be a better way to work with nature," she said, while working alongside other volunteers this summer at the Wetherby Park Edible Forest in Iowa City.

The Wetherby Park initiative — spurred by Iowa City-based Backyard Abundance — is among the latest efforts in the national edible forest movement.

Cedar Rapids also made a start in recent years by planting trees at the Ellis Food Forest, an initiative of nonprofit Matthew 25 with help from Marion-based Trees Forever. Apples, peaches, pears and service berries have already been harvested from the former flood site, with plans set to add strawberries and grapes.

While the elements in each project differ, the purpose of an edible forest is the same: to serve as a free, low-maintenance source of local, healthy foods from trees that produce fruits and nuts, berry-producing shrubs, and perennial plants, such as vegetables and herbs. Some also incorporate annuals.

Though the Quad City Food Forest project has just taken root this year, it's an idea that founder Chris Rice has contemplated since childhood when he tried to grow trees by sticking apple seeds in the ground. "It's an ancient idea that's used all over the world," said Rice, who lives in Rock Island and works as a carpenter in Davenport.

While recent food forests try to stake claim as "first in the U.S.," Rice points to one started in 1967 in Monmouth, Illinois, as the likely candidate for the title. Gary Fernald grows shagbark hickory, hazelnuts, walnuts, pawpaws, American persimmons and more at the site, and is willing to share pecan seedlings and other plants to help start the Quad City Food Forest, Rice said, which will lower costs.

As the Davenport project takes shape, volunteers will be needed to plant and help establish the trees and bushes, he said, but once the plants mature, little maintenance is needed as the area becomes a woodland ecosystem.

Rice envisions using only native plants and sees the food forest serving as an educational tool, where residents learn what grows well in their climate and use seeds from the forest to plant at home.

The Quad City Food Forest Coalition, which includes at least 100 supporters, chose a preferred site for the food forest at a 5-acre, city-owned grassy field in Davenport that cannot be developed with buildings due to flood restrictions. Rice would like to get underway with planting next spring.

In Iowa City, the Wetherby Park Edible Forest is an extension of the Edible Forest Maze, planted in 2011 as a project of Iowa City Parks and Recreation, along with AmeriCorps, Backyard Abundance volunteers and neighbors. The edible landscape includes herbs, gooseberries, comfrey and more.

Backyard Abundance director Fred Meyer points to research that shows children do not eat recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables, but are likely to eat food they have planted or harvested. The same is true of adults.

The one-third acre site and other types of edible landscaping serve to decrease grocery bills and increase habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, Meyer added.

"This year, we're laying the foundation, literally," he said, as about 40 volunteers mulched the site this summer to prepare for planting in 2015. Apple, pear, plum, cherry and mulberry trees, and aronia berry, currants and strawberries are among plants that will be added as the Iowa City project grows.

Both Meyer and Rice note that community involvement is vital.

One of the best arguments for a food forest, Rice maintained, is it would enhance the community's quality of life. "This is going to belong to the community," he said.

***Cindy Hadish** writes about local foods, farmers' markets, gardening and the environment at homegrowniowan.com. For more information about **edible forest initiatives,** visit backyardabundance.org or facebook.com/qc.foodforest.*

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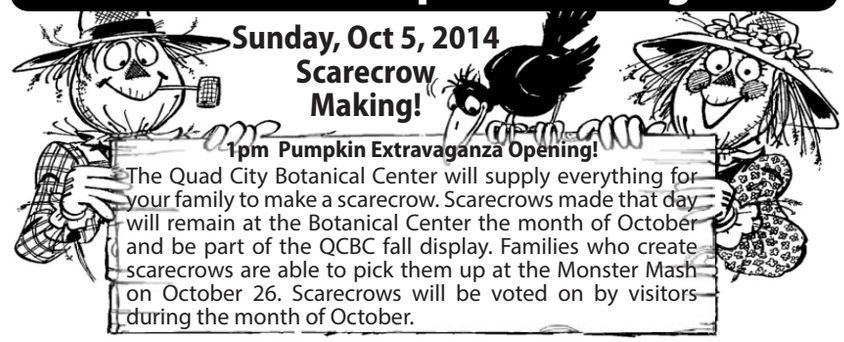
2014 October Pumpkin Extravaganza!



