



AND SO IT GROWS

CHRIS COLLINS

Let's hear it for yodeling

I enjoy listening to yodelers. Who doesn't? I have to wonder.

Patsy Montana's "I Want To Be A Cowboy's Sweetheart" is one of my favorite songs and the perfect platform for Patsy to display her proficiency as a yodeler.

The song begins with a tuneful yodel followed by the lyrics written by Patsy Montana herself in 1935:

*"I want to be a cowboy's sweetheart
I want to learn to rope and to ride
I want to ride o'er the plains and the desert*

*Out west of the great divide
I want to hear the coyotes howlin'
While the sun sinks in the West
I want to be a cowboy's sweetheart
That's the life that I love best."*

Several years ago (it was the fall of 2005 to be exact, according to our newspaper files) I had hoped to perfect my yodeling skills after attending a yodeling workshop during a Cowboy Poetry event in Baker City. The workshop instructor, Terri Taylor, suggested listening to "Yodel the Cowboy Way" a Riders in the Sky CD, to learn the basics. I bought the CD, but I've yet to perfect the technique that Terri made look so easy.

But I haven't given up hope. A new CD my son and daughter picked up for me this summer might set me on the right course — both physically and mentally — as I continue to hone my yodeling skills.

It's titled "Sweatin' to the Yodeling Oldies," and sets a fast pace for a workout of walking, jogging or maybe having a heatstroke if I'd have received the music a little earlier in the summer.

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BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

Wonderful walnuts

Walnuts of all varieties are falling now and squirrels have taken notice. Some people have, too, if they are lucky enough to have access to a walnut tree. Well, black walnut not so much, as the harvest of black walnuts is labor-intensive in this area of the country. In the Midwest there are walnut hulling machines that travel around and set up in certain areas. They remove the green outer hulls and buy the walnuts from you for a nominal fee per pound. Or, you can buy your own hulled walnuts back from them.

Quite a deal, if you have ever tried to hull them yourself. Cracking them is another story. They have such a tough shell that it is ground and used for sand-blasting.

• **Black Walnuts** — (*Juglans niger*) deciduous trees. Usually large and spreading. Native to eastern U.S. High-branched tree grows to 150 feet, but usually not over 100 feet in the West. Nuts are thick-shelled and very hard but with rich flavor. Improved varieties with thinner shells are: "Thomas," "Stabler," and "Ohio." Big, hardy shade tree for big places. Fairly drought-tolerant. Don't plant near vegetable or flower gardens, rhododendrons or azaleas, as black walnut inhibits these plants' growth by secreting a substance that inhibits growth of other plants. Black walnuts have a long dormant season. They are also known for attracting aphids. Don't park your car under a black walnut tree as you will end up with the aphid's sticky honeydew on your vehicle.

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Feasts For Pregame Festivities



Kafta kebabs, charred long hots, tomatoes and onions.

Jessica Griffin/Philadelphia Inquirer-TNS

TERRIFIC TAILGATE

By Allison Steele
The Philadelphia Inquirer

PHILADELPHIA — Just because you're hanging out in a parking lot doesn't mean you can't enjoy professional-caliber food while you're waiting for the game to start. A few of Philly's chefs recently offered their ideas.

At Suraya, Fishtown's Lebanese restaurant, chef/owner Nick Kennedy cooks every day over an open bed of coals that could be replicated in a small grill outside the Linc. For a do-it-yourself version of his kafta kebabs, he suggested mixing ground beef with parsley, cumin, and other spices that give it a warm, savory flavor. He recommended forming the kebabs the night before. It helps the meat set better, he said, plus it takes most of the work out of game day.

"Don't overcomplicate it," he said. "Otherwise, you won't be able to enjoy yourself while you're doing it."

He accompanied the skewers with onions, tomatoes, and spicy long hot peppers, throwing the onions in their skins right on the coals for eight to 10 minutes until they're charred black on the outside. Give them another few minutes to rest, then peel off the black layer, and they're sweet and juicy inside.

Placed close to the fire, the long hots should get a good char after only about four minutes. Kennedy slices the tomatoes in half, adds a sprinkling of salt, and cooks them face-down for four to six minutes, as close to the flame as possible. "You want to get them really charred and hot, so they explode with juices when you eat it," he said.

