

RENTON *Magazine*

Volume 5 / No 5 May 2010



**Dog parks –
Where pooches
can play
all day**
page 10

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publisher's note

This month we have some wonderful stories about mothers to share, thanks to you who took the time to share yours with me. I thoroughly enjoyed receiving and reading about your mothers, and I hope you enjoy the stories, too.

* * * * *

For next month, please share stories about your fathers. Like last month, I'll start with a story about mine. I lamented to my husband that I didn't have warm, fuzzy stories about my dad.

"But you have great stories. Dad stories are different from Mom stories," he said.

I do have lots of great stories about my dad. He passed away last fall, and I still miss him every day. Here's one story:

After college, I worked at one of my family's newspapers in the White Mountains of Arizona, a few hours from the main newspaper office and plant. Officially I was a reporter, but had extra duties. One of them was dealing with the landlord, simply because I was on-site and the landlord was too cheap to make a long-distance call.

Each week, we stacked our unsold newspapers outside on the sidewalk as a convenience to the community organization that recycled them to raise money. One time, although the stacks were out of the way, they weren't picked up as expected and spent the night outside. The landlord came by and yelled at me about them.

Shortly after the landlord left the office, my dad called about other issues. He noted that I sounded upset and asked why. When I told him about the papers and the landlord chewing on me, Dad also demanded to know why the papers had been left out overnight and why I hadn't brought them inside. I felt attacked on all sides and was in tears by the end of the call.

A half hour later, one of the department heads called.



Don Kramer
PUBLISHER'S DAD

"I hear you're having a bad day," Doug said.

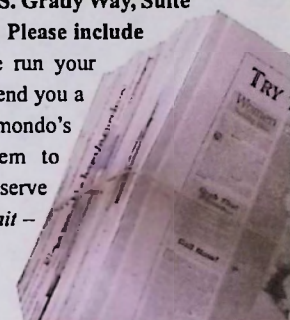
"Yep," I squeezed out.

"Well, not as bad a day as your landlord is having. Just after your dad got off the phone with you, he called your landlord. And told him in no uncertain terms what he would do to him if he ever made you cry again."

Ah. The richness of being held to a higher standard, while knowing someone has your back.

* * * * *

Now it's your turn. Write about your dad, or favorite father figure. Send your story electronically to Dad@RentonMagazine.com, or mail them to us at Renton Magazine, 15 S. Grady Way, Suite 514, Renton WA 98057. Please include a phone number. If we run your story next month, we'll send you a \$25 gift certificate to Armondo's caffè italiano. Keep them to about 200 words; we reserve the right to edit. *Don't wait – the deadline is May 10.*



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cover:

Renton's Unleashed Furry Friends (RUFF) built and maintains the Cedar River Dog Park, Renton's sold off-leash dog park. The dog park gives dogs, and their owners, an opportunity to socialize with others. Photo by James Bavendam. See story on page 10.

important phone #'s

City Hall
425.430.6400

Chamber of Commerce
425.226.4560

Community Center
425.430.6700

Fire Dept
(non emergency)
425.430.7000

Library (Main)
425.430.6610

Library (Highlands)
425.430.6790

Police Dept
(non emergency)
425.430.7500

Puget Sound Energy
1.888.225.5773

Renton Community Foundation
425.264.0516

Renton Magazine
425.271.9300

Renton Museum
425.255.2330

Senior Activity Center
425.430.6633

Valley Medical Center
425.228.3450

upcoming events



may 8
Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

BACKYARD WILDLIFE FESTIVAL

Tukwila
Community
Center
12424 42nd Ave. S.
206-768-2822
Admission: Free

Tukwila's annual Backyard Wildlife Festival will feature day-long festivities focusing on the appreciation of natural wildlife. Highlights will include workshops, wildlife presentations, arts and crafts, and live music. To celebrate the festival's 10th year, the city will dedicate Codiga Park – its newest park and certified backyard wildlife habitat.

2010 Ahead of the Class



may 11

Tuesday,
7-9 p.m.

Renton IKEA
Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

425-226-4560

Admission: Free
(register online at
www.gorenton.com)

The public is welcome to the Renton Chamber of Commerce's 10th annual "Ahead of the Class Excellence in Education" awards banquet. This ceremony recognizes and rewards Renton School District teachers who demonstrate high standards of professionalism and innovation in teaching. The Seattle Seahawks Drumline will provide entertainment. A dessert reception will follow.



may 4

Speaking Truth To Power

In a presentation at the Renton History Museum, Jack Hamann, author of the award-winning "On American Soil: How Justice Became a Casualty of WWII," traces the remarkable story of the reversal of a historic injustice. This program is appropriate for teenage audiences and up.

Tuesday, 5 p.m.

Renton History Museum
235 Mill Ave. S.

425-255-2330

Admission: Free with regular museum admission



may 9

Mother's Day Brunch

Mothers and their children are welcome to brunch at Renton Technical College, hosted by RTC's culinary department. Menu includes an omelet bar, carving station with honey ham or baron of beef, brunch buffet, waffle bar, pasta bar, pastries and fruit, juice, and coffee. Each mother will receive a carnation. Reservations are preferred.

