

# The Plain and Practical

Year Five, Issue 39, March 2012

“Live simply, that others might simply live.” Elizabeth Seaton

## Good Reasons To Stay At Home

I’m listening to the traffic reports while ironing Good Husband’s shirt and slacks for work, before full daylight, while thousands of people are shooting their vehicles towards their destinations in the city. There’s no ice storm, no wind advisory, but they are busy crashing and rolling over their cars and trucks in the ten degree temps out there in the Urban Jungle. One truck has hit an embankment, another has taken out a utility pole in a busy intersection, a road is closed to investigate a multiple car accident.

Now ask yourself—would any of these people have gotten into their cars to travel this morning, if they knew they would be injured, and their vehicle trashed? Of course not. But the risk is always out there. Every day, someone is seriously injured commuting to work. It’s Russian Roulette with our cars as bullets, even if you are an excellent driver and the roads are clean and dry, someone on the other side of the road can drift over and cause you to wreck.

Gas prices are reportedly going up again (thirty cents in the last three weeks) and if you’ve opened your electric and gas company bills for this month, you probably got a bit of a shock how those prices are going up, too. Visit any meat counter and a cut of beef that you paid \$5 for a couple of years ago has doubled in price; I now pay for zukes and summer squash, per pound, what I used to pay for ground beef. Even the “cheap” foods, dry beans and oatmeal and corn flakes and frozen turkey, are tripled from three years ago. Butter has doubled.

Not to mention, every time I leave the house, by the time I get home from several errands, someone will have said something unkind or rude, or I’ll overhear a cell phone conversation that disturbs me for the rest of the day (like the woman who was arranging to buy her marijuana while her 10-year old was standing there, listening). People’s behaviors bother me, the butt cracks under short tee-shirts, full urine bags under wheelchairs dragging and dripping on the floor, opening a door and dinging someone else’s car, leaving a used diaper in a shopping cart.

How can you avoid going out there and getting impinged upon by people’s bad driving, their dramas, offensive language, rudeness, their desire to spread biological hazards?

How can you eliminate those unpleasanties, and save money, too?

Stay home. That’s the simple solution. With online buying and mail order, you can get most of your needs; make annual shopping trips to an area that carries things you seek (mine is Shipshewana and Middlebury Indiana, with a return dogleg through Archebold, Ohio to Sauder Village, passing two bulk food stores on the way home to Marysville). Milk can be a quick stop at the gas station on the way home from work. This summer I plan to can, freeze, and dehydrate goodies from my own garden, as well as products from other farmers at the produce market just a block away. I’ve received packets of beans to grow and dry, and herb seeds so spices and teas can come from my own yard as much as possible.

I rebuild most of my clothing from thrift store purchases, so when I see a good 50% off denim jumper, I pick it up, wash it and set it aside for future sewing. It can become a skirt, a jumper I’ve restyled, a shirt, a bag, a pillow cover, and scraps can be cleaning cloths. Sweaters and corduroy and sheets and blankets are bountiful and cheap, a couple long days of thrifting and you can put aside materials for a year of projects. Socks, underwear, buttons, fabric, snaps, thread and other needs are easily ordered through GVS, Gohn Bros., or HomeSew. My household cleaners are made from lemon juice, vinegar, and salt, with some scouring powder for tough jobs, from a store I can walk to.

Stay home. When I visit people’s houses, they are as crowded as my own, but I’m working on using up some of this stuff. If you don’t spend your time driving around in Crazyville, you’ll have more time to cook from scratch in your own clean, warm, cozy kitchen. If you aren’t scheduling yourself (continued p. 2)

## Cheaper than the Y.M.C.A or the Country Club!

There’s now a web site, [www.Caloriesperhour.com](http://www.Caloriesperhour.com), where you can type in your weight and how long you’ve been doing a bit of housework, and it will calculate for you how many calories you’ve burned up. Some of the activities are on a par with a quick walk in the park, and others rank up there with a stairmaster device at the local gym!

