



**chris
walden**

At what point in life does cooking become second nature? Through it has never been my goal to become another Julia Child or Galloping Gourmet, I would love to boil water without burning it or boil eggs without ending up with yokes only as the whites ooze out in some disgusting form. When I was younger I figured that becoming a good cook was

achieved in the same way as hair color or body shape... it was inherited. My mother is a great culinary talent, whipping up seemingly effortless concoctions that taste fantastic and always add a few pounds. When my sisters developed the same kitchen expertise I naturally assumed that it would follow through with me.

Evidently, they got all the cooking genes because I continue to undercook, overcook or not cook at all. The pathetic part of it is that I try. Once I invited a friend over for what I promised to be the best work chops around. I did everything perfectly, down to timing the expected time of completion. Alas, my oven failed me and the usual 45 minutes baking time for the chops turned into a three-hour vigil, resulting in two drunken individuals who could have cared less whether they ate pork chops or paper bags. I have since, vowed only to have dinner parties not exceeding three or four people, all of whom are close, tolerant and understanding friends.

ONCE I bypassed my rule and planned a well-intentioned wedding morning breakfast for one of my girlfriends and her bridesmaids. By then I had reverted to top-of-the-range cooking only and thought I had the method pretty much down to a science. But no matter how hard I tried the hash browns still flew out of the pan and onto the floor, the eggs stuck to the burners (and I was using a pan) and the bacon had a rather charred look to it.

I served it up anyhow and they all raved over the flavor and the feast, but I noticed that most ever-

thing was left on the plates except the cantaloupe, which had been untouched by my human hands and, therefore, edible. It's been said that one doesn't learn the art of cooking until one has someone to cook for. Not true. I have me to cook for (a sufficient number) and I have indeed tried to reasonably satisfy my taste buds before tossing it all and heading for a free meal at my mother's.

There is of course a problem of matching my hunger to my energy and somehow it is always easier and quicker to open a can of tuna fish, slap on some mayonnaise and let that suffice until it is either gone or rotten.

Another problem may be an improperly stocked kitchen. My cupboards are something close to the Mother Hubbard variety. One friend into shock when I said I had no pepper. Once recovered she informed me that without the proper spices and various accoutrements, such as sharp knives, mixing bowls and baking pans, I would never pull off a tasty meal.

What she didn't know is that empty cupboards force creativity. Just the other night and fresh out of peanut butter, I feasted on a cream cheese and jelly sandwich. And who wouldn't melt over lettuce, cucumbers and ketchup on bread.

There is a silver lining to all this.

While my potato salad is frequently sought after, seldom am I asked to bring a dish to pot luck dinners unless it is, in fact, the dish only. And I also save a great deal on grocery bills... cream cheese and jelly are actually quite cheap.

Still it would be nice some day to make spaghetti that comes from the heart instead of the can and cook a meal that I would allow someone I hardly know to eat.

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Booklet views play equipment

Summer means swings, sandboxes and teeter totters. It can also mean backyard injuries on playground equipment.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 100,000 persons each year suffer emergency hospital emergency room treatment for injuries connected with public and home recreation equipment. Most of the injured are children between the ages of 5 and 10.

A free pamphlet called "Backyard Play Equipment" offers advice on how to shop for safe playground equipment and how to prepare it for use.

Set the legs of the swing in concrete in the ground in order to anchor it properly. Be sure all pegs are well below ground level and that there is little or no slack in the chain or cable. Cap any exposed screws or bolts. If you can't find a set with protective caps, tape over these protrusions. Don't buy equipment with open-ended hooks, particularly S-hooks. Don't buy equipment with moving parts which can pinch or crush fingers. Avoid equipment with sharp edges or rough surfaces or having rings with a diameter more than five inches but less than 10 inches since children's heads may become entrapped. Swings with lightweight seats are preferable. Hard, heavy seats cause injuries.

Be sure to teach your children safe

Treasurer elected

Georgann Byrd of Bloomfield Hills was elected treasurer of Rockwell International's Women's Club as members held their annual installation dinner recently at Alvaro's in Royal Oak. S. J. Tompkins, vice president and senior advisor of automotive affairs, installed the new officers.

The club is an organization founded to provide social, cultural and professional benefits to its members and community.

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