Sunday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Renton Technical College (cafeteria)
3000 N.E. 4th St.

425-235-5845 ext. 4

Cost: \$14/general; \$9 for seniors and children under 10



may 9

Renton Youth Symphony Orchestra Concert

This talented group of young musicians will perform unabridged classical compositions.

Sunday, 3 p.m.

Carco Theatre
1717 S.E. Maple Valley Highway

425-430-6700

Admission: \$10/adults;
\$7/adults over 50 and
youth under 18



upcoming events

may 15

Saturday, 9 a.m.
(check-in begins)

Highlands Library
2902 N.E. 12th St.

425-430-6600

Fee: Free



City of Renton's "Green and Clean" Saturday park volunteer project at Highlands Library is an opportunity to dig in and help maintain this area for everyone to enjoy. Families are welcome. Tools are provided, along with plenty of water and an energizing snack. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult or guardian.

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Ensemble Ballet
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Alice



May 1 & 2

Ensemble Ballet Theatre's artistic director Kimberly Wooten presents an original ballet based on Lewis Carroll's classic, "Alice in Wonderland." With new choreography, EBT takes viewers down the rabbit hole with Alice into a topsy-turvy world of strange and wonderful characters.

Saturday, 2:30 p.m. and
7 p.m.; Sunday, 1:30 p.m.

Renton IKEA
Performing Arts Center

400 S. 2nd St.

1-877-EBT-8771

Admission: \$12/adults;
\$8/students and seniors

www.ebtballet.org



may 21 and 22

2010 Relay for Life of Renton

Relay for Life brings together people nationwide to celebrate the lives of those who have battled cancer and lost, and the strength of survivors who inspire others. Relays based at local high schools allow everyone in the community the opportunity to raise money in the fight against cancer.

Friday, 6 p.m.-
Saturday, noon

Renton Memorial Stadium
405 Logan Ave. N.

425-793-8634

Register at
www.rentonrelay.org



may 22

Renton Rotary's Annual Wine Event

Bring your family and friends to enjoy quality wines provided by more than 15 local and regional wineries. The evening will include a silent auction, a glass and jewelry sale, and food catered by Don and Larry's Catering. All proceeds will support Renton Rotary's purchase of new winter coats for kids in the Renton community.

Saturday, 5 to 10 p.m.

Home of Denny and Bernie Dochnahl
13200 Lake Kathleen Road S.E.

206-947-1120 (Denny)
206-941-1533 (Denis)

To register, email denny@dochnahl.com

Cost: \$60 per person

calendar of events

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Memorial Day Celebration

Monday, May 31, 1-2:30 p.m.

Tahoma National Cemetery will hold its annual Memorial Day Celebration (rain or shine), featuring M.C. Joe Lavoie, chairman of the Tahoma honor guard; speaker Orin Hatton, coordinator for the National Cemetery Administration in Washington, D.C.; and entertainment by the Bellevue Community Band. Students from Tahoma Junior High School will post American flags at each gravesite. Twenty-five hundred to 3,000 guests are expected. Parking is limited.

Tahoma National Cemetery
18600 240th St. (Kent)

425-413-9618

Admission: Free

Rainier Symphony Pops Concert

Saturday, May 15, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 16, 3 p.m.

The Rainier Symphony closes its season with this highly anticipated concert.

Renton IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St. (Saturday)

Foster Performing Arts Center
4242 S. 144th St. (Sunday)

206-781-5618

Admission: \$15/adult; \$10/students and seniors (62 and over); 12 and under are free

www.rainiersymphony.org

Spring Shredathon

Saturday, May 8, 9 a.m.-noon

The City of Renton presents a spring annual document-shredding event at the Sam Club's parking lot. Residents are welcome to bring up to five boxes containing paper documents to be destroyed in a truck-mounted shredder. Boxes should be 12 to 15 inches deep by 10 inches high. Donations of canned goods will be accepted for the Renton Food Bank. This event is co-sponsored by the City of Renton, Renton Police Department, Sam's Club, and Iron Mountain.

Sam's Club parking lot
901 S. Grady Way

425-430-7520

Cost: Free

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The 1957 Miss Wahoo Exhibit

Through May 29

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.;
Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Closed Sundays and Mondays

The Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum presents an exhibit featuring a 1957 replica of Bill Boeing Jr.'s Miss Wahoo. The museum will feature historic photos, artifacts from the original boat, and interpretive displays.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum
5917 S. 196th St. (Kent)

206-764-9453

Admission: \$10/adults; \$5/seniors and children under 16; free for members and children under 6.

www.thunderboats.org

FREE ENTERTAINMENT

Teen Nights

Saturday, May 1, 7-10 p.m.

City of Renton Parks and Recreation provides a safe place for youth ages 11 to 17 to hang out at the Highlands Neighborhood Center. The evening includes games, sports, and movies. Snacks provided.

Highlands Neighborhood Center
800 Edmonds Ave. N.E.

425-430-6700

Admission: Free

Renton History Museum Tours

Third Saturday, 11 a.m.

Tours are appropriate for elementary students through adult. No reservation is necessary unless there are more than five people in your group. In that case, call the museum one day in advance.

Renton History Museum
235 Mill Ave. S.

