

POST-APOLYPTIC HOUSEWIFE'S DOMESTIC COMPANION

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Welcome to after the apocalypse! This little zine is brought to you by the extended community of Swancon, Western Australia's regional science fiction convention... and a few others too. We hope all you housewives out there appreciate these tips on how to keep your man happy, your children gainfully occupied and well-disciplined, your household running at 120% efficiency and your hair perfect, even in the nuclear or zombie aftermath.

Proclaiming "I for one welcome our robotic overlords" will not save you from the treadmill.

HOW TO HOST THE PERFECT POST APOCALYPTIC PICNIC

Got bunker boredom, your kids looking Vitamin D deficient, electronic communication completely unreliable? Why not organize the perfect post-apocalyptic picnic?!

Guest List

It is advisable to only invite humans. Others, particularly zombies, radiation mutants or robots, can be problematic- even if they used to be your friends.

Location and Weather

Beachside is usually a good option - zombies have limited cognitive abilities and cannot swim; they tend to flail and sink. The sea also provides a nice change from typical wasteland views.

Beware hotspots of grey goo- self replicating nanorobots seem to be rapidly on the rise in some marine locations. Also check localized garbage gyres are not due for a shore landing- no one likes unsightly rubbish.

Weather is unpredictable. Advise guests that in the instance of acid rain, dust-storms or high radiation- picnic will be cancelled.

Safety and Gear

All guests should carry weaponry: a gun of choice, ammunition, a back up pistol and hatchet should suffice and perhaps a trusty household item of some description (eg. a brick).

Request guests also bring Anti-Rad drugs (eg. Potassium Iodide, Prussian Blue) and their Bug -Out -Bags (BOB's) in case of unforeseen circumstances such as a mass zombie assault or change in weather conditions

(Note: For aesthetics and peoples general demeanor, weapons should be kept discreetly out of view)

Menu Suggestions

Marinated human knuckles may be the flavor of the month, but please respect those in the group who are non-cannibals (a rapidly declining demographic but they do still exist)

HeaterMeals EX ©, portable and high in calories is obviously a winner. Thanks to Innotech's Flameless Ration Heater technology, these meals also self heat.

Canned mussels or oysters may show you are a woman of means but please keep an eye on expiry dates

Since it was discovered as edible, specially 'radiosynthesised' and melanised black fungi has become a very popular aperitif (eg. *Cladosporium sphaerospermum*).

For a beach side picnic bring your hand operated water desalinator, all other instances water purification tablets should suffice.

Entertainment

Zombie piñata – be creative and make one or just use an old discarded zombie corpse

Zombie bowling- all you need is a few zombie heads and 20 or so plastic bottles

(Note: With all zombie games, the use of protective gear, such as goggles, mask and gloves is highly recommended)

If you follow these tips, and ensure you remain a ladylike hostess at all times (even in the event of a zombie attack) - everyone should have the perfect post-apocalyptic picnic experience!

Some days your only achievement may be to stay dry.

Hardware Harry's Special Offer

Do you miss the days when information was at your fingertips?

Does your husband say things you think aren't right, but you're just not sure?

Do your kids deserve the best post-nuclear education?

Want to be the smartest lady in the bunker?

Hardware Harry can help!

I have in stock RIGHT NOW **computer chip memory sticks** with a pre-apocalypse download of the entire **Wikipedia!!!** The combined knowledge of computer-age global humanity can be at your fingertips! No more scratching your head for answers – all the explanations you could ever need are on one tiny chip! Purchase now for just **\$429.95!**

Buy for yourself or for someone special - it's the perfect gift!

Imagine the look on your husband's face when he unwraps his present from the kids, expecting more hand-carved fungi and zombie-ear collages, and finds one of Hardware Harry's specials!

All you need to run it are a **card reader** (available separately) and a **12V solar panel**, just like that one you were wondering what to do with. Or, why not buy the lot as a package for just **\$229.90** extra? Hardware Harry will even set it up for you for free!

Hurry now, and give yourself and your kids the best chance you can!

The Editor says: "Wikipedia download sticks are a wonderful and useful household resource. Just remember that it was written by people like your husband, who are smart and talented in their field but may sometimes hold forth on topics they know a little less about."

How To Cope With Pregnancy Cravings

A sensible husband indulges his pregnant wife's cravings,
for he knows her body is wise even if she is a little more muddled than usual.
A sensible wife avoids vexing her husband with trivial or insincere demands,
as she knows she has no need to prove his devotion.

