



DORY’S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

Picking up huckleberries well worth the effort

Have you ever picked up huckleberries?

No, I don’t mean off the bush in the mountains. I mean off the floor.

Off the floor where you just spilled a small container of them meant for your breakfast bowl of cereal; those hard-picked by one of your sons and delivered to your door for your later enjoyment.

It is a sight to behold as you stand there with the little empty container in your hand that you had just bumped against the freezer door and the lid and huckleberries spread over the kitchen floor.

One’s first thought is of horror over your clumsiness and loss of those hard-won purple berries. These are the ones with the sharp taste with which you grew up and prefer over the lesser flavor of those more like blueberries. These are the ones you can no longer go into the local mountains and spend the day picking, one by one, hoping not to share them with a bear or two. These are berries of the past which your youngest son has spent his time picking and sharing with you so that you can enjoy them all year ’round because of having frozen them in little cartons.

Now you stand there looking down at what appears to be initially a tragic happening. One’s thoughts are of horror over your loss of those hard-won purple berries and your own clumsiness. Should you cry or get angry?

Then you consider your broom and dustpan standing in the corner as against your regret in losing the addition to your oats and bran awaiting.

The berries are frozen so they could be picked up and washed. No loss but one’s own time and attention.

See Dory / Page 2B



BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

Sunflowers bring smiles on every trip

The drive to Boise is usually not as interesting, but with the hoards of cheery sunflowers lining the highway, I couldn’t help smiling.

I’d like to return in a few weeks to collect seeds so that I could have some of this happiness in my garden and share it with the neighbors and everyone who walks by on the sidewalk.

Normally Kansas is the sunflower state, but perhaps the early pioneers brought the wild sunflowers with them from Kansas.

Sunflower, *helianthus*. *Compositae*. Annuals and perennials. All zones. Coarse, sturdy plants with bold flowers.

All are tough, tolerant plants for full sun, any garden soil. Perennial kinds spread rapidly, may become invasive. Not for tidy gardens. All bloom in late summer, fall.

H. annuus. Common sunflower. Annual. From this rough, hairy plant with 2- to 3-inch-wide flower heads have come many ornamental and useful garden varieties. Some ornamental varieties have double yellow flower heads 5 to 7 inches across; others have large orange, red brown, or mahogany heads.

The best-known form is coarse, towering to a 10-foot-tall plant with small rays outside and cushiony center of disk flowers, 8 to 10 inches across.

See Sunflowers / Page 2B

Summer Harvest Penne Pasta



Linda Gassenheimer/TNS

This pasta dish features summer’s bountiful vegetable harvest.

SUMMER VEGGIES MAKE PASTA SHINE

By Linda Gassenheimer
Tribune News Service

Gather the best summer vegetables for this tasty penne pasta dish. The sauce is filled with eggplant, zucchini, bell peppers and ripe tomatoes and finished with a little cream. If you can’t find really fresh, ripe tomatoes, use good-quality canned plum tomatoes.

Helpful Hints:

- Any type of short cut pastas such as fusilli, elbows and rigatoni can be used instead of penne.
- All green or all red bell pepper can be used instead of using both.
- 5 garlic cloves can be used instead of minced garlic.

Countdown:

- Prepare all ingredients.
- Put water for pasta on to boil.

• Make sauce.

Shopping List:

To buy: 1 small eggplant, 1 small zucchini, 1 small red bell pepper, 1 small green bell pepper, 1 small jar minced garlic, 8 plum tomatoes, 1 container heavy cream, 1 package penne pasta, 1 small bunch fresh basil, 1 small package broken walnuts and 1 small piece Parmesan cheese.

Staples: olive oil, onion, salt and black peppercorns.

