



Whidbey Nibbles

Slow Food Whidbey Island

a Washington nonprofit corporation

Promoting tasty, healthy and local food.

*Good cooking is the result of a balance struck between frugality and liberality ***.
The fact that every crop is of short duration promotes a spirit of making the best of it
while it lasts and conserving part of it for future use.*

Patience Gray, **HONEY FROM A WEED**

FRESH SHEET

Seasonal Eating

By Jim Hicken

Making the best of the crop when in season, and conserving part of it for future use. A balance struck between frugality and liberality.

Patience Gray elegantly expresses the seasonality of traditional cooking and eating. Before the evolution of refrigeration and a national, then an international food supply network, our diet was limited, indeed defined, by what was available in our immediate locality. Our diet was further limited by what we could grow, gather or hunt in the season we ate it,

plus what we could cache or preserve for the starving times.

This wintertime edition of Whidbey Nibbles will have several pieces reflecting the seasonality of eating and the seasonality of cooking.

Sue Ellen White, author and canning instructor, and Tarey Kay, expert canner and canning judge, will share a bit about the **history of preservation and canning**. Merv Floyd shares a recipe using local bounty and the easiest of preservation methods: **root cellaring** and **freezing**. I'll include a recipe for an unusual rye bread with home **pickled** red cabbage in lieu of sauerkraut. And we will have a few photos of winter larder eating. And since preserving is based on growing or buying in season and in

MARCH 2014 BILL OF FARE

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*** For reflections upon fasting and feasting, see excerpts from Patience Gray's **HONEY FROM A WEED** sprinkled throughout this issue. Available at Sno-Isle Library. ***

plentiful amounts, Anza Muenchow takes us to the garden with a **pea primer**.

While preserving was essential for survival to our ancestors, today home canned goods have made their way out of the subsistence larder to the food show airways and high end restaurants. The kitchen backdrop of PBS's John Besh, for example, includes jars of preserved bounty, which often land in his pot.

And restaurants have discovered a market for dishes made with on-site pickled and other highly flavored ingredients or accents. Examples include the Woodberry Kitchen in Baltimore, MD; Farmstead in Providence, RI; Blackberry Farm in Walland, TN; and locally, the Herbfarm.¹

Indeed, one characteristic of many home preserved goods is the highly spiced and highly developed flavor profile they present. As we know, before refrigeration, and before safe, reliable canning, spices and smoking/drying were used to preserve foods (and mask off-flavors). Both of these processes had as a byproduct the introduction of new and concentrated

flavors. TV and restaurant chefs are taking advantage of this flavor bonanza and we can too.

And this flavor bonanza comes from the easiest preserving processes, which happily are the ones requiring the least investment in equipment. Home canned foods sometimes have earned the reputation of being bland, overcooked and mushy; yet this partially deserved criticism is most apt for pressure canned foods. The tastier dishes – jams and jellies, pickles and relishes, jerkies and fruit leathers, for example, all come from more primitive, and easier to learn and do methods – methods which do not require much in the way of equipment. So it is worth including preserved goods in your kitchen skills quiver, not just for the lean seasons, but for the taste.

[Click here to jump to Bill of Fare](#)



Canning jar, à la Nicholas Appert.

A Brief History of Canning

By Tarey Kay and Sue Ellen White

Anyone who has planned and packed meals for a group heading off on a backpack, fishing or kayak trip can identify with the truism, “an army marches on its stomach,” which has been attributed to both Frederick the Great and to Napoleon Bonaparte.

As late as the American Revolution, soldiers were expected to forage for part of their sustenance. Nutritional requirements were often fulfilled by plundering civilian stores, an aid in demoralizing enemy territory as well as fulfilling the need for adequate calories to march and fight.

Early Greeks and Persians began the practice of supply trains, arrangements with merchants and food caches to feed their troops, and the great Roman army became known for having the most advanced logistics for food supply in the ancient world.

¹ nytimes.com/2012/12/05.

ORIGINS

Napoleon Bonaparte became frustrated with the problems of feeding his vast army and in 1795 offered a prize with the princely sum of 12,000 francs for the person who perfected a method of preserving food.

A French chef and confectioner, Nicholas Appert, took up the challenge and for about 15 years experimented with ways to preserve foods such as soups, dairy, jellies, vegetables and juices. He placed the food in glass bottles, sealed them with cork and wax or pitch and placed them in boiling water. Voilà! Chef Nicholas in 1809 won the prize, the appreciation of his emperor and La Maison Appert became the first canning factory.

Bonaparte, meanwhile, learned a lesson during his 1812 winter campaign across the bleak Russian landscape when he dismissed his supply trains as too burdensome, expecting his troops to live off their surroundings. Of his 600,000 soldiers, 500,000 died.

Records indicate that the Dutch began packing heated meat, covered by fat, into tinned iron containers and secured by soldered lids as early as 1772. But their process, like that of the French was a military top secret.

Successfully feeding an army on the move gave one's side a considerable advantage. Civilians went about in their accustomed ways: drying, salting, brining, sugaring and potting (cooked meat immersed in fat to exclude air, which we now call a confit).

Peter Durand, a British merchant, took the process to the next level soon after, using tinned cans and obtaining a patent, which he sold in 1812 to two businessmen who, by 1813, were marketing to the British Army.

As advanced as these methods were, their developers had no understanding of why canning worked. That would have to wait until the work of Louis Pasteur identified microbes as the cause of spoilage; he introduced

pasteurization in 1864.

And early on, it was not as convenient as one might imagine. Hungry diners had to force the can open with a knife, bayonet or smash it with a rock, as the first effective can openers were not introduced until the mid-1850s.

HOME CANNING

Commercial canning of food always increased during wars and it was at about the time of the Civil War that a New York tinsmith, John Landis Mason, developed a system that would revolutionize food preservation for the home market. His invention of the

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a Washington nonprofit corporation, and

A convivium of Slow Food USA

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reusable glass jar with threaded rim and matching tin lid with a rubber gasket for the seal meant that families could invest in Mason's jars and safely use them again and again.

Combined with the popularization of the cast-iron kitchen stove and a drop in the price of refined sugar, home preservation took off in the 1880s. These first efforts, though, focused on jams, ketchup, pickles, tomatoes and fruits as the equipment and techniques for preserving at home low-acid foods such as meat and vegetables had not yet been developed.

The charming wire-clamped jars such as Lightning and Atlas — which employed a glass lid and rubber gasket held down by a moveable wire for sealing — were used from the late 19th century until the 1960s and are popular now, along with their replicas, as decorative objects.



Early home pressure canner — about 1915.

The first wide-mouth, self-sealing jars were made in 1903 by Alexander Kerr, who perfected his invention a dozen years later with the introduction of the flat metal lid, ring and jar system we use today. The wide mouth made it easier to get the food into the jars and the gasket material built into the lid was a simpler way to seal the jars.

The open-kettle method for high-acid foods was the first home standard: boiling jam or brine, and product, was poured to overflowing in a hot, sterilized jar and then the rubber seal and screw lid secured the contents. This ensured that the components were sterilized and subsequently safe to eat. Another method for high-sugar treats such as jams and jellies was to cook them to the desired thickness, pour into small jars and then top with a layer of paraffin to seal.

Older readers might remember swiping a finger along the edge of the wax-sealed jam in Grandma's pantry to taste the sweet, thick syrup that had seeped out.

Of course, now your local county extension agent would faint at the mention of these methods of canning, which were succeeded by the cold-pack method in which blanched or fresh foods are packed in clean jars, covered in liquid, sealed and then immersed in hot water for a specified time. Other methods followed, including hot pack and pressure canning.

PATRIOTISM & PRIVATION

With the United States' entry into World War I, provisioning an overseas army resulted in cuts on the home front. In April of 1917, Herbert Hoover was appointed head of the Food Administration, which encouraged citizens to have Meatless Mondays and Wheatless Wednesdays, plant gardens and preserve the harvest. Hoover wrote that his message was "Go back to simple food, simple clothes, simple pleasures. Pray hard, work hard, sleep hard and play hard. Do it all courageously and cheerfully."