Sunday, Oct 5, 2014
Scarecrow Making!

1pm Pumpkin Extravaganza Opening!
The Quad City Botanical Center will supply everything for your family to make a scarecrow. Scarecrows made that day will remain at the Botanical Center the month of October and be part of the QCBC fall display. Families who create scarecrows are able to pick them up at the Monster Mash on October 26. Scarecrows will be voted on by visitors during the month of October.

Sunday, Oct 12, 2014
Super Hero's Ice Cream Social
Ice cream, kid activities and more.

Sunday, Oct 19, 2014
Pumpkin Carving! 1pm-4pm
Each family will receive one free pumpkin to carve and take home! Additional pumpkins will be available for purchase.

Sunday, Oct 26, 2014
Monster Mash 1pm-4pm
(the not so scary Halloween Party!)
Costume contest, candy hunt, and awards for the best scarecrows.

A Family Pumpkin Pass can be purchased for $30 and is good for the entire months activities.

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outdoors

NIGHTHIKE

iStockphoto

Discover a new adventure as you hit the trail after dark

By Christine Darr

On a recent camping trip to Backbone State Park, my husband and I decided to try out something we had never done before — night hiking. I am an amateur hiker whose adventures usually take place in the bright sunshine. I was excited to experience the wild outdoors when it really comes to life: after the sun goes down.

Upon arrival at our campsite in the afternoon, we set off on a trail by our tent, since it is helpful when planning a night hike to be already familiar with the trail in daylight. The path we chose took us into a beautiful wood full of towering oak and maple trees along the precipice of a ravine overlooking the Maquoketa River. There were many valleys and hills to navigate. At the crest of one hill we spotted a doe nibbling on some grass about 30 yards away.

Around dusk we set out again on the same trail. Right away, the forest seemed less vast somehow, the darkness settling in and obscuring the distance. The flatness of the colors moved our attention from sight to sound: the "pee-a-wee!" call of the eastern wood-pewee, the haunting "who-cooks-for-you" call of the barred owl. Up in the canopy we heard a cacophony of flapping; looking up we saw the last flourish, we think, of an owl's supper.

Our progress on the trail was much slower this time, as we preferred to navigate using the moonlight rather than our headlamps. While we weren't able to make out much, we could see the next few steps on the trail. On a bridge about mid-hike, we stopped and tried to find wildlife. Sure enough, when I clicked on my headlamp and looked up the creek, there was a pair of eyes shining directly at me. We stared at each other for a while and then the unknown creature started slowly to amble off.

We began heading back to our campsite, both because the darkness was getting thicker by the minute and — honesty here — we were starting to freak ourselves out with talk of mountain lions and bears (though not impossible in this environment, not terribly likely).

On the last leg of the trail, when it was flat and mainly brush, we heard a ferocious growl coming from our left. We froze and turned our lights in that direction. We caught a pair of eyes in our lamps and watched the critter move slowly up a branch and then back down, before it finally walked away. In retrospect it was likely an opossum, but at the time the growl had its intended effect and we were sufficiently intimidated into thinking it was a much bigger creature out to get us.

Once back at camp, we relaxed and reflected on how the darkness changes something familiar into something magical and mysterious, and we wondered if anyone ever truly overcomes their childhood fear of the dark.

*Contributor **Christine Darr** makes her Radish debut this month.*

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For XSTREAM Cleanup photos & more, visit
www.xstreamcleanup.org

To treat or not?

Weighing your options for the future of your ash tree

By Annie L. Scholl

Concerned about your ash tree since the arrival of emerald ash borer (EAB)? Sure, there are insecticides you can use to guard against the bright metallic green beetle, native to Asia and Eastern Russia, that decimates ash trees. But before you take that step, horticulturist and certified arborist Patty Petersen suggests you pause. After all, once you start, you'll be treating that tree for its entire life.

Petersen, who has been a horticulturist for Trees Forever in Marion, Iowa, for 23 years, says there will come a time when ash trees simply will be gone as a result of EAB. Even so, she's concerned about people misusing chemicals in an attempt to kill the bugs, which were first discovered near Detroit, Michigan, in 2002, and have since spread to Illinois (as of 2006) and Iowa (as of 2010).