425-255-2330

Admission: Free

LIBRARY PROGRAMS SCHOOL THEATER

'Just Another High School Play'

Saturday, May 1; Friday and Saturday, May 7 and 8, 7 p.m.

What do you do when the director walks out on opening night? Go on with the show or shows as the case may be. This production has a little bit of everything from the Greeks to modern theater.

Hazen High School Auditorium
1101 Hoquiam Ave. N.E.

425-204-4226

Admission: \$5

SENIOR EVENTS

Renton Senior Activity Center
211 Burnett Ave. N.
425-430-6633

Mother's Day Luncheon

Friday, May 7, 11 a.m.

Mothers will have lunch served to them, and Mary Kay representatives will be available to give hand massages. Pampering begins at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m.

Fee: \$3 (donation if over 60); \$6 (charge if under 60)

Senior Stage Revue

Thursday, May 13, 1 p.m.; Friday, May 14, 7 p.m.

The Renton Senior Activity Center has a lot of talent to show off at its annual Senior Stage Revue. The public is welcome to attend and watch the dancing, singing, and other talents.

Fee: \$3

If you have an upcoming event you want others to know about, we want to hear from you. Please send information about your event to info@pugetsoundpublishing.com or call us at 425-271-9300.



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We need a winner!

I had a wonderful trip to Mariner spring training this year with my daughter Briana, her best friend from college, Laura, and Laura's dad, Tom. We were quite a sight – two aging, gray-haired men and two young and charming college graduates.

We spent the better part of the week taking in Mariner games and visiting other Cactus League facilities. There was truly an air of excitement that only a new season can bring. The off-season acquisitions, the potential strength of our pitching staff, and the fact that Griffey came back for another year have sports fans hoping.

Everywhere we went in the greater Phoenix area we saw people sporting Mariner clothing. We all wore ours and it made us instant family members. Complete strangers were no longer strangers at all. It became a source of great fun inquiring of others how they thought the season was going to unwind.

I am convinced that we need a winner. We need the Mariners to go all the way to the World Series and clinch it. There have been just too many disappointments these last few years. It became evident when the Sonics left town that we were on a downward spiral. I still remember when they won the NBA championship and what that did to our area.

The Husky and the Cougs football programs are both in the rebuilding stage, which offers some hope after several very dismal years. The Seahawks have come to

Renton, and that has been a great addition. Now they need to make something happen on the field.

I don't want to overlook the Seattle Storm and the Seattle Sounders, who have performed well and provided us at least with some thrill. I was really hoping the Huskies were going to get by the Sweet Sixteen. Believe me I had to up my heart medication for Pac 10 tournament and NCAA playoff games.

The reason I believe we need a win has little to do with the sports themselves or the competition that is inherent. I want a World Series because it will bring a spirit that transcends any differences that we might have and will mold us into a close-knit community, at least for a few weeks. It will bring to our area what I experienced at spring training – nobody is a stranger.

I have not felt that same experience since the days following 911 when we as a whole country were united, and you know what has happened since then. We have become more polarized than any time in American history with perhaps the Civil War trumping. I long for a renewed unity.

We have been very patient in this region. I would like to believe that this year, maybe just maybe, it will be our turn. Go Mariners!



Kirby Unti
COLUMNIST

Renton Magazine columnist Kirby Unti is pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in the Renton Highlands.

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against cancer

*B*ecause cancer never sleeps, Relay for Life teams keep going, one footfall at a time, around and around the track, for 18 hours.

Renton's Relay for Life starts at 6 p.m. Friday, May 21, and ends at noon Saturday. Renton Memorial Stadium offers a track and camping space for the teams, and bleachers for supporters and spectators.

Hundreds of participants are expected, and tens of thousands of dollars will be raised. As of mid-April, 44 teams with 562 participants had pledged more than \$55,000.

Lisa Walker of Renton learned she had breast cancer in 2006. She's participated in the American Cancer Society event ever since.

"I do it because I was a cancer survivor, and so people can see how far we've come along," she says.

Each Relay for Life starts with a Survivors Lap, which encourages survivors to circle the track together to celebrate their victories over cancer.

At night, the Luminaria Ceremony is a time of remembrance. Participants often walk a lap in silence, honoring people who have been touched by cancer. Each luminaria bag bears the name of a person.

Bands will play to keep up the spirits of the walkers. Young and old, sick and well, they walk side by side to raise money and awareness for a disease that never sleeps. And while some walk, teammates will rest up for their turn on the track.

Karyn Johnson, 15, participated in the 2009 event. She sat on the infield turf in a circle of high schoolers, enjoying the camaraderie of guitar music and card-playing.

"I wanted to come and support, and hang out with friends, too," she said.

STORY BY DIANA KRAMER
PHOTO BY CELESTE GRACEY

For more information on the Internet, to register or to donate, do a Google search for "Renton Relay for Life."



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Warm weather primer:

*Save energy,
save money*

BY JUDY DUNN

The great thing about "green" is that you can usually help the environment and save money at the same time. Whether it's a new, energy-efficient appliance or simpler ways to save on your power, spring is a perfect time to start planning.

