



A Few Tips for a Simple Life

by Michael Guilfoil, *The Spokesman-Review*

Organic farmer MaryJane Butters long ago embraced Thoreau's dictum to "simplify, simplify." As a Forest Service ranger in the 1970s, she spent two summers roaming Utah's Uinta Mountains with her home on her back. Later, she maintained the most remote wilderness ranger station in the Lower 48. Today, Butters and her family live eight miles outside Moscow, Idaho, on their farm, headquarters of her mail-order dry-foods business. But even e-commerce hasn't tempered Butters' enthusiasm for simplicity.

Send Long-Distance Love

Even if miles separate you from Mom, you can schedule a long-distance date and feel closer than ever thanks to today's webcam technology (think Skype). Simply schedule time for dinner or drinks. Or make your date more interactive by planning ahead. Send Mom a care package, tucking in her favorite coffee or wine and other treats to be relished during your rendezvous. A scrapbook of memories can stir up stories to share, or send along a copy of a book you both might like and plan to "meet" for mother-daughter book club discussions every month.

Pass Notes

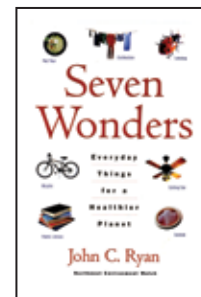
Whether you're near or far, handwritten letters are a great way to connect with Mom. After losing her mother to cancer, author Whitney Biggs longed for something to cling to—a keepsake of her mom's life and personality—and realized she wanted to create that connection with her own children too. Her solution? *The Mother and Daughter Letter Book*. This nostalgic set of notecards is designed to be written, shared, and treasured long after the last envelope is sealed. Personal prompts help you communicate thoughts that may often go unspoken. www.treasuredpassages.com

Share a Dare

One of the best ways to bond is by sharing experiences—the more thrilling, the better! Join hands with Mom and take the plunge into adventure. Hot-air ballooning, llama trekking, kayaking, fly fishing, yoga—the sky is the limit at Excitations, an innovative company that specializes in connecting people with unforgettable gifts of experience. Choose from a diverse mix of experiences grouped by price, type of experience, region, or occasion. Not sure what Mom might enjoy? Get her a gift card and let her lead the way. www.excitations.com

SimpleSolutions

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In December 1999, a newspaper reporter from Washington called. He was writing a review of the book *Seven Wonders: Everyday Things for a Healthier Planet* by John C. Ryan. Michael Guilfoil of *The Spokesman-Review* newspaper asked me if I had my own "seven wonders." The story that ensued was headlined

"Simple Solutions." Here, then, is the continuation of that story.

Each issue of *MaryJanesFarm* will feature in detail new solutions, and will give you all the information you need to make them your own.

Solutions from previous issues are available in the magazine section of my website: www.maryjanesfarm.org/SimpleSolutions.

7 ways to pamper Mom

What does Mom really crave on her special day? Chocolate? Flowers? Think again. Of all the gifts you can give her, time with you is the most precious of all. Here are 7 fabulous ideas for making Mother's Day memories that the two of you can share for a lifetime.

Live and Learn

Has Mom always wanted to master a special skill but never found the time? Take this opportunity to partner for a back-to-school venture. Sign up for a joint lesson in knitting (Knitmap.com), cooking (Williams-Sonoma.com), soap making (Soapguild.org), foreign languages (Eblul.org), or woodworking (Woodcraft.com). You'll enjoy learning more about each other as you rise, in cahoots, to a new challenge.



seven wonders

Make Time for Tea

Does Mom enjoy life at a slower pace? Find time in your schedule to plan an old-fashioned tea party for two. "When tea is served in a lovely corner of the yard or garden, something enchanting happens," coos the Mulberry Vintage Décor blog. "Women's voices ring in May breezes. There is laughter. And in the dappled sunlight, at a table set with favorite china, delicate confections, and tea sandwiches, affections are renewed." Amen. Get vintage tea party tips from an 1897 issue of *Ladies Home Journal* at www.alittlegraceandcharm.com.

Map Memories

Mapping the miles you've travelled with Mom is a project that'll pull heart strings (hers and yours). Start with an atlas and a keepsake journal. With Mom's help, list places you've been together over the years. Mark locations on maps cut from the atlas, paste the maps in your journal, add photos, and jot special memory notes along the way. Or even make a map quilt like the one in our "Saying Yes!" Feb/March 2013 issue.

Nurture a New Mom

Do you know a new mom who could use a little TLC? Give her a "girlfriend's gift certificate" for a day of much-needed pampering. When she redeems it, you'll head over to her house ready to cook, clean, launder, change the baby, paint her toenails, field phone calls, or just indulge in hours of grown-up girl gab.