The government printed posters entreating people to support these efforts for the boys overseas and civilians responded enthusiastically, with ever-more home canners. It was about this time that steam pressure canners came into use. Some towns set up community-run canning centers, complete with instructors, so everyone could can up the local harvest. As late as the 1970s, there was a custom cannery in Toppenish, Washington, where residents brought everything from asparagus to tomatoes and took it home in neat metal cans.

Permaculture teacher Michael Pilarski recalled his memories of the Toppenish facility:

"In 1973 and 1974, I worked at one of the last custom canneries left in Washington state, the Toppenish Custom Cannery in the Yakima valley. Each day during the growing



1918 patriotic poster encouraging canning (note variety of jars).

season, the cannery was filled with a bedlam of hundreds of people peeling, slicing, dicing and pureeing all kinds of fruits and vegetables they had grown, gathered or bought locally. They filled cans with their own products and recipes.

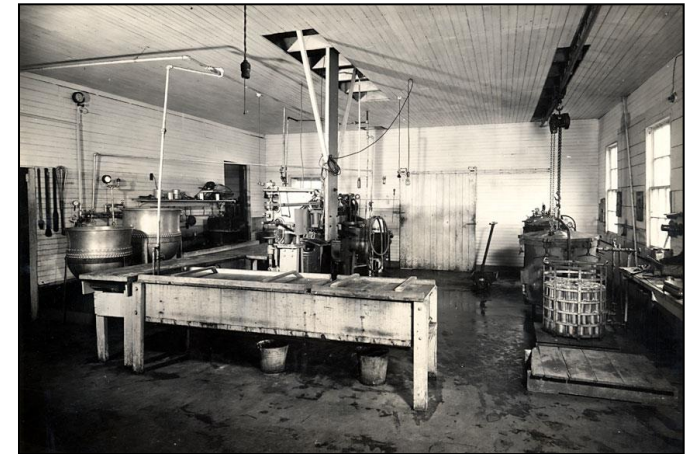
"Our small cannery crew heated the cans (and contents), ran them through the lidding machine and then pressure cooked the cans for specified times depending on the contents. Some things like salmon and meats were cooked longer. The customers picked their

cans up the next day when the cans had cooled down. The noise was deafening and the languages were many. The customer base included Hispanics, Indians (half the Yakima valley is on the Yakama Reservation), Filipinos, Japanese, African-Americans, Southerners and all kinds of whites. It was a real melting pot of a crowd and it was all

focused on food. Local food for local people.

"There used to be about 50 custom canneries around the state in the mid-1900s. There is not a one left. Perhaps it is time to start some new ones."

The crushing hardships of the Great Depression encouraged even more people to make do with canning. In 1931, 1.2 million Ball canning jars were purchased, the largest amount ever sold up to that time by the company. Research had begun, driven by the land-grant colleges (such as Washington State University) into the



Ferguson custom cannery in Snohomish, Wash.

science of food preservation and in 1932 investigators suggested groupings of food according to acidity because of spoilage properties associated with the pH of each individual food.

Homemakers benefited from classes and informational pamphlets provided by their county extension agent.

By this time methods and equipment had proliferated. Canning methods included open kettle, water bath, steam canning, oven canning and pressure canning. Zinc lids with rubber rings, wire bail over glass lids and gaskets and self-sealing lids of various types existed. It took a number decades and scientific research and testing to sort things out for safety and efficiency.

The Victory Gardens and propaganda posters of the World War II are most popularly connected with home canning. Women contributed to the war effort with food preservation and work in the factories vacated by the



men who were fighting in Europe and the Pacific.

After the war, when women were pressed back to their proper place in the home, prosperity and convenience foods such as frozen TV dinners began to replace the home-produced and preserved food. The frozen food industry had developed during the war years due to tin shortages and homemakers embraced it in the 1950s, along with supermarkets and post-war prosperity.

BACK TO THE LAND

However, a new generation waited in the wings and the late '60s and early '70s saw a great cultural shift among the young, including the back-to-the-land movement that stressed self-sufficiency and a home-grown lifestyle. Perhaps the budding homesteaders remembered Grandma's jam and pickles — they embraced canning, drying and other home skills. One of the early proponents was Carla Emery, who mimeographed and sent installments of her 700-page classic, **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COUNTRY LIVING, AN OLD-FASHIONED RECIPE BOOK**, to readers over several years while living on a remote Idaho ranch with her husband, raising six children and

numerous species of farm animals. She inspired the young women whose shining jars of canned goods began showing up at county fairs.

After another hiatus, home food preservation is enjoying a 21st century resurgence. In 2009, the sale of home canning equipment increased by 12 percent and canning classes and books are proliferating. A new generation is



WWII government poster, 1944.



Author Tarey Kay's plentiful, colorful pantry.

discovering the pleasures of jewel-like jams, tart pickles, flavorful tuna and homemade hot sauce. Canning's new popularity is driven by concerns over commercial food additives and processing, issues of sustainability and a wave of local, epicurean canned goods. Elegant jars, labels and packaging available today can make anyone's homemade best into a gourmet gift.

For those who would like to start canning, the **BALL BLUE BOOK**, published annually, is an excellent primer on canning, covering the techniques of water bath for high-acid and pressure canning for low-acid foods. It offers a wide variety of recipes

and troubleshooting tips. More experienced canners may want to branch out and try the heavenly jam, jelly and marmalade recipes in **MES CONFITURES**, written by master French patissière Christina Ferber, or perfect small batches with **PRESERVING BY THE PINT** by canning blogger Marissa McClelland.

Local canning classes are sometimes offered on Whidbey or one can seek out an experienced canner for advice. Spring is the time to plan and get equipment ready so that your own fruits of summer can be "put up," shown at the county fair, given as gifts or simply enjoyed next winter. There is nothing quite like a bowl of oatmeal with your home-canned organic golden peaches on a cold winter morning.

Those interested in starting a custom cannery on the island can contact the editor.

About the authors: Tarey Kay has been canning since the early '70s. She doesn't like to garden, so purchases in season, has been known to barter, and of course, appreciates anything free, which all goes into jars. Sue Ellen White began canning in the early 1970s, when she moved to Whidbey and has a big garden, orchard,

chickens and a Little Free Library at her home.



A new generation of canning supplies and ideas await the adventurous canner.

*Editor's notes: Photos courtesy of the authors. **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COUNTRY LIVING, AN OLD-FASHIONED RECIPE BOOK; MES CONFITURES; and PRESERVING BY THE PINT** are available through the Sno-Isle Library. The **Ball Blue Book** is available most places canning supplies are sold on the island.*

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CHEF'S STATION

PRESERVATION METHODS:

FREEZING

ROOT STORAGE

Captain Crabby's Dungeness Pie

From Mervyn & Kathy Floyd

We have always enjoyed catching our own Dungeness crab right here in Puget Sound. Any leftover crab is picked and frozen for future meals. We put the crab meat in a small amount of salt water because it seems to preserve better that way. When ready to create a recipe using crab, we defrost it and sometimes use the juices and salt water as part of the recipe.

At the end of the farming season, we always buy a large amount of Willowood potatoes and keep them cool out in the garage. These keep through most of the winter and are often used in Captain Crabby's Dungeness Pie.

Merv created this recipe after having lobster pie in Maine. When the chef refused to share the recipe, Merv came home and invented his own version, using Dungeness crab instead of lobster and his own special touches to create perfection.



Captain Crabby's Dungeness Pie

Photo courtesy Kathy Floyd

Original recipe from Mervyn Floyd.
Makes four servings.

Filling Ingredients

4 T butter
1/3 C medium dry sherry
1 pound frozen Dungeness crab meat,
defrosted
1 ½ - 2 T flour
1 C Fat Free Half and Half²
2 egg yolks, beaten
2 Baking potatoes

Filling Instructions

1. Cook the 2 baking potatoes in the microwave and set aside.

² This is not a typo. Kathy explains: "Indeed, the term Fat-Free Half and Half seems to be an Oxymoron! We purchase Fat-Free Half and Half at Freeland's Payless in the dairy section. It's right next to the Full-Fat Half and Half. We use it to cut some of the fat from the finished product. If you'd prefer, you could simply [use] Half and Half as the ingredient."