With the federal government's Energy Star rebates, replacing your old, wasteful refrigerator or clothes washer can put cash in your pocket.

"The appliance industry is mandated by the federal government to create products that save energy and protect the environment," said King Parker, owner of King and Bunnys Appliances in the Renton Highlands.

Since 1992, when the voluntary labeling program went into effect, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy have promoted the Energy Star program as a way to identify energy-efficient products and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Washington state will receive \$5.6 million for the federal government's Cash for Appliances rebate program. It targets refrigerators and clothes washers because they are two of the most energy-intensive appliances in the home. Homeowners who replace their appliances with quali-

ENERGY STAR Cash for appliances rebates

Started: March 15, 2010

Ends: When funds run out- first come, first served

Total available: \$5,607,450 statewide

Rebates: \$75 for qualifying* ENERGY STAR refrigerators; \$100 for clothes washers

* For more information, visit www.energystar.gov or <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/1226/default.aspx#613>

fied Energy Star models get rebates of \$100 for the purchase of a clothes washer and \$75 for a refrigerator.

"Green" is the big word these days," said Parker. "We are excited to be an Energy Star dealer."

For consumers with no funds for an appliance upgrade now, there are other, less expensive ways to save energy and cut power costs.

MacKenzie McDowell, public relations analyst for Puget Sound Energy, shared some tips for saving energy in the summer months.

"We recommend you start with the easiest, lowest-cost, highest-value options," MacKenzie said.

"Then, as your budget, schedule and inclinations allow," she continued, "you can move down the list to more involved energy-saving options requiring a higher investment."

Puget Sound Energy's advice for the top five lowest-cost, highest return alternatives?:

- Open windows and doors in the evening and early morning when it's cooler outside. Raise windows high on the warm side of the house and lower on the cool side to create a good cross-ventilation. Also, ENERGY STAR ceiling fans use 50 percent less energy than conventional models.
- Use a clothesline instead of the clothes dryer on warm days.
- Refrigerators are one of the biggest energy-wasting appliances, so open

Some Renton stores that carry CFL bulbs

Ace Hardware/Fairwood, 14100 SE Petrovsky Rd.

Ace Hardware/Highlands
4601A NE Sunset Blvd

Bartell Drugs
16940 116th Ave SE

Bartell Drugs
4700 NE 4th Street

Fred Meyer
17801 108th Ave SE

Fred Meyer
365 Renton Center Way

McLendon Hardware
440 Rainier Ave S

Walgreens
275 Rainer Ave S

Walgreens
3011 NE Sunset Blvd.

the door sparingly and for as short a time as possible.

- Use the outdoor barbecue instead of the oven when you can and run only full loads of dishes in the dishwasher, using the "no heat" option for the drying cycle.
- Replace your heat-generating incandescent light bulbs with ENERGY STAR-qualified compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs and fixtures. They use up to 75 percent less energy and last up to 10 times longer.
- And check your local appliance store or the Energy Star Web site for more information on the rebates.

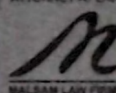
"We bought extra product in anticipation of this event," Parker said, "and have a good supply of qualifying appliances in stock."

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Windermere



Off-leash park is a social draw for dogs and their

Each night after work, Adam Samp takes his 14-month-old Australian shepherd named Ozzy to Renton's one and only off-the-leash dog park.

The Cedar River Dog Park is next to the Cedar River Trail, across the river from Renton's Community Center. A small graveled parking lot, next to the river, is a short walk from the park. The 3.5 acre park is enclosed with a rustic split rail fence, lined with mesh wire. A smaller fenced area is designated for small or shy dogs to play and socialize at their own pace.

It's a daily outing for Samp and Ozzy because Samp wants the dog "to play, and it's good socializing." Samp hopes to get some quiet studying done as Ozzy runs, but he usually ends up throwing a tennis ball the entire time.

Mike and Lanea Wilson, also of Renton, take their year old golden retriever named Riley and their four month old black "mutt" named Ty about once a week.

"The river is a big draw," says Mike. Usually after some play time they take

Riley down to the river adjacent to the parking lot to splash around and cool off.

"Riley loves it, but Ty is still getting used to the idea of the river," says Mike. The Wilsons like the "nice and open area," and the fact that the park is easy to get to.

Although the park is for the dogs, there is a sense of community among the owners.

"People are friendly," says Samp, who is open to chatting between tennis ball launches. As the days have gotten warmer and longer, Samp has noticed more visitors. The Wilsons agree.

"There are usually five to six other owners, but the park is never crowded," says Mike. The park was built and is managed by RUFF, Renton's Unleashed Furry Friends. Owners are required to pick up after their dogs, and small plas-

tic bags are available as well as garbage cans. Dogs that are showing aggressive behavior must be removed by their owners immediately.

Children are not allowed to run with the dogs for safety reasons. Dogs under 4 months old and female dogs in heat are prohibited. No people food is allowed inside the enclosed fenced area, and owners are asked to supply their dogs' own water. All dogs must be licensed and vaccinated.

