



M. Antonio Silas/Collegian

Janet Robinson, of Piper's Peck, picks her peppers which she uses to make salsa, jelly and preserves.

# Piper's picks peppers

By Anita Modi  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The red rust of a pitcher well and dark wood of the Robinsons' kitchen greet visitors to the Piper's Peck, a small, family-owned business in Bellefonte, Pa.

Janet Robinson, founder and owner of the Piper's Peck, said she started planting and selling both fresh and dried peppers in 1998, when she heard a local restaurant owner comment on the lack of peppers in the area. Her pepper farm soon expanded to include tomatoes, peaches and herbs, and her product line expanded to include pepper products from the traditional Salsa Verde to the eclectic Peach Jalapeno Preserves.

Robinson began selling her products at the State College Friday Farmers Market in 2001. She said she enjoys interacting with both the local vendors, from whom she often buys produce, and her customers.

"Getting to know my repeat customers at the market is always nice," Robinson said. "But my best feedback comes from the customers who call or e-mail to say, 'I'm from Arizona and I've never had good salsa until I had your salsa.'"

Raspberry Chipotle Preserves, a jelly combining the sweet flavor of raspberries with the hot kick of the Robinson's chipotle peppers, sells more than 1,000 jars a year, equaling the number of jars of salsa sold and doubling the sales of all her other jams and jellies combined, she said.

In addition to salsa and pepper jellies, Robinson makes barbecue sauces, fruit jellies and homemade fudge, which she sells alongside her peppers at local farmers markets and festivals.

The pepper produce that Robinson uses comes from a small patch of land just behind her home hosting about 1,000 pepper plants. She said she purchases the plants to transplant into her own miniature farm from the Miller Plant Farm in York, Pa., an annual shopping trip preceded and followed by a three-hour drive.

Despite the length of the journey, Robinson said she's satisfied with the peppers she's ordered all along, originally on the recommendation of Mike Orzolek, professor of horticulture at Penn State.

"I definitely learned this business as I went along," Robinson said. "All I knew about at the beginning were jalapenos."

Now, she's knowledgeable about banana peppers and cayenne peppers, habanero peppers and sweet peppers, all arranged on the two strips of land in her backyard.

Robinson plants the peppers in May and picks them in July and August, paying careful attention to color.

The lighter the color of the pepper, the milder it will be, she said, explaining that most peppers start out green, turn yellow, and develop spiciness as they transition to a deep red color.

Sweeter peppers are plucked earlier, while peppers for her hottest salsas are saved for later. At the end of the season, the leftover peppers are frozen for use throughout the year.

She usually makes three batches — more than 30 jars — of pepper products during a full eight-hour workday, she said, bottling and labeling each batch while enjoying the peace and quiet of her kitchen.

The Piper's Peck kitchen has been certified by the PA Department of Agriculture, which inspects every aspect of the facility to ensure that the products are safe for general consumption.

To e-mail reporter: arm5373@psu.edu

# Magazine names best dressed list

By Samantha Critchell  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK — First lady Michelle Obama is becoming a fixture on the Vanity Fair International Best-Dressed List — but it's soccer star David Beckham who earned a spot in the hall of fame.

The most eyebrow-raising choices on the magazine's annual list of top tastemakers are in the "originals" category, which includes cover girl Lady Gaga, John Galliano and Helena Bonham Carter.

Gaga channels the "Dada

Catholic girl" in the spirit of Gypsy Rose Lee and Rosie, the Jetson's robot maid, the magazine says, while Bonham Carter, who says her favorite items of clothing is her "bloomers," is inspired by Vivienne Westwood and Marie Antoinette.

Galliano's finds his role model in Oliver Twist, and his favorite shoes are his "lucky biker boots."

Vanity Fair sends ballots to thousands of people, in the U.S. and abroad, believed to have the inside track on style, including designers, retailers, editors, socialites, photographers and entertainers. Amy Fine Collins, Aimee Bell and Reinaldo Herrera oversee the 71-year-old list, which the magazine inherited from the late fashion publicist Eleanor Lambert in 2004.

This year marks Mrs. Obama's fourth consecutive appearance, noting she has practically single-handedly revived arms, belts, cardigans, shifts, high hair and kitten-heel pumps, and it's the third year for France's Dior-wearing Carla Bruni-Sarkozy. British first lady Samantha Cameron is making her debut, with the magazine pointing to her wardrobe full of brooches, bib necklaces and the labels Phillip Lim and Erdem.

