



**NUTRITION:
IT'S ALL GOOD**
ANN BLOOM

Chill in the air makes comfort food especially enticing

As the days grow shorter and the nights a little chillier, we get a sense the seasons are changing. With the change in seasons, we also tend to change our eating patterns. We start to think of warm, heartier types of food; many people call this comfort food. One may start wishing for meatloaf and mashed potatoes, or macaroni and cheese, or soups and stews for those blustery days when only comfort food will do.

Comfort food can be healthy as well as satisfying, without being laden with heavy sauces or using a lot of expensive and hard to find ingredients. Sometimes the simplest dishes are the most flavorful and therefore most satisfying. Take, for example, pasta. On its own it may seem very bland. However, by boiling it in salted water until it is not quite done, then adding a flavorful sauce of warm tomatoes, oil and herbs, and some sautéed garlic and onions, suddenly pasta is elevated to a comfort food.

Soups and stews also represent comfort food during fall or wintry weather. If you have, and use a slow cooker, you are on your way to a freezer full of comfort food.

See **Comfort**/Page 2B



**BETWEEN
THE ROWS**
WENDY SCHMIDT

Getting excited about grafting

It is high time for a vacation escape to different scenery and adventure. Not that the vacation will last long, but they always say that a change is like a vacation. In any case, it will have to do.

In view of widening knowledge of gardening and creating an abundance of variety on what you have, I've been talking to my friends Anne and Luis. Luis is proficient in the art of grafting.

Most things in the garden can be grafted. The most popular is grafting apples (and other fruits) and roses. I'm hoping to learn the art of grafting from Luis (he seems to have enough patience to be able to teach me that skill).

He's talking of grafting a couple branches of my wild peach tree onto one of their apricot trees. I'm excited about the prospect of grafting. When I took the master gardener program in 1997, one of the horticultural professors gave us a mini-seminar about grafting and I purchased a grafting knife from her.

Now I'm not sure where that special knife is, but will be able to learn with or without it I'm sure. A few different varieties of apple trees would be handy to have grafted onto the quince trees. Often a few apples is enough and you don't need a whole tree of the same kind of apple.

I'm sure you are all aware of the fall yard work needing to be done without my listing them to remind you. Take time to enjoy the colored leaves in spite of the fact you'll be raking them soon.

If you have garden questions or comments, please write to greengardencolumn@yahoo.com. Happy gardening!

Fresh Vegetables Add Color To The Dinner Table



Terrence Antonio James/ChicagoTribune/TNS

Grilled golden beets center a colorful fall salad with sautéed beet greens, red onions, bell pepper, herbs and crumbled feta.

FLAVORS OF FALL

By **Jeanmarie Brownson**
Chicago Tribune

My anxieties subside when three things align in my world: a full gas tank, cash in my wallet and plenty of food in the refrigerator. Specifically, fresh fruit and vegetables.

Luckily, fall farmers markets and produce stands overflow with goodness. Think squash, onions, potatoes, sweet peppers and hot chiles. The variety of tubers and root vegetables can be intimidating, but rest assured most take to simple cooking methods, such as steaming and roasting, beautifully.

I'm particularly fond of the mild-mannered, pale green globes of kohlrabi. Especially when they sport bright-green, leaf-topped stems. Not only does that mean they are very fresh, but also those leaves are edible. I treat the greens like lacinato kale — steaming or sauteing them.

Kohlrabi is technically not a root vegetable or a tuber; rather it is an enlarged, above-ground stem. I prefer to purchase kohlrabi when it's the size of a baseball because it can be enjoyed raw in thin slices or fine shreds, or quickly steamed in the microwave. Some kohlrabi varieties can be as large as a softball — these are best steamed to tenderness. I

always peel the globes to remove any tough, fibrous skin.

Kohlrabi, with its mild, broccoli-stem flavor, absorbs other ingredients, such as herbs, garlic, soy sauce, olive oil or butter, beautifully.