The park is still in its "pilot project stage," and RUFF is looking to improve and maintain the facility. More informa-

tion about contributing funds and talents is available on the Internet at v

Humans

BY KIM COLLETTE



Top right, Dog parks turn strangers into friends in moments. Left, Ko Ly of Renton brings his pup, Curley, for exercise and to gain important social skills with other dogs. Below, On Saturday mornings,

14-month-old Leo knows it's dog-park-day and practically drags Marina Golub to the park. Far left, Large areas and fences allow dogs to run in ways they can't at home. Photos by James Bavendam.



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men's mental health

Depressed men may need a little help from friends

BY ANDREW FICKES

*G*rowing up in a society where men are expected to be macho and tough, men with depression are often too embarrassed to talk to others and share their feelings.

But with the American economy in a downturn, family physicians—like Bob Thompson at Valley Medical Center—are seeing more and more men showing symptoms of depression and describing situational causes like, “I can’t find work,” or “I’m being too overworked.”

“It’s so often that men are the last to seek treatment,” Thompson said. “Depression is more common among men than people recognize, because it’s not talked about. It’s under-recognized, and underappreciated.”

Thompson said depression can occur in all age groups of men, from teenagers feeling withdrawn at school, to middle-aged men feeling unfulfilled at work, to widowed men missing their



loved one and unable to perform physical work.

“I see a lot of depression in men associated with heart disease and cancer or chronic pain, like chronic back pain,” Thompson said. “All of this threatens their ability to support their families. They’re no longer as confident and capable of earning a good income and produce at a level that they’re used to.”

Symptoms of depression include irritability, anger, a short fuse, withdrawing from friends and family, not sleeping and eating well, and drinking more.

Thompson recommends a treatment regimen of adequate sleep (eight to nine hours of rest a night); a healthier diet, eliminating sugars, caffeine, and alcohol; and exercise. Exercise helps release endorphins in the brain that counter fatigue and irritability.

“For those who are overworked, they should take time off,” he said. “Take three-day weekends and find ways of getting into recreation and relaxation.”

Thompson said clearly what a lot of men need is someone to talk to. Men should seek out counseling. If cost is an issue, often times having a close group of friends that you confide in is good.

“For a lot of men, having a close group of friends where they’re able to share more deeply often helps to avoid deeper depression,” he said.

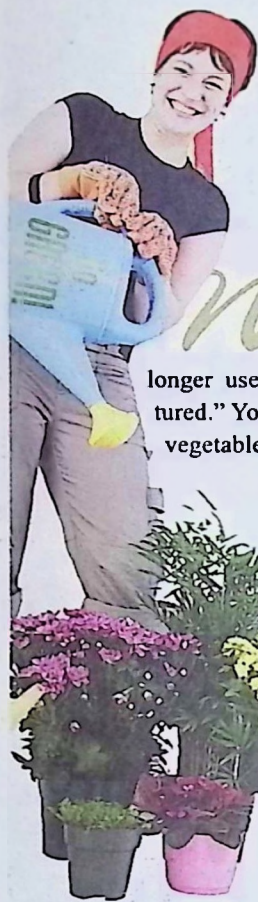
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around the garden



Making the move to *organic* gardening

BY ELAINE ANDERSON

What does it mean to be a gardener who uses only organic methods? It means you will no longer use pesticides and fertilizers that are "manufactured." You will use only natural compounds to keep your vegetables and ornamentals healthy and happy.

There are many excellent reasons to make this decision. If you are a vegetable gardener, you no doubt prefer not to ingest chemicals with your dinner. Even if you don't grow veggies (and you aren't munching on your ornamentals), moving away from synthetic pesticides and fertilizers will make your environment a safer,

more healthful one. It will reduce pollution of our water and the harm done by synthetic chemicals to beneficial insects, other creatures, children, and, yes, even adults.

But, just because something is natural doesn't mean it's safe. Take nicotine. It kills pests faster than a speeding bullet. And, it's natural! Admittedly, this is an extreme example, because use of nicotine has been banned for all commercial organic growers. It's difficult for home gardeners to find it, but some do and use it believing that because it's natural, it is safe. The truth is, it's fast, it's effective, and it's deadly.

My point is, don't be fooled by the word "natural." Choose your natural pesticides just as carefully as you would synthetic ones. Remember, too, that overuse of a natural fertilizer can be as harmful as overuse of a synthetic one. They will both end up leaching into the soil and polluting our water.

Organic gardeners need to be just as educated, even more so, about the substances they use as gar-

deners who use synthetic compounds. To be successful, they must actually have a greater knowledge of what their plants need to remain healthy. Organic gardeners can't plant willy-nilly, knowing they can fall back on an arsenal of chemicals if a plant's not behaving the way it should. Actually, this method is doomed to fail eventually anyway.

Taking time to learn the various cultural requirements of the plants in your garden and providing for them will, in many cases, eliminate the need for treatment, natural or otherwise.

Do your homework, and you'll earn an A-plus when you make the move to organic gardening.

Elaine Anderson is the Washington State University Extension coordinator for the King County Master Gardener Program. The program, funded by King County and WSU, provides free, environmentally friendly gardening advice to home gardeners. For answers to your questions about organic gardening and other topics, call the Master Gardener Phone Clinic at 206-296-3440.

