

## Churchgoing kid isn't an angel

Sunday services used to be a time to contemplate my week, to meditate on my weaknesses and pray for the strength to make it through both in the future. Now that I take the children with me each week I am beginning to feel like I have put the Lord on hold. It's a whole new ball game — from the first peal of the bell to the dismissal song I'm in constant agitation instead of meditation.

The model child that sits next to his parents for a full hour without batting an eye is not my child. My child is the one that whispers so loud people think the PA system is fouled up. It's my child that points out to me and everyone else in the pew that I didn't put anything in the collection plate. And it's my child that asks out loud if she can go out and play during the sermon. She's on the move as soon as we get into the church as if she's become possessed with the challenge of disrupting everyone in the building. When it's time to stand she sits, when it's time to kneel she stands, but when it's time to go she's the first one out the door.

It's not as if she was once an angel and has since fallen into evil ways; church was never tops on her list of places to visit. As a baby I would bring her to church dry and fed under the assumption that she would sleep at least an hour. As soon as I sat down she would burp up all over me and the unsuspecting soul next to me. I've noticed that most people do not care for the odor of sour milk. Another sure bet was that she would pick that time to fill her pants. She couldn't do it discreetly — she always sounded like she was pressing weights. I



Margaret Schmale's

### Bits and Pieces

spent more time in the bathroom than the janitor did. It was too bad a speaker wasn't installed in there.

I could see when she turned into a toddler that her tricks became more refined and I spent less time in prayer. She loved to sing along with the choir, but didn't like to stop when they did. The bye-byes and a good game of peek-a-boo were adequate to distract the people behind us. The real test of my virtues came when she hopped over the legs of the kneeling Christians and raced for the rear of the church. She was halfway to the door by the time I had pardoned myself to the end of the pew and stumbled into the aisle.

We advanced a few years and a second child has doubled the trouble, but my oldest is still coming up with new and unique ways to sidetrack my thoughts. Recently she took a grasshopper to church and it hopped from body to body throughout the service. It drove her and half the congregation crazy until it was captured and dispatched in a most unchristian manner.

I keep trying to further her religious training, but it's not easy when she comes up with remarks like, "Do angels wear sneakers?" and "When they shoot a rocket to outerspace does it blow a hole through Heaven?" My favorite was, "Is the College of Cardinals a baseball training camp?" It's no wonder I pray for continued patience each week.



Darlene Clark stirs broth for gluten "steaks"

## She cooks for family without using meat

Darlene Clark doesn't rely on the standard meat and potatoes for her family's meals. In fact, she doesn't rely on meat at all — the four members of the Clark family are vegetarians.

"I haven't cooked meat for my family since I was married," Mrs. Clark said. She uses natural foods such as grains and legumes to supply protein in their diet.

"Vegetarianism is just a personal preference of ours," she explained. "It isn't something I'd try to force on other people."

Mrs. Clark's reasons for a vegetarian diet are simple and straightforward.

"Rather than feeding a cow or two on an acre of land and then eating the cow, why not get the protein first-hand?" she asked. "You get much more protein per acre from vegetables than animals can produce."

Nutrition experts sometimes warn that a vegetarian diet can lead to serious deficiencies, Mrs. Clark said. "But they are

referring to a diet based solely on vegetable products, without using any animal foods, such as milk and eggs," she explained.

"A diet which contains no eggs or milk can become deficient in Vitamin B 12," she commented. "But eating only a few eggs regularly will supply that nutrient."

The Clark family's meals are made from home-grown garden vegetables, grains and legumes bought in bulk, and moderate amounts of eggs and dairy products.

"We often hear that vegetable protein is inferior to animal protein," she said. "But I combine grains and beans so their proteins complement each other. When they are blended, one will make up the deficiency of the other. Together they provide a complete, high quality protein."

A concern about vegetarianism which is frequently expressed is the amount of protein it provides. "Nutrition experts are revising the recommended daily allowances of protein," Mrs. Clark said. "They are constantly being scaled downward. Humans don't need as much protein as was once recommended."

"When people find out that I don't cook with meat, they always ask me how I plan meals," Mrs. Clark commented. "It seems impossible to them to come up with menu ideas that don't revolve around meat and potatoes."

She explained meatless meal planning has been easy for her since she ate very little meat as a child.

"We couldn't afford it," she said. "We lived mainly on what we grew in our

garden, and I learned to cook with vegetables."

The entrees which she prepares most often for her family are soups and casseroles. She makes lasagne with vegetarian burger, and prepares a vegetable "steak" made out of wheat gluten which she sautes and then bakes in a cream gravy.

"My family doesn't like the commercial meat substitutes which so many vegetarians rely on," she said. "So I make most of my entrees from scratch. Since I'm a working mother, I appreciate recipes which can be made quickly with little mess."

Her recipe for "gluten steaks" qualifies on both counts. She uses an instant gluten flour called "Do-pep" which is available through health food stores. "I can mix up a batch of gluten steaks in five minutes and let them simmer for an hour while I work at something else," she said.

"I can also grind the steaks and make a vegetarian 'burger' which I use like hamburger," she commented. "It's a very versatile recipe."

(Mrs. Clark's vegetarian recipes, including the one for "gluten steaks", are featured in the "Recipe of the Month" column on this page.)

