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Fascinations

I am fascinated by our Rose of Sharon hibiscus. We bought it last year when it was blooming profusely. We later found another hibiscus, a Creole Lady, that we thought would be better for the location so we dug up the Rose of Sharon and planted it in a pot. The buds dried up and fell off. The leaves fell off. We thought it was dead so we moved the pot to an obscure location thinking we would plant something else in it this spring. The only water it got was from the rains. Guess what? It is now loaded with buds and new growth!

Amazing Useless Information

Dr. Watson's bullet wound moved according to different Sherlock Holmes stories. In [A Study in Scarlet](#) it was in his shoulder, but in [The Sign of Four](#) it was in his leg.

Brain Teaser

Peter picked one pepper more than Paul. Pat picked one pepper more than Pam. Peter and Paul picked 10 more peppers than Pat and Pam. Peter, Paul, Pat and Pam picked 60 peppers. How many peppers did Peter pick?

See page 3 for the answer.

The Pony Express - Life Before Twitter

The Pony Express service started on April 3, 1860 as the first rider departed St. Joseph, Missouri. If we think postage is expensive now, just take a look back. The Pony Express delivered letters 2,000 miles to California within 10 days, but the cost was \$5 per half-ounce!

The famed Pony Express riders each rode from 75 to 100 miles before handing off to the next rider. There were a total of 190 way stations located about 15 miles apart. The service lasted less than two years, April 3, 1860 to late October 1861. During its operation of just over 18 months, 183 men are known to have ridden for the Pony Express. Here are some more interesting facts:

- Riders were paid \$100 per month.
- Riders got a fresh horse every 10 to 15 miles.
- Horses traveled an average of 10 miles per hour.
- The Pony Express route was stocked with 400 horses.
- The youngest rider for the Pony Express was Bronco Charlie. In July, 1861, he was 11 years old.
- The fastest Pony Express trip was 7 days and 17 hours. The trip delivered President Lincoln's inaugural address from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento, California.

Civil War Ends

On April 9, 1865, after 500,000 American deaths, the U.S. Civil War effectively ended as Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in the home of Wilmer McLean near Appomattox Court House in Virginia. Terms of surrender, written by Gen. Grant, allowed Confederates to keep their horses and return home. Officers were allowed to keep their swords and side arms.

Solar Surge for iPhone

If you are one of the millions of people who have an iPhone 3G or 3GS, you may be interested in a new product from Novotek. The Solar Surge uses the sun to charge an external supplemental battery enclosed in a case that surrounds the iPhone. Two hours in the sun will provide about 20 minutes of talk time. To help figure out how much charging is needed for other tasks, the company provides an iPhone app and web site calculator. You only have to input the type of weather, plus how much talking, movie watching and music listening you plan on doing. The [app](#) will tell you how much solar charging you need to keep your iPhone humming.

The charger is now only available at novothink.com, the company's website. The iPhone version is \$80, while the iPod Touch model is on sale for \$53. Both are available in either black or white, with other colors to come.

According to the company, this is the first solar charging solution approved by Apple.

The Wine Corner



It is the VERY slow interaction of oxygen and wine that produces the changes noticed in aging wine. It is believed that wine ages more slowly in larger bottles, since there is less oxygen per volume of wine in larger bottles. Rapid oxidation, as with a leaky cork, spoils wine.

From 1970 until the late 1980s, sales and consumption of wine in the United States held a ratio of about 75% white to 25% red. At the turn of the Millennium, the ratio is closer to 50-50.

Hold the Salt



In today's world of highly processed food, everyone can benefit from watching their sodium intake. Our bodies require sodium to function properly, but too much is a far bigger concern than too little. A high-salt diet puts you at risk for high blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease, stroke, or kidney disease.

The recommended consumption of salt is no more than 2,300 milligrams daily. That's the amount of sodium in one teaspoon of table salt. The average American consumes more than double that amount, which shows how challenging it is to stay within healthy guidelines.

The first step in modifying sodium intake is to realize that up to 80% of the salt in the U.S. diet comes from processed foods, not from salt added to food during preparation or at the table. This means that simply throwing away the salt shaker is not the solution. Here are some things you can do:

1. Go easy on the saltiest offenders. This includes deli and processed meats, canned soup and broth, canned vegetables and beans, pickles, frozen entrées, and salty condiments.
2. Go whole. Fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and most other unprocessed foods are naturally low in sodium. Many of these foods are also rich in potassium, which helps counterbalance sodium's elevating effect on blood pressure.
3. Dine in. Restaurants are notorious for pouring on the salt. A Google search shows that even a seemingly innocent entrée like Chili's Asian Salad with Salmon has almost 4,000 mg of sodium. (It also has 1,120 calories!)
4. Be a label sleuth. When you compare nutrition labels on products at the grocery store, make sure you check the sodium content, too. Just remember that nutrition stats are listed per serving, so if you eat more than one serving, you'll need to make sure you calculate total sodium accordingly.

Spice It Up !



Cayenne Pepper

Hot and spicy, cayenne pepper is available year round, adding zest to flavorful dishes around the world and health to those brave enough to risk its fiery heat.

The cayenne pepper is a member of the Capsicum family of vegetables, which are more commonly known as chili peppers. It's botanical name is *Capsicum annum*. The common name "cayenne" was given to this pepper because of its cultivation in a town that bears the same name in French Guiana on the northeast coast of South America.

It is no surprise that cayenne peppers, as well as other chili peppers, can trace their seven thousand year history to Central and South America. The cuisines of these regions are well known for their hot and spicy flavors.. Originally they were used as a decorative item and later as a foodstuff and medicine.

Cayenne is sure to heat up any vegetable healthy sauté. Keep a container of cayenne on the table right next to the pepper mill, so you and your family can add a pinch of extra spice to any of your meals. Here are some ideas:

- ➔ Give your hot cocoa a traditional Mexican flair by adding a tiny bit of cayenne pepper.
- ➔ Canned beans take on a whole new dimension when cayenne is added to them.
- ➔ Cayenne and lemon juice make great complements to cooked bitter greens such as collards, kale and mustard greens.

Featured Recipe: Double Raisin Bread Pudding

6 slices Sun-Maid Cinnamon Swirl Raisin Bread, cut into 3/4 inch cubes
1/2 cup Sun-Maid Raisins
2 cups milk
2 large eggs
1/4 cup sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Heat oven to 350 degrees (325 degrees for a glass dish).

Butter a 1-quart baking dish. Combine bread cubes and raisins in baking dish. In a mixing bowl, combine milk, eggs, sugar, vanilla, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg and blend well. Pour over bread and raisins. Let stand 5 minutes. Bake, uncovered, for 50 minutes, or until knife inserted in center comes out clean.

A Final Word

Thanks again for reading the Glen's Place Newsletter. I hope you found something of value here. If so, pass it on. Comments, questions, and suggestions are welcome and appreciated. Send them along to Glen@Glen's Place.

I hope the Spring season is off to a good start for you. Get outside and get some exercise and fresh air. You know this winter has kept you in far too long!

Until next time remember:



Answer to brain teaser: 18 peppers

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