

# Columns

## Longing for the good old days of apathy and indifference

I was at a friend's house and noticed something peculiar. I'm not going to call him out on it; he'll recognize himself.

There was a grouping of four light switches on the wall with a switch plate held in place by eight screws — one above and one below each switch. That's normal. But I noticed that the slot on each screw head was positioned perfectly vertically. That doesn't happen by accident.

I thought maybe it had been done as a joke or for aesthetics since that particular group of switches was prominent on the wall. But on the other side of the door was another group of switches with the screw heads also positioned vertically. I eyed an outlet near the floor. Yup; vertical screw heads.

### Ramblin' Man

By David Porter



Attention to detail is important, but I've never noticed this anywhere else. I asked about it and he admitted that all of the plate covers in the house were done this way. That takes commitment.

Did I razz him about it? Of course I did. That's low-hanging fruit. Part of me wanted to randomly turn some of the screw heads throughout the house just to drive him nuts for weeks to come.

I checked in several rooms and found that almost all of the screw heads were straight up and down. But I found three that were not. Two were on the same switch plate indicating that someone else had taken that cover off and put it back on. I was handed a small screwdriver and, instead of wrecking the system, I fixed the ones that were off to make them vertical.

Do I think such detail is silly

and unnecessary? Absolutely. But I also know that having that kind of order in his life is important to him. Thus, messing with them, even under the guise of fun, would be disrespectful. It's his house; he can arrange things however he wants. Plus, I don't have so many friends that I can afford to lose one over something so trivial.

My own surroundings, at least in my home office, are in a constant state of disarray. I wouldn't want someone else to come in and straighten things up for me. I don't have anything against neatness and order, but my personal space is just that: personal.

One of the things that make it personal is that I know where everything is and can generally find what I'm looking

for when nobody else would be able to. In that sense, I'm in total control of the chaos.

I would argue that we're both exhibiting compulsive, obsessive behavior. I would also argue that mine is a less desirable trait.

When you see that someone is orderly and neat in regard to minute details, one can assume that everything he pursues is similarly organized. And when you see that someone is sloppy and uncaring in their surroundings, one might suspect that they are disorganized in everything they do.

Of course, you might be wrong about both of them. There are areas of my life that are precise; I merely prioritize where I want to expend my energy.

The point is, we're all a lit-

tle unnecessarily judgmental toward others. When someone does something that we think is abnormal, or maybe we don't understand it or we don't agree with it, we need to try to respect it.

It's OK to disagree. We don't have to emulate what we don't embrace. But it's not going to impact my life because somebody thinks differently than I do. In fact, I think it's kinda cool that we all have our own quirks.

There seems to be a trend these days toward intolerance. I never thought I'd miss the days when we were indifferent and apathetic.

© Copyright 2023 by David Porter who can be reached at [porter@ramblinman.us](mailto:porter@ramblinman.us). The old mantra "to each his own" seems to be lost these days.

## How to build your own healthy lifestyle

As I have written about before, only 3% of US adults are currently living a healthy lifestyle according to a study done by the CDC and Mayo Clinic. But, it's really not our fault. We have all lived through the last 110 years of changes in our food supply, medical care, insurance dictating treatments and learned helplessness.

But over the last 10 to 15 years, a resurgence of health awareness is really starting to take hold. I have people come in every day asking about how they can take better care of themselves without any outside help. I think this is great! The more aware you are about your health, the better person you become and the better our

world will become in the future.

To help this transformation from our current sickness care model of healthcare to a wellness care model, you must first become aware of the basic truths of building a healthy lifestyle. Up until now, you have had to piece together what you could, where you could about building a healthy lifestyle. My goal is to create a one place to get credible healthy lifestyle information, that's not trying to sell you something. Once you have a solid understanding of how you can remain healthy, you can make informed decisions about what and what not to do.

So, over the next few weeks,

I'm going to describe the foundational parts of building and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. These things aren't hard to understand, but they are hard to stick with because 97% of people in the US today aren't doing them. Therefore, if you feel you're swimming up stream, then you are probably doing things right!

There are 3 parts to building a healthy lifestyle. First is healthy eating. Second in movement. And finally is your ability to handle stress. Doesn't sound to difficult, does it? But if you listen closely to almost every drug commercial they say, "when diet and exercise isn't enough".

Have you ever wondered

why diet and exercise isn't enough? It's because there has been so much confusion around what a healthy diet and proper exercise looks like. So, I decided to take a slightly different approach to this problem. I will give you my recommendations of the right types of diets and exercise,

but I'm going to go even more foundational than diet.

I will talk about healthy eating in 3 different ways. First is eating real food. The second way is to understand the importance of the time you eat and frequency of your eating. And finally, how important hydration is to your

overall healthy lifestyle picture.

What is real food? My definition is, if it can go bad after a few days then it was alive to begin with and chances are there is a place for it in your diet. If you can kill it, pull it off a tree, dig it out of the ground or pull it out of the water, it's real food. What most people don't think about is how light energy from the Sun has been captured inside all real food and is then released to you as you digest that real food. This is truly where your energy comes from.

Next week, I will continue this discussion and talk about timing and hydration.

### Real Life Wellness

By Dr. Bill Hemmer



## Small towns can make big memories

The old River City's Freedom Celebration is in the books for 2023, and from my view, it looked pretty cool.

There were food trucks, and the strawberry shakeup was to die for, I'm told. (The old die a beetus doesn't allow me to indulge very often, unfortunately.) The bike parade was filled with patriotic finery as usual, also.