# Home and Garden

## Here's how to ripen green tomatoes

Keptomatoesinthegarden as long as possible, advises Gray Thompson, Oregon State University Extension agent, Clackamas County, home-urban horticulture.

However, in those areas of the state where an early frost is likely, mature green tomatoes can be picked and ripened off the vine.

A tomato is in the "mature green" stage if the tissues are gelatinous or sticky when the tomato is cut and the tomato interior is yellowish. Tomatoes that have not advanced to the mature green state will not ripen.

To check for maturity, cut a green tomato in half. If the pulp that fills the compartments is jelly-like, it is mature green. The seeds will be dragged aside easily by the knife and not cut through.

In immature green tomatoes, seeds are easily cut through and the jelly-like

pulp has not yet developed. Mature green tomatoes also have a pink or reddish tinge on the blossom end. They are more glossy and whitish green than immature tomatoes and have less

hairiness. Mature green tomatoes can be placed in deep straw, or in a room where the temperature ranges from 60-70 degrees F. They will ripen over a period of three to four

weeks. Sunlight is not needed to ripen tomatoes. In fact, they will ripen satisfactorily in the dark. Only the temperature is important.

## Spring bulb meeting set

Ed McRae, hybridist for the Oregon Bulb Farms in Sandy, will be the featured speaker at a meeting on spring bulb planting and care. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 27 at the PGE Service Center 3700 SE 17th in Portland.

"This will be an educational session to teach home gardeners more about new varieties of bulbs, care and planting techniques and indoor forcing methods," said Ray McNeilan, OSU

home horticulture extension agent. According to McNeilan, a number of new bulb varieties have been developed in both the spring bulbs and garden lilies. McRae will introduce these new varieties and discuss how they can be used in the landscape.

Planting, care and maintenance of the spring bulbs will be covered by Ray McNeilan. "Too often the spring bulb garden spot is forgotten until the bulbs peek up next spring,"

McNeilan said. "Then the gardener suddenly realizes he forgot to replant, divide or fertilize the bulbs." According to McNeilan, fall is the time to prepare and care for next spring's crop of flowers.

Ray Thompson, area extension agent in home horticulture, will offer tips on forcing bulbs into early bloom for indoor color. "Bulbs can bloom with only a minimum of stimulation if proper techniques are used," McNeilan said.

## Convection ovens offer new options

Convection ovens offer a relatively new cooking alternative, according to Janice Weber, Oregon State University Extension family resource management specialist. On first sight, the new oven resembles the conventional oven, but a look inside reveals the difference.

"The convection oven uses a fan unit to force the heated air within the oven cavity, and allows for recycling of about 90 percent of the heat," Ms. Weber explains. Several advantages are cited for using a convection oven. For instance, no preheating is necessary, cooking temperatures can be reduced up to 100 degrees F. and approximately 60 percent of cooking energy is saved. In addition, foods remain moist and flavorful,

and cooking is completed in about one-half the normal time.

"The system includes a

broiler and will also cook at lower temperatures, just like a conventional oven does," the specialist notes.

## Garden comfrey patch will pay dividends

Comfrey can brighten up a dull corner of your landscape next season with its deep green foliage, and can stock your herb cupboard with a truly versatile natural remedy for many common ailments.

The herb boasts a high content of vitamins A and C and is rich in calcium, potassium and phosphorus. It is most useful in treating wounds and burns and extracting poisons externally. In tea form, it is unbeatable for quick relief from gastric distress.

Comfrey grows well in a

thoroughly tilled, sweet (pH 6.0-7.0) soil, with full sun, abundant humus, and plenty of moisture. Dig in lots of compost or rotted manure, bone meal, and a liberal supply of dolomite lime.

Root cuttings grow well when planted in the fall. They should be laid horizontally three to six inches deep and three feet apart each way. Once established, this very hardy perennial will produce large yields with a minimum of maintenance year after year.

—from Jude Ramsey Jensen

### Recipe of the month

## 'How-to' tips for meatless entrees

### GLUTEN STEAKS

Broth: 2 quarts water (3 quarts if not using tomato juice) 1 quart tomato juice (optional) 1 package G.W. Broth 1/2 cup soy sauce 1 medium onion 2 tablespoons oil Saute onion in oil. Add remaining ingredients.

Steaks: 2 cups water 2 tablespoons soy sauce 1 package G.W. Broth or other seasonings 1/4 cup regular flour 2 cups Do-Pep (or slightly more)

Make broth and bring to boil in large kettle. Mix ingredients for "steaks" to near bread-dough consistency, then finish mixing by turning the dough in a rolling manner — do not knead. Cut dough in half and make a roll out of each piece. Slice and flatten, then drop slices into boiling broth. Reduce heat and simmer one hour. Makes about 30 "steaks."

These can be ground to make a burger, or can be sauteed in a breading meal, then baked in a mushroom sauce or cream gravy.

### EGYPTIAN STEW

2 tablespoons corn oil 1 cup chopped onion 1/2 cup chopped green pepper 1 can whole kernel corn with juice 1 teaspoon salt 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning 1 can green soy beans 1 No. 2 1/4 can tomatoes 2 cups sliced zucchini one third cup chopped parsley Saute onions and green peppers in oil until tender. Add all the other ingredients except the parsley. Bring to a boil and simmer just until the zucchini is tender. Add chopped parsley and serve.

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