Pregnancy cravings can seem like a trial, but they're not just in your head: the growing baby needs many nutrients at different stages of development. Iodine, calcium, beta carotene, omega-3 oils all have their specific place as building blocks, and vitamin C, iron and protein are a constant and increasing demand as the baby grows. It can be hard to eat enough of these nutrients at the right time, and cravings are well known for demanding out-of-season foods! Instead of sending your husband out to brave the brigands for you, a little preparation in the right season means your pantry will be ready with nutritious alternatives. Keep some of these items in stock wherever possible, for yourself or to share with your neighbours. A small gift can make a big difference in these times!

- **Sea salt.** Fill a small shallow puddle or dish with seawater and let it evaporate in the sun. Store the dried crystals in a watertight jar. Salt from groundwater contains different minerals and may not satisfy the cravings.
- **Pumpkin seeds.** Toast them whole with salt, or split them and gently bake the inner cores (pepitas). They keep well, make a satisfying snack and are a good source of oils.
- **Linseed (flaxseed) and radishseed.** These are another good source of oils. It is always handy to have a flax plant growing nearby – they are quite hardy and a good source of fibre for thread and string. Their seed makes an excellent tonic added to breakfast cereals and can help stabilise hormonal moods during your regular cycle. Seeds of the crucifers such as broccoli, wild radish, mustard and canola also provide key oils and when crushed make a pleasant oilcake.
- **Dried avocado.** Pick the fruit when it is well ripe (check the stem colour) but still fully hard, then peel and grate it and dry the gratings. These will store well in an airtight and pest-proof container and can be added to many different meals for colour and flavour. Avocados also keep on the tree for as much as four months so with careful planning can be a boost to your meals for an extended season.
- **Preserve blueberries in rendered animal fat.** This may seem unusual but is a great delicacy at certain points in pregnancy and in the depths of winter when fresh fruit seems a long way away. The same can be done with semi-sun-dried tomatoes.
- **Beef and lemon preserve.** If you have access to vacuum jar preserving, prepare jars with slices of beef alternated with slices of lemon and fill the space with lemon juice mixed with herbs. These will always be an acceptable gift for an expectant mother! A non-vacuum alternative is to pack the beef and lemon in salt and let them cure together.
- **Ground cuttlefish powder.** This can be added to almost any dish. Just make sure that it is quite finely ground, to increase digestibility and reduce the risk of aggravating dental caries.
- **Macadamia nuts** keep in the shell for a full year and are relatively pest-proof – they make a great energy boost all year round.

Tip: eating too much of certain foods can increase cravings by preventing you from digesting to the fullest. During pregnancy, while delicate portions are acceptable, be careful not to overindulge in rabbit, wattleseed or anything that contains caffeine.

HOW TO DOMESTICATE AND TRAIN GIANT MUTANT ANTS

Handy Hints brought to you by Survivors-R-Us Pharmaceuticals.

Step 1: Ask your husband to provide you with a Giant Mutant Scout or Guard Ant depending on your requirements. How he does this is of course up to him, but we recommend using the S-R-U-P Entrapment Kit, complete with Mandible Guards, High Tensile Chain Harness and Ant Prod for \$39.95, available from most regional outlets.

***Note:** We do not recommend using Giant Mutant Fire Ants or Jumping Ants except for Certified Experienced Ant Handlers.

**** Note:** Certification courses are available but require proof of prior experience and are negotiable in terms of cost and duration, depending on said experience. Please see inside your nearest store for more details.

Step 2: Utilising your S-R-U-P Giant Mutant Ant Scent Syrups (Known as GMASS) and their corresponding instructions, work with your Giant Ant for at least an hour a day. We recommend at least a month's daily training using the Queen Ant's Scent Syrup so your Domesticated Ant recognises you as an authority figure and not food. (Do not be afraid to drench yourself in it at the beginning, especially with a particularly aggressive ant. Taper off the amount slowly and by the end of the month you should be able to just lightly coat your gloves and shoes.)

**Note: The Queen Ant Scent Syrup (or QASS) is especially good for giving your hair those sun-bleached highlights the discerning housewife can no longer achieve naturally with the permanent cloud cover. However if you prefer to keep your luscious locks dark, rub in well S-R-U-P's Maximum Cover Clay Mask (or MCCM) before applying the QASS.*

Step 3: Remember! Never use your S-R-U-P Ant Prod violently enough to puncture your ant's carapace. The scent of a distressed ant's body fluids may be enough to draw wild Giant Mutant Ants to its defense, to the detriment of a good housewife's neat home and gardens.

Step 4: When utilising your Ant Prod to tickle your domestic ant to regurgitate, always use freshly sanitized buckets to receive the pap. Remember that whilst the pap is edible as is, it has a better flavour after several days fermentation in a dark corner, and the efficient housewife has several containers set aside for this duty. That way you can always have 5-day-old Ant Pap on hand to enhance any meal when neighbours pop in unexpectedly!