Here’s some samples. Remember, the more you put into the activity, the more calories you burn, so turn on some music, or lift your voice in song, and do a two-fold good turn—a cleaner house AND healthier body: These are calculated for a 150-pound person, for a 30-minute time period:

Task	calories burned	add jogging
Doing Laundry	73	345
Making the Beds	68	340
Scrubbing The floors	129	401
Rearranging The furniture	204	476
Washing Windows	102	374
Gardening	136	408
Raking the Yard	146	418
Carrying a Small child Up & down stairs	289	561
Shoveling Snow	204	476

And no, I don’t know how you could jog in place while doing some of those activities . . . But I am beginning to understand why I’m so tired by six p.m. every day! I don’t see spinning and drum carding on there, but I’m thinking they are about equal to washing windows.



## March, 2012 Third Month

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

11—Daylight Savings Time Begins  
17—St. Patrick’s Day  
20—First Day of Spring

*The sun was warm but the wind was chill,  
You know how it is with an April day,  
When the sun is out and the wind is still,  
You’re one month on in the middle of May.  
But if you so much as dare to speak,  
A cloud comes over the sunlit arch,  
A wind comes off a frozen peak,  
And you’re two month’s back in the middle of March.*  
Robert Frost

## Onward With March!

This is the hopeful month (we hope it will get warmer soon) and the bright, cheery month (once that silliness with daylight savings time is done with) and the month we stumble outside, rub our eyes like old bears, and notice all the trash that has blown up into our yard over the winter. I wait at the door and pounce outside like a little yappy dog the moment the sun has warmed up my yard to fifty degrees, clomp around in waterproof boots, my frozen fingers holding a clipboard with lists of peas and beans and the height of sunflowers and the planting distance of herbs. It’s all a waste of time, but oh, how I love it, even though my logic whispers to me that where the sun is casting four o’clock shadows now, is not where I can depend upon having sunlight until four o’clock three months from now when I have put a flat of tomato plants in that location.

I’ve mailed envelopes of seeds back and forth to friends from the cold still-shoveling snow realm of northern Michigan, to Tennessee and Kentucky and just down the street, and today slipping a couple envelopes to share with the nice lady that owns the local florist shop.

There’s a stack of old sheets in the corner of the sewing room, in a clean laundry basket complete with a large crochet hook, ready to become fresh pretty rag rugs for porches and doorways. The season of mud is coming.

Today, going out to the bin next to the shed, where I stacked the handmade rough birdhouses we brought when we moved, see if they need cleaning out or paint, and I’d better hurry because a feathered friend was already standing on one and asking his mate if it suited her, and it’s still caterwonkers in the tub. Onward, spring is indeed coming!

### Good Activities Don't Cost Much

I'm sure you'll have some to add to this list, but here's some ideas for healthy, wholesome things that don't cost much, some are even free, and they sometimes even help others:

