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DANGER FROM UPSTREAM *A Lesson as Earth Day Turns 50*

Wednesday, April 22, 2020, will mark the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Yet, while we celebrate the beautiful, wild spaces of our world, long-time residents of Anniston, Alabama, will be marking another 50th anniversary — a far darker one at that. You see, in 1970, even as Earth Day was being printed on calendars for the first time, Monsanto was busy covering up the fact they'd poisoned the waters of my home county.

Polychlorinated biphenyl (or PCBs) had been used in everything from paint to power transformers, making it quite high in demand. This remained the case even after the chemical was discovered to be harmful to humans as far back as 1939. PCB exposure can lead to skin conditions, mental development issues, cancer, and more. And yet, at its manufacturing plant in Anniston, Monsanto chose to dump untold pounds of the toxic chemical into Snow Creek, upstream from many town residents. The effects of this irresponsible decision are still being felt today.

While the multibillion-dollar chemical company had been disposing of PCBs into the local creek for decades, 1970 was a particularly damning year. Earlier, biologists hired by Monsanto as part of a strategy seeking to defend the company from what the company considered "adverse legal and public relations issues," introduced fish to the polluted creek — to horrific results. One researcher said the experiment was "like dunking the fish in battery acid." Monsanto did not share the results of this experiment with the residents of Anniston, who had already begun to notice the creek had taken on a strange, red hue. In 1970, an internal company document laid out Monsanto's policy in plain language: "We can't afford to lose one dollar of business."

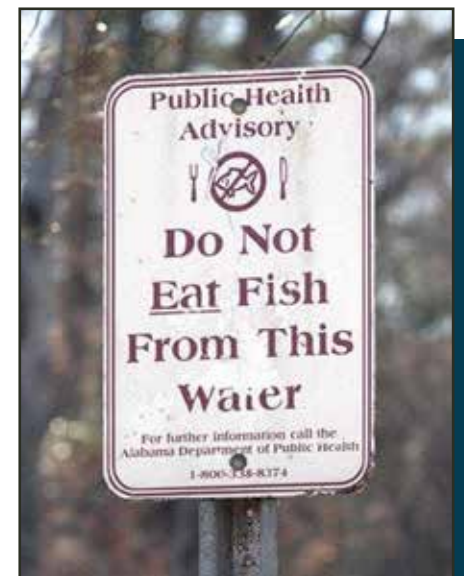
There were, of course, signs of trouble outside the walls of the company. A local undertaker reportedly complained he was "burying too many children."

Hog farmers had noticed their livestock's mouths beginning to turn green, just before Monsanto representatives showed up to offer top dollar for the animals. Community efforts to call out the pollution were made, but the company was able to largely deflect and suppress these outcries.

And so the world would remain in the dark until 2002. That year, a nationally televised CBS "60 Minutes" report declared that Anniston, Alabama was among the most toxic cities in the country, with PCBs being present at high levels in the very blood streams of the town's residents. Cancer, birth defects, and neurological disabilities were rampant and still haunt Anniston to this day.

While growing up in the countryside outside Anniston, I came into contact with people affected by Monsanto's disregard for public health and safety due to the polluting of Snow Creek and the downstream creeks and rivers. For their sake, I wish I could say there was a happy ending to this story, but that's often not how these things turn out. After many years of litigation defended by Monsanto's deep pockets and army of corporate lawyers, Monsanto ended up paying a settlement; however, the nearly three quarters of a billion dollars paid out by Monsanto to date still falls short of covering the area residents' lifetime of health issues, loss of life and property. Many of the town's residents who haven't succumbed to cancer or liver disease are stranded with property no one's willing to buy, living among bio hazard signs and abandoned buildings.

Monsanto, meanwhile, merged with the Bayer Corporation, strategically rebranding themselves in the process. Ironically this strategy sounds all too familiar: Rather than taking action to clean up their toxic public image, the company has chosen to simply hide itself behind another name and move on. Anything to avoid losing a dollar of business.



On Earth Day, 2012, national poet and environmental advocate Wendell Berry gave a speech at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. He titled his address "People Who Own The World Outright For Profit Will Have To Be Stopped." It was during this address that he introduced a new, brilliant twist to the Golden Rule: "Do unto those downstream as you would have those upstream do unto you."

So, as we mark a half century of celebrating this good Earth, let's remember this philosophy. We are not separate from our ecosystem — the health of this planet touches and enriches our lives. Letting profiteers exploit these riches can only hurt us downstream.

— John Colvin

Another Slice of Pi(e) *The Sweetest Ways to Celebrate Pi Day*

Break out your calculators and grab your aprons because it's almost Pi Day! This holiday has gained popularity among mathematicians and bakers alike — two groups that rarely overlap.

Pi Day is March 14, which when written numerically is 3/14, the first three digits of the mathematical constant pi. Pi is special because it's used to calculate the circumference of a circle. This might not sound like a big deal, but pi is used in engineering, construction, GPS, motors, power generation, and even television! If we hadn't calculated pi, none of these achievements would be possible. Pi is pretty important, and it's definitely worth celebrating! Here are two ways you can get in on the fun.

