

'Econo-Eating'

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I've been to a couple of parties lately that were great fun, had spectacular food and were not much work or expense for any one person. At a time when we're all concerned about the cost of food and other expenses, it's nice to have the fun of entertaining without the difficulties. These parties were cooperative parties. Kind of like a potluck hors d'oeuvres party. Each person brought a party food or a dessert that could be picked up, such as cookies or candy. That way, no one person had to do all the work or bear all the expense. There was a generous amount of food, a good variety and everyone enjoyed seeing what the others brought. It's nice to get some new ideas for quick and easy foods for entertaining.

There are ways to "have your cake and eat it, too" as far as entertaining is concerned. You can have the fun of a party without a big expense if you use your creativity. Years ago when my daughter was a baby and my husband in school, we hardly had a dime extra to spend. Our friends were in the same boat, so a party was popcorn, punch and table games while the kids slept in the bedroom. Those were just as much fun as any fancy cocktail party or dinner out that I've ever been to.

My husband's office has "hair-cutting parties." When he first asked me if I'd like to go, I couldn't understand what he was even talking about. It

seems that when they were graduate students, they didn't have money for haircuts so they'd get together, throw a little money into the pot for the refreshments and cut each other's hair. Now the faculty and the graduate students get together regularly. They're great fun—though I haven't been brave enough to let them cut my hair yet.

There are ways to lower the cost of entertaining:

—let guests bring foods or beverages so they share the cost and the time it takes to have a party.

—don't buy expensive specialty foods. Research on the food that is wasted shows that this type of food frequently shows up in the garbage.

—trade time for money. Make your own party foods such as dips, crackers or special spreads. Arrange your own trays of meat and cheese.

—choose lower-cost foods. Most people don't need to have a complete meal at a party, so feature lower-cost fruits and vegetables and eliminate or be conservative on meats and cheeses. If you do choose meat, make it something you can stretch, like meatballs that have added bread.

—fix a punch or have people bring their own beverages.

There are also ways to make entertaining easier:

—keep the food and the entertainment simple. You don't have to dazzle everyone with 20 choices. Fix three or four inexpensive or filling items.

—make a menu that uses items that are on sale.

—do some of the things ahead of time. Dips and marinated vegetables even taste better if they're done at least the day before.

—let people help. You know the people who arrive early are going to ask if they can help. Have jobs organized so they can do them without running into each other.

—remember that the people are more important than the house. It's nice to have things in reasonable order, but there's seldom a need to clean every inch of the house.

Here are a couple of my favorite party foods. The flat bread is a brand new one to me, but so inexpensive and good tasting. It was served at a super fancy restaurant and when I raved about it, my friends said, "I have a recipe that's like this." A super find. The other recipe is a fairly expensive one but easy to do ahead. I usually only make it when mushrooms are on sale.

Sardinian-Style thin Bread
2 1/4 cups flour
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup lukewarm water (110 degrees)
1/4 cup cooking oil
Sesame seeds, if desired

In a bowl stir together flour, sugar, salt and baking powder. Stir in water and cooking oil. Mix by hand until dough can be gathered into a ball. (If needed, add more water, one tablespoon at a time.) Let dough rest 15 minutes. Divide into 10 portions, shape into balls. I used a cornstarch puff to lightly flour the surface. Any porous cloth can be used. Fill with dry cornstarch, tie the corners of the cloth together and bounce it on the surface and the rolling pin.

Roll each ball out very thin, to about an 8-inch circle. It will be an irregular shape. Sprinkle with sesame seeds, if desired, and roll again, pressing the seeds into the dough. Place 2 rounds on a lightly greased baking sheet. Bake in a 450 degree oven for about 5 to 7 minutes or until lightly browned in spots. Remove from oven, cool on wire rack. Roll and bake remaining dough. Store in an air tight container. The large sheets can be broken into two or three large sections and served with butter or margarine.

Marinated Mushrooms
2 pounds fresh mushrooms
1/2 cup cider vinegar
2 tablespoons chopped green onions
1 or 2 cloves garlic, pressed or minced fine
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons tarragon vinegar
1 cup salad oil
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper

Steam the mushrooms until slightly soft on the surface, about 5 minutes. Cool. Cover with a tight lid and store in refrigerator for at least overnight to have flavors penetrate. Can be stored two or three weeks. Can be drained and used as a salad or served as an appetizer.