- **How about a walk around** in your yard, or up and down your street, or if you are up for it, a country road, and picking up paper trash or other unwanted things for proper disposals. Good exercise.
- **The birds will soon be building nests**, so now's the time to share your yarn and thread scraps, the batting from an old pillow, pet hair you've combed and saved, your own hair pulled from brushes and combs. Put them into the branches of shrubs where the little ones fly, and they will clean them up soon.
- **go through your closets** some cold winter day, and fish out the things you haven't worn in years. Good ones can be put into a donate pile, worn things into recycling pile, very worn things cut up into rags.
- **In your linen closet**, see if there are sheets and pillows and towels that need to be discarded—good quality sheets can become strips for a rag rug or a layer in a “camp comforter,” and pillowcases make wonderful play dresses for little girls, or recycled shopping sacks that are washable. Old blankets can be tied inside two sheets for a lovely comforter, and old towels are always useful for cleaning cloths and staining cloths.
- **The library** is a resource people don't usually explore well. Ours has several meters you can sign out, that tell you how much electricity a particular appliance is using, puppets and toys for children, they offer lecture series and author signings and various holiday entertainments. Spend a couple of hours at your local library and really get to know the place—for example, many of them have wi-fi now, and ours even has a lunchroom area with wi-fi.
- **Continuing education classes.** Everyone should know how to perform CPR, have basic First Aid certification, a food handler's license is a smart thing in your own home, and most health departments offer Food Manager's Licenses, as well, for those who coordinate functions with food. Find out where the continuing education resources are for your area, and dig in. Stained glass? Eliminating debt? Real estate tips? You'll be surprised all the new things to learn.
- **Volunteering** does have a cost—maybe gasoline, maybe a different pair of shoes you'll need—but it helps you be a better person, can be a service to the Lord, and certainly benefits the less fortunate. Grow stuff for the food pantry, or wait on the front desk at your favorite charity, or stuff envelopes for mass mailings—helping others is what decent, caring people do, when their circumstances allow. Give blood. Do Meals on Wheels. Spoon feed at the nursing home.
- **Tutoring**—maybe it's at your local school or vocational workshop, or at your library, or with your own children and grandchildren, teaching others spreads the knowledge YOU think is important. Adults who want to learn to read are out there struggling. Visitors to our country need practice with their English conversation skills. Teens are hungry to make their lives better and know that education is a key to success. There's folks out there who want to learn to garden, make baskets, can their own food, process their own chickens. Whatever jewel the Heavenly Father gave you, squeeze in a little time to share it with others.
- **Spiritual growth** comes in many packages. We often spend more time criticizing others, than we do looking at ourselves for improvement. You might be putting off some travel, or reading, or taking a bible studies class. Would you like to participate more in your church? Talk with your pastor about opportunities to grow your faith. Take a retreat, either organized or something you set up for yourself at a cabin in the woods or a solitary place. Pray upon guidance.

### Editor's notes

Owners: Craig and Valerie Hibbard. Expenses covered by Editors until successful enough to stand on its own. Ads selected by Editors and given freely, and we reserve the right to refuse any ads. Email comments to [valerie@plainandpractical.com](mailto:valerie@plainandpractical.com), or mail to: 216 S. Plum Street, Marysville, OH 43040. We'd like to hear your comments. You may read PNP free on the web at [www.plainandpractical.com](http://www.plainandpractical.com), or order print copies by writing or emailing the editors.

Valerie sells her things on Etsy, at [www.apronsrecycled@etsy.com](http://www.apronsrecycled@etsy.com), and has a blog for diary entries, at [www.plainandpractical.typepad.com](http://www.plainandpractical.typepad.com)

“But by becoming strongly fixed in notions of our own, and by exalting ourselves and considering ourselves better than others, an judging others, our unity is broken, the bond of love is severed, and confusion and anarchy ensue. Here men take the seat of God, for we are only to answer to the Almighty for our views—we are not to be concerned to give an account to man, so long as our views are such as lead us to love our Creator above all, and our fellow creatures ourselves. What matter is it what opinions rest in our minds?” The Quaker, Sermon by Elias Hicks (1826) p. 121.

### Stay at Home, con't.

for activities every night or tired from running around all day, you'll feel more like eating a simple meal you've prepared yourself, and some time with a good book or a handwork project.

Staying at home is a lifestyle choice. You are always being coaxed to go out and about, to shop and buy things, to accumulate and clutter up your place. The radio and television tell you there's a special sale right now on cars, pizza, eyeglasses, dental treatments, cruise vacations, and mattresses. You need to call and sign up right now for child care, classes for your degree completion, a workshop on flipping houses, and a new diet plan. Turning off the television and radio are good ways to insulate yourself from such messages. Subscribing to The Budget, Keepers at Home, Encouraging Word, Young Companion, and Family Life, brings reading material into your home that does not encourage you to spend on unnecessary things, and costs less than cable.

Your home should be the place on Earth where you most prefer to eat a meal, work on a hobby, read your Bible, and put your head down at night. Your home should be constructed and arranged in such a way that you can cook there, work there, pray there, sleep there. Fix it up so you like being in your house—make it warm and cozy in winter, with iced tea and cool benches in shade in summer. Fix it so you have adequate stored goods so you shop every day in your pantry, not driving up to the market and going out into the world.

There should be a running list of once-a-year purchases, and the items on that list for maintaining what you already have, should be longer than new things to get—more neatsfoot oil for conditioning belts, than new belts. More oil for sharpening tools, than new tools to replace them. More notions for re-making and fixing up the clothes you have, than new clothes off the rack. And your home should be the very best place for doing all those things.