SUMMER HARVEST PENNE PASTA
Recipe by Linda Gassenheimer

2 teaspoons olive oil
2 cups sliced onion
1 cup eggplant cubes about ½ inch (with skin)
1½ cups zucchini cubes about ½ inch
½ cup sliced red bell pepper
½ cup sliced green bell pepper
3 teaspoons minced garlic

1 ½ cups quartered plum tomatoes
2 tablespoons heavy cream
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
¼ pound penne pasta (about 1 ½ cups)
½ cup broken walnuts
½ cup fresh basil torn into small pieces
¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Place a large pot filled with water for the pasta on to boil. Heat the olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and saute 2 to 3 minutes. Add the eggplant, zucchini, red and green bell peppers. Saute 5 minutes. Add the garlic and tomatoes and continue to cook 5 minutes. Add the cream and salt and pepper to taste. Blend well.

When the water comes to a boil, add the penne and boil 10 minutes. It should be cooked through but firm. Drain and divide between two dinner plates. Spoon the sauce over the pasta and sprinkle with walnuts, basil and parmesan cheese.

Yield 2 servings.

Ban on single-use plastic bags a good start

We all know that plastic pollution is having a staggering effect on our communities, our rivers and our oceans.

I don’t know about you but the pictures of animals tangled in or full of plastic break my heart. Plastic pollution is virtually everywhere now because it doesn’t go away.

You have seen the bags and bottles littering our neighborhoods, and those are very visible. Less visible but equally, or maybe even more, troubling is micro plastic.

Over time plastic slowly degrades into smaller and smaller pieces. These small pieces are called micro plastics and they never go away. Even rain in the Rocky Mountains is contaminated with micro plastics.

Animals and humans now regularly consume micro plastics and reports are starting to roll in about the harm it does to our bodies. People around the world agree that we need to dramatically reduce our dependence on plastic to protect our health and the health of our planet.

The Oregon Legislature has



TRASH TALK

CYNTHIA ROBERTS

decided to begin to address the plastic problem by banning single-use plastic bags. The statewide plastic bag ban goes into effect Jan. 1, 2020. It only eliminates single-use plastic checkout bags at stores and restaurants, but it is a good beginning.

During the last eight years, 17 Oregon cities banned single-use plastic bags. The new ban creates a consistent policy across the state and has the support of the Northwest Grocery Association. Concerned citizens and legislators hope the ban will have a meaningful impact by reducing clogged water systems, landfill trash, unsightly litter, wildlife death and micro plastic contamination.

State Republican legislators voted against the bag ban, preferring to let the free market come up with a solution to the plastic problem. Forgive me for stating the obvious, but if the free market could solve

the problem we wouldn’t be in this predicament.

Plastic is manufactured from petroleum, which is subsidized by our federal government. Some very powerful corporations are making tons of money extracting oil and manufacturing plastic.

Protecting the environment and our well-being is not their priority. Sometimes we need our government to create laws that protect everyday citizens, our communities and our watersheds.

Cities that have banned single-use bags report an 80% reduction in the number of bags dispensed by stores — paper or plastic. Most people are using their own reusable bags.

After one major city banned bags in 2011 it reported an 89% reduction in plastic bag litter in the storm drainage system, a 60% reduction in creeks and rivers and a 59% reduction in city streets and neighborhoods.

Many people reuse the plastic grocery bags a few times or use them as trash bags or pet waste bags. The current grocery bags are so flimsy that they are only able to hold a few items and double bag-

ging is often necessary.

A family may be collecting about 20 bags each week. Some may get reused, some get recycled at local grocery stores, but most end up in the landfill or littering our lands and waterways.

One argument against the ban is that without these single-use bags people will buy more plastic trash bags. True enough. It is also true that some people will not want to spend their money on trash bags and will instead try to reduce their waste.

Out of concern for our environment, others will work on waste reduction and alternative solutions. The solution I chose a year ago was to stop using trash bin bags entirely. I compost most all food waste so I have very little wet trash.

The new law requires stores to charge at least 5 cents for thicker, reusable plastic bags, recycled paper bags, or some kind of reusable cloth bag.

Participants in food assistance programs are exempt from the charge.

See Plastic / Page 2E