The meat cooks in just a few minutes, he said, depending on the size of the skewer, and is ready after a couple more minutes of resting.

Kennedy suggested finishing it all with a little olive oil and sea salt, drizzling it with the runoff juices from the vegetables, and serving it with hummus and pita. Vegetarians can leave out the meat and put the veggies together for a sandwich.

Jim Burke, the chef at Yards Brewing Co., said the brewery's popular Philly-style wings can be easily adapted for game day.

The wings are tossed in a buffalo sauce made with garlic, vinegar, jalapenos, and long hots that give it a pale green color as well as a tangy, spicy flavor.

"We basically just asked ourselves, how can we make it more Philly?" Burke said. "Anywhere we could, we wanted to add local traditions."

Experienced grillmasters might consider cooking the wings entirely over a charcoal grill, starting them on the cooler side of the grill and gradually moving them toward the hottest area. But for a simpler approach, the wings can be prebaked at home in the oven, then finished on the grill for game day. Cook until the skin crisps up and the meat inside is juicy.

Once done, they are tossed with salt and the green sauce, just enough to coat them lightly. The heat in the sauce can be offset by some cool blue cheese dipping sauce.



Charred long hots, tomatoes and onions on the grill.

Jessica Griffin/Philadelphia Inquirer-TNS

Sushi chef Jesse Ito of Queen Village's Royal Sushi & Izakaya recently added a special to his nightly offerings that he said is approachable enough for a tailgater in search of something new. Beef negimaki, or beef and scallion rolls, can be prepared the night before by pounding thin sirloin or another type of steak, slicing it, rolling it up around crunchy scallions and mushrooms, then spearing it on skewers for cooking.

"Anyone can make a hibachi out of a grill," he said. "And if you can cook a steak, you can cook this."

Sliced into bite-size rolls, the result is a salty, addictive snack. The vegetables give it crunch, and Ito recommends a drizzling of chicken tare, a Japanese dipping sauce, for a touch of sweetness.

At DiNic's in Reading Terminal Market, there's more than just the famous roast pork sandwich on the menu. But it can be a challenge to get people to try other things, said owner Joe Nicolosi. The pulled pork is best for a tailgating party, he said, because like the best tailgating food, it can be prepped ahead of time, then finished in a slow cooker that lets the flavors deepen for hours.

To get it ready for the slow cooker, he suggested seasoning a boneless pork butt with salt and pepper and stuffing herbs like rosemary, fennel, and garlic into the crevices. He recommended cooking the meat in a 450-degree oven for half an hour — or searing it — then caramelizing onions with fresh garlic and setting it all aside until it's time to leave. It all goes into the slow cooker with water and perhaps a cup of wine.

When it's done, Nicolosi advised serving it on a roll from Sarcone's, layering salty provolone cheese on the bottom so it melts and laying long hots on top — red ones, sweeter than the green. He likes to pour some of the cooking juices on top for extra flavor; chefs with immersion blenders might find the sauce's thickness improves from some blending as a last step, he said.

"The pork basically needs to be falling apart, no resistance at all when you touch it with a fork," he said. "You can't really overcook it — it just gets more tender."

PHILLY WINGS

Serves 4

2 pounds small to medium chicken wings
2 tablespoons salt
¼-½ cup canola oil

Toss wings with salt (if multiplying recipe, use about 1 tablespoon per pound). Cover and refrigerate several hours or overnight.

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Remove wings from fridge and pat dry.

Put them in a pan large enough for them to fit comfortably in one layer, add barely enough canola oil to coat the wings, and put them in the oven.

Cook for approximately 20 minutes, until they are fully cooked but only lightly browned. Remove from the oven and let rest for 10 minutes.

Once they have cooled to room temperature, reserve any liquid in the pan to add to the hot sauce later.

Gently pat wings dry before wrapping them tightly to transport in a cooler.

At the game, remove wings from cooler to get them to room temperature. Coat the wings in a very small amount of canola oil and place them on the grill.

Turn the wings often and monitor heat so they brown evenly and deeply on all sides. They must cook long enough for the skin to crisp completely.

Transfer wings to a bowl, season to taste with salt, and add enough of the warm hot sauce (see recipe) to completely coat the wings. Serve immediately.

— Jim Burke of Yards Brewing Co.

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