2. Drain defrosted crab and reserve juice.
3. Preheat oven to 425 degrees using regular bake cycle.
4. Melt 2 T butter in sauce pan; add sherry and boil 1 minute; add drained crab, stir, and remove from heat.
5. In a med sauce pan melt 2 T butter. Add flour, cook and stir until mixture bubbles. Remove from heat.
6. Drain and reserve sherry mixture from the crab meat.
7. Slowly stir reserved sherry and Half & Half into Flour/butter mixture until thoroughly blended. Return to heat and cook, stirring constantly until sauce is smooth and moderately thick. (Adjust with Half and Half or mix in Cornstarch if necessary).
8. Spoon 4 T of the sauce into a small bowl. Add beaten egg yolks, 1 tablespoon at a time, stirring well after each addition. Return egg mixture to sauce and mix well. Stir over low heat for about 3 minutes. Do not allow it to boil.
9. Remove from heat and add crab and fold gently to mix without breaking up crab too much.

“Once we lose touch with the spendthrift aspect of nature’s provisions epitomized in the raising of a crop, we are in danger of losing touch with life itself. When Providence supplies the means, the preparation and sharing of food takes on a sacred aspect. The fact that every crop is of short duration promotes a spirit of making the best of it while it lasts and conserving part of it for future use. It also leads to periods of fasting and periods of feasting, which represent the extremes of the artist’s situation as well as the Greek Orthodox approach to food and the Catholic insistence on fasting, now abandoned.

“Poverty rather than wealth gives the good things of life their true significance. Home-made bread rubbed with garlic and sprinkled with olive oil, shared – with a flask of wine – between working people, can be more convivial than any feast. My ambition in drawing in the background to what is being cooked is to restore the meaning.”

Patience Gray, **HONEY FROM A WEED**

1 ½ Cups Ritz crackers
Parsley and lemon slices,
optional

Topping Instructions

1. Melt 4 T butter in a frying pan. Stir in lemon juice. Remove from heat.
2. Stir in crushed crackers and add enough reserved crab juice so the mixture is moist and thick.

Finishing

1. Cut cooked baked potatoes in half and scoop out potato, leaving about ¼" potato in peel. Place each potato half in individual ramekins.
2. Pour the crab sauce into and over each potato half, filling the ramekin.
3. Spread the topping evenly on each dish.
4. Bake at 425 degrees for 10 minutes or until top begins to brown.
5. Garnish with parsley and lemon slices if desired.

Topping Ingredients

Juice from defrosted crab
4 T butter
1 T fresh lemon juice

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UNCLEAN HANDS (FARM & GARDEN)

Spring Beckons

By Anza Muenchow
Maha Farms

Spring is almost here and images of a future abundant garden outside my door inspire me. We know the value of eating local, for the environment, for the freshness, for the local economy, and for the food security of having access to quality food. What can be more local than having your own food garden? When we embrace food growing, we experience many personal advantages: activities outside can be mentally uplifting and the connection to the seasons can provide a deep pleasure. I especially love it when children have the opportunity to spend time in the gardens of their friends and family. Research reports a positive lifetime impact in children when their connection with soil and food and the environment is nurtured.

Let's get started with one of the most delicious and arguably the easiest spring food crop: PEAS. All parts of this plant are edible AND they tolerate cool, less fertile soil. Late winter or early spring are the best times to sow seed, usually outdoors though they can be transplanted if you want to start indoors. Prepare your bed by loosening the soil and mounding it enough to allow it to drain. We call it creating a raised bed. Soggy soil is always a bad idea for planting. Do not add any manure. Peas hate fresh manure. They love full sun, but can tolerate some shading in the evening or early morning if that is your only choice. Have fun designing the trellis to support their growth. Their vine has little tendrils that grasp a string trellis; they are not twining vines like beans. I am not sure why peas prefer string to wire, but it certainly is cheaper and easier to store. If you have a windy site, you need a strong trellis frame as the vines can get quite large and heavy. In a protected area, this is less of a concern. Typically our soils are acidic (acid rain and all) so you may want to add some garden lime, about a cup for every 3 feet. However,



Two rows of early spring peas reaching trellises.
Photo courtesy Marc Wilson.

peas tolerate a wide range of soil acidity. I always encourage a soil test for pH and nutrients when you have the opportunity, but just watching how well weeds grow can tell you a lot too.

Next is sowing the seeds. Timing is important: plant after Washington's Birthday until about April (cool season), may be best with a waxing moon. Before planting, I recommend mixing fresh legume inoculant (available at garden stores) and a few drops of water with the seeds to give each seed a dusty coating. The inoculant is freeze dried bacteria that lives along legume roots and that provides nitrogen to the plant that it extracts out of the air (free fertilizer!). Legumes can find this bacteria in the soil, but the plants get a quick start if you add some when you

plant. Germination can be quicker if you soak the peas for a few hours before planting, then coat with a small amount of inoculant. Sow heavily as peas tolerate crowding and you can always thin later for added salad greens. I love eating those early sweet vines, just the tips.

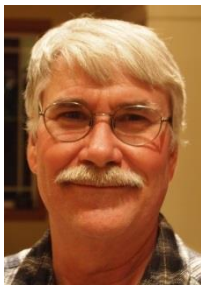
With so many wonderful selections, I find I have to plant several varieties. Snow, snap and shelling are the typical choices. Snow peas like Mammoth Melting Sugar have pea vines that are almost sweeter than the pods forming later. Most people prefer the sugar snap type from which there are several varieties to choose. Next, you need to decide how tall a vine you want to support, select suitable varieties from the seed catalog description. Just choose one that grows the height you prefer, 4 feet or 6 feet or even higher.

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Board Minutes

December 9, 2013

By John Burks, Secretary



Opening:

The board of Slow Food Whidbey Island was called to order by Vincent Nattress, President, at 6:08 p.m. on December 9, 2013 at the home of Debra Richardson.

Present:

Officers: President: Vincent Nattress
Secretary: John Burks
Communications:

Jim Hicken

Treasurer/Membership: Debra Richardson

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 11th board meeting were approved with changes to minutes as recommended by Mr. Jim Hicken.

2. Treasurer's Report

A copy of the P&L for the 2013 Taste of Whidbey was provided to board members present.

3. New Board Member Appointments

Board members discussed filling open board positions. Anza Muenchow, Maryon Atwood and Trish Zapinski have all agreed to serve on the board. A motion was made by Mr. Jim Hicken to appoint these three

members to the board with their board positions to be agreed upon following discussion with each individual. The motion was seconded by Ms. Debra Richardson and unanimously approved.

In further action, Ms. Debra Richardson submitted her verbal resignation as treasurer to the board, and John Burks was unanimously elected and accepted the office.

Assignments:

- Mr. Vincent Nattress will contact each of the newly appointed board members to discuss board position.
- Mr. Vincent Nattress agreed to circulate via e-mail the results of his discussions with the prospective new board members and confirm the board position which each individual agrees to accept.

Following Mr. Nattress' discussion with the prospective board members, Mr. Jim Hicken will circulate an e-mail to board members with a resolution designating the new board members to their agreed upon board position.

4. Bylaw Revision

Mr. Jim Hicken proposed the following revision to the corporate bylaws under section 5.19. The proposed revision is shown below in italics.



Yogurt, grapefruit zest English muffins enlivened with home grown dried thyme.

5.19 Removal

(a) At a meeting of members called expressly for that purpose, one or more Directors (including the entire Board) may be removed from office, with or without cause, by two-thirds of the votes cast by members then entitled to vote on the election of Directors represented in

person or by proxy at a meeting of members at which a quorum is present. Directors may not be removed by a mail or electronic vote referred to in Section 4.13.