LEARN TO RECITE PI

Pi has fascinated mathematicians for centuries because it's an irrational number, meaning the

digits go on forever. If you want to try your hand at memorizing some of the numbers, here are the first 50 decimal digits of pi (with spaces, so they're easier to remember!).

3.14159 26535 89793 23846 26433 83279 50288 41971 69399 37510

To make things simple, we often round pi up to 3.14, but many people have challenged themselves to memorize and recite as many digits as possible. In the Guinness Book of World Records, the record is currently held by Rajveer Meena, who recited pi to the 70,000th digit on March 21, 2015. And he did it all while blindfolded!

EAT SOME PIE

Another popular way to enjoy Pi Day is to bake and eat pie. This dessert is perfect because it's

both a homophone (same pronunciation as "pi" but with a different spelling and meaning) and a circle. Challenge your friends to a pie-baking contest, or buy your favorite pie from the store and have a pie-eating contest. And, while this may be a controversial stance, we believe pizza pie deserves a place in Pi Day celebrations, too.

Here's to Pi Day: the tastiest, nerdiest holiday of the year!



All the Glory of a Home-Cooked Meal In a Camp Stove

Phrases like “roughing it” might lead you to think you’re stuck with trail mix and dry granola bars on backpacking and camping trips. Nothing could be further from the truth! In fact, with a little preparation and some creativity, you can have delicious food on your next backcountry trip. Here are some tips to get you on the right track.

USE PREMIXED SPICE AND MEAL PACKETS.

One surefire way to spice up any meal is with, well, spice! There’s no need to bring the whole container of cinnamon or cumin. For a tasty breakfast, mix oats, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, and cinnamon ahead of time and pack them in a container. Lentils, quinoa, and a cumin and pepper spice mix can make a great chili-inspired dinner.

TURN TO ONE-POT MEALS.

One-pot meals mean less clean up and more fuel efficiency, which is especially helpful for backpackers. With your premixed packets of food and spices, just add water and you’ll be on your way to a tasty meal.

PIZZA IN THE BACKCOUNTRY?

Yes, you can even cook pizza in the backcountry! All you need are a few simple ingredients and either a campfire stove or grate. You can buy the dough or make your own at camp by mixing flour, salt, water, and yeast. Knead the



dough, then let it rest for 20 minutes. Add oil to your skillet and place it on your camp stove or campfire grate to heat up. Press the dough firmly toward the edges of the skillet, then place the skillet on the fire or stove and bake until one side of the dough is golden brown, then flip. Once the other side is cooked, add toppings and place back on the heat source until it’s ready. Enjoy!

KEEP YOUR FOOD TO YOURSELF.

To protect yourself and wildlife while you’re enjoying your delicious meals, practice Leave No Trace principles and pack out what you bring in. When critters begin to associate humans with food, it creates problems for every species. Always keep food away from where you sleep, eat at least 100 yards away from your tent, and use secure containers to store food for the night.

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Spring-Cleaning With Marie Kondo Tips From a Master Organizer

It’s that time of year again, when we’re meant to dust, scrub, and organize until our homes are nearly unrecognizable. While clearing out the junk that builds up over the winter can always be a positive thing, the truth is many of us don’t even know where to start — so why not get some professional advice? Drawing inspiration from famed tidying expert Marie Kondo, we’ve put together the top three organization methods to make your spring-cleaning a success!

END GOALS

Kondo knows that motivation is a make-or-break factor for many people when it comes to deep cleaning. So, before you even touch a duster, give yourself a moment to take a breath and really commit to the project. She recommends picturing how much easier life will be once your home is clean and organized. Keeping that end result in

mind can give you the extra push you need when you might be thinking of throwing in the towel.

OUT WITH THE OLD

Your first step in the cleaning process should be to get rid of unwanted, unused items cluttering up your home. Not only is this good organizational practice, but it will also make the rest of the process that much easier. You don’t necessarily have to throw things away, either. Clothing and furniture still in decent condition can be sold at a lawn sale or donated! Not sure whether to get rid of something? Ask yourself Kondo’s famous inquiry: “Does this spark joy?”

CATEGORIES, NOT ROOMS

Often it’s tempting to clean one room at a time, but shifting between very different types of cleaning and organizing can get exhausting, creating

opportunities for us to stop and then never pick up the cleaning again. Focusing on one category at a time, such as “clothes” or “vacuuming,” can help us stay focused and get into a rhythm. Best of all, your whole house will become organized uniformly, ensuring that you can enjoy the whole of your living space by the time you’re done.

Best of luck, and happy cleaning!



Orange Glazed Salmon

Inspired by RealFoodWithJessica.com

Ingredients

- 2 salmon fillets (10 oz total)
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp ghee
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary, chopped
- Zest from 1 orange
- 1/3 cup fresh-squeezed orange juice
- 1 tsp tapioca starch

Directions

1. Heat oven to 425 F, and line a sheet pan with parchment paper.
2. Salt each fillet with 1/2 tsp salt. Bake for 6–8 minutes.
3. In a saucepan, combine ghee and garlic and cook over medium heat for 3 minutes.
4. Add rosemary, zest, and juice. Cook for another 3 minutes.
5. Stir in tapioca starch until lumps disappear and mixture thickens.
6. Plate salmon and top with orange sauce.

SUDOKU

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