The most beautiful grape vine will only produce sour grapes if kept always in the shade.

LIVING WITHOUT CHOCOLATE

Chocolate's natural rarity is enhanced by its value and fragility – few traders will carry it. Its value is so high they run too much risk of attack, and it is easily damaged by weather conditions. If you crave chocolate because of fond memories or a perverse desire for a scarce commodity, there is little to be done. But if you crave it for other reasons there are some handy alternatives. Try substituting *dark green leafy vegetables cooked with oil or butter*, a handful of *nuts* (especially *macadamias* or *hazelnuts*), *5-day-old ant pap* (see page 4) or just a glass of *water*. You can lift fatigue with a stimulating but healthy drink made from grinding a mixture of *roasted barley and dandelion root*. Nibbling at *dried fruit* or *sweetener leaves* can take the edge away, and Mrs Stevenson's prizewinning slice recipe below makes a lovely treat!

MRS STEVENSON'S SWEET SLICE

(recipe by Mrs George Stevenson of Canimdurra,
winner of the Precious Pickles and Preserves Sweet Tooth competition)

Ingredients:

Two cobs of very-fresh corn (must be picked that day)
Two tablespoons of oil
Two cups of amaranth seed
Pinch of baking soda (sodium bicarbonate)

Instructions:

Scrape the fresh corn kernels into a bowl and mash thoroughly. Place them in a saucepan with a tablespoon of water and heat gently to a simmer. Keep the mash at simmer without boiling for five minutes.

Meanwhile, very carefully pop the amaranth seed in a heavy frying pan over low heat, and then remove the popped seed to a mixing bowl.

Stir the oil through the corn mash, then add the baking soda and mix in. The mash should begin to froth and form a foam. Quickly stir this through the popped amaranth and spoon the mixture into a baking-papered tray. Let sit in a cool place until it has set, then slice and serve.

Coping on Your Own – What to Do When your Husband is Zombified

No matter how much we may wish otherwise, there is a very good chance that you will lose your husband during a wave of zombie attacks. Every family has lost someone to their undead onslaught, and your husband, one of the warriors out on the front line may be next.

We pray it may never happen, but if it does, you will need to learn how to cope on your own. Here are eight tips to help you cope on your own when your husband is zombified.

1. **Don't break your routine.** Of all the coping mechanisms available to you, your routine will offer you the most comfort. Also, it will help keep your life and family together in the face of chaos and impending zombie attack.
2. **Keep the children busy.** Remember, they have just lost their father. Keeping them busy will help keep them from dwelling too much on their sorry. Just be lenient when they suddenly break into tears. Wipe them dry then gently encourage them to focus back on the task at hand.
3. **Remember him as he was, not how he is now.** Chances are when your husband is zombified, he may come for you and the family first. It will be much easier to dispatch his zombie remains if you do not associate this walking dead creature with your late husband.
4. **Rely on friends and family.** A large group of people can lay better defences and the hole that your missing husband has created in the perimeter will be covered. Also, they'll be able to defend your back should pirates or raiders come along.
5. **Dispose of his things.** There are many reasons for this: you can trade his clothes for much-needed resources; you don't need constant physical reminders of him as a few precious items such as photographs or his favourite Glock are enough to keep his memory alive; hound-dogs on his zombie's trail may come harrass you instead; his items will only be abandoned should you need to suddenly evacuate. You should know by now that we cannot cling to the past. Consider the letting go of his personal effects as a liberation.
6. **Reorganise the resource rations.** Yes, he's gone. You now have an extra ration of food and water. Either keep this for yourself and your children, or make extra money/favours by trading it to someone you trust.
7. **Don't think you must have a man in your life to survive.** Don't take up with the first male to come along. If he's unattached, there's probably a reason for it, and not a good one. You managed to survive the Apocalypse. You'll survive your sudden singlehood as well.
8. **Collect your late husband's caches.** Every good provider would have stored up supplies and weapons in alternate locations. Collect these up, then re-hide them again. Chances are if he's told you about them, he may have told someone else. As soon as they learn he's a goner, they'll be after what is rightfully yours.

It is a blow to lose any of your small group, especially after so many people died in the Apocalypse. Losing your husband is a double-blow. But with a level head, a sense of routine and careful management, you will survive.

Unable to get any sugar? Try using boiled beetroot syrup as a sweetener – a shot of it in porridge can give a great lift! Tell your children it's "brigands' blood" and they'll think you're the most fantastic mother on Earth. They might just be right!

Contributors

Thanks to everyone who submitted content from one-liners to small articles. Including (alphabetically) Briony T, Heidi K, Jess, John P, Josh, Nicola D, Sarah P, and Tiki S.