(b) At the discretion of and by majority vote of the other Directors, a Director may be removed if the Director (i) fails to attend in person, or as otherwise provided in

“We are so used to thinking of hunger as the antithesis of appetite, of fasting as a moral purgative, that we have lost the ability to understand it as the underside of the feast, the background that gives it [feasting] definition and depth. If there is no scarcity, there is no real having, either: it is not hunger that makes men greedy but fear of hunger. Those who accept it as a needful condition earn that true fastidiousness that is attentive, not to what they eat, but to what they truly want to eat.

“In the same way, it is hunger that shares the intimacy established between cultivator and his or her small plot. A piece of land upon which all hope of sustenance rests and the mode of planting and tending and harvesting that is accomplished by a ceaseless laying on of hands, creates a robust union. Through her own participation in these acts, as neighbor, friend and fellow hungerer, Patience Gray has made that connection real in her own life.”

John Thorne, introduction to Patience Gray’s **HONEY FROM A WEED.**

these bylaws, three (3) consecutive board meetings, or (ii) fails to so attend forty percent (40%) or more of the board meetings in any calendar year. A Director shall be subject to removal as provided in this section for a period of one hundred eighty (180) days starting the day of and immediately following the Director’s qualification for removal as above provided. Pursuant to Section 6.2 of these bylaws, officers may also be removed as provided in this Section.

All board members present agreed with the proposed revision. A recommendation was made by Mr. Hicken to review this bylaw change with the newly appointed board members and submit it to a vote of the board by e-mail.

Assignments:

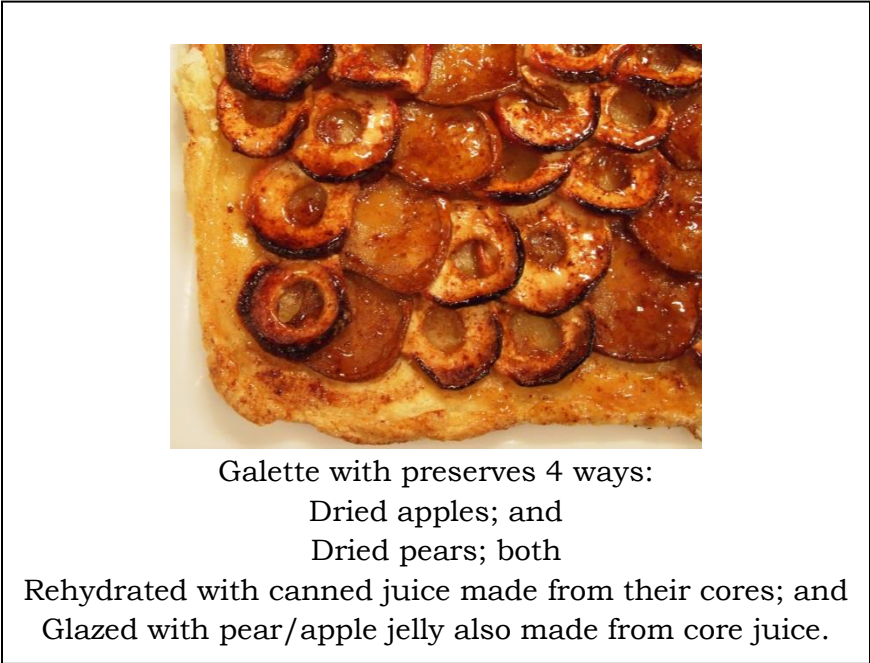
- Mr. Nattress agreed to review the bylaw change with the newly appointed board members when he discussed board assignment with them.
- Mr. Hicken agreed to circulate the proposed bylaw change to the board for a vote following Mr. Nattress’ review with the new members.

5. Committee Positions

The board discussed the creation of a number of committees. Ms. Richardson informed the board that Ms. Glo Sherman had agreed to serve as chair of the Table Event Committee. Mr. Nattress informed the board that Ms. Anza Muenchow had expressed interest in working on educational programming, and it was suggested that she be asked to serve as chair of an Education/Program Committee along with a board position. Ms. Trish Zapinski has expressed interest in chairing a committee for future events such as the Taste of Whidbey.

A resolution was passed by the board to create “Table Event” and “Big Public Event” committees. Ms. Glo Sherman was elected to chair the Table Event committee, and Ms. Trish Zapinski was elected to chair of the “Big Public Event” committee. The board granted authority to Ms. Sherman and Ms. Zapinski to add members to their committees as they see fit. Mr. Vincent Nattress expressed strong interest in serving on the “Big Public Event” committee, which the board highly supported. Ms. Cheryl Lawrence, Mr. Merv Floyd and Ms. Kathy Floyd were mentioned as potential members on the Table Event committee, and their names would be referred to Ms. Sherman. Ms. Sherrye Wyatt of Whidbey Island Grown/Whidbey Island tourism has indicated a strong interest in partnering with Slow Food Whidbey Island in future Taste of Whidbey Island events. It was recommended that she be contacted by Ms. Zapinski to gauge her interest in working with her committee.

The board requested that the “Big Public Event” committee provide via e-mail a proposal/recommendation to the board by January 31,



Galette with preserves 4 ways:
 Dried apples; and
 Dried pears; both
 Rehydrated with canned juice made from their cores; and
 Glazed with pear/apple jelly also made from core juice.

2014 related to a 2014 Taste of Whidbey or similar such public event.

The board requested that the Table Event committee provide via e-mail by February 28, 2014 a proposal/recommendation related to 2014 Table Events for Slow Food Whidbey Island.

Assignments:

- Ms. Richardson will contact Ms. Glo Sherman about assumption of Table Event Chair. (see e-mail dated December 10, 2013)
- Ms. Trish Zapinski will convene the “Big Public Event” Committee and provide a proposal/recommendation via e-mail to the board by January 31, 2014 related to a 2014 Taste of Whidbey or similar such public event.
- Ms. Glo Sherman will convene the Table Event Committee and provide a proposal/recommendation via e-mail to the board by February 28, 2014 related to 2014 Table Events.
- Ms. Debra Richardson agreed to contact Neil Dexter, caretaker for Strawfield House and Farm, about a larger role in Slow Food Whidbey Island.

6. Reports

Mr. Hicken updated the board on the following items:

- Discussion with Chris Williams concerning Slow Food Whidbey Island co-hosting “food basic” programs with the Deer Lagoon Grange.
- Meeting with Joanna Weeks concerning WhidbeyLocal.com as a SFWI web presence.

- Teleconference with Slow Food regional governor Gerry Warren regarding application of Sugar Hubbard for Taste of Ark.
- Update on Ark of Taste application for Sugar Hubbard being prepared by Ms. Jenanne Murphy.
- Listing of Slow Food Whidbey Island in Whidbey Almanac.

Assignments:

- Mr. Hicken agreed to contact Chris Williams about possible dates for a jointly sponsored food basic program at the Deer Lagoon Grange during February.

7. New Business

- Ms. Richardson updated the board on the December 7th presentation on her new book, **Blessing the Hands**

That Feed Us, by Vicki Robin. Approximately 80 people attended the event. There was good participation from Slow Food Whidbey Island members. \$270 was collected in donations at the door. The rental fee for the evening was \$65 and \$45 was spent on fresh, local cider for the event. The net income of \$160 is to be divided equally between Vicki Robin and SFWI. A check in the amount of \$81 has been sent to Ms. Robin by Ms. Richardson.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for January 13th beginning at 6 p.m. at the home of Vincent Nattress.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

[Click here to jump to Bill of Fare](#)

Whidbey Nibbles, MARCH 2014.

Like? Forward to a friend or two.

Board Minutes

January 13, 2014

By John Burks, Secretary

Opening:
The board of Slow Food Whidbey Island was called to order by Vincent Nattress, President, at 6:05 p.m. on January 13, 2014 at the home of Vincent Nattress.

Present:

Officers: President: Vincent Nattress
Secretary/Treasurer: John Burks
Communications Director: Jim Hicken
Membership Chair: Debra Richardson
Board Members: Maryon Atwood, Anza Muenchow, Trish Zapinski
Guest: Brad Lehrer

5. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the December 9th board meeting were unanimously

approved.