Fashion as a category is, of course, well represented with Tory Burch, Elber Albaz of Lanvin, Georgina Chapman of Marchesa, Stacey Bendet Eisner of Alice + Olivia, and Glamour editor in chief Cindi Leive making the cut, as well as Ralph Lauren's three adult children, David, Dylan and Andrew. Royals have their style ambassadors in Princess Mary of Denmark and hall of famer Germany's Princess Mafalda of Hesse.

Diane Kruger, Carey Mulligan, Javier Bardem, Martin Scorsese, Alec Baldwin, Pharrell Williams, siblings Maggie and Jake Gyllenhaal, and couple Ed Burns and Christy Turlington provide the star wattage.



Gerald Herbert/Associated Press

Michelle Obama walks the red carpet during an arrival ceremony.

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# HOROSCOPES

By Jacqueline Bigar

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** for Wednesday, Aug. 4, 2010. Happy birthday! You will want to create more security through a higher profile than in the past. You will make your imprint on your community as well as your professional associates. Through networking, you greet unusual success and happiness. Be open to friendship and creating much more of what you want. If you are single, if and only if you decide to change that status will someone float into your life. Attached Leos find they are a strong force in making the bond work. Stay on the high road. GEMINI points to the correct path.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19) \*\*\*\*\* Don't lose track of what is happening within your immediate surroundings in the a.m. Choose to say little, knowing you will have an opportunity later. A change in attitude from others could prevent any comments. Tonight: Midweek, break with friends. **TAURUS** (April 20-May 21) \*\*\*\*\* Others might not get your intent. Perhaps you exhibit a lack of clarity. Right now you are honoring a different drummer. Others might be taken aback by this new personality trait. You might wonder if you have an alternative. Tonight: Your treat. **GEMINI** (May 22-June 20) \*\*\*\*\* For the moment, ignore what goes on in the a.m. You will have a radical change of perspective by the afternoon. Remain sure of yourself when dealing with others in the afternoon. You

also could be more realistic. Tonight: Others seek you out, pronto. **CANCER** (June 21-July 22) \*\*\*\*\* Emphasize what is. If you get caught up in what you would like, you might experience a total backfire. A meeting could prove to be more significant than you anticipated. Remember, you don't need to make a decision quickly. Tonight: Do your thing. **LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) \*\*\*\*\* Perhaps because you have such a Lionesque and dignified approach is why people naturally defer to you. Take action and do what you feel is needed. You sense the tides as they turn in your favor later. Tonight: Midweek break. **VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) \*\*\*\*\* Others test their limits. Whether they are conscious of it or not, it makes no difference, as the experience is the same for you. Keep breaking patterns, and detach from your traditional response. A chance to take the lead in an important endeavor happens — finally. Tonight: A force to be dealt with. **LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) \*\*\*\*\* Recognize what is going on behind the scenes through discussions with a key player. Don't act on your knowledge just yet. New information will be forthcoming, adding yet another slant to the situation. Tonight: Let your imagination go. **SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) \*\*\*\*\* Like it or not, others continue to be dominant. This could feel like a problem if you let it. Remember, this is a passage, and you can change the dynamics in a New York minute. Feel better now? Tonight: Dinner for two. **SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) \*\*\*\*\* Getting past a confusing matter

this morning happens, even if you can't find the path. The unexpected occurs, opening up several dynamic possibilities. Opt to have people around you, as you enjoy them so much. Tonight: Acting like it is Friday night! **CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) \*\*\*\*\* Your greatest push needs to be in the morning, when all creative wheels seem to be on "go." On the other hand, you might not even make it to work, as you could get distracted. Know that by the afternoon you could have way too much to do. Tonight: Clear out a project or run an errand or two. **AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) \*\*\*\*\* You might want to avoid dealing with family but find it impossible. On the other hand, you might want to hide out this morning and not be seen at the office. By the afternoon, you can have a much more upbeat perspective. Tonight: Let your hair down. **PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20) \*\*\*\*\* Play the cynic, but listen well. Much information heads in your direction. How you understand what is happening affects nearly every other aspect of your life. Smile and remain upbeat. Tonight: Do some tough thinking.

**BORN TODAY**  
Singer Josh Golden (1994), 44th president of the U.S. Barack Obama (1961), singer, trumpeter Louis Armstrong (1901)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at www.jacquelinebigar.com.

### AUTOMOTIVE

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