

# Mom Had The Last Word

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

My mother said I was the most difficult of her four boys to raise. I caused her a lot of worry, beginning with whooping cough as an infant just as the vaccine was becoming available, but it was my difficult-to-control behavior that really tested her mettle. Mom said I spent as much time in the church vestibule, which was the place for crying and unruly children, as I did in church. I must have been an embarrassment for her, for she had been a teacher in the church's parochial school until she married Dad and the kids started coming.

Dad sang in the choir and wasn't available to help her except to administer the spankings Mom promised when we got home.

I was a typical second child, rebellious, prone to temper outbursts and competitive. When I reached school age I liked academics, but my parents' visits with my teachers at report card reviews were always long.

Most of my teachers until my latter portion of high school said, "Michael is bright and gets his work done, but he doesn't always pay attention. He lacks self-control, gets distracted easily and is strong-willed."

After high school, I studied to become a Catholic priest but disappointed my parents, when after three years of seminary I transferred to the University of Colorado to finish my undergraduate degree. Mom was so upset she cried for weeks and didn't come to my college graduation.

She started to warm up as I pursued a Ph.D. in psychology and met Marilyn. She said to me, "Everybody loves Marilyn," as Mom truly did, while also implying I should behave like Marilyn.

Mom didn't fully understand the challenges of graduate school and becoming a professor at the University of Virginia. She told others she was proud of me, but not me.

She devoted herself to community work, helping to initiate residential and employment programs for persons with disabilities like my youngest brother with Down syndrome, and facilitating local Community Chest and church fund drives.

It mainly fell on me to look after Mom when Dad died in 1980 just a year after we moved to Iowa to farm and to undertake my psychological services for farmers and Marilyn's nursing educator roles.

Slowly I began to grasp why Mom telephoned me at all hours of the day or night, first from the home she and Dad built when they moved into town from the family farm and later from her residential retirement community. She didn't tell others she felt she was dying and needed to be seen by doctors who could

identify the serious maladies she was convinced she had.

Psychotropic medication helped, but still Mom continued to struggle with anxieties. It took me years to understand what originated Mom's perturbations until she told me her mother almost died after childbirth.

Grandma delivered her firstborn child, my mother, at home while her husband served in the U.S. Army in Europe during WWI. She had complications after giving birth and was ill for several months until her uncle, a physician in Omaha, took the train to the little farm town of Defiance, Iowa to perform a dilation and curettage procedure.

My mother did not have her own mother or father to fully nurture her as an infant during the critical parent-infant attachment phase so necessary to acquiring a sense of security. Plus, their farm had reverted back to the lender while Grandpa was overseas.

Eventually, advances in knowledge about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and my psychology training helped me figure out that I probably had a modest degree of ADHD that continued into adulthood. I didn't need much sleep, 4-6 hours were sufficient. I couldn't sit through long meetings.

Recently, scientists figured out that ADHD and anxiety proneness are genetically linked. Farmers are especially prone to both, and there are upsides and downsides to both.

Cancer in 2002 changed my body chemistry. Both my temperament and hair color lightened.

Perhaps the school of hard knocks also changed me, but Mom was a significant influence. She designated me to execute her will and make business and healthcare decisions long before she declined.

Mom asked for help with nearly everything. At times I grew tired.

In the process I learned patience. It didn't come easily but I became increasingly more understanding and appreciative of Mom.

I learned to use humor and to say "No" when appropriate to protect her from exploitation, her fears, and to curtail unnecessary demands.

In mid-May 2010, I had to speak at a conference in North Dakota, so I visited Mom at the local hospital where she had been admitted because she was growing weak. Mom said she wouldn't live much longer.

As I left her hospital room to travel, Mom's last teaching words were "You need to lose weight, don't you think?"

She died at 91 years of age. Let's appreciate our mothers always, besides on this May 11 Mother's Day.

*Readers may contact Dr. Rosmann at [www.agbehavioralhealth.com](http://www.agbehavioralhealth.com). He is a clinical psychologist and farm owner at Harlan, Iowa.*

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Dr. Mike ROSMANN

## Visiting Hours

# The Skinny On Coconut, Palm Oils

BY SARA GERMAN, RD, RN  
Avera Sacred Heart Hospital

## THE HYPE

Google "health benefits of coconut oil," and you'll get more than seven million results. It has recently been championed by Dr. Oz as "a heart-healthy food that can keep your body running smoother." According to his website, coconut oil assists with weight loss, moderates blood sugars, manages cholesterol, and helps with aging. It's not the only tropical oil getting positive press: Dr. Oz recently championed red palm fruit oil as one of the top miracle foods of 2013, reporting that it helps you live longer, fights belly fat and heart disease, and even reduces your risk of Alzheimer's disease. At fourteen dollars a jar, it's certainly one of the more pricey options out there, but is it worth the expense?