6. Treasurer's Report

Ms. Debra Richardson reported that the current unreconciled account balance is \$3,619.21.

Ms. Richardson will transfer the treasurer records to Mr. Burks prior to the February meeting.

7. Old Business

A) New Board Positions

“If Tuscan vegetables are sweet and have an aromatic savor, English vegetables are grown for substance. Italian conversations in the same way are delightful effluvia, which quickly evaporate. In England you get the equivalent of substance – an argument. The nature of the Italians resembles earthly emanations; in England what you have is ‘character.’ The consequence of this, both in human beings and in fruit and vegetables, is a passion for youth and freshness, *for grasping what the season has to give at the precise moment; this lends to ardour in daily living and eating.*” Emphasis supplied.

Patience Gray, **HONEY FROM A WEED.**

A motion was introduced by Mr. Jim Hicken that the officers and titles effective at the end of this meeting shall be:

Anza Muenchow - Vice President

Debra Richardson – Secretary

Maryon Atwood – Membership Director

Trish Zapinski – At-Large Director

The motion was seconded by Mr. Vincent Nattress and unanimously approved by the board.

B) Board Resolution

Mr. Jim Hicken made a motion to introduce a resolution (see attachment [omitted]) to:

- Set the number of directors at 7.
- Establish “at-large” director duties.
- Establish “no-attendance” removal resolution.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Debra Richardson and approved unanimously by the board.

C) Education Committee

Ms. Muenchow agreed to chair a committee to develop educational type events with a focus on food education which fit the tax exempt mission of Slow Food Whidbey Island.

D) Arc of Taste: Sugar Hubbard Squash

Mr. Jim Hicken introduced the topic of a nomination of Sugar Hubbard Squash for the Arc of Taste prepared by Ms. Jenanne Murphy.

Assignments:

- Mr. Vincent Nattress agreed to provide a chef testimonial to be attached to the nomination documentation provided by Ms. Murphy.
- Mr. Jim Hicken agreed to follow-up with Ms. Murphy about getting input from Dale or Lynn Sherman for the nomination submission, and Ms. Maryon Atwood

volunteered to assist with getting feedback from Lynn Sherman.

- Mr. Hicken and Ms. Murphy will submit the nomination to Slow Food USA when all paper work is ready without bringing the matter back to the board.

E) Program on Grass Fed Beef

Slow Food Whidbey Island will be co-sponsoring a program on grass fed beef in conjunction with the Deer Lagoon Grange on February 25th at the Deer Lagoon Grange. A recommended donation of \$5 for attendance was agreed upon.

Assignments:

- Mr. Vincent Nattress agreed to develop the program and advertisement copy for the event.

F) Committee Status/Reports

- Mr. Jim Hicken reported that the deadline for submission of articles for the next issue of Whidbey Nibbles will be March 5th. The winter issue’s theme will be **Preserving and Cooking from the Larder**. Mr. Hicken requested that the new board members provide a short bio for inclusion. Publication date will be prior to March 15th.
- Mr. Hicken reported that our distribution list for the Whidbey Nibbles now numbered 430.

4. New Business

A) Ms. Richardson introduced the following topics for consideration:

- A program on Bret’s pickles.
- Development of a Slow Food Whidbey Island calendar as a fund raiser.
- A Slow Food Whidbey Island presence at local farmer’s markets.
- Development of special events geared toward Slow Food Whidbey Island members as a benefit for being

members. Such events might be open to public for a cost.

- Requested board members to find someone to maintain a Slow Food Whidbey Island web site.
- B) Ms. Maryon Attwood suggested development of cooking classes as a fund raising possibility. She suggested partnering with a local restaurant on a day that they are typically closed.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for February 10th beginning at 6 p.m. at the home of Trish Zapinski. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

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ACTIONS OF THE BORED

Meet Our New Board Members

December marked a momentous occasion for our small organization – the Slow Food Whidbey Island board filled to its contemplated size, and even added an extra member to accommodate the influx of eager volunteers! Here are the bios of the new board members:

Anza

Muenchow – Vice President:

Anza

Muenchow worked in Seattle, WA for 25 years as a social worker and a community organizer. In the 1990's she began teaching how to grow food to children and adults in schools, community centers and housing



projects as well as developing p-patches and micro-farms. While serving immigrant and refugee communities in Seattle, she learned how the language of food and food production created profound cross cultural communication. In 2005 she moved with her husband, Marc Wilson, to Whidbey Island to begin a family farm. Now with an acre of row crops, berries and herbs, Maha Farm has a CSA, a farm stand and sells to chefs and at local farmers markets in the summer. Still committed to teaching, Anza teaches food growing to children and adults through workshops, seminars and community classes and also hosts interns with Marc at Maha Farm.

In 2008, Anza received a scholarship to attend Terra Madre in Torino, Italy, the international Slow Food gathering, where she met many mentors: Carlo Petrini, Will Allen, Vandana Shiva, Kumar Satish, and

many others. Ever thankful for that opportunity, Anza is pleased to serve on the Whidbey Island Slow Food Board.

Maryon Attwood – Membership

Chair:

Maryon Attwood brings over 25 years of experience as a non-profit executive to the Slow Food Whidbey Island board, including managing community arts and cultural organizations with all of their unique complexities.

Maryon combines her values and passions as an owner of Cook on Clay, her first private venture, as she continues to develop business and products that serve a community vision.

Maryon's formal art training includes a classical fine arts education and a B.A. from Monmouth College in Illinois. She studied at the Art Institute



in Chicago, Illinois and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C.

Maryon's interest in clay began when she was the Director of the Worcester Center for Craft in the mid-1990's. Her platters now reside in kitchens and on tables across the nation. Her interest in producing and now manufacturing oven-to-table and grill-to-table platters comes from her concern for healthy foods prepared safely in environmentally stable cookware without the use of Teflon, aluminum pans, or aluminum foil.

In addition to being a principal of Cook on Clay, Maryon is an environmental and agricultural activist, a founder of the Greenbank Farm New Farmer Training Program, and has worked on sustainable food system issues that encourage farmland preservation, new farmer training, and "bringing the farm to fork."

Trish Zapinski – At-Large:

Trish Zapinski is a fairly new full-time resident to Whidbey, and is



busy discovering all things local. After spending time expanding a woodland landscape she is now looking forward to planting her first vegetable garden. As an avid baker with a strong German influence, Trish is always looking for that next cheesecake challenge and really enjoys experimenting on friends and family. She has been a Slow Foods advocate for many years now, and fully embraces the philosophy of good food, good conversation and good community.

With the new board members come changes in roles by the continuing directors. Deb Richardson has moved to Secretary, and John Burks has moved to Treasurer. Vincent Nattress and Jim Hicken remain unmoved.



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CHEF'S STATION

PRESERVATION METHODS:

FREEZING

PICKLING – HOT WATER BATH

PRESSURE CANNING

DRYING

The Cabbage Chronicles

(A preservation story)

By Jim Hicken

Red Acre Cabbage grew up as part of a large family in a small garden. It was a tough childhood, with Red having to compete with sisters and brothers for space, food and water. But Red was fortunate to grow in the Pacific Northwest, where water was abundant; the days were warm and nights cool; and the hours of sunlight were plentiful. Red's worst problem was aphids, so thick they seemed to be an outer layer on Red's layered body.



This is the story of Red's chameleon like existence.



Red Acre Cabbage, on the way to Fair!

Red's large family was well traveled. Some of the destinations included neighbors' houses, Good Cheer, Soup's On and of course, Fair.

Yet this diaspora diminished Red's family only slightly, and nights were turning colder and aphids hungrier. Something had to be done. Enter the preservationist...

Red's first experience with preservation was simple and direct:

Grilled & Frozen. Remove the outer layers, wash and slice in eighths, including some of the white core in each slice, salt and drizzle with olive oil, then grill over charcoal, or broil in the oven. Red's natural sweetness is brought out by the heat. Serve hot or freeze for later use, to bring the flavor of summer to winter soups and side dishes.



