

"I Can" at Bygone Basics



October 2009



Happy Harvest from our family to yours!

Here we are, October...my favorite time of year! (and not just because my birthday and anniversary are in this season ☺)

Where did my summer go? Did we have one? It was a cool wet summer for the west Michigan area. We started June with high hopes of time spent outside and lush growing things. It seems the major growing thing was our lawn! The vegetables fought mildew and blight, cool growing temperatures and, in my own peppers and tomatoes, less pollination. My daughters are now busily picking their pumpkins that they sell roadside at their Grandmother's. The final results aren't in yet on how they fared the weather.

How was your summer? I would absolutely love it if you dropped me a note

Amish Summer Kitchen

When I was a girl, we spent time with dear friends in Indiana. Our families were the same, kid for kid, and had similar work ethics. We really enjoyed these visits. I didn't realize until I was older, just how special the experience was. Our friends were Amish and in the true wisdom that is in a child, we never questioned why there was no electricity..etc. It was just how things were. I absolutely loved their summer kitchen and was amazed to learn they had two kitchens. It seemed a much better method than all of my sisters and my mother

and let me know. Did you or your neighbor have a bountiful garden? Or maybe you are thankful for the local farmer's market.

One thing I'm always sure to say is that not everyone wants to grow a garden, or can a ton of tomatoes. The harvest season can sometimes make one feel as though they must work hard over a bushel of produce. We'll look at this in another section of the newsletter. Just having knowledge of these heritage skills is priceless and make a valuable re-connect with our history, a history that made us who we are. Besides, who knows, you may want, or need, to use these home arts some day.

A Happy Healthy Harvest Season to you...from my family to you.



bumping into each other in the heat of our kitchen. As I reflect today, the camaraderie in that kitchen was why I loved it. There were three generations of women in one huge open space, laughing, and sharing companionship, all the while canning massive quantities of produce...that everyone shared.

Think about "putting food by" with your sister, daughters, or girlfriends in the same spirit found in the Amish kitchen. It has potential as a forever memory.

October/November Special Events:

- October 10 Valerie's Birthday
- October 11 Lakeside Inn Fall Festival
- October 17 daughter Bethanee's Birthday
- October 24 daughter Rachael's wedding
- October 25 daughter Mary Lynn's birthday
- November 1 John and Valerie's Anniversary ☺
- November 9 daughter Paula's Birthday
- November 14 Ladies Day at Hot Rod Harley
- November 26 Thanksgiving

"Just having knowledge of these heritage skills is priceless and make a valuable re-connect with our history, a history that made us who we are."



Apples – Can't you just smell them in the air?

"But I, when I undress me Each night upon my knees Will ask the Lord to bless me, With **apple** pie and cheese." This thought by Eugene Field, an American poet and journalist, captures the wholesome apple. This fruit is at once, healthy to the body and nourishment to the soul with remembrances of simpler, happier, times.

As we look at apple season, square in the face, I share a few thoughts. First, autumn brings with it many different types of produce. To avoid the daunting feeling that I **MUST** preserve it all now, I try to process based, not on when an item was picked but by how long it will be ok in a cool place. Apples are the perfect example. They are ripe now, but, if I am busy canning tomatoes (which don't store in a basket for anyone!) I know I can put apples in a cool place until I am ready for them. Some varieties store for many months.

My favorite is the Ida Red. This apple variety is, in my estimation, the perfect apple. It stores until May in the right circumstances allowing for a fresh apple pie in the depths of winter and has a sweet tart and crisp taste. It is great in salads, dried, in applesauce and pies.

Here is a great old recipe for apple jelly that works wonderfully and requires very few ingredients. I am a big fan of simplicity!

Gather:

3 pounds of tart red apples (surprisingly it works/tastes best if about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the apples are underripe)
3 cups water
3 cups sugar
2 Tablespoons of lemon juice (if you have it on hand)

Cut the apples in small pieces (no peeling or coring necessary...I told you it was simple) and add with the water to a saucepan. Cover. Bring to boil and simmer gently for 20-25 minutes until apples are soft. Press gently through a moistened cheesecloth or jelly bag. You want to end up with 4 cups of juice. Once strained, place in large pan, (I use a dutch oven), with sugar and lemon juice. Boil, bringing the temperature of the jelly to 220 degrees F.

Skim any foam off the surface and pour into 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ pint jelly jars. Seal as you would jams and jellies. I use regular canning lids and rings and then process in boiling water bath for 5 minutes. Then, cool upright on a rack.

Why is it called "CANNING" when we use glass jars?

I was asked this question the other day and it isn't the first time. Fortunately I knew the answer (sometimes that happens). I'll share the answer with all of you. Because, it really is a good question...with an interesting answer.

Relative to tin, glass is fairly new in the history of canning and was initially too expensive to most households. It was very hard to come by due to rough transportation methods and breakage. Originally (since Napoleon, actually, I checked) canning was done in tin cans. They were sealed with a device that crimped the tin lid down and then they were processed in heat. Glass jars were invented by a man with the last name of Mason...the rest was history. If you are curious, I can show you what a tin can sealer looked like for home "canning."

Now Scheduling through December:

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.

Bygone Basics

915 S Livingston Street

Whitehall, MI, 49461

Phone: (231) 740-4065

Email: ICan@bygonebasics.com

www.bygonebasics.com



Valerie with 2 young "butter churners" at the October 11, 2009 Women's Fall Festival at the Lakeside Inn. A great time!!