Beets, on the other hand, sport loads of their own unique, earthy flavor. Cooks and chefs have embraced the once-maligned burgundy-red root and now feature them prominently on menus and in cookbooks. Farmers markets prove a good source for non-traditional types, such as candy stripe, golden and white beets. I like how well all of them pair with flavored oils and smoky bacon fat. Sharp additions, such as tangy cheese, vinegar, onions and garlic help mellow their inherent beetiness. So does oven-roasting or grill-steaming them in foil packets.

Like kohlrabi, the freshest beets are sold with their green leafy tops intact. Do not discard the greens — instead saute them in a skillet with a little olive oil and enjoy as a side or addition to scrambled eggs or grain bowls. To motivate me to cook the greens before they wilt terribly, I remove them as soon as I get the beets home. Rinse, spin dry and they are good to go.

The kohlrabi and sausage skillet supper

that follows can be made with other vegetables as well. I often sub in diced parsnip and turnip as well as cubes of golden potatoes. The foil-packet roasted beets taste good hot or chilled. I spoon warm leftovers onto toasted naan for a casual meatless main dish.

KOHLRABI AND CARROT RIBBON SALAD

Prep: 15 minutes
Cook: 10 minutes
Makes: 4 to 6 side servings

3 medium-size kohlrabi, about 1 1/2 pounds, trimmed, peeled
2 medium-size carrots, trimmed, peeled
2 1/2 tablespoons tamari soy sauce
2 tablespoons unseasoned rice vinegar
1 1/2 to 2 tablespoons honey or sugar, to taste
1/2 to 1 tablespoon piri piri hot sauce (or other hot sauce), optional, to taste
1/2 teaspoon dark Asian sesame oil
Salt
Chopped fresh green onions or chives
Sesame seeds

See **Flavors**/Page 2B

A small change welcomes the new season

In the corner of my living room there is a little round lamp table on which I change the décor every month.

I used to redecorate the whole room every month, but since I reached age 94 I decided to just acknowledge the changing season with a token observance of turning over the calendar page.

This may not seem like a big thing to most folks who still hurry/scurry everywhere and accomplish great things, but it wouldn't surprise me to find that there are those reading this Dory's Diary column who know what I'm talking about — how important it is to keep a hand in things, even from behind one's window at home that seems to hold our hostage for the time.

Never give up, I tell myself — even with something as simple as changing a calendar page or a small tablecloth square, by accepting old age, the continuing



DORY'S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

threat of the COVID-19 virus, or just a rocking chair rest on a day of vacation.

Stay in touch, I say. Don't give up.

Back to the tablecloth, a small square that fits over the top of the round table and hangs partway down, a plain floor-reaching tablecloth. The one there as I wrote had beautiful embroidery of a handful of yellow sunflowers on green stems against a light-colored background. It pleased me to see it there and it seemed that I should share it with others through words. It had served its purpose for September.

At the beginning of the month when I had put it there in honor of four of my family's September

birthdays, I also put a bouquet of artificial sunflowers in a vase on the table to tie it all together with the lamp and the embroidery.

I was pleased, but it led me on to place a multicolored crocheted afghan on the davenport; then on to the hutch with pictures of my family, heirloom china in fall colors, all fronted by the remains of a once fresh yellow rose from a good friend and standing birthday cards to be better seen. Doing one thing first when you feel tired or depressed leads one to doing something else; then another task and yet another. Amazingly, one feels so much better when day is done.

It took such a little effort, really, to change the room from summer greens to gold of early autumn, and now I chose to do it again as October came on the scene with varicolored falling leaves, orange of pumpkins, and the bringing in of sheaves of wheat.

It all brings back yearnings for the past as I put away the September items, but then excites with

the appearance of the new colors and the wonder of what the future will bring.

Dory's Diary started out in the newspaper in 2009 and went on over the ensuing years; now, only once and again. On occasion I still feel the urge to share with those who still respond to those days of the past and still face the future's challenges regardless of whether from behind a window or out there in the danger zone. But, one must question the need for what was, despite desire, and what will help or hinder.

We are all in this changing world together and we'll accept the challenges together. But, once in a while, it may soothe the soul to just enjoy the look of a new tablecloth in changing colors on a little lamp table in the corner of the living room. And, in the evening, turning on the lamp may help spread the beauty of the season in one's life.

Readers can reach Dory by email at fleshman@eoni.com