Look around you, and determine what you are getting out of going elsewhere. Do you run away from your home because it's messy? Then get it cleared up and what you can't use, give away. Do you go elsewhere because your home is dirty or soiled? In the long run, it's cheaper to hire help and get it shipshape and clean and organized, than to keep leaving and buying things that won't make you happy anyway. Do you leave because it's dull and boring? Time to set up a reading area, hobby area, get a musical instrument, take up gardening, have friends over to work on a project. Take back your home. Make it your favorite place.

The PNP newspaper is hoping to switch over the back page to individual box ads (free) on alternating or third months, so that more information can reach our readers. **If you have something you make or grow at home, please let us know** and help us put together some nice advertising so people can learn about your work and how to purchase from you, whether it's sewing, seed sharing, spinning, raw wools, broom corn, grapevines, camping retreats, or other wholesome things.

*“The store of wisdom does not consist of hard coins which keep their shape as they pass from hand to hand; it consists of ideas and doctrines whose meanings change with the minds that entertain them.”*  
John Plamenatz, Philosopher

### Start A Groundhog Day Group

There's been various attempts in large cities to gather together in camps and parades, massing to convey the point that many Americans are financially frustrated on so many fronts.

My response to this was to invite forty friends to a networking party at my house, at seven on a Saturday evening. I'm calling it a Groundhog Day Meeting (it's right around Groundhog Day, and since the folks who were invited are grounded in wholesome good skills and talents to share, and we're coming out into the light to share, it seemed a fitting name).

We're going to do a round-robin sort of kindergarten show and tell thing, I'll stand up and say, Hello, I'm Valerie Hibbard, and I like to spin and weave and make baskets, I'm available to advise on homeschool art and craft projects, I'm looking to buy or trade for some metal strips and scraps for an art project I've got coming up.” People who build decks can pass around photos of their work, those who sell their time can pass out business cards, and so on. After we go around the circle, I'll shove people towards the coffee, tea, cookies, fruits, and treats in the kitchen and let them mill about connecting with each other and around ten we'll start yawning and indicating the door's over that way. There will be a basket with local maps, a cup of pens and pencils and scratch paper to write on and we'll set the date of the next meeting while everyone's here. And I'll probably hand out copies of this paper, if there's any left.

**Ways to Recycle for Gardening**

- plastic coffee containers are easily punched for drainage, and large enough that you can just take the whole plant outside for the summer—great for herbs you want to start early indoors.
- cardboard-style egg cartons make dandy small individual starters for tiny plants, such as rosemary and tarragon, which take awhile to get going.
- Jugs from vinegar, water, molasses, pickles, and other foods, are fine for getting tomatoes started in your porch-room or cobbled greenhouse, just cut off the top, punch holes in the bottom, and you’ve got a planter.
- Aluminum foil can be washed, balled up and then strung onto strings to hang in the garden, where the shiny surfaces move in the wind and frighten away some of those birds for you.
- older baskets that have become too broken or worn for the house any more, can be easily recycled into planters. Put it where you want it to be, put in a piece of linen or burlap so it comes up the sides to line it, and fill with potting soil. It won’t last long, but this way you get one more very pretty use out of a broken basket.
- used shower curtains, plastic tablecloths, drop cloths, boat covers, and other plastics, can be laid down as weed barriers, placed on poles for frost protection, or placed around tomato cages against larger animals.