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- Guided Brd Tour - 9:45 a.m.
- Ed Hume, Vegetable Gardening - 11:30 a.m.
- Do garden remedies really work? - 1 p.m.
- Seattle Tilth, Composting at home - 2 p.m.
- Certified Garden Tour, get maps at Festival - 3-5 p.m.

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fresh tastes

Try a starchy side dish with an **Ethiopian** flair

Several years ago one of the couples for whom I catered a wedding reception, wanted an international menu. We came up with a special dish for each continent, and it was a fun and creative menu. They invited my son and me to an Ethiopian restaurant, where we sampled foods from Africa.

African food is bold, colorful and has rich earthy flavors and strong spicy undertones. Food is precious and sometimes hard to obtain. Recipes are passed down traditionally from generation to generation. The climate is harsh, and people work hard sowing seeds, rearing livestock, gathering wood to fuel the fire and fetching water to carry back home. Most of the population of Africa is rural, scraping out a living by growing crops and selling them daily at nearby marketplaces.

consistencies. It accompanies most meals and can be called sadza, ugali, bogobe or meallepap, depending on the region. To accompany stews, it is rolled into a ball by hand and dipped into the sauce.

Spices are produced in vast amounts and play an important role in flavoring African foods. Many basic recipes for spice mixtures are kept on hand to add flavor to foods such as harissa, niter kebbeh, ras el hanout, berbere and biltong. Ginger, fenugreek seeds, tamarind, sumac, and cardamom are used frequently in these mixtures.

wood to burn down to proper cooking temperature. Food is sometimes buried in the coals or cooked over a grate.

Meat is never barbecued with a sauce, but sometimes a seasoning rub is used. The other way Africans use meat is in pots of soups and stews, which are prepared in large quantities, as people tend to live together in close-knit villages.

Teff is a nutty, nutritious grain which grows in the highlands of Ethiopia and is the basis for injera, the bread which is served at all Ethiopian meals. Making

Mealie is the African word for maize. Mealies are grown in gardens carefully tended by women. After harvesting, it can be eaten fresh or dried, husked and ground into mealie meal. It is a staple dish of Africa and cooked to make porridges of various



CHRISTIE KATONA

Christie Katona is the owner of Christie's Catering Inc. in Renton. She attended the Cordon Bleu in London, has authored many cookbooks, taught cooking classes for many years and worked as a restaurant consultant. More recipes and suggestions can be found at www.Christies-Catering.com.

Africans use a variety of grains as well. Bulgar, a type of cracked wheat, is used frequently in North Africa, as is cous-cous. Cassava is a plant that can be poisonous unless cooked. It was brought to Africa by Spanish and Portuguese traders and is a food staple. The leaves are used as a vegetable, and the roots are cooked and pounded into a mash called fufu.

Braais, or barbecues, are synonymous with African life. This tradition stems from early days of explorers, hunters, pioneers and safaris. To start the fire, a ball of grass is placed in a circle of stone, small twigs are added and then large logs. It takes about an hour-and-a-half for the

injera is an art and very time consuming. The teff grain is pounded into a flour and then made into a dough. The dough is fermented for at least three days and then cooked over a wood fire in an enormous skillet. It looks somewhat like a huge tortilla. At each Ethiopian meal, a piece of injera is draped over the table and a variety of stews are ladled over the top. Diners tear off a piece of injera and scoop up the stew, which has soaked into the bread.

As I recall, we offered a chicken dish with peanut sauce to go with the injera. Here are some other starches that will lend a creative African flair to a simple grilled chicken or fish entrée.

Mango Couscous

Serves 4

you will need

1 cup couscous	1 jalapeno chili, seeds and ribs removed, finely chopped	Juice of one lime
2 Tbs. olive oil		1/4 cup chopped cilantro
1 clove garlic, minced		1/4 cup chopped parsley
1 ripe mango, peeled, pitted and diced	1/2 cup raisins	Salt and white pepper to taste
	1 ripe tomato, diced	

directions

Prepare couscous according to package directions. Heat olive oil and sauté garlic, mango and jalapeno; stir until mango begins to turn golden brown. Add remaining ingredients and combine. Heat through and serve hot or it also can be served at room temperature.



Pomegranate Rice

Serves 6

To seed pomegranates, cut fruit in half and submerge in cool water. Release seeds using your fingers between the segments.

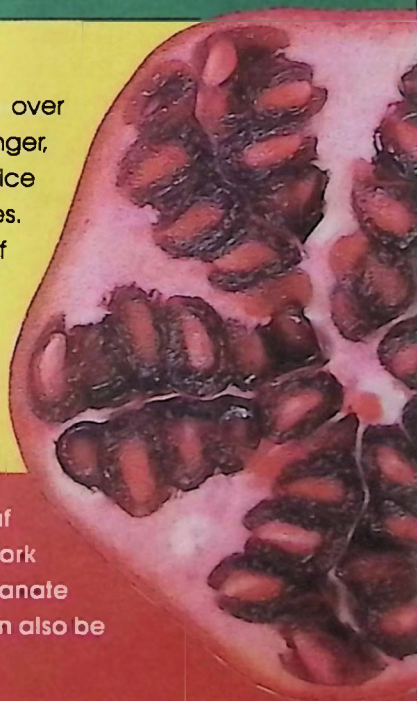
you will need

2 cups long grain white rice	1 cinnamon stick
1/2 cup olive oil	1 bay leaf
2 shallots, minced	3 cups chicken stock
One 2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated	1/2 cup pistachios
	Seeds from two pomegranates

directions

Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat; add shallots, ginger, cinnamon and rice, stirring until rice is golden brown, about 5 minutes. Add chicken stock and bay leaf and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to simmer. Simmer for 15 minutes, remove from heat and let sit, covered, for about 10 minutes or until all liq-

uid is absorbed. Remove bay leaf and cinnamon stick. Fluff with a fork and add pistachios and pomegranate seeds, serve immediately or it can also be served at room temperature.




