

Following freezer failure, a flurry of rapid recipes

Gretchen McKay
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

This most definitely was not the way I envisioned kicking off 2021 in the kitchen.

On the first Monday in the new year, I noticed my toes felt kind of wet when I stumbled to the fridge to fetch milk for my morning coffee. Glancing down, I immediately got a sick feeling. Water was drip, drip, dripping out of the bottom of the freezer into a puddle on my wood floor.

I yanked the drawer open to discover that nearly everything inside had started to thaw. Clearly broken, the freezer was a disaster of epic proportions.

As a food writer, I always have countless ingredients on hand that can be whipped up into something

tasty on a moment's notice. When the pandemic curtailed my daily trips to the grocery store in 2020, my fridge and freezer got fuller still.

According to the FDA, when frozen food gets above 40 degrees for more than two hours, it enters the "danger zone" where bacteria can rapidly multiply and lead to foodborne illnesses like salmonella and listeria. A food can only be cooked or refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or registers below 40 degrees.

Expletives flew as I pulled bags, Tupperware containers and foil-wrapped packages out of the freezer and threw them onto the counter to assess the damage.

Along with several zip-close bags of garden vegetables, the

wreckage included half-used boxes of phyllo and puff pastry dough, several rounds of homemade pie dough, plastic containers of leftover chicken curry and homemade tomato sauce, and raspberries I'd picked by hand in September.

Then there was the meat — so much meat — including at least four different kinds of sausage. All I could see through my tears was dollar signs, especially because the floor boards under the fridge were starting to warp.

What do you do when your freezer breaks and you've suddenly got a ton of half-frozen food on your hands? After you stop swearing and determine what's salvageable, you start cooking.

The USDA website states that a full freezer can hold for two days

because the food will act like a big block of ice. Lucky for me, my freezer not only was packed but the digital thermometer still read 40 degrees. Many items in this cold depository of tasty leftovers and yet-to-be-cooked frozen ingredients — especially those in the bottom layer — were mostly still frozen.

While I was able to stuff a few items into a second freezer in the basement, an embarrassing (and heartbreaking) amount of food ended up either in a garbage bag or in the compost.

See **Freezer** / Page 4B

Gretchen McKay/Pittsburgh Post-Gazette-TNS
A steaming bowl of beef and sausage chili takes the chill off on a cold winter day.



BUILDING

Continued from Page 1B

The bookstore idea grew over the years and Margaret, Ferdinand's daughter, began working in the bookstore.

In February 1916, Adolph, with his wife, Clara, as manager, moved the pharmacy into the West Jacobson Building, permitting the growing Newlin's Book and Stationery Store to have the full space at 1114 Adams. Here the store was able to expand to offer, along with their books, such new wonders as an Edison phonograph or victrola as well as toys, artwork, typewriters, and office supplies. Margaret remained as manager of the bookstore.

A new partner in this bookstore expansion was Joe Palmer who served as president of the Electric Light Co. and also president of Farmers and Traders National Bank. Newlin's Book and Stationery Store remained in business until October of 1928 when Cecil R. Myrick of Spokane purchased the business. Much to Mr. Myrick's delight, Margaret stayed on as manager with the new company. The business changed its name to La Grande Book and Stationery Co. and operated until 1939 when it closed. The location was soon occupied by City Grocery, a subsidiary of La Grande Affiliated Stores.



Fred Hill Collection

The building at 1114 Adams Ave. has a long, and sometimes convoluted, history.

This building at 1114 Adams, more than any other building, gave me a merry chase in rounding up the people involved. It started out with just two names, Newlin and Palmer, in the 1893 city directory. Who was Charles Palmer? Next I had to discern how Ferdinand and Adolph were related. Then I learned a bit more of how the other names fit into the family. Ferdinand in 1836 was born into a Quaker family living in Maryland. Beulah was born the same year into a Quaker family living in Pennsylvania. Ferdinand married Beulah and became parents to Adolph, Robert and Margaret. The family started moving west and was living in Iowa in the 1860s. By 1870 they had moved to Oregon finally settling in La Grande. To put this into perspective, this family transition was occurring during the time of the Civil War, 1861-1865.