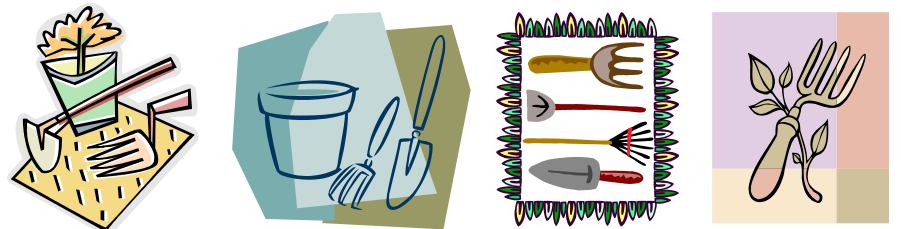
Do you walk through a woods or a field of wildflowers, and think, “that one’s too short,” or “that one’s too gaudy,” or “looks like that one’s taking dope.” Of course not. But when we walk through the shopping mall or we’re standing in line at the grocery, or sitting in a meeting, these thoughts may creep in. “Jill looks tired, probably got the grandkids dumped on her again last weekend” or “look at John’s shabby clothes, but his wife is sure all dressed up.” I constantly fight against this problem. Judging others cuts us down, even if it’s left unsaid, it still damages and removes us from His Path. I’m training myself, when I catch that negative thought, to replace it with a positive, spiritually better one—if nothing, else, say a little prayer for them, select something from my own life and give thanks for it, cultivate a feeling of embracing instead of dismissing. It’s one of my worst faults, and I can clearly remember my grandmother partaking of it and whispering these things to me as a child. I control my own thoughts, and am working hard to put them on the righteous path whenever I am able, and pray for forgiveness and assistance when I fail to do so.

