

Heart-of-the-Home . . .

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Newsletter



December 1964

Dear Friend:

I always look forward to writing the Christmas Newsletter because I feel that "Merry Christmas" is such a personal greeting.

First I want to welcome our new readers from Anoka, New Ulm, Minneapolis, Mankato, and Frost classes. This is my way of keeping in touch with you and letting you know I'm always here to help in any way I can.

My circle of friends widens with every new class. I hope yours has widened too--both from meeting new people and from renewing old acquaintances. This is the time of year when we value friendship more than ever, but remember that the best way to have a friend is to be one:

I went out to find a friend
But could not find one there;
I went out to be a friend,
And friends were everywhere!

At this Christmas time, may your joys be many and may the New Year bring you happiness.

Sincerely yours,

Marion Melrose

(Mrs.) Marion Melrose
Home Economist in Rehabilitation



DO YOU HAVE CHRISTMAS FEET?

Whether it's from shopping or from extra baking, it's aching feet that make many homemakers dread the holiday bustle. So start conditioning your feet now.

Soak your feet in hot suds daily for as many minutes as you can spare and scrub them vigorously with a brush. Make a special softening "cream" by squishing up a handful of thick suds and stirring in a tablespoon of baby oil. Use the mixture to massage red places on your feet. Rinse them with warm water, then with cool water, and dry them thoroughly. Put on clean hose and a change of shoes and the rejuvenated feeling will surprise you.

Try this before the family comes in for supper and the real pressures begin. A warm relaxing bath is even better. You can give your feet the "treatment" in the bathtub.

OUR READERS WRITE US

MRS. C. K. WESTMAN, SR., of Clearwater sent a piecrust recipe. She says it's a good one to use when your small helpers are home for Christmas vacation and want to help with the baking. It doesn't get tough with a bit of extra rolling.

Here's the recipe:

3 cups enriched flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup lard (or $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups homogenized fat)
1 egg
5 tablespoons water
1 teaspoon vinegar

Sift flour and salt together. Cut fat into dry ingredients until mixture resembles cornmeal in texture. Mix beaten egg, water, and vinegar. Make a well in the dry ingredients and pour liquid into it. Mix with a fork. Roll out and fill with your favorite pie filling.

WATCH THE WARRANTY

When you buy an appliance, read the warranty carefully so you'll know what responsibility the manufacturer takes for repairs and replacements. Also, keep the sales slip or some other proof of purchase that shows the purchase date. Warranty cards you send to a company from which you've bought an appliance are filed by date of purchase rather than by name of purchaser. If you can't furnish the purchase date, the company can't find your card in its files.

SOUP FOR BREAKFAST

Spaghetti, hamburgers, or soup for breakfast may sound horrifying to the bacon, eggs, toast, and coffee nation we are. But if you can't get your children to eat breakfast try some drastic breakfast menu changes.

Too often youngsters, and adults too, skip breakfast. Maybe it's because they aren't interested in cereal and milk, eggs, or pancakes with fruit. Hamburger patties prepared ahead of time are no more trouble than eggs. It takes less time to cook a frankfurter than an egg. Opening a can of soup and heating it with milk or water is as easy as cooking cereal and you can drink it out of a cup. Along with fruit juice and milk, any of these makes a good breakfast.

It doesn't matter when food is eaten so long as children and adults get the nutrients they need. Vitamin C is most easily obtained from citrus fruit or juice but an orange eaten at recess or lunch time is just as valuable as at breakfast.

Be imaginative and if it sounds a bit crazy, don't worry. Sometimes it helps to be offbeat!

A SHOCKING CHRISTMAS GIFT

If you receive a hair dryer for Christmas, be careful where you wear it. The National Safety Council tells us that many women wear electric hair dryers under hazardous conditions. Even though your dryer may be portable, never wear it while bathing or doing the laundry. You may save time by washing dishes or washing out nylons while drying your hair, but this is a dangerous practice.

There is a definite danger of electrocution for women who wear electric hair dryers while in the bathtub, shower, or while standing in a puddle on the laundry room floor. The danger arises from current leakage and a three-pronged grounding plug is not complete insurance against it.

IRONING BOARDS DO DOUBLE DUTY

A clipping from the October 11th St. Paul Pioneer Press was sent to me with the suggestion of using an adjustable ironing board as a sewing table. A portable sewing machine is often too high when placed on a kitchen or dining room table. Sometimes a card table is not sturdy enough. But an adjustable ironing board can be lowered so it is just the right height. Place the machine on the wide end of the board and you'll have space at the other end for pins, scissors, and other sewing items.

SHORT SHORTS

Most homemakers know that honey kept on the kitchen shelf turns sugary and dark. It crystallizes even sooner in the refrigerator. Researchers at the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station tell us to solve the problem by keeping honey in the freezer. Remove only a small amount at a time, enough to last a week or two.

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To prevent dust from collecting behind pictures and marking the walls, glue small squares of polyfoam or foam rubber at both lower corners.

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Vacuum cleaner repairmen tell us that half of vacuum cleaner trouble is caused by a dust bag that is too full. Empty the bag when it is one-half or at the most three-quarters full. Don't empty disposable bags. They are meant to be thrown away and are not strong enough to withstand emptying.

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For the best flavor in ground beef, use beef containing some fat--about 20 percent. Lean ground beef such as ground round steak has fewer calories than fatter beef but it will dry out more in cooking.

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Keep sweet potatoes, dry onions, hardrind squash, eggplant, and rutabagas out of the refrigerator. They keep better in cool rather than cold storage.

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If your aluminum kettles darken after cooking your "Christmas Lutefisk" here's how USDA suggests brightening them up. Boil cream of tartar in water. Use 1 to 2 tablespoons cream of tartar per quart of water depending on how dark the pot is.