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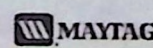
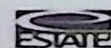


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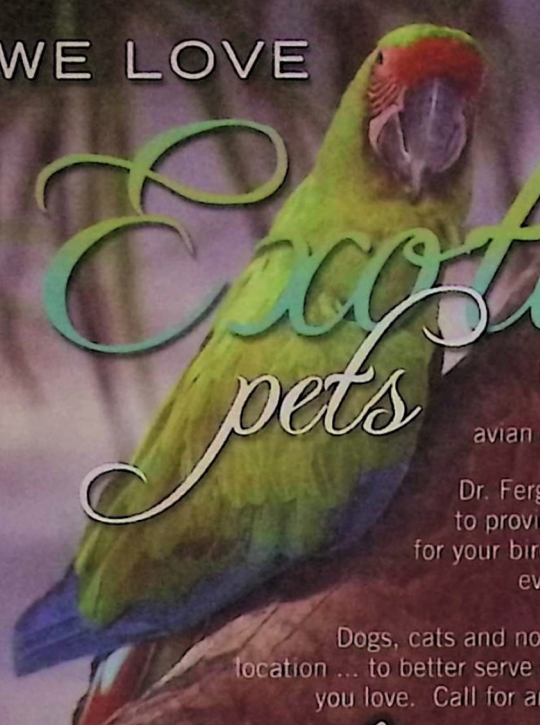
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pet care

Your diet may not be fit for a dog

BY DR. KATHLEEN CONNELL

You may know that chocolate and caffeine are bad for your pets, but do you know about other dangerous foods? Pet owners should be aware of a number of foods: Alcohol can cause vomiting, diarrhea, decreased coordination and other central nervous system effects, difficulty breathing, tremors, abnormal blood acidity, coma and even death.

Milk: Just like people, many pets are lactose intolerant. Feeding milk and milk-based products can result in diarrhea or digestive disturbances in both cats and dogs.

Salt: High levels of salt can cause excessive drinking, urination and toxicity. Signs of excessive salt intake include vomiting, diarrhea, depression, tremors, high temperature, seizures and even death.

Avocados can cause vomiting and diarrhea in dogs. Birds and rodents are even more sensitive to this fruit and can develop difficulty breathing, fluid accumulation around the heart and even death.

Macadamia nuts can cause weakness, depression, vomiting, tremors and high temperatures in dogs, sometimes within 12 hours.

Grapes and raisins affect the kidneys and can cause kidney failure. In a pet already coping with a current health problem, symptoms may be more dramatic. Interestingly, we still don't know completely why grapes and raisins do this.

Uncooked yeast dough can rise and cause gas accumulation in your pet's digestive tract. Dough and other uncooked foods should not be offered as treats.



PHOTO COURTESY OF
HENRY MOORE JR., BCU/WSU

We test raw eggs to prevent human disease. Pets should not eat raw eggs either.

Raw foods: Some owners like to feed raw diets. Raw or undercooked meats, eggs and bones could be contaminated with Salmonella and E. coli. Raw eggs contain an enzyme that interferes with your pet's absorption of a necessary B vitamin. Raw and cooked bones pose a choking danger or can become lodged in your dog's stomach or intestines.

Xylitol is a sweetener used in gum, candy, toothpaste and other products. Signs of poisoning by this popular sweetener include vomiting, lethargy and loss of coordination. The pet could lie down and develop seizures. Xylitol affects liver function, so elevated liver enzymes are seen on blood tests and liver failure can occur.

Onions, garlic and chives can cause irritation of the stomach and intestines and can cause damage to red blood cells. Cats are more susceptible, but dogs can also suffer if large amounts of these vegetables are eaten.

If you suspect your pet has eaten anything toxic or poisonous, contact your veterinarian immediately.

For more information on plants, foods and household products poisonous to pets, contact the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center. Information is available 24 hours per day by calling 1-888-426-4435. You can also visit the Web site, <http://www.aspc.org/pet-care/poison-control>.

Dr. Kathy Connell, DVM, owns and operates Foxglove Consulting in Olympia

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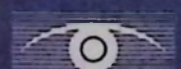
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Mothers -
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stories from our
readers, sent in to
share with you.
We hope you
enjoy them.

I grew up in a house directly across the street from a railroad yard, where I got my first glimpse of homelessness and compassion.

The freight trains had "travelers" called "hobos" who would ride in the empty freight cars. When there was a layover or a long stop, some would find their way down to our house looking for a meal.