The next name was Joe Palmer. Who was he and why was he involved with a book and stationery store? This is where the story got interesting and also very convoluted.

Joe was also born into a Quaker family in 1838 in Pennsylvania. His family left Pennsylvania and settled in Iowa for a time. They also kept moving west and arrived in La Grande on the Fourth of July 1864. In La Grande Joe was a city councilman in 1879 and became a businessman who was heavily involved with the electric company and the bank. So why the bookstore? As I said, this got so convoluted when I was trying to figure everything out, I got a large piece of paper and started a family tree for each family.

Beulah, the wife of Ferdi-

nand Newlin, had the maiden name Beulah Palmer. Joseph Palmer was Beulah's brother and the uncle of Margaret who was manager of the bookstore. What I learned and what is too complicated to convey in this article is that Beulah Palmer, wife of Ferdinand Newlin, was also Ferdinand's fourth cousin once removed.

The only one left is Charles, who purchased the property in the first place. He was the younger brother to Joe and Beulah. Charles, age 20, was

working as a miner in this area in the 1870 Census. By 1880 he had moved to Baker City and had established himself as a retail grocer.

Sometimes stories have a way in needing to go just a bit further. This one had quite a twist from the beginning that needed to be shared so we can really appreciate what these pioneers experienced.

Ferdinand was born to Cyrus Newlin and Susan Bullen. His father died in 1844, leaving two slaves and a bit of land to 8-year-old Ferdi-

nand. His mother, Susan, was named executrix. Then in 1848 Susan died.

There was a man named Howes Goldsborough who had a plantation in Maryland. It appears that Howes was an orphan profiteer and he took the three Newlin orphans to raise in exchange for the slaves and the property they had inherited. In 1854, 18-year-old Ferdinand Newlin married Beulah Palmer, also 18. Now you know the rest of the story.

Keep looking up! Enjoy!



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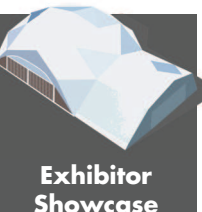
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HEART

Continued from Page 1B

Blood is needed to carry oxygen to every cell in our bodies.

A diet high in fat can cause a blockage in our arteries. A blockage can lead to a heart attack or a stroke. Smoking is also something which has a bad effect on our hearts. Smoking closes blood vessels, which makes it hard for blood to flow.

However, a diet that is rich in fiber, which is found in fruits, vegetables and whole grains, along with lean proteins, and low or nonfat dairy products is helpful in making sure our arteries will remain clear which helps our hearts beat strong. For more information on heart health, check websites such as www.dietaryguidelines.gov and myplate.gov.

Not all fats are created equal. When it comes to fats that interfere with a heart-healthy diet, saturated fats are the culprit. Lard, and the white fat surrounding meats, and butter — fat that is solid at room temperature — should be avoided. Olive oil, avocados, canola oil, and those types of fats are fine in moderate amounts.

Physical activity is also good for a healthy heart. Physical activity will help with keeping a healthy weight. Weight gain, which left unchecked, can lead to obesity. Obesity puts extra strain on the heart. Physical activity does not have to mean running a marathon. It can be as simple as walking. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC), the recommended activity level for the average adult is 30 minutes most days of the week (two hours and 30 minutes per week) at a moderate pace. Moderate is defined as moving at a pace that gets the heart rate up, and breaks a sweat. In other words, you can carry on a conversation with someone, but you can't sing. Examples of moderate physical activity include walking, gardening (raking and trimming shrubs), water aerobics, dancing and bicycling, anything that gets your heart rate up is good.

In addition to a well-balanced diet and physical activity, emotional health is important. Constant stress puts a strain on the heart. A study from the University of Rochester Medical Center found chronic stress increases the stress hormone cortisol, increases blood pressure and blood sugar, which are all risk factors for heart disease.

Feeling a connection with others (including our pets), doing activities we enjoy, meditation, yoga, and laughing are all stress reducers and can boost the immune system, all of which makes our heart happy.

Take care of your heart and your heart will take care of you. It will be around for all those billions of beats, beats that you can share with your loved ones.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Ann Bloom has worked for the OSU Extension Service for 15 years as a nutrition educator. She studied journalism and education at Washington State University. She lives in Enterprise.

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