Red's next trip to the kitchen was for a raw party:

Cabbage Slaw. Red was the star of this shindig, cut in eighths and sliced fine, or machine shredded. His supporting cast was from the rainbow of whatever was available (all shredded or cut small): **Green:** broccoli (be sure to blanch if the slaw is to be frozen), green beans or sweet pepper; **Yellow:** summer squash; **Orange:** carrots; **Golden:** raisins; more **Red:** diced apple and minced red onion, or **White:** minced raw shallots, and even **Blue:** slivered almonds (which turn blue in this crowd!). And any good party needs some **liquid lubrication;** this one included apple vinegar, apple juice and toasted sesame oil. Of course no party is complete without something **crunchy,** toasted sesame seeds, and **salty,** coarse sea or kosher salt. This healthy alternative to a mayonnaise

based coleslaw tastes great when just mixed, but even better the next day. Best of all, it **freezes well** and gets juicier when defrosted – without losing its crunch. For another take: see **BALL BLUE BOOK'S** freezer slaw, pg. 99 (2009 Edition)



But Red and siblings were getting crowded in the freezer, so the next adventure was full on **pressure canning!**

Cabbage Soup.

With cooking and processing times based on **BALL BLUE BOOK'S** vegetable soup, pg. 65 of the 2009 edition,³ chopped Red's playmates included



³ Since Red's vegetable soup ingredients vary dramatically from the Ball ingredients, those wanting to follow Red's path should be experienced canners comfortable with creating their own recipes.

summer squash, Walla Walla onions, garlic, lemon juice, home **dried** parsley and thyme, salt, pepper and a bay leaf during the preliminary simmer.

Red's wanderlust away from Ball Blue Book tested recipes now sated, Red's next preservation adventure was with **pickling**, which uses a **boiling water bath** (so no expensive pressure canner needed).

Spiced Red Cabbage. BALL BLUE BOOK pg. 57 (2009 Edition). The Ball Blue Book ingredients include red wine vinegar, brown sugar, and copious amounts

(measured in quarter and half cups!!!) of 8 spices, mostly whole, and held in a bag during the preliminary boil before filling the jars, but ground spices

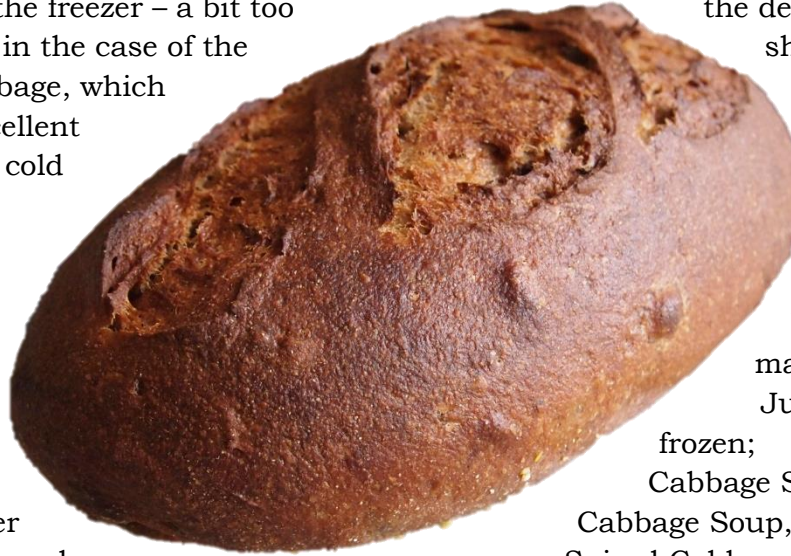
left in the jars also work. And Red went to Fair for a second time!



Now Red occupied a prominent position in the room temperature larder as well as the freezer – a bit too prominent in the case of the spiced cabbage, which was an excellent condiment cold and a palatable, but not great, side dish when heated (which does temper the vinegar and spice).

Recipe research yielded no other roles for Red, until Spiced Red's cousin – sauerkraut, was considered. Here is one such recipe, substituting spiced cabbage for sauerkraut, from James Beard's **American Cookery**, pg. 413.

Pork with Spiced Cabbage includes pork chops, bacon, tons of cabbage, juniper berries, beer and garlic. To Beard's recipe, I added shallots, and reduced the sauce at the end, after removing the solids. I added sugar as a foil for the sauce's acidity, and finished the sauce with butter.



Another sauerkraut inspired recipe is **Rye Spiced Cabbage Bread**, the details for which are shown elsewhere in this issue ([click here](#)).

So to recap, Red Acre Cabbage has shown up and been preserved in many forms so far: Just plain, grilled and

frozen;

Cabbage Slaw, also frozen;

Cabbage Soup, pressure canned; Spiced Cabbage, pickled in a boiling water bath;

Pork with Spiced Cabbage; and Rye and Spiced Cabbage bread.

In various guises, our Red Acre Cabbage has performed roles from a condiment with a walk-on part to co-star of the show! Not a bad performance for the humble northwest cabbage.

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PRESERVATION METHOD:

FERMENTATION

Preservation – Really Old Style!

By Vincent Nattress



Food is plentiful at harvest time, or when the salmon are running. But that bounty is, by and large, very perishable and you just cannot eat enough in September to make it through the rest of the year. Come January you are going to be in a world of hurt unless you have some means of creating a reserve of food to draw on. As a result all cultures have had ways of putting some food aside for later consumption.

The different ways in which historic peoples have found to preserve food were numerous and ingenious. All preservation techniques are fundamentally about stopping spoilage. **Traditional methods** from around the world use **heat, smoke, wind, salt, sugar** and **acidification** to preserve foods, often in some combination.

I find **fermentation** to be the most interesting of these methods,

because without it we would not have so many of the foods I love. It is amazing how the action of bacteria, molds and yeasts are harnessed to prevent *other* bacteria, yeasts and molds from destroying food. It is mind boggling to me that these techniques were developed centuries before any of the processes could even be explained. Fermenting wine and beer is one thing, but converting potentially dangerous foods such as vegetables and raw meat into such delicacies as kimchi and salami just seems like alchemy. And this was happening thousands of years ago, through processes that must have seemed like magic, long before people even knew the earth was round.

Even today, with the benefit of scientific understanding, it is nerve wracking. I made fermented wild boar salami once. I remember grinding and seasoning the meat, adding the necessary dextrose and bacterial starter, and stuffing it into large casings. When I was done I had about 40 pounds of soft, red, greasy meat tubes on a large tray. I remember leaving them sweating in my office, on a 90+ degree day, with the air conditioning off. I read the instructions that came with the starter culture over and over again. Rationally I knew that

warm, moist air was what the bacterial culture needed to get to work eating the dextrose and giving off the lactic acid that would eventually make the sausage acidic enough to be safe. But it went against everything I had ever been taught to leave that meat sitting there for two days.

The sausage turned out beautifully in the end; definitely the finest charcuterie I have ever made. But I made it with the help of food scientists, freeze-dried cultures and clear instructions. It is incredible that this technique must have been stumbled upon by blind luck thousands of years ago, and that had happened over and over again, all over the world.

These transformational techniques preserve food, providing an incredibly important hedge against famine. They allow people to preserve nutrient and energy rich meat and fat long past the time when it would have rotted otherwise. Because of this huge evolutionary advantage we could see their development as inevitable. There were undoubtedly numerous times when people died from a bad batch of Mettwurst, but the risk was outweighed by the advantage of having preserved food in time of famine. Certain

producers or regions that did it better, safer and more consistently became the go-to sources for specific products, blessed as they were with the right climate (temperature range is very important) or the perfect natural populations of air-borne flora.

What was happening at the same time was the elevation of food beyond mere sustenance to the level of cuisine. Often preserved foods – like kimchi, stinky cheese or olives – are an acquired taste. And while those tastes might be easier to acquire if you were starving, we are the only animals that will re-try something that we find unappealing the first time we taste it. When it comes right down to it, eating fermented food is one of the things that makes us human.