*“And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?”* Matthew 7:3

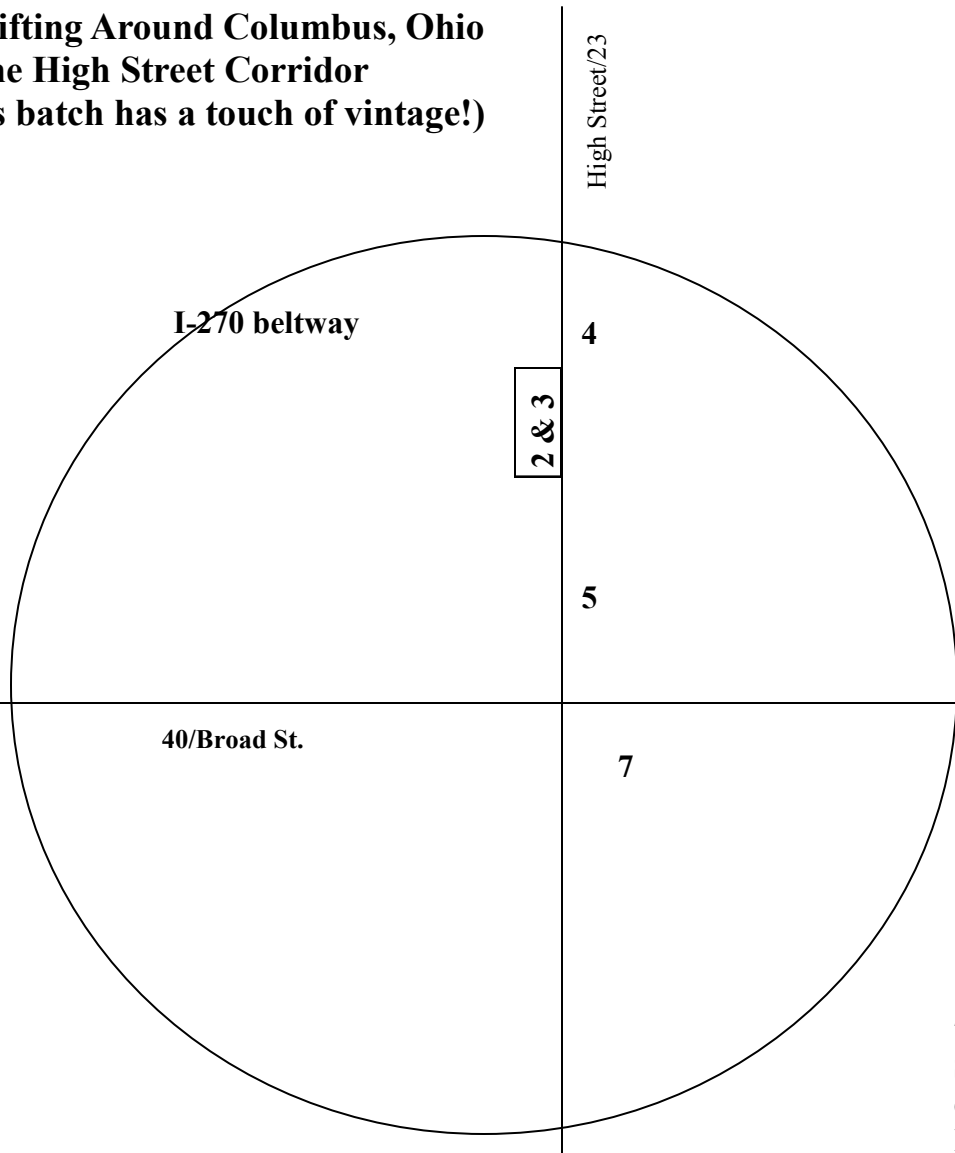
**The Making of Spring**

*I stand at the carding machine,  
slipped and shawled  
and look out the window at the cold I can feel  
even within my house  
the cat meows to fluffy fat birds  
eating last night's cornbread.  
I place some gray into the carder  
and begin to crank it  
and then, deciding not to live in this moment,  
but in spring instead,  
I throw in a rosy pink,  
the color of June sunsets  
and pretty flowers I know will return  
and watch the two colors  
grow together in the batt  
gray skies become roses, bit by bit,  
and I smile for the spring that is coming.*

*Valerie Hibbard*



**Thrifting Around Columbus, Ohio  
—the High Street Corridor  
(this batch has a touch of vintage!)**



Remember: we are coming into the most common season for Church garage and rummage sales, and while Bag Sales are becoming less common, try the end of the event for those extra savings. If you arrive early and prepared with cash and a list and sizes needed, you’ll do well. Your extra bags and boxes are usually very appreciated, too, so bring them along.

1. **Boomerang Room**, 3274 N. High street, 614-262-9661. Clothing, linens, accessories, little higher prices than thrift stores but if you want a knockout prom dress or formal outfit it can be had for a fraction of “new store” and be unique, too. Upscale but reasonable. Don’t forget the basement, but it’s really hard to get down the steps.
2. **Eclectiques**, 3265 N. High Street, 614-447-2242. This is an antique shop, lots of vintage, I’ve bought beautiful baskets, crochet hooks, thimbles, and linens to recycle—the basement is a little scary but filled with lower-cost items.
3. **Rag-o-rama** is at 3301 N. High Street, Columbus, 614-261-7202. You can gather up your clean, good quality vintage and drop it off for cash or credit towards purchases. Lots of unusual party clothing for the college crowd, tutus, hose, costumes, etc.
4. **In Review** is a small independent thrift shop with a smattering of everything, prices are hit and miss, some cheap, some not, always good clothing bargains on the going-out-of-season rack in front. Crafting supplies are usually good prices. 614-261-7377, call first for hours.
5. There’s a **Goodwill store** that just moved closer to the campus area, on High Street, but no address is available online yet.

7. **Golden Hobby shop**—in German Village, 630 S. 3rd Street, Columbus, Ohio, 43206. 614-645-8329. Ohio residents over age 50 can consign (20% and a \$30 annual fee) handmade quilts, rugs, afghans, woodworking, art, and knitted/crocheted items here. I often find handknitted slippers and socks to purchase, and will be taking them my yarns, handmade cards, and aprons soon. Great prices, good cause, because folks can make 12 things a month (limit) and drop them off, so it’s a good thing.

### *A Few Plain and Practical Resources for Self-Sufficiency*

(Editor's Note: We'll be placing free box ads here for folks with supplies, for those who like to make for themselves or make and sell for a little pin money for their own households. About every third month we'll put in that long list you're used to. Hang onto old PNPs for awhile so you have those.)