Before you start treating a sickly-looking tree, Petersen says, you have to make sure the tree really is an ash tree. Often residents think they have an ash only to discover it's something else entirely. Petersen suggests you either get really good photographs of the tree leaves or you bring a fresh sample of a small branch to an extension office or an organization like Trees Forever.

Once you've determined you actually have an ash tree, then you have to determine what's causing your tree to decline. Petersen says there can be many reasons for a tree to look distressed. For example, the dry weather over the past several years is a big factor.

EAB do their greatest damage when they're creamy, white larva, weaving back and forth through the conductive tissue of ash trees, robbing them of the nutrients and water they need to survive — but their presence can be hard for homeowners to detect beneath the bark.

To make sure you're dealing with EAB, Petersen says you should contact the University of Illinois Extension, the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, or the Department of Natural Resources or Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship in your state. They will collect a sample from your tree and then send it in for identification.

After that, you need to determine if your tree is worth treating. If your tree is very young or very old, Petersen advises you to cut it down. If it's a middle-age tree in good condition — one that is shading your house, for example, and providing significant energy savings — it may make sense to try and save that tree.

Prevention of EAB involves drenching the base of the tree with insecticide or using a granular insecticide around the base of the tree. Before you start applying it, however, Petersen says read the label. And she's certain if you do thoroughly read it, you likely won't use the insecticide. The warnings make it clear this isn't something to mess around with.

"People think they've got to be a good steward and treat ash trees, but when they evaluate all the consequences, that's not true," she says. "Everything is connected. You can't do one thing without impacting the environment — the water, soil, birds and other creatures. We have to be very cautious anytime we use a pesticide."

Clockwise from left: Ash leaves (iStockphoto); the telltale tunnels of EAB in ash wood (Patty Petersen / Trees Forever); an emerald ash borer (Associated Press).

Petersen says once consumers are educated about EAB, the majority will choose not to treat their trees. If you do decide to treat your tree, she advises you to hire an expert pesticide applicator — especially if your tree is over 20 inches in diameter or you have more than one tree to treat. Again, she suggests replacing smaller trees.

If there's a bright side to the EAB infestation, it's that it has raised awareness about the importance of planting a diverse mix of trees — something Trees Forever has been trying to educate the public about for more than 25 years, Petersen notes. Greater tree diversity lowers the risk that future pests and diseases can devastate a tree population, such as is the case with EAB and with Dutch elm disease in the past.

__Annie L. Scholl__ is a frequent Radish contributor. More information can be obtained from __Trees Forever__ through treesforever.org or by calling 319-373-0650.

QC TODAY WEEKEND

Begins September 6th on TV6

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6 a.m. & 8:30 a.m.

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The General Store

food for thought

Right next door

To be a better neighbor is to be a better you

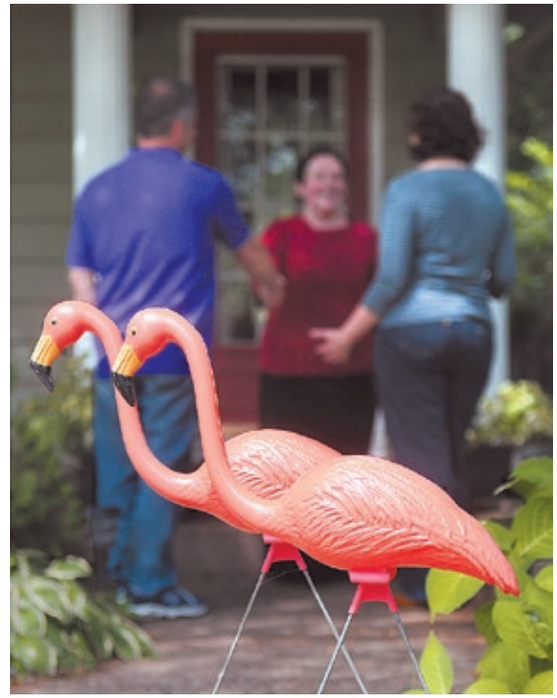
By Leslie Klipsch

The plastic pink flamingos typically would land by Wednesday afternoon. Of course, the children spotted the bright birds first and would point in excitement at the weathered lawn decor knowing fully what their arrival indicated. The birds were an invitation to a Friday night neighborhood party and their location indicated where it would be held.