For a child, this was scary, especially since my dad was working. So while I was busily going around the house and locking

all the windows and doors, my mom, on the other hand, would busily go into the kitchen and make them lunch, which they ate on our front porch.

No one was ever threatening, just extremely thankful.

I will always remember my mom being so open and willing to feed the hungry. That lesson in compassion has stayed with me a lifetime.

♥ TISH GREGORY, RENTON



With five children to feed and living in the fruit-rich Spokane Valley, Mom canned all summer. She would get us up before first light to pick strawberries in the early, early morning when everything was still wet with dew. We, along with neighbors, would pile into cars and head for the u-pick strawberry fields, intent on picking several flats of strawberries. Just as the sun would start to beat on our backs, we would be finished! At home, Mom would put us to work: sort, clean, cut and sieve.

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Magically jars of jam would appear in our cellar. Pears and peaches were easier on us kids because we bought those in flats. But the system was the same. By the end of summer our cellar would be lined with jams and jellies, pears, peaches, beans, and tomatoes. My favorite was pears because Mom would color them green, yellow, blue, pink and white. My! They made a pretty sight. Thanks, Mom, for feeding us with such warm and happy memories.

♥ GAYLE COLLINS, RENTON

As I find a box of seashells in the closet, I think about how Mom and I walked for miles along Florida beaches collecting shells. After returning home, I sat beside Mom while she labeled each shell with its scientific name and

then glued them on a large display board.

I wish I was as talented at organizing as Mom, but she valued my creativity. Mom wrote poems, which I illustrated with swirls of crayon. Mom later praised my colorful artwork. I can close my eyes and feel a warm glow of comfort as I remember the living room of my childhood home where my artwork graced the walls for years.

Mom often told the story about walking side by side with her best childhood friend.

"Pan," said Mom.

"Y mantequilla," chimed her friend. Then they linked arms and laughed. Mom and I were bread and butter as well.

♥ LINDA TIEDERMAN, NEWCASTLE

My mom came from Illinois and, when I was

5, she took my three younger brothers, my special sister and myself back by train to meet her family. The dining car was nine cars up and we were scared of crossing between them, and so she would walk us across, one at a time. Finally, a conductor noticed and, although it was against the rules, someone would come back, take our order and bring us our food.

We were extremely poor but Mom said, "In this country, everyone is equal; we could be anything we wanted to be, no matter what!" When nine of us would clamor about whom she loved best, she would always say she loved us all individually, for the special people we were.

I know I am special and wrapped with love that has helped me through the most dire times of my life. Thanks, Mom!

♥ MARY TOBIN, NEWCASTLE

My favorite mom story was when we were camping in 1960s Canada and we had my cousin with us. The rangers had come around and warned that there were bear in the area and to be careful. The next afternoon my cousin and I were on our way to the toilets, really more like outhouses. All of the sudden there was this "ugh-ugh" sound that to my cousin's ears was the bear, and we were in clear and present danger. She took off, shrieking at the top of her lungs. I was a distance behind her and saw my mom come out with a devilish grin, so I took off and shouted to the entire campground that it wasn't a bear but my mom! To this day I can get a rise out of my cousin and make my mom's eyes twinkle with this story.

♥ GLENDA JOHNSON, RENTON

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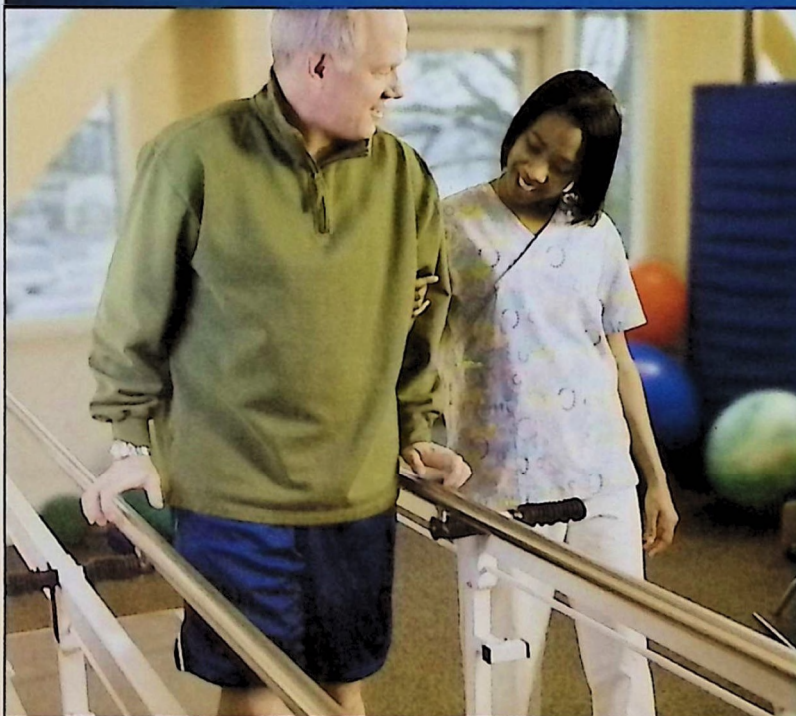
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