In some cases, the products created were stable enough to be traded, enhancing commerce. Being able to make dry cured hams like Serrano or Prosciutto not only made a tasty treat and a hedge against lean times, it also turned a local, perishable product into a tradable commodity. Increased trade too, is a hedge against regional famine, and adds to the stability and diversity of the diet. Trade also enhances culture. And so cultures

of microbes played a crucial role in the development of human culture.

And so it is thanks to many diverse cultures of microbes that peoples around the world have been able to preserve food, and develop myriad culinary cultures, which have in no small part help us to survive and prosper.

“If we knew what we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?”

Albert Einstein

[Click here to jump to Bill of Fare!](#)

CHEF’S STATION

PRESERVATION METHOD:

PICKLING

Rye/Spiced Cabbage Bread

Jim Hicken

This take on rye bread uses predominately whole grains⁴ and omits the ubiquitous caraway seeds, which let the rye flour’s taste shine through. Also included is a generous serving of home canned spiced cabbage (see [recipe](#) above). The

⁴ Vital wheat gluten is added to make up for the a lot of non-flour ingredients and rye’s inherently poor gluten. Vital wheat gluten is 80% protein, so actually enhances the nutritive value of the bread!

result is a tangy, spicy and earthy bread with a tender crumb (perhaps the result of the pickled cabbage’s acid level).

Yield: two, 1.5 pound loaves

Ingredients:

Rye starter⁵, which is comprised of:

4/7 C 125g Water.

2/3 C 90 g Rye flour.

1 1/3 C 315 g Water.

1 C 130 g Spiced cabbage.⁶

1/6 C 40 g Cabbage water.

2 T 25 g Canola oil.

2 T 25 g Sugar.

3 1/3 t 20g Salt.

dash Vitamin C

crystals (optional).

¼ t 1 g SAF instant

yeast.⁷

2 C 250 g Rye flour.

2 1/4 C 325 g Whole wheat flour.

1/3 C 50g Vital wheat gluten

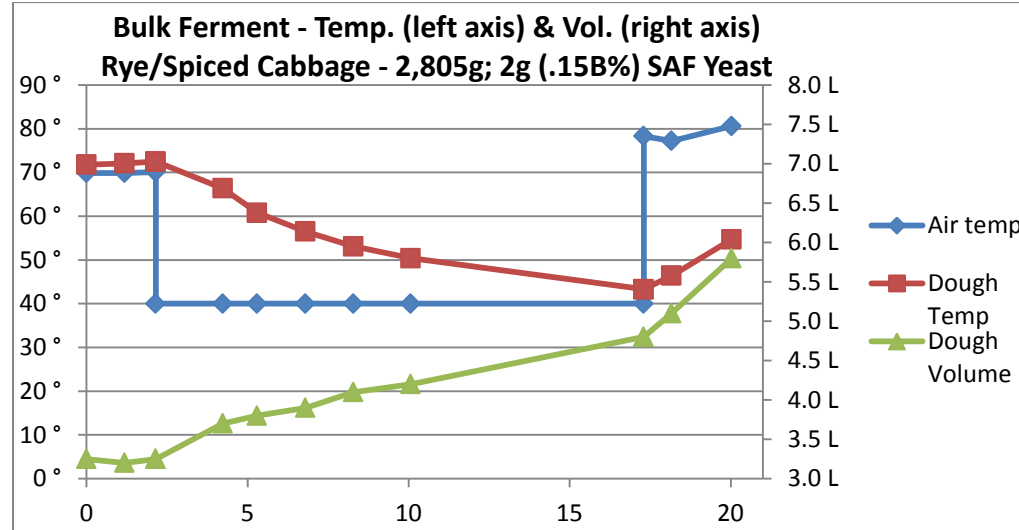
⁵ If you do not have starter, increase the yeast weight to 1 percent of the weight of all flours, and use additional water and rye flour to produce the same total dough weight.

⁶ Sauerkraut may be substituted.

⁷ If using “active dry yeast” increase amount by 20%. One gram is too small for most scales to register – use the volume measure instead, and don’t worry about exceeding the yeast called for; it should do no harm.

Procedures:

1. Mix the yeast in a bit of the water so that it disperses evenly. Then mix all ingredients but the flours well.
2. Add all but 50 grams of the flour (1/3 cup) and mix well.
3. Let rest 30 minutes, covered.
4. Knead 8-10 minutes, using the reserved flour as needed to keep the dough from sticking to the board. Do not over knead a rye bread such as this.



Bread Fermentation Stages.

Keep your eye on the green line, which is the volume of a large batch of bread dough (4 loaves). The scale is on the right vertical axis.

At first, nothing seems to happen even though the dough spends 2 hours at room temperature. During this time the carbon dioxide (CO₂) produced by the yeast is absorbed by the dough itself and does not end up in the small, gluten lined holes which will grow and cause the dough to expand.

During the next 2 hours, the dough expands (CO₂ is migrating into the dough holes because the dough itself is saturated), even though the dough is refrigerated and is cooling off. The dough continues to cool and rises slowly during the next 14 hours of refrigeration.

In the last 3 hours, as the dough warms up in the proofer, CO₂ production increases dramatically, and dough volume takes off.

5. Put the dough in a bowl, cover tightly and leave on the counter for an hour or so, then refrigerate overnight, or up to 16-18 hours. If the dough is mixed up late in the day, set out two hours, then cool.
6. The next day, bring the dough to nearly room temperature (65-70° suffices), about 1 1/2 hours in a humid proofing box at 80°, or longer on the counter.
7. Form the loaves and place in cloth lined baskets. Proof in a proofing chamber at 80° for 1 1/2 - 2 hours, longer on the counter (keep covered – the top of the dough should not dry out).
8. Place the loaves onto a cornmeal dusted pizza peel, and slash the tops.
9. Slide onto a pizza stone in an oven preheated 45 minutes to 1 hour at 500° F.
10. Bake 20 minutes at 435° with steam, switch the loaves and bake an additional 20 minutes at 415° without steam. It's important to bake rye breads quickly, hence the high temperatures. If you want extra crusty, use 20 minutes at 450° then 15 minutes at 425°.

11. The loaves should end up at between 200-205° F.
12. Let cool 2 hours before slicing.

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UNCLEAN HANDS (FARM & GARDEN)

An Onion Surprise

By Judy Feldman
Executive Director, Greenbank Farm

In the life of a farmer, there are few actions that do not have a tangible impact. Late frost hits, early crops get damaged, which reduces the price a farmer can ask for them, which impacts the bottom line. A policy around surface water changes, and infrastructure or testing protocols (or both) must be added at the farmers' expense, reducing the profit margin on their crops, which impacts the bottom line. Tractor breaks down at peak cultivation time, weeds grow out of control, putting pressure on crops and making harvest more challenging, amount and quality of produce goes down, and yes, this impacts the bottom line.

To some degree, we all feel these pressures, but with such a thin profit margin and so much risk inherent in growing living things in an

unpredictable climate, farmers feel them more than most.

What's interesting is that while the impacts are tangible, the outcomes are not always expected.

For instance, in 2013, students at Greenbank's Organic Farm School put in a large high tunnel. Each year, some sort of new structure is raised in



Dr. John Navazio and Dani Morrisey
Photo courtesy Jessica Babcock, Greenbank's Organic Farm
School Field Manager and Trainer

the student farm to provide them with the experience of building something related to farming. Thinking they could get it up and operational quickly, they chose a week in April to get started. Whidbey soils are funny though, and when the students began digging the

holes for the uprights, they found large, cobble-y rock, not soil. Not only did they not get the high tunnel up in a week, they didn't get the holes dug in a week. The week "off" of planting had made sense when the plan was to raise the tunnel and then plant inside it — it didn't make much sense when the week was up, the month was up, *spring* was up, and they still couldn't plant in the unconstructed high tunnel.

The decision to try to get that high tunnel in early ultimately caused much of their crop plan to be altered in one way or another, throwing off much of their planting schedule. This made them nervous about one crop in particular — storage onions. Here in the maritime Pacific Northwest, we have a short season for onions anyway. Getting them in the ground late? The farmers were skeptical, but had to give it a try, especially since the crop was part of their plan with the Organic Seed Alliance for development of locally adapted onion seed.

