



BOB’S THOUGHTS
BOB BAUM

Sports writer is better than any ‘real’ job

Don’t get me wrong, being a sports writer is a heck of a lot better than most any real job.

It’s just not always exactly what you’d think.

For example, someone will find out what I did for a living and say, “Wow, you get to talk to the athletes?”

“No,” I’d reply. “I HAVE to talk to the athletes.”

It’s not always a pleasant experience. While there are any number of terrific people who also happen to be professional athletes, there also are those who dread our very existence.

I covered all four major pro leagues — MLB, NFL, NBA and (for a few dozen games) NHL.

See **Sports** / Page 2B



BETWEEN THE ROWS
WENDY SCHMIDT

Earwigs are interesting, harmless

This time of year there are lot of earwigs around the garden and yard. They are fearsome looking creatures, insects with the usual six legs insects possess.

Their pinchers (also called forceps) on their tail end are curved on males and straight on females. These are used as an aid for eating, and for defense if they feel threatened. They can sometimes pinch, which may sting a little, but they have no poison in their pinchers and they rarely even break your skin.

Earwigs were once believed to crawl into people’s ears to seek the dark and moisture, but that is a myth. They spend their time in compost and rotting leaf and vegetable matter. They also prey on small insects (earwigs are omnivorous) and don’t care if their food is alive or dead.

Earwigs can come into your house when you bring them on flowers or vegetables, and they will head for your trash or damp places.

When you step on them or they are defensive, they exude a smelly liquid. This causes no harm, but is unpleasant.

If you have garden questions or comments, write to greengardencolumn@yahoo.com. Thanks for reading!

Tips For Getting The Most From A Basic Staple: Rice

With The Grain

By Arthi Subramaniam
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Cooking rice is not rocket science and requires little effort. But cooking it perfectly requires some basic rules and common sense.

Rice is deeply ingrained in my psyche, and I cannot imagine a life without it. Maybe it is because I consider rice, especially with yogurt, the ultimate comfort food, and shamelessly have it any time of day every day. Or maybe it’s because making rice was one of my first kitchen chores.

My mom would give me a steel bowl with grains that I had to rinse repeatedly until the water finally changed from cloudy white to clear. Next I would stick the four fingers (not the thumb) of my right hand into the rice and fill the bowl with water until it reached the joint closest to the palm on my index finger. The bowl then was ready to be placed in the pressure cooker. It was always the same bowl with the same amount of rice.

There are more than 40,000 varieties of rice today and the white, brown, red and black (which actually is deep purple) kernels can be classified into three categories — long-grain, short-grain and medium-grain.

It is not the actual length of the rice that determines its category, explains Christopher Kimball, founder and president of Milk Street. It is the ratio between its length and width.

The length of long-grain rice is about five times the width; when cooked the grains are distinctly loose, fluffy and don’t stick together. The basmati, Texmati and jasmine grains remain firm and dry even after they are cooked, making them perfect for preparing biryani, pilaf, mujadarrah, tahdig, jambalaya and rice salads.

Medium-grain rice is three times as long as it is wide. The grains are noticeably less fluffy than the long-grain ones and less sticky than short-grain. This category includes Valencia and bomba, which are typically used to make paella; ponni, a full-boiled Indian rice; and carnaroli, which is favored for any type of risotto.

The short-grain rice is twice as long as it is wide and gets sticky and clumpy when cooked. The aromatic seeraga samba and ambemohar, which cook quickly, belong in this category. Short grains also are commonly used for sushi, which holds up because of the stickiness.

Being a rice aficionado, I have several varieties in my pantry and four tried-and-true devices that I use interchangeably depending on the quantity needed, time restrictions and how lazy I feel.

I pull out my sturdy, everyday steel pot when I want to make just a small amount of basic plain rice. I turn to my faithful 30-year-old Hitachi automatic cooker, which announces the rice is done with a delightful chime, when I am multitasking in the kitchen or don’t have the time to baby-sit it. I lean on my Instant Pot when I cook rice with meats or dried beans and want it to be done, well, instantly.

I treasure my fourth device, an old-fashioned Indian pressure cooker that is a gift from my parents. It whistles loudly whenever it needs to let off steam and the weighted pressure regulator on the vent pipe would pop up and then sit back down.

The proportion of water to rice has a big impact on whether the dish is a hit or miss. Typically the ratio is one cup of rice to two cups of water but that changes according to the type of rice, the device it is cooked in and how much other liquid is required in the recipe.

For those who cook rice once in a while, a good sturdy pot or saucepan will suffice. Start off by bringing the water to a boil, add the rice and return to a boil. Then turn the heat down to a simmer and cover the pot, letting the rice cook for 15 to 18 minutes. Keep in mind that if it boils too hard, the rice will break up.

If you are using an automatic rice cooker, follow the device’s directions using cup measurements and the lines along the side of the bowl. There is less involvement with the cooking process and no guesswork whatsoever, but the rice comes out perfectly time and time again.

The Instant Pot also is a foolproof and a hands-off way of making rice.

It is important to rinse rice well before it is cooked. Always. Rice is sometimes dried outdoors and rinsing gets rid of the dirt. Also, the grains tend to rub against one another in the sack during transport. This creates a powdery surface stant that will cause rice to stick when cooked if the grains are not rinsed in the beginning.



Andrew Rush/Pittsburgh Post-Gazette-TNS

There’s a double dose of coconut in this rice. The rice is first cooked in coconut milk, along with green peas, and then flavored with grated coconut, mustard seeds, white lentils and fennel seeds. It is finished with a sprinkling of fried onions.

