



AND SO IT GROWS
CHRIS COLLINS

Lamenting a move, and a late garden

The unusually suffocating heat that we experienced this summer and the stifling smoke that later filled our skies haven't been the only challenges that have confronted me this year.

My garden was planted late, and as a result it is producing later than usual.

I've been sidetracked and distracted. It's been a difficult spring and summer in many respects.

When considering the big picture, however, the move of our newspaper office was not the biggest hardship I've faced. In retrospect, it might even have helped me get through the other concerns that have shrouded my days. Nevertheless, the move was a difficult one and very personal to me, having spent the past 39 years in the building at 1915 First St.

I didn't want to move.

See *Lament* / Page 3B



DORY'S DIARY
DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

Cataloguing videos spurs memories

Thoughts have a way of linking themselves together through association. In this way videotapes, travel, genealogy, and birthdays link one on one.

This is how I got there today.

This time it had to do with one of my projects over the last winter and into the heat of this summer.

The project was one of organizing my videotapes that had seen me through lonely times when I was not otherwise organized in thought or activity. I had decided that they should all be identified as to movies taped over the years and not otherwise identified except by a little slip of paper stuck inside the cover. If the paper had fallen out, there was no way to identify the programs without going through the whole tape again. With from two to six different movies or programs on each tape, this would be quite a project that could be done while I was not otherwise engaged and made a companion with my eat-alone meals.

See *Dory* / Page 3B

Homemade Barbecue Sauce



Hillary Levin/St. Louis Post-Dispatch/TNS

A selection of homemade barbecue sauces — Texas barbecue sauce, front, Carolina barbecue sauce, rear, and apple-bourbon barbecue sauce, left.

GETTING SAUCY

By Daniel Neman
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

It is a little-known fact that when you put store-bought barbecue sauce on ribs, the ribs secretly laugh at you. Chicken snickers. And brisket?

Brisket outright mocks you.

Store-bought barbecue sauce is fine, if you have no imagination and you like bland food that totally lacks interest. If you have friends or family over for a party, it is a good way to tell them that you don't like them very much and you think they are not worth the effort.

But homemade barbecue sauce?

It has life, vitality, exhilaration. The taste is dynamic, exciting, spirited. The ribs will show respect to you. The brisket will stand up and salute.

And it isn't even difficult to make. You can generally whip up a batch in less time than it takes to go to the store and buy the stuff in the jar.

The only problem is trying to figure out which kind you want to make.

Barbecue sauce can run from thick and sweet, like they make it in Kansas City, Missouri, to thin and vinegary, which you'll find in eastern North Carolina. In western North Carolina, they add a little ketchup to the vinegar.

Much of South Carolina uses a mustard-based sauce, but it is an abomination and not worthy of the word "barbecue." Or "sauce."

In Texas, barbecue means brisket, and the sauce is served on the side. The sauce is almost an afterthought, and purists don't bother with it. When they do, it is tomato-based, a little sweet and a little spicy.

I happen to love Texas style, so I made a batch — the first of three. To me, Texas sauce is the most versatile. Not only is it the only one you'd want to eat with brisket, but it also goes equally well with pork ribs (or beef ribs, for a real treat) and with chicken.

I made a recipe I have been making for nearly 20 years; it's what I use when I make barbecued brisket. It's a well-balanced blend of most of the expected ingredients (ketchup, onion, garlic, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, molasses), plus a few that you wouldn't expect.

Mustard, for one, but not enough that it turns into that glop from South Carolina. Coffee, too, which rounds out the bottom notes of the taste and gives the sauce a noticeable depth. And the last ingredient is chipotle peppers — it's a Texas thing — which pack just the right amount of heat to give it a marvelously smoky undertone.

As a rule, I try not to use liquid smoke on anything; it feels like cheating. But chipotles get their smokiness from actual smoke, so I feel free to use them with abandon. Also, I like them.

For my next barbecue trick, I whipped up some North Carolina barbecue sauce. I usually make the tomato-free, eastern Carolina

version, so this time I decided to try the way they make it in the western, mountainous part of the state.

The differences are subtle, but very real. Both sauces are essentially vinegar with spices and peppers. But while the eastern version uses a mix of white and apple cider vinegars, the western one tempers the apple cider vinegar with brown sugar. A quick shot of ketchup is all it needs to add just a hint of richness to the sauce.

In North Carolina, both sauces are used exclusively on pulled pork. But I'm a loner. A rebel. A free spirit floating on the breezes of imagination. So I baste it on grilled chicken, too. That's the kind of thing we culinary outlaws do.

Besides, it tastes great.

Finally, I wanted to make a different kind of barbecue sauce, a sauce that was light and sweet and unusual. So I made a Bourbon-Apple Barbecue Sauce.

The trick was to create a blend that was harmonious, yet sprightly. I did not want any one flavor to stand out, but I wanted to keep it bright. So I knew I did not want to simmer it for too long — but then I had to find other ways to keep the individual flavors from being too assertive.

The secret was balance. Ketchup makes up the base of the sauce, but I toned down its force with sauteed sweet onions.

See *Saucy* / Page 3B

Cruciform family: 4 petals and many more garden options

Cruciferae. The mustard, cabbage, or cress family contains many food plants and ornamentals as well as a number of weeds. The notable characteristic is a four-petaled flower resembling a cross. Familiar members include all the cabbage group, radishes, turnips, stocks, rocket, and sweet alyssum (*Lobularia*).

Cruciform means in the form of the cross. The reason for the name derived from Latin, is that the little seedling sprouts have four leaves in the form of a cross. Also, the blossoms on the mature plants of the whole family have four petals like a cross as well.

The whole cruciform family are more tolerant of cool weather than a lot of other



BETWEEN THE ROWS
WENDY SCHMIDT

get a crop. Otherwise, you can plant in late summer for an autumn crop as they tolerate some frost.

Brussels sprouts are annuals and grow over a wide variety of climate zones. The mature plant has a tall stem with a crown of large leaves. The stem is covered with tiny sprouts. They are fairly easy to grow where summers are not too hot, long, or dry. "Jade Cross Hybrid" is easiest to grow and most heat tolerant. You may have to grow your own from seed.

In mild climates, plant in fall or winter for

vegetables. When the weather gets too warm, they tend to bolt (go to seed), so you need to plant early so that you

winter and spring use. Sow outdoors or in flats in April, transplant young plants in June or early July to a sunny place where they will grow and bear in fall.

Treat Brussels sprouts the same as broccoli. When big leaves start to turn yellow, begin picking. Snap off little sprouts from bottom first — best when slightly smaller than a golf ball. Leave little sprouts on upper stem to mature. After picking, remove only leaves below harvested sprouts. A single plant will yield from 50 to 100 sprouts.

Brussels sprouts are readily available in the grocery stores most of the year. They are easily prepared and cook fairly fast. One easy way is to steam/boil them with a tight lid. With them include 4 or 5 whole allspice berries.

When the sprouts are soft and easily pierced with a fork or knife, thoroughly drain them. Quickly add a chunk of soft butter and ¼ teaspoon of almond flavoring. Replace the lid and shake and swirl the pan a bit to melt the butter and distribute the flavors. Serve in a deep bowl to retain heat longer.

Cabbage — annual or biennial, grown as an annual. Plant in a different place each year to discourage pests. Eight vegetables in the cabbage family: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage (savoy, Napa), collards, kale, and kohlrabi — all are excellent home garden crops.

All of the cole crops will grow well in reasonably fertile, well-drained soils.

See *Garden* / Page 3B

