

"I Can" at Bygone Basics



June 2010



An Unlikely Pair

"They posed together with practiced ease, a pair so appealing and yet so unlikely that you had to wonder what had brought them together: chemistry or ambition?"

Despite the fact that I borrowed this quote from Harvey Weinstein in a description of Hilary Clinton and John McCain, it holds just as true for another odd couple...Asparagus and Strawberries. (Yes...I just used the words asparagus and strawberries in the same sentence as

Hilary Clinton and John McCain ☺) These odd twins hail in the summer harvest season hand in hand as June gets under way. All while a third sibling, less desired, waits to be sought. Rhubarb. Always waiting in the shadow of strawberries.

We have been busy freezing & canning this early harvest. We have pickled Asparagus and strawberry jam for the rest of the year, long after early summer yields to fall. And after a day in the kitchen or after work for dessert...strawberry-rhubarb shortcake topped with a dollop of fresh whipped cream!!!

Gardening Outside the Lines

I'm a bit of a free-spirit, despite my love of heritage, and I tend to get some degree of reaction from my gardening style. These reactions vary from quizzical eyebrows to out-right questioning..."Why are there peppers and pole beans in your flower bed?"

I interplant for various reasons, and rarely in straight lines. Without the luxury of great garden-able ground for both flower and produce gardens, I intermix what space I do have with what is important to me. I also believe that a summer squash vine is as pretty as an ivy....that a pepper plant is as beautiful as a begonia...so, why not mix them and make use of the garden's space with both flowers AND vegetables?

I don't really plant in rows because light and rain and soil types don't occur in rows. They occur in patches. So I plant in patches too. A sunny place is for a trio of peppers next to daisies and a few feet away, some trillium are just waning their bloom in a shady spot.

It is kind of like painting with Picasso's brush. Some call it companion gardening and tout the values of pest preventative flowers like marigold when planted among tomatoes. This a possible truth, and value, but the science remains to be proven absolutely.

While science debates the benefits, there is certainly no harm from this style of gardening. I even use large containers to further my gardening desires while ignoring the minor challenge of little actual ground space. There are pots of pansies and peppers, tomatoes and petunias, pickles and marigold... all on my deck. There must be about 15 of them and I'd guess there'll be more before July rolls around. In one long pot, I have strawberries, chives, a pickle plant, a marigold, oregano, and moss roses.

The caution I have to give is that one must never spray pesticides that are not approved for food use and should mostly stick with soaps and organic remedies.

June/July Days of Note:

- June is NATIONAL FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLES MONTH
- It's also DAIRY MONTH
- June 15 SMILE POWER DAY
- June 17 EAT YOUR VEGGIES DAY
- June 19 NATIONAL HOLLERIN' CONTEST DAY
- June 20 FATHER'S DAY
- June 21 SUMMER SOLSTICE
- June 29 HUG DAY
- July 2 I FORGOT DAY
- July 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY
- July 7 Son John Hanson II Birthday
- July 7 NATIONAL STRAWBERRY SUNDAE DAY
- July 15 COW APPRECIATION DAY
- July 22 HAMMOCK DAY

"Spring being a tough act to follow, so God created June." ~Al Bernstein

Churning Butter, a Bygone Basics Experience



BEER Shampoo

Ok.. now that I have your attention....Bygone Basics' kitchen is filled with really interesting and ingenious older kitchen implements, cookbooks, and oddities from generations past. 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.

In our kitchen is an early version of a bread machine. This clever machine essentially works the same as today's version, without the electricity. It was introduced at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. The instructions are stamped into the lid and really is a good example of early time saving mechanisms for the kitchen. It kneads (by turning the handle briefly) and raises the bread...marketed as a way for the woman of the 1904 kitchen to have time to pursue her interests. This World's fair marked the beginning of the era where machines were prolifically developed not just to advance science and industry, but also to help make everyday life easier.

Also introduced at this world's fair were a tabletop stove, coffeemaker, automatic potato masher, and dishwasher.



Just so you know I wasn't teasing and perhaps a bit in honor of Father's Day:

BEER SHAMPOO

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup beer (darker varieties are better)

1 cup shampoo (any kind)

Boil the beer until it reduces to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. Cool and add to the shampoo. I use the shampoo from a purchased bottle until the product is down by a cup and pour in the reduced beer. Use it to wash your hair as usual.

Leaves your hair with wonderful body and the proteins from the malt and hops in the beer build up the hair helping to repair damage.

The Farmer's Markets are OPEN!!!!

Daughter, Jessica, who is at Michigan State University and in the Army Reserves and ROTC, leads a busy life and has to work to make her budget fit her wage. She called me today all excited. "The Farmer's Market is OPEN!" she said so thrilled and went on about how the items in season were so much less expensive (and apparently, there were also morels there). It did my heart happy to hear that some of the values she learned over the years from me are coming home to roost for her. She is shopping frugally and locally and in season.

There are many area Farm Markets and every city usually has one or two. Get to know the local growers and find out when they have a surplus. Offer to purchase surplus at the end of market day. They are often happy to sell at reduced prices to avoid taking the produce home and having it spoil and go unsold.

Now Scheduling through the Summer...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.

Valerie K. Hanson, Kitchenaire

Bygone Basics
915 S Livingston Street
Whitehall, MI, 49461

Phone: (231) 740-4065
Email: ICan@bygonebasics.com
www.bygonebasics.com



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Bygone Basics Pressure Canner.*