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- 1 teaspoon chili powder**
2 tablespoons store-bought biryani masala or garam masala
1½ teaspoons salt
1 (12-ounce) package of paneer, cut into 1-inch cubes
1 green pepper, diced in cubes
1 teaspoon canola oil
For rice
3 cups basmati rice
1 teaspoon canola oil
1 tablespoon fennel seeds
3 cardamom pods
1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
2 serrano green chilies, halved
1½ teaspoons salt
5¼ cups water
For onion topping
2 tablespoons oil
1 large white onion, thinly sliced
½ teaspoon sugar
¼ cup mint, chopped
1/3 cup cilantro, chopped

To marinate paneer: In a large bowl, combine yogurt, garlic, ginger, turmeric, chili powder, biryani or garam masala and salt. Stir well.

Add paneer cubes, green pepper and oil and combine gently. Taste and add more salt if needed.

Cover bowl and let it marinate for at least 20 minutes at room temperature.

Rinse basmati rice and set aside.

To cook onions: In a Dutch oven over medium heat, add oil. After oil is heated, add onion and reduce heat to medium-low. Don’t stir the onions for the first 7 to 8 minutes. Then stir and add sugar. Stir occasionally, until the onions turn medium brown. Take them out of the pot and set aside on a plate.

To make rice: Add 1 teaspoon oil to the same pot on medium-low heat. Add fennel seeds, cardamom pods and cinnamon stick and stir for 1 or 2 minutes. Add green chilies and stir again for 1 minute. Add salt, water and rice. Cover and cook for 15 minutes.

See **Rice** / Page 2B

West-Jacobson Building part of La Grande’s post-fire downtown

By Ginny Mammen

Two businessmen — N. K. West and C. S. Jacobson — in 1913 partnered in the construction of a two-story blond brick building at 1300 Adams Ave. It was built on a lot purchased from Turner Oliver that had stood vacant since the fire of 1891, when two blocks of wooden buildings in the center of downtown La Grande burned.

Prior to the fire this corner had housed a general store from 1888 to 1889. The new structure provided commercial space on the first floor with offices on the second floor. One of those offices housed the dental business of C. B. Cauthorn. A ghost sign on the upper east wall of this building shows an advertisement for that business.

Carter Blake Cauthorn was born in Corvallis in 1871 and in 1895 began practicing dentistry at the age of 24. He moved to La Grande in the fall of 1904 and set up his practice

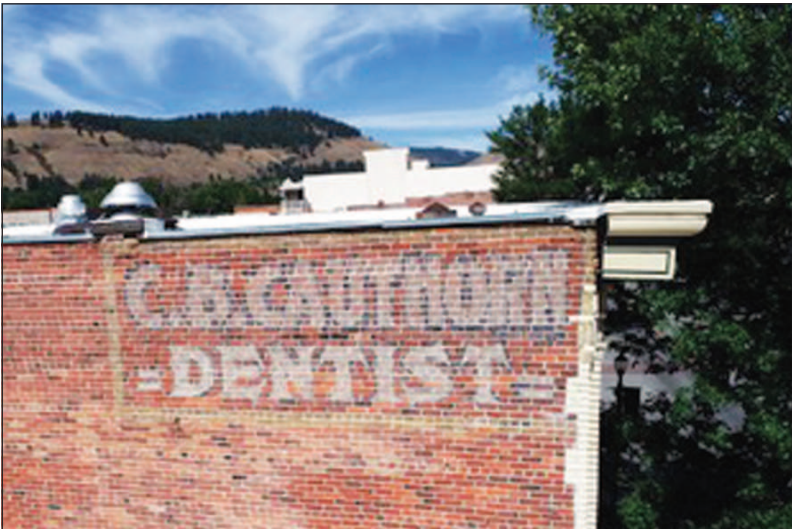


Photo by Ashley O’Toole

A ghost sign advertising C.B. Cauthorn’s dental practice remains on the east wall of the West-Jacobson Building at 1300 Adams Ave.

on the second floor of the Gardner Building (National Register of Historic Places) at 1210 Adams over Hill drugstore. In November 1913 he moved his dental office to the second

floor of the newly built West-Jacobson Building (National Register of Historic Places), just down the street, at the corner of Adams and Elm. Dr. Cauthorn and his wife, El-

sie, whom he married in 1911, lived a very quiet life in La Grande. They had no children. He practiced full time in La Grande until 1926 when he sold his business. Dr. Cauthorn died in February 1958 and Elsie in August of the same year.

The name N. K. West has been associated with a building in downtown La Grande since 1899. La Grande pioneer Nathaniel Kendrick West Jr. was born in Wisconsin in 1866. His family moved to Portland where his father founded a clothing business. He worked in his father’s store and in 1885 married a young Portland woman named Martha. They left Portland in 1899 with their baby daughter, Ada, and came to La Grande. He purchased a clothing and dry goods company at 1208 Adams, where the N. K. West Apartments, built in 2005, now stand. The original building, built by Jay Brooks and sold to West, burned in 1994.

Martha, called Mattie, and N. K. had only one child. Shortly after they arrived in La Grande sad times came to the family. Mattie became very ill around 1902 and in 1904 she died at the age of 36. N. K. threw himself into raising his teenage daughter and his work.

West was a man of many interests including his farm, dairy ranch and raising and racing horses. He was involved on the Union County Fair Board among many other local activities. In 1909 Ada married Herman Siegrist, a local merchant, and they set up housekeeping with her father. They had only one son named Kendrick. Tragedy hit the family again in 1922 when Ada died at age 34. N. K. married Mae Robinson in 1923 and they moved to his Summer-ville farm. Nathaniel K. West Jr. died in 1939 and Mae in 1961.

See **Building** / Page 2B