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You can reduce "pilling" of sweaters and other fabrics by turning articles inside out when washing them. This protects garments from rubbing against other items in the washer. Washing such articles in mesh bags protects them still more. Pills already formed may be removed with a scissors (fingernail scissors held with curved side down work well). Remember to hold the cloth firmly over a curved surface such as a firm pillow or your knee. Careful though, so you don't cut the fabric. You can also remove pills with a commercially made roller pill remover now on the market.

THE SHOE'S ON THE OTHER FOOT

You may remember something I've often said in class--"Use the right tool for the right job. Never use a paring knife to scrape gum off the linoleum or for outside jobs."

Well, it just takes some of us longer to learn. My rose stems needed to be tied together when I was covering them for winter. Yes, you guessed it. I went in and got a paring knife (my best one) to cut the heavy cord. When I was through cutting, I stuck the knife in the ground so I wouldn't lose track of it--but it got too dark to see the knife. I planned to pick it up in the morning but when I got up what did we have but 4 inches of snow! I'll have to wait until spring to find my rusty paring knife. After this, I'll practice what I preach--honest I will!



REMOVING STAINS FROM FOAM-BACKED MATERIALS

Prompt stain removal is important on any fabric but even more so on foam-backed materials.

Results of research by home economists from the Universities of Minnesota and South Dakota show that the sooner stains are treated, the easier they are to remove. Correct methods are important too.

Here are methods found successful in removing common stains from foam-backed materials: Remove coffee, chocolate syrup, and orange drink stains by sponging foam-backed fabrics with cool water, soaking in cool water for 30 minutes, sponging detergent into the stain, and then sponging perborate bleach into the stain.

Corn oil and melted shortening can be removed by first hand washing the fabric in a detergent, then sponging detergent into the stain, next sponging grease solvent into it, and finally sponging bleach into the stain.

To remove mustard stains, sponge detergent into the stain, then soak in hot detergent solution several hours, and finally sponge bleach into the stain.

If you use a bleach in removing stains from foam-backed fabrics, University researchers suggest that you use sodium perborate rather than chlorine bleach. Sodium perborate bleach does not turn the foam yellow as chlorine bleach often does.

YOU'LL BE SEEING

Soup in seconds--Instant soup is now being developed by research scientists at USDA. Right now they're perfecting a process that turns pureed beans and peas into instant powders. The process will end soaking and cooking. Just add water, stir, heat, and serve.

Instant applesauce--Soon to be on the market is a coarsely ground and sweetened granular material that can be converted instantly to applesauce by adding hot water. If protected from moisture pickup, instant applesauce will keep for a long time in your kitchen:

More concentrated frozen juices--The old orange juice mixing rule--mixing one 6-ounce can of orange concentrate with three cans of water--may soon be a rule of the past. USDA has revised its standards on orange juice, and soon you may be able to make more juice from the same size can you now buy.

Instant strawberries--USDA researchers are now experimenting with a strawberry powder that can be kept on the shelf. The powder will dissolve instantly in cold water for making sauces, dessert toppings, jams, and milkshakes. We'll also see raspberry, blueberry, and boysenberry flavored powders.

Shrink proof sweaters--Easy-care all wool sweaters you can toss into your washer without danger of shrinkage or melting will be on the market soon. Three textile mills are now producing yarn for sweaters and other knitted garments using the WURLAN shrink proof treatment developed by USDA. The garments have the look and feel of natural wool and the easy-care qualities of synthetics.

A NEW STOCKING FIBER

What, no more nylons? No, not exactly, but for the first time in a quarter of a century a new fiber has come along to challenge nylon--Vectra. Vectra is manufactured by a division of the National Plastics Products company.

Does this mean there will be no more stockings made of nylon? Most likely not, but that's still a question for the future.

Vectra is claimed to be more snag resistant than nylon even in sheer hose. It is said to be cooler than nylon in summer and warmer in winter. It looks and feels like silk, washes and dries easier and faster than nylon, and resists soiling. It can't fade since the fabric itself is colored and stockings aren't dyed after they are made.

Vectra stockings are being made in several sizes but at present there is not a large selection of colors.

NO MORE NEW FIBERS--MAYBE

Fiber manufacturers will soon stop inventing new fibers, our clothing specialists at the University of Minnesota tell us. Instead, more emphasis will be placed on improving fibers already in production.

USDA has contracted with Georgia Tech for research to determine what causes seam puckering in cotton wash-and-wear garments. Elimination of this wrinkling would add to the easy-care features of such clothing.

USDA scientists are now working on chemical treatments that will make cotton more soil resistant and easier to clean. Household fabrics such as curtains and table linens may also be improved when this new research is completed.

Cotton knitwear treated by this new process is guaranteed not to shrink more than 1 percent lengthwise even when machine washed and dried. Now on the market are children's sleepers that keep their size and shape for the life of the garment. This new process is also used for men's and boys' underwear and will soon be available in outerwear.

WHAT MEASURES THE WASH WATER?

In buying an automatic washer, one feature is sometimes forgotten. How does the machine measure water? It's especially important to know the answer if the water pressure changes during the time your machine is filling or rinsing. This sometimes happens on farms when there is a heavy demand for water in the barn and pressure in the house gets low.

Water coming into an automatic washer is measured in two ways. In a time-fill machine, water runs in for a certain number of minutes. With such a system you may wash a load of clothes with much less than the required amount of water. The metered- or pressure-fill machine is the type to buy if your water pressure is likely to fluctuate. With this system, a certain amount of water will run into your machine no matter how long it takes.

Most manufacturers make both models, but the metered-fill will be found on the "top of the line"--the more expensive models.

