

Column #10-2002:

Dear I.O.W.A.:

*On Leaf Forts...*

*... fall has arrived—the trees are turning—so much beauty to see...*

When is the last time you built a "leaf fort?" Probably a long time ago, if ever. Now we spend our energies removing every leaf we can down to even blowing off our lawns, sidewalks, and driveways. Well, ok, if we must—but before we do—consider taking the time with the children to build a leaf fort and really play in it for a while. It will resemble a "sand castle of leaves!" We used to build ours next to the one room school house fence. If you don't have a fence, how about next to a shed or garage or without walls—try using some of the already bagged leaves for walls with loose leaves covering all. Same effect—the idea being to allow for some creative play with the kids.

*On Eating on the "Raw Side"...*

According to natural foods health expert, Dr. Gabriel Cousens, the more we incorporate raw foods into our diets, the better for our overall health. Raw foods are considered to have a higher "life force" than cooked foods and the primary reason being the preservation of enzymes in raw foods. Dr. Howell, a pre-eminent food enzyme researcher said: "Enzymes are both chemical protein complexes and bioenergy reserves." *Conscious Eating* by Dr. Gabriel Cousens, p. 519. Our body's ability to make enzymes can be exhausted due to a number of reasons including, for example, eating mostly cooked food, stress and illness. According to work of Dr. Howell, as cited by Dr. Cousens, if what we eat is pretty much cooked, irradiated or microwaved, so that we are not taking in a new supply of enzymes, this can "cause a enlargement of the pancreas and also stress our endocrine glands, such as the adrenals, pituitary, ovaries and testes." *Id.* at 525.

To the extent we eat more raw foods, the pancreas doesn't have to work so hard to secrete enzymes and this allows our bodies to use our enzymes for detoxification, repair, and the general overall health of our glands and organs. *Id.* Additionally, eating raw foods is important for the general health of diabetics and those with hypoglycemia. *Id.* at 527-528. The highest amount of enzymes is found in raw foods such as fermented krauts, miso and tempeh along with sprouted seeds. Sprouted seeds are best at the 1/4 inch length, fully developed and nicely green. In general, fruits, vegetables, seeds and sprouts comprise the raw food enzymatic category. Think of juicing! More next time.

*Basil Pesto*

With the frost warnings and fall upon us, it is time to take in the rest of the herbs for drying, freezing, or making into pestos. By now, you are probably on the second or third cutting of your herbs. Try mixing 1 cup of basil leaves with 1 and 1/2 cups soaked walnuts and 1 cup soaked pine nuts, and 3 cloves of garlic in the food processor. This makes a nice thick paste. I drizzled freshly squeezed lemon and olive oil over this, pulsing until blended. Season with a little salt. Keep refrigerated. This needs to be used in a few days. Try heating a wheat

flour tortilla on the skillet, then spreading the tortilla with a good thick layer of the Pesto, topping it with a tangy topping of diced tomatoes and chives or scallions. You could dice some mozzarella cheese into this or have it straight vegetarian. Roll it up, cut on the diagonal and enjoy! It's perfect with pasta too!

#### *Apple Chutney*

2 apples diced  
3 dates pitted  
1 tsp. Ginger  
1 tsp. Cinnamon  
1/2 cup water

Blend all ingredients except the apples. Pour over the apples. Serves 2-3.

Chutneys add a little extra to a meal, in color, texture, flavor, as well as being an interesting item to talk about, including how other cultures, particularly India, consider these to be a normal and regular part of a meal.

#### *Update on Chicken Herding...*

As we go into the fall, I let a big Black Australop hen hatch some eggs. I know it is getting late, but she was broody for so long, I felt sorry for her and gave her 8 eggs of which she hatched 6. She has a Polish/Dominque cross, which will have puffy feathers on top of his head and a black speckled body. Another is a pure white Araucana cross. There is a purebred Dominque rooster, all black speckled (like an old fashioned Barred Rock). 2 more look like they will be real dark Araucanas. I wonder if these cross bred chicks will lay blue eggs as I enjoy getting them along with my brown eggs.

I gave the chicks a big night crawler worm I found and it was just too funny watching one chick run with the worm, then another grabbing it and running the other way. Finally one chick downed the entire worm! These chicks are just 3 weeks old! We have small children come to visit from town and they enjoy watching the mama hen with her chicks running around and listening to the sounds she makes as she calls them to something she has found for them to eat.

Meanwhile, I herd in the main flock each evening and they are getting pretty good about going in now. The small flock that lives by the corn crib basically refuses to be herded and they won't go in until they are just plain good and ready, which means just about at dark! The mama hen with her chicks goes in pretty early but I have to chase in the other 11 Partridge Rock pullets who live with her. I look at it as my required exercise program and actually look forward to doing this daily as it gets me outside in all sorts of weather, and I practice some deep breathing as I am *herding*. All in all, it's a decent enough meditation!

*Meanwhile, be good to yourself. **Keep deep breathing**...new studies show a connection with weight loss. 'Til next time, when we'll explore more on body-mind-spirit issues affecting our health in "The WellFem-in-Law™" column.*

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