But a funny thing happened on the way to a potential crop failure. Some of those onions did GREAT, in a shorter time frame than our already short onion season. This provided Dr.

John Navazio of the Organic Seed Alliance with some significant data that is now being used to further develop a reliable onion for our region.

While not directly related to that story of frustration, stones, and scrambled crop plans, the Organic Farm School will be working on even more variety trials with onions this year. In particular, we'll be growing out four varieties of cipollini onions as well as a few varieties of storage onions. Watch for opportunities to try these savory treats in our Farm Shop* (previously known as the Wine Shop) this fall. We'll be caramelizing some for tasting as part of our evaluation of the varieties.

By the way, that high tunnel did eventually get finished – in August. It's ready to rock and roll this year!

**We'll still be carrying the wine you have come to expect at the Farm, but also more of our Farm grown produce and seed lines! Our remodel should be about complete by the beginning of April.*

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FORAGING

Patience Gray's book has the full title **HONEY FROM A WEED, FASTING AND**

FEASTING IN TUSCANY, CATALONIA, THE CYCLADES AND APULIA, and chronicles her living among the hard scrabble peoples of these Mediterranean lands, as Patience and her partner "the Sculptor" followed the stone. An essential part of the diets of these peoples was foraged "weeds" from the rocky hillsides. Because this is the Mediterranean, these weeds are our culinary herbs, thyme, rosemary *et cetera*, along with salad and pot greens – dandelion and so on.

Here in the northwest, our foraging is more likely to be at the seashore rather than on the arid mountain slopes, and Laura McCarty's piece about seaweed gathering on Oregon's coast fittingly concludes our articles this issue.

And by the way, Gray's bibliography is extensive; and she contrasts her love of books with the largely oral traditions of the people with whom she lived and shared times of privation and of plenty. Gray explains her title thusly: "The weed from which I have drawn the honey is the traditional knowledge of Mediterranean people." Indeed, traditional knowledge of foodways, whether they be from the Mediterranean, or elsewhere, can sweeten all of our tables.

DEPARTMENT

Foraging Seaweed at Lincoln City

By Laura McCarty

For the amateur collector of sea vegetables (aka "seaweeds"), planning how you intend to preserve your harvest is important. This I learned during an educational outing to the shores of the Pacific Ocean at Lincoln City, Oregon, in April 2013. The abundance and variety of seaweeds, red and brown and green, seemed almost overwhelming once we reached the lower reaches of the intertidal zone.



Another thing I learned from my companions was that seaweed harvesting is strictly limited on public lands in the state of Washington. The only time period this year when the

public is allowed to collect seaweed in state parks is April 16 to May 15, and the only state parks where seaweed collection is allowed are Fort Flagler, Fort Ebey, and Fort Worden (see wdfw.wa.gov/fishing). Collecting seaweed at city, county, or private beaches is subject to the rules of that jurisdiction or owner. Collecting seaweed in Olympic National Park is prohibited (see nps.gov/olym/fishregs).

With the main problem – access to clean waters – potentially solved by the state, preparing to collect seaweed then means acquiring a seaweed license, bucket, and scissors; knowing the tides, the weather, and your daily collection limit; being able to recognize seaweed species of culinary interest; thinking about where to park; and having a bit of luck.



Rockweed

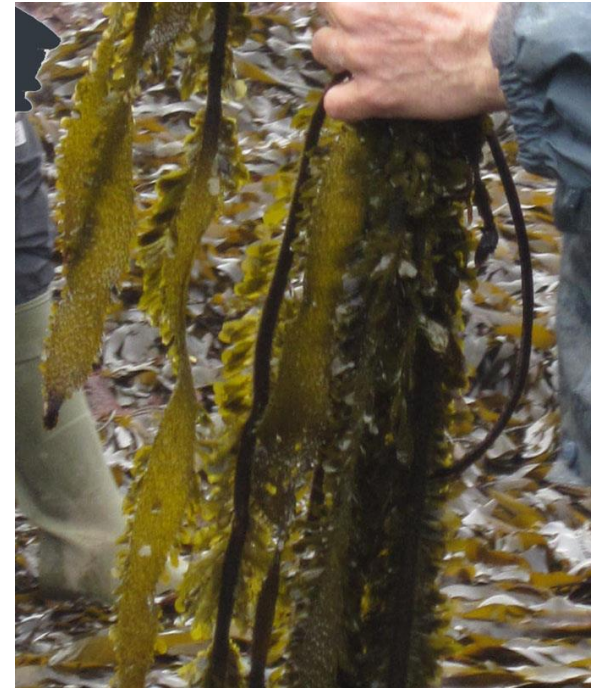
Rockweed (*Fucus*, a brown seaweed) is edible but would in my opinion be more interesting as a bed for steaming other foods. Some suggested deep fat frying it as a crispy snack.



Nori

Nori (*Porphyra*) is a translucent red seaweed that, at Lincoln City, had attached itself to a rocky outcropping high on the beach (in the upper intertidal zone). Iridescent seaweed (*Mazaella*, a red seaweed in the middle intertidal zone) was only slightly less delicate, with nice flavor (I thought), but more beautiful.

Kelp stems are supposed to make good, crunchy pickles. Recipes can be found on the internet.



Feather boa

Feather boa is another seaweed that is easy to identify and good to eat. Read more at morethanweeat.wordpress.com/raw-seaweed-chips/.

Drying sea vegetables seems to me to be the most promising preservation strategy, although I have not actually tried doing it yet. My easy success with drying kale chips in the oven encourages me, though, as does my very positive experiences with tasting dried seaweeds. On a trip through Nova Scotia a while ago, I was

amazed to see waist-high heaps of dried dulse (Palmaria, a reddish-purple seaweed) for sale at a crude public market in one of the Atlantic coastal towns. Looking like delicate beef jerky, dried strips of dulse became my favorite savory snack on the trip home.

Now that I have been introduced to seaweeds in their home surf, the subject matter of sea vegetables has exploded in complexity and possibility for me. The next thing I want to try is using a fresh or dried piece of a red seaweed called Turkish Towel (Chondrachanthus) for thickening a pudding (see recipe in Druehl's book, *Pacific Seaweeds*).

PACIFIC SEaweEDS: A GUIDE TO COMMON SEaweEDS OF THE WEST COAST, by Louis Druehl. This book is highly recommended for its authoritative contents and personal tone, and includes recipes in an appendix.

*All photos courtesy Laura McCarty. **PACIFIC SEaweEDS** is available through the Sno-Isle Library system. Editor.*

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To follow Slow Food Whidbey Island online, link to <http://www.whidbeylocal.com/slowfood> or to <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Slow-Food-Whidbey-Island/116702671688025>.

Parting Thoughts

As Patience Gray tells us, eating well takes us through cycles of fasting and feasting, and those cycles inherently follow seasonal patterns of plenty and of little.

Our appetites and our appreciation of what nature gives us are heightened by following nature's seasons – eat what is fresh, local and in season, your table will be more enjoyable because of it.

And as I hope this issue illustrates, preserving is worth including in your kitchen skills quiver, *not just for the lean seasons, but for the taste.*

Editor

FEEDBACK: All feedback, articles, opinion, letters and pictures welcome at FWIFeedback@whidbey.com. Submissions may be published and are subject to editing for length and for other arbitrary and capricious reasons. Jim Hicken, editor.

THE FINE PRINT: All opinions expressed herein are those of the authors, who are solely responsible for the content of their respective contributions. Opinions herein do not necessarily represent those of Slow Food Whidbey Island, a Washington nonprofit corporation or Slow Food USA, Inc., its members or affiliates.

So there!

A WORD ABOUT HYPERLINKS: This newsletter has "hyperlinks" to web material, the visual portion of which is sometimes abbreviated. If you are concerned about clicking the hyperlink, you can hold your browser over the hyperlink and the full web address will appear. You can then type the address in your web browser.