The musical accompaniment was flawless, as always. The fireworks company lived up to their well-deserved national reputation and put on a great small-town show, and a special thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Craig for sharing their children's delight with us. The little guy's "there it goes" every time there was a particularly

big boom hit Mrs. HLS and I right in the feels, remembering when our littles were truly little and filled with wonder at fireworks and life in general.

As happens every year, my mind drifted back in time to when Henson Park was THE place to be for pretty much the entire day, for pretty much the entire town. Baseball and softball players of all ages would get a chance to show their skills in front of pretty much all their friends and families. People who weren't there scoff when I estimate that at least 1000 people could be found in the park at any one time, starting around 9 am and staying until the fireworks display over the field south of the country club concluded

### Hook, Line and Sinker

By Tony Hooker



around 9:30 or 10 pm.

I sometimes wish we could recapture those days and let the younger generations know what community really means. I don't mean for this to sound like some geezer telling youngins to get off his lawn while ranting about the old days. No. Really. I don't. OK, you're not convinced, are you?

What I'm trying to get at is we were a community back then because we didn't run to Champaign for everything we needed. No Wally World meant that the PN Hirsch and the Index Notion Stores on Main Street thrived. The thought of going to another town to watch their fireworks was not even a consideration, and the

funny thing is, folks from all the towns surrounding Villa Grove probably felt the same way. Why consider going to Arthur or Champaign or Monticello when we had food, fun, family and friends, right here on the southeast side of town?

I can't speak for every little town, but my dad lived in Bement when I was a kiddo, and they had a similar deal at what locals called the "large" park. I remember being a "chicken runner" with my step-brother, taking fresh, hot fried chicken refills to folks. I can't remember if the chicken dinner was free, but I know mine was. That and the satisfaction of a job well done were my pay for helping out with the festivities. It was cool though, because it

seemed like everyone pitched in to make it a great day.

Truth be told, the fireworks were good, back in the day, but having the fire department and city workers light them off with flares can't compare to the sophisticated electronic ignition system employed by the company that put on last night's show. Another unavoidable truth is that we're a mobile society now, and we're not going to go back to the bucolic days of yore, and folks will blow off VG's show for those that are bigger, and that's OK. All of us have our memories, and sometimes they can be triggered by a child's giggle of delight. My only hope is that today's generations are making lasting memories of their own.

## The grill can make desserts, too

For the past several weeks I have been sharing recipes for the grill. I've given you meats and sides, but now it's time to talk dessert! One of my favorite ways to eat peaches is off the grill. It's pretty simple to do and here is one important tip. Use freestone peaches that are still firm when you lightly squeeze them. Really ripe peaches will burn quickly on the grill.

Cut the peach in half, remove pit. Brush the cut side with a bit of olive oil. Place the peaches on grill over medium heat cut side down. Grill uncovered for 4 to 5 minutes. Flip and grill 4 to 5 minutes more. This is really good served warm with a scoop of

ice cream! Or you can try this recipe. It's tasty and so pretty!

### Grilled Peaches with Berry Sauce

4 servings

1.2 of a 10 oz pkg frozen raspberries in syrup, slightly thawed  
1 1/2 tsp lemon juice  
2 medium fresh peaches, peeled and halved  
5 tsp brown sugar  
1/4 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 tsp vanilla extract  
1 tsp butter

In a blender or food processor, process raspberries and lemon juice until pureed. Strain and discard seeds. Cover and refrigerate until chilled.

Place the peach halves, cut side up, on a large piece of heavy duty foil. Combine

### Let's Cook

By Linda Hoskins



brown sugar and cinnamon, sprinkle into the centers of the peaches. Sprinkle with vanilla, dot with butter. Fold foil over and seal tightly.

Grill over medium-hot heat for 15 minutes or until heated through. To serve, spoon the berry sauce over peaches.

I spent last weekend with

all my siblings, and we had a wonderful time. And like any family reunion, there was lots of delicious food. My sister served a delicious Corn Salad and I ate several servings! She was kind enough to share the recipe. This would be a good side dish with bbq ribs or any meal really. At first glance, it

seems like a lot of chopping, but this salad is so worth the time, and it can be made a day ahead of time.

### Corn Salad

Serves 8 to 10

2 12 oz cans kernel corn, drained  
1/2 cup thinly sliced celery  
1/4 cup diced green pepper  
1/4 cup diced red pepper  
1/4 cup diced yellow pepper, optional  
2 Tbsp chopped green onion  
1 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley

**Marinade:**  
1/4 cup sugar  
1/3 cup vinegar  
1/4 cup vegetable oil  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/8 tsp pepper  
1/4 tsp dried mustard  
1/2 tsp dried tarragon  
1/4 tsp dried basil  
2 tsp dried parsley

Mix vegetables in a large bowl. Mix marinade ingredients in a small bowl. Toss marinade with corn mixture. Marinate in the refrigerator at least 4 hours or overnight. Drain off marinade. Serve in a glass bowl.

If you have a recipe to share, or perhaps a funny story about a recipe you tried to make, please share with us by sending to [letscook!@heraldpubs.com](mailto:letscook!@heraldpubs.com) or mail to Mascoutah Herald, PO Box C, Mascoutah IL 62258. This column is printed in multiple papers in Illinois and Missouri, so you are willing, please tell us what town you are from. If you prefer, I will leave your name and/or town off. Thanks and Happy cooking!