

Hoquiam Farmer's Market News - Cherries and Berries Edition

Local News

Posted by:

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I do not exaggerate. These Cherries have created swooning. They are that good! They are a rare variety called Tietons, grown in Wenatchee, delivered to us by market vendors who must wear disguises for fear of being mugged. I think that the folks in Wenatchee don't wish for any of these beauties to leave their town. WE also have Rainier cherries in, but they are just your average good cherry. The Tietons are the SuperStar Cherry of all time! We also have yummy Watermelon in, because I was so darned sure that The sun would grace us with its' rays this week. I hate to sound smug, but sunshine is in the forecast! And of course, the justly famous and much anticipated Spooner's Strawberries are now here, fresh picked berries every single day of the week. And you don't have to scramble over to Aberdeen to get them. Life is good!

The Fourth of July. Independence Day. I lay awake last night pondering how different this world would be without this spectacular holiday. After such serious thoughts, my mind gradually crept into its more normal state. Which means that I began thinking about food. Some special holiday foods require intensive planning and preparation, but the Fourth of July is the cook's best friend. The food can be as elaborate or simple as your skills and time allow, and picnic style potlucks are as all American as the flag! My menu list for the Fourth of July is based on classic foods; Deviled Eggs, Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Grandma's Rolls, Watermelon, Grilled Meat (I'm open to chicken, hot dogs, burgers, steaks) Pies, and Ice Cream. If good corn is somewhere to be found, then Corn on the Cob. This is a menu that you can trust. Other recipes may come and go, but if you keep some of these foods on the table, everyone will be happy and well fed. There is one cooking controversy that I can put to rest right now. How to hard cook your eggs. If you have ever cracked open the shell only to see a faint green tint surrounding the egg yolk, you know that your method didn't work. I think that we all tend to err on the side of over-cooking eggs rather than take a chance on undercooking them. So, here is the trick. Place your eggs in a pan, cover them with cold water, make sure that there is a full inch of water on top of the eggs. Bring the eggs to a boil, then remove them from the heat. Let them stand for 17 minutes. Then drain them and place them in an ice water bath and let cool. This results in perfectly cooked eggs and allows you to use even the freshest eggs. Fresh eggs are notoriously hard to peel, but the plunge into the ice water bath shocks the membrane into pulling away from the shell. Deviled eggs are a perfect food and allow for adding all sorts of extra ingredients. In my opinion, a bit of tang is needed; a spoonful of Dijon mustard or a splash of Apple Cider Vinegar is all that you need to elevate the flavor. Best Foods Mayonnaise is a requirement, not an option. We won't even stoop to discussing those other types of wanta-be mayo brands. Not in Deviled Eggs. It would be un-American, Do not do it. Now I add a sprinkle of Celery Salt. I've eaten Deviled Eggs that had shrimp, smoked salmon, bacon, even fish roe. Some people use relish, some shudder at the thought. Just warn people if you're feeling adventurous and slip some mystery ingredient into the Deviled Eggs. The taste buds are all set to expect a familiar flavor and don't always react well when taken by surprise. Speaking of surprise ingredients reminds me of my Uncle Alan. Uncle Alan was a Free Spirit, a Man of Action, a Risk Taker-but not when it came to food. He had expectations and was my mother's most devoted fan. My mother was a truly good cook, but she was also Scottish, thrifty, and always ready to

try out a new recipe. Sometimes she branched out on her own, leaving her innocent and unsuspecting family to discover the 'new and improved' version without benefit of any warning. One of the family's Fourth of July favorites was homemade ice cream. We all took turns cranking the handle and adjusting the layers of ice and rock salt, but Uncle Alan was the guy to call on for those last ten minutes of arduous churning. I can picture him now, sleeves rolled up, bald head gleaming in the sun, tonelessly singing a bawdy ballad- a man filled with the happy anticipation of savoring the first bowl of well earned ice cream. Hand churned ice cream requires 'ripening', a short time of rest before serving. But Uncle Alan was far too anxious to follow this rule. He always popped the cover off and plunged a large spoon into the rich treat, feeling entitled to his reward. This particular time the ice cream going into his mouth was ejected as soon as it touched his shocked tongue. He was a man who was never at a loss for words, and the worst of his extensive vocabulary came tumbling out, the volume increasing with each profanity laden shout. My mother was trying to cover our innocent ears and my father was laughing so hard that tears streamed down his face. He finally sputtered to an end of his tirade, looking at my mother such anger and disgust that a lesser woman would have wilted. As it turned out, she had an extra quart of buttermilk in the refrigerator and decided that she's pep up the ice cream 'just a bit'. Honestly, I sort of wondered if she hadn't just been a bit bored- it seemed to me that she enjoyed Uncle Alan's reaction just a bit too much! He never quite got over that incident. I think that I wasn't alone in my suspicions about her innocence. I often caught him casting suspicious furtive looks at the dinner table after that, and he politely waited for his hostess to take the first bite after that day. It isn't always the perfect meal that we remember the longest or best I know that I'll remember the Buttermilk Ice Cream Fiasco for the rest of my life, recalling the impish smile on my mother's face. Not to mention all those colorful new words that I learned that day. Here's wishing you a memorable Fourth of July! Barbara Bennett Parsons- oh yes- Deidra's Deli IS Open on the Fourth of July too! 1958 Riverside in Hoquiam ph. 538-9747 538-5880 for Deidra's