"Flamingo Fridays," as we called them, took place nearly every week during the summer months in our Chicago neighborhood. Each Friday, a North Seeley Avenue resident would place a card table right next to the pair of pink flamingos and fill it with snacks, pull up a cooler filled with drinks, and welcome neighbors for a moment of friendly chit-chat before the weekend began. People could come and go as they pleased and the low-key environment, taken in week after week, allowed for a genuine community to take shape.

These casual gatherings allowed for neighbors to be introduced to other neighbors and for people to stretch beyond an impersonal "hello" as they walked briskly by. Piled on top of one another, the informal Friday nights led to increased trust and familiarity in what sometimes seemed like a huge, impersonal city.

Not only were these evenings a lot of fun, but they also prompted increased engagement with and compassion for those we lived near. It didn't take too many Fridays before we were bringing meals to families with new babies, keeping an eye on one another's homes, meeting for lunch and sharing our daily lives. All of this neighborliness planted the seed for future acts of kindness, and it provided an example for the children among us who might someday grow up and spread this good-neighbor sense wherever they land.



Gary Krambeck / Radish

My family and I live in a new neighborhood now and have established new ways to connect with our neighbors in the Quad-Cities, but come Sept. 28, which is "Good Neighbor Day," I will certainly think about our North Seeley community and the way that we uniquely cultivated our relationships.

Regardless of how social you are or how organized your neighborhood is, Good Neighbor Day provides an opportunity to thank a neighbor, bake for a neighbor, or merely acknowledge a neighbor with a nod. It also prompts personal reflection on your physical section of the world and your place within it. After all, the world at large can seem overwhelming, but when scaled back to your own block, things may appear more clearly.

Mother Teresa once asked a simple question: Do you know your neighbor? "Spread love everywhere you go: first of all in your own home. Give love to your children, to your wife or husband, to a next door neighbor," she said. "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness; kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting."

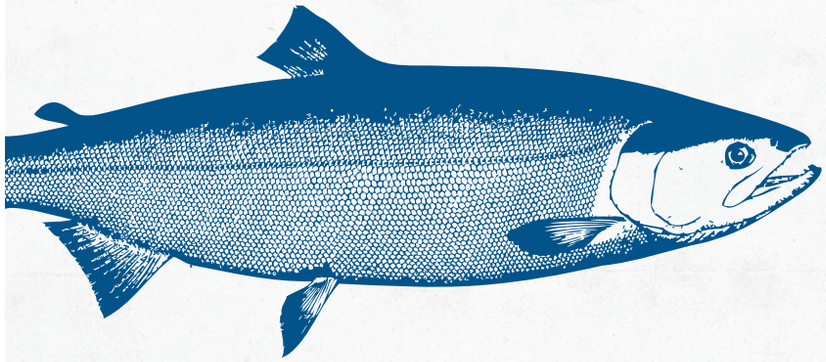
For me, Mother Teresa's words mean saying hello when I see a neighbor get out of his or her car, welcoming someone new on the block with a few cut flowers, or perhaps offering to gather mail during a vacation. None of these are huge gestures that require much effort on my part, but I have a feeling that the discipline, practiced over and over again, will ultimately shape my life.

What I learned within the first several Flamingo Fridays is that showing kindness to and engaging with a neighbor prompts something bigger to happen. Week after week — no matter where we live — we end up training ourselves in generosity, fine tuning our ability to serve and love, and gaining confidence in our individual aptitude to make someone else's life more pleasant. Through this attention to what is right next door and the obedience of our response, we are practiced and primed to make bigger leaps, to look beyond our block, into the distance, and ultimately, see our neighborhood, as well as our response to it, grow.

***Leslie Klipsch** is a frequent Radish contributor. Discover more of her work at **leslieklipsch.com**.*

Small actions, big impact

When it comes to being a good neighbor, small gestures add up: **Withhold judgment** • *Don't hide, say hello!* • **Shovel a neighbor's walk or help with raking as a random act of kindness** • *Provide a heads-up if you'll be entertaining outside* • **Support local businesses** • *Share excess from your garden* • **Support local schools** • *Avoid gossip* • **Share tools** • *Be considerate of noise* • **Introduce yourself** • *Mind your animals* • **Learn names** • *Share important neighborhood news* • **Keep your space tidy** • *Offer a hand* • **Practice parking etiquette** • *Bake or buy something to share*



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