Two Trackers, Wranglers plan Christmas parties

The Heppner Two Tracker 4-H Club held the last ride-meet for the season on Sunday, Nov. 27, at the fairgrounds in Heppner, said a club spokesperson. There were 15 members present.

Club members worked on Western and English equitation.

The club will hold a Christmas party on December 4 at 1 p.m. in the indoor arena at the fairgrounds, weather permitting, the spokesperson said. Horse-rider games will be played and a prize will be awarded for the best decorated horse. Any Wrangler members interested in participating are invited to join in, she said.

The Wranglers will also hold a Christmas party on December 4, beginning at 4 p.m. in the fairgrounds' annex building. A potluck dinner will be served and the main dish will be furnished. Members with last names beginning from A through L are asked to bring salads and those whose last names begin with M through Z are asked to provide desserts.

A gift exchange with gifts costing \$3 or less will be held for those interested in participating. Girls are asked to bring a gift for a girl and boys, a gift for a boy.

All 4-H members are invited to participate in this party, the spokesperson said.

IHS Student Body begins program

The lone High School Student Body has initiated a teacher of the month program for the 1983-84 school year. The criteria for selection includes teaching excellence and going above and beyond the call of duty for kids. The teacher of the month chosen for October was Del LaRue. LaRue teaches earth

science, biology and health at lone High. He also serves as counselor and athletic director and teaches seventh grade math. In addition to his academic responsibilities, LaRue is head basketball, head track, and assistant football coach at lone. He is in his 23rd year of teaching and his 13th year at lone.

Ducks no longer welcome

A dramatic increase in the number of waterfowl (primarily mallard ducks and Canadian geese) overwintering in the South Columbia Basin has led Portland General Electric to initiate a duck dispersal program at McCarty Reservoir.

The reservoir acts as a cooling facility for PGE's 530 megawatt coal-fire plant 17 miles west of Boardman. The 140 acre pond is a man-made facility which was constructed in 1978 and filled with Columbia River water in 1979.

In the past around 18 percent of the 1.2 million waterfowl in the Columbia Basin wintered in the South Columbia Basin (Morrow and Umatilla Counties in Oregon and Benton County in Washington). Almost none of those birds were in the area of the coal-fire plant. In 1982 the South Basin hosted 77 percent of the birds, over 500,000, in the Basin and most of them were out at McCarty.

According to PGE wildlife biologist, Ron Klein, the pond didn't become a duck attraction until the plant went into operation and the water no longer froze over. Compounding the problem was also a sharp increase in corn production in the surrounding areas at the same time. The combination of the warm waters and abundant food has lured the ducks from their traditional wintering site throughout the Columbia Basin.

Two concerns were raised by the concentration of the birds at McCarty Reservoir. The major one was a lack of birds in the other areas of the Basin for hunters. The other was the opportunity for the spread of disease, enhanced by the warm waters and large numbers of

fowl. Unable to allow hunting on the reservoir because of EPA quality restrictions and reluctant to spend 12 million dollars to meet those standards, Portland General Electric has initiated a duck dispersal program based on those used successfully in the Willamette Valley in Oregon and the Sacramento Valley in California.

The program is built around 15 propane-powered "cannons" at a cost of \$4,000, which fire automatically and should scare the ducks and geese away. The "cannons" will be placed around the pond in areas where the birds tend to congregate and the timing of the "booms" will be changed so that the fowl don't become accustomed to it.

The noise produced by the "cannons" is quite loud and has been rated at 135 decibels at 100 feet.

The program will not attempt to scare away the birds until their numbers reach 50,000 which should be in early December, and will end on January 22, 1984, a date which coincides with the end of hunting season. The program which will be closely monitored could also be halted by the outbreak of disease among the birds. It is felt that if the population is diseased that it would be best to attempt to isolate them in the area by not scaring them away and also not adding to the stress of the situation for the birds.

Efforts are also being made throughout the region to make other areas more attractive to the birds. The increase in corn crops in a wider area has already shown some response and some of the refuges in the North Basin area have been closed to hunting.



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