**Handspun Yarns and Hand-poured Soy candles**—my friend Bev is much admired for her self-sufficiency, and she not only can spin and sell you lovely yarns (see Etsy page, mulchandmore) but also does dozens of scents in jarred candles, which can be stored away for years if needed. Write to:

**Beverly Thorne**  
1941 S. Camp Ten Road  
Elmira, MI 49730



Valerie's going to be getting her work around a bit more, now that the shop has closed:  
March—begin consigning at the Golden Hobby shop, in Columbus, OH  
April 28, Penguicon show, in Southfield, MI  
June 23—Fiber Arts Weekend, at Sauder Village, in Archbold, OH  
August 1, her sculpture show starts a month's run in the Short North, Columbus, OH  
September, Vikings Come Home (SCA) near Traverse City, Michigan

You can see her yarns at Ginko Gallery, in Oberlin, Ohio,  
And she is preparing yarns for Clinton Woolen Mill, in Clinton, Michigan  
And preparing four wool crazy quilts for Log Cabin Gift Shop, in Athens, Ohio for when it opens in late Spring



**Sisterthreads** is a group of three Christian women who sew together in the daughter's house amongst her four children, one of which is special-needs. Although they focus on quilts, they also do a variety of purses and organizers for knitting needles, crochet hooks and other sewing items. By mail: Sister Threads, P. O. Box 91, Herrietta, MI, 49638, or telephone, 231-389-0253.

E & M seeds can be found on Etsy, as well as by writing to:  
**Eric and Mary, E&M Seeds**  
10445 18th Ave. S.  
Seattle, WA 98168

They hand gather their garden's heirloom seeds, including hard and soft squash varieties, peas, beans, and many flowers. All are non-GMO, non-hybrid, so you'll be able to trust what you eat, as well as save seeds for yourself and others the following year. Some of her seeds I'll be planting this year:  
**Kuri squash Telephone Peas**  
**Delicata Squash**  
**Purple podded pole beans**  
and several heirloom tomato varieties

#### Scrap Leather, lacing, and hides.

Ever say to yourself, "I could cut a couple of elbow patches and save this coat a couple more years" or "If I could just find a bit of leather, I could make a nice holster for this tool." Well, for \$25 each and some shipping, you can get a 12-15 pound roll of dandy ready leather, with all sorts of hobby pieces. You'll have enough for several projects repairing and making new items. They also sell leather working tools. All American leather. Real Leather People, P. O. Box 251, Sonora, KY 42776 or 270-369-8880 or [sales@realleatherpeople.com](mailto:sales@realleatherpeople.com)

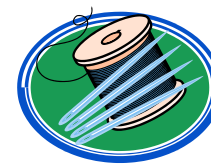
**Wm. Booth, Draper.** 18th century reenactment supplies, I get my linen thread, horn thimbles, and other well-made, old fashioned items from this resource. They target re-enactment folks, but if you need flax yardage, linen thread, patterns for easily modified modest clothing for men or women, tapes and ribbons and supplies for constructing corsets or undergarments, and other hard-to-find sewing items, this is the place. Staff is knowledgeable and pleasant. 2115 Ramada Drive, Racine, WI. 53406, or, <http://wmboothdraper.com>, or 815-648-9048.

**Mid-States Wool Growers, 9449 Basil-Western Road, Canal Winchester, Ohio, 43110. 614-837-9665, M-F.**

This is the place to get \$2 and \$4 a pound raw wool, wear yer farmin' clothes and just dive in, skirt for yourself as much as you want, bag it and out the door you go. The very best price for sometimes excellent fleeces. You can call ahead and see how high the stock is; also a sheepherder's supply store and some spinning supplies.

We'd like to ad more . . . Ads!

Let us know who's missing, and we can fit them into this page next month



#### Good Word Puzzle

Salt has always had value—sometimes more than ground grains or even meat! Here's some of the passages of the KJV Bible which mention Salt—see if you can match the scripture passage to its location (yes, some are repeated and have more than one location, but that would be a greater measure of scholarship than I currently possess).

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. "his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt"  | <b>2 Chronicles 13:5</b> |
| 2. "and that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, For the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil" | <b>Leviticus 2:13</b>    |
| 3. "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?"   | <b>Genesis 19:26</b>     |
| 4. "Ye are the salt of the earth"   | <b>Colossians 4:6</b>    |
| 5. "Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? Either a vine, Figs? So can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.                           | <b>Ezra 6:9</b>          |
| 6. "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how to answer every man."   | <b>James 3:12</b>        |
| 7. "every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt"  | <b>Job 6:6</b>           |
| 8. "Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom Over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?"  | <b>Matthew 5:13</b>      |