

# "I Can" at Bygone Basics



April 2010



## April Showers

We know the saying....right? "April Showers bring May flowers." The saying is actually "*March winds and April showers? Bring forth May flowers.*" Here are a couple more predictive old sayings: *A dry March and a wet May? Fill barns and bays with corn and hay. As it rains in March so it rains in June.*

Where did these corny sayings come from? And are they really of any value? Much of them are helpful if you understand the reasoning behind them. They are really old instructions in a time of storytelling and conversation. Before research books and the internet were available. Think about it. If March is dry, the fields could get

plowed and seeded by May. Then, the rain would help germinate seeds and there would be a good chance of a nice crop.

My mother still "gardens by the moon." This old phrase means that certain moon phases bring specific crop tasks. For example she plants her onions and radishes a few days after the last March full moon (sometimes there are two full moons in a month known as a "Blue Moon"). I find real value in this old style of gardening. I have yet to find a meteorologist who can predict the weather into the future with 100% accuracy but the moon phases are 100% predictable and the logic behind planting and harvesting with them is sound. So the next time you hear an old saying, consider the potential real advice it may yet carry into other generations.

## A Holiday without Dad

Perhaps you noticed that I didn't send out the last couple issues of newsletters. My Dad passed away a month ago. He had Alzheimer's, making his last several months full of challenges and memories.

His frustration at his fading thoughts and memories was difficult to see. We all wanted to help him. In a way it is as though we found his lost memories. We found we tended to remember more and more all the things that made Dad...well, DAD. As he lost the ability to fly, we talked of his antics in the air with him and others. As he struggled to get a name right for someone, we reminisced about when he lived on the family dairy in Hart and of the asparagus he

and mom grew and the jugs of Maple Syrup made each spring by the hundreds. We said good-bye to Dad and knew with him went so many experiences and memories we never even knew about.



*In loving Memory of  
John Alvesteffer*

Easter is our first family holiday without him. Mom is coming over and she will help me in the kitchen making a ham and I'm sure going to let her make the mashed potatoes. I'll watch carefully because I think she has a trick she hasn't yet shared with me about making them so light. You just don't know what the last memory you make with each other is going to be.

Happy Easter to you all...from my family to yours. Treasure each moment.

## April Days of Note:

- April is **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**
- It's also **NATIONAL GARDEN MONTH** ([nationalgardenmonth.org](http://nationalgardenmonth.org))
- April 4 **EASTER**
- April 6 *Son-in-law Don's Birthday*
- April 7 *No Housework Day*
- April 9 *Daughter Paula's WEDDING DAY!*
- April 15 *Daughter Crystal's birthday*
- April 16 *Wear your pajamas to work day*
- April 17 *Husband Appreciation Day*
- April 22 *Earth Day*
- April 28 *Full Moon (the Pink Moon)*

*"Each day of our lives we make deposits in the memory banks of our children. ~Charles R. Swindoll, The Strong Family."*

*Christine DeBrot and her father, Sam Church enjoying memories at a recent Bygone Basics Experience*



# How to Live on 10 Cents a Day

Bygone Basics' kitchen is filled with really interesting and ingenious older kitchen implements, cookbooks, and oddities from generations past. As a guest told me just last week, "every time I look in a direction there is some new old thing to see." The really cool thing is these are not hands off museum displays. Guests at Bygone Basics actually use them if they choose to. A visit really is an Education ADVENTURE.

One of the items in the kitchen is a White House cookbook dated 1901 and is described as a comprehensive cyclopedia (spelled just like that) of information for the home containing cooking, toilet and household recipes, menus, dinner-giving, table etiquette, care of the sick, health suggestions, facts worth knowing, etc. The book is by the Steward of the White House (yes in DC) at the time. It is fascinating!

**Tucked into the book is an article clipped from an old newspaper dated April 30, 1901:**

*How to live on 10 cents a day without limiting your diet to breakfast foods and water has been solved by the household economic conference being held here (Chicago) under the auspices of the Collegiate Alumnae association. The authors of the following menu declare it will keep one healthy and comfortable:*

*For Breakfast - Puree of lima beans, Entire Wheat bread, Butter, Tea, sugar, milk.*

*For Dinner - Lamb Stew, Carrots, Potatoes, Onions, Turnips, Dumplings.*

*For Supper - Brown bread toast, Butter, Sugar, Tea, Milk.*

*For a family of four the total cost of this elaborate menu would be, according to the official collegiate figures, 39.78 cents. Cost for one person ten cents. The nutritive value of this menu is as follows: Proteid - 71.4, Fat - 84.6, Carbo hydrate - 2.63*

I wonder what the same meal would cost today? If someone has nothing better to do and wishes to research this and let me know, I would love to hear the break down for 2010 cost for the same food.



## What is Bygone Basics anyway? What do Guests do there?

Bygone Basics is a very new idea...well an old idea brought into a new concept. ☺ In homes and kitchens of yesteryear family members, neighbors, and friends fueled home, heart, and hearth through cooking and baking and preserving harvests. The younger generations would learn how and why certain foods were handled a certain way through hands on experience...not through cookbooks or the internet. Bygone Basics takes that hands on kitchen concept and helps guests travel back in time to experience this very feeling of artistry learning and "home, heart, and hearth." While learning occurs it is almost unnoticed as it is hands on and interesting and never fails to surprise how easy natural cooking, baking and food preservation can be. Throughout the process, there is conversation, laughter, interesting things to see and use. Valerie serves homemade hearty snacks and beverages. Guests take home their food creations, skills they can use, and enjoy great memories from the experience for a long time after. Printed instructions are also provided to help guests repeat their sessions at home and a certificate of achievement is awarded as well.

## Now Scheduling through April and May...and beyond:

Dates are getting filled fast; please get your date on the calendar so you don't miss this unique activity. Email or call me today to discuss how we can tailor make your time with us. This is an experience based business. Whether it is a bridal shower, sisters, husband and wife, grandparents and grandchildren...or, you really want to get involved in "putting food by" through canning and baking, we have an experience for you.

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*Susan Mulvey & Valerie canning tomatoes*