

# Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser

Pictures, pictures everywhere. There are entirely too many to hang in our new home. So I've packed several boxes, after carefully wrapping the frames, and will store them.

Over the years we receive pictures of the ten grandchildren as they grow. There are pictures of sisters, parents and grandparents. Where to put them is the question.

With our first child we started a tradition of taking photos to use as a Christmas card. And, over the years it was a wonderful record of our six children's growth. Some people have saved these and then returned them to me so that I have several complete sets of those 25 years.

One picture that we hung is a "hair" design. My grandmother's hair and her sister's hair were used in an artistic arrangement and put in a gold frame. Another unusual

frame holds a picture of my mother at age five holding her favorite doll.

I've also acquired pictures of other families and have tried to contact them in order to return the studio photographs. But I have not had success. There are many pictures of my mother's school teacher, Ida Eby, and her family stored away in a trunk. Often folks will say that they will come for pictures but never do and I hate to throw them away.

One picture that I'd like to find is an expensive aerial photo that was taken of our farm. It seems that it has vanished into thin air and I'll probably be quite surprised when it is eventually discovered in some unusual place. But until then, I'll ask Allen to find more studs in the walls to hang four mirrors.

Although it is often considered a "rich" food, sour cream contains only 25 calories per tablespoon, compared with 99 calories per tablespoon of mayonnaise. Sour cream also provides calcium, vitamin A and riboflavin.

One glass of milk provides enough energy to walk one mile, dance one hour, play nine holes of golf, clean house for two hours or climb 196 stairs.

## Tips For Using Microwave

**TOASTING NUTS AND COCONUT** - Place 2 to 3 cups nuts in a glass baking dish. Spread evenly. Heat uncovered for 2 minutes; stir. Heat 1 minute, stir. Heat an additional minute or until nuts just begin to turn color. If you toast only 1/2 cup of nuts, lessen the cooking time to about 1 minute.

You can use the same procedure with 2 to 3 cups of coconut. Spread evenly, heat uncovered for 3 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds. Less coconut - less time.

**TO SOFTEN CHEESE AND SPREADS** - Most people know that cheese should be served at room temperature, we often forget to remove it from the refrigerator before a meal. A few seconds in the microwave solves the problem instantly. Be careful - 5 seconds is about the average time required - rarely leave it in longer than 10 seconds.

The microwave also softens refrigerated cheese spreads, cream cheese, peanut butter, and herb and garlic butters to an easy spreading consistency. Items stored in glass or plastic containers can be warmed in the jar after the metal top has been removed. Start with 10 seconds and increase according to the amount. Remove foil wrapper from cream cheese, place on a plate and heat for 10 to 15 seconds.

The microwave is an excellent medium for revitalizing stale chips, crackers and rolls. To give renewed flavor to stale corn or potato chips or pretzels, spread them evenly in a shallow dish.

Heat uncovered for 1 minute. Let stand 2 minutes before serving. This also works with soggy crackers and day-old rolls. Be careful not to overcook the rolls or they will become hard as bullets. 15 seconds is right for 2 rolls, 25 seconds for 4 and 35 seconds for 6. Even very dry rolls can be revived by sprinkling with a few drops of water and wrapping them in a paper napkin before placing in the oven.

When warming cookies, doughnuts or coffee cakes, heat a single piece no more than 10 seconds.

Save the crusts or odd-shaped pieces of bread and make your own croutons and bread crumbs. First the croutons: cut 6 slices of bread into 1/2 inch cubes. Spread evenly in a shallow casserole. Heat uncovered 3 minutes; stir heat 3 more minutes; stir. Let stand 2 minutes.

To make bread crumbs simply place the crisped croutons in your blender and mix to the desired consistency.

Rather than struggle to open stubborn clams and oysters, place them on a paper towel in the oven 4 at a time for 15 seconds. Watch them carefully. When they cautiously open their shells just a crack, remove them from the oven, insert the clam knife and they will open effortlessly. This takes some experimentation. Too much heat will cook them and too little heat will not force the shells open.

Bacon right from the refrigerator is difficult to separate. Place it in your microwave for ten seconds and it will peel easily.

How many times have you tried to scoop brick hard ice cream from your freezer. To facilitate serving, place 1 pint of ice cream in its container on a plate and heat for 15 seconds. The plate prevents excessive melting on the bottom. One quart takes 30 seconds to soften. Watch carefully. Remember you just want the ice cream to soften to the scoopable stage.



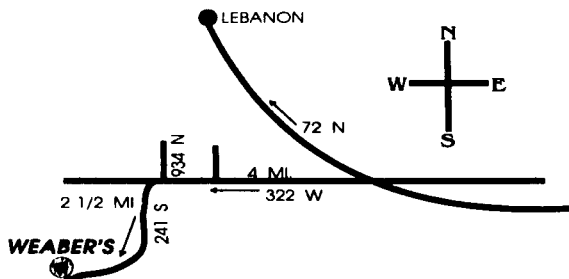
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