But wait, there's more to the story. While coconut and palm fruit oil have some vocal supporters, many health organizations urge caution. Unlike other plant fats, tropical oils are high in saturated fat, the same kind of fat found in animal products like butter, the skin on poultry and the fat around your t-bone steak. Coconut oil is much higher in saturated fat than butter, while palm fruit oil has just about as much. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends limiting foods high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol, and replacing saturated fat with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, such as olive oil and canola oil, to help improve blood cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart disease. But proponents of tropical oils

maintain that their unique properties mean they should not be lumped into the same category as animal fats. What does the research say?

## SEARCHING FOR EVIDENCE

It's true that the saturated fat in coconut and palm fruit oils is not exactly the same as the saturated fat found in animal products. Fats come in different sizes - short, medium and long - and tropical oils have more of the "medium" kind. This means they are processed differently in the body. Additionally, red palm oil contains a form of vitamin A, an important nutrient that is missing from the diet of many people around the world. One thing to note: palm kernel oil is not the same as palm fruit oil - it contains much more saturated fat, and has questionable health effects.

Although these differences exist, how important they are is still unknown. Some studies suggest that the kind of saturated fat found in coconut and palm fruit oil may not raise LDL (or "bad") cholesterol levels like the saturated fat found in animal products does. On the other hand, tropical oils don't appear to lower LDL cholesterol as much as other plants fats do; studies are conflicting. In countries where coconut oil and palm fruit oil are produced, many people have a high intake of tropical oils, without necessarily having an increased risk of heart disease.

Red palm fruit oil may have anti-inflammatory properties. It has been used successfully to combat vitamin A deficiency in several countries, but this is typically not a problem in the United States. Coconut oil could possibly assist with weight loss. Effects on Alzheimer's, immune function, and a

host of other medical conditions have not been adequately researched. Unfortunately, most of the available are studies 1) short and small (results may not apply long term or with most people), 2) conducted on rats (obviously not the same as people), or 3) observational (which can't be used to prove anything). The bottom line: there is still a lot of research to be done.

## A REGISTERED DIETITIAN'S TAKE ON THE SUBJECT

The jury is still out on coconut and palm fruit oils. Emerging evidence seems to indicate that they might not be that bad for you - there could even be a few health benefits, and they are probably better for you than, say, butter or stick margarine. However, these are absolutely not miracle foods. Incorporating these oils into your diet won't harm you, but it also won't make you lose ten pounds in a month or ensure you live past one hundred. Other oils, specifically olive oil and canola oil, have a lot more research backing their health benefits. If you are looking for ways to lower your cholesterol, very good evidence shows that replacing equal amounts of saturated fat with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat (found in nuts, avocados and vegetable oils other than tropical oils) will help do this.

How does this play out in my personal baking? Depending on what I'm making, I choose my fats preferentially like this: olive oil > canola oil > coconut oil > butter. I don't use tub margarine, but if I did it would go between canola oil and coconut oil.

## NE Neb. RC&D Receives Grant From Neb. Environmental Trust

PLAINVIEW, Neb. — Northeast Nebraska RC&D announced that it will receive \$24,134 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust for the "Integrated Management of Noxious Weeds in Biologically Sensitive Areas by the Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area."

The Trust Board announced funding for the project at its meeting on April 3 in Lincoln.

This is the third and final year of award. The project is one of the 132 projects receiving \$21,750,000 in grant awards from the Nebraska Environmental Trust this year. Of these, 56 were new applications and 76 are carry-over projects.

Invasive species are cited

frequently as significant threats to biological diversity in Nebraska's Natural Legacy Project planning document (NNLP). To address issues with invasive species, NNLP recommended development of collaborative conservation efforts to implement strategies that address specific issues in biologically unique landscapes (BUL's) identified in the plan. One such group is the Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area (NNWMA). NNWMA is composed of a diverse group of partners and covers 8 counties and 4,610,212 acres of private, public and tribal land. Eight BUL's are partially or wholly within NNWMA boundaries. These

include prairies that contain federally threatened Western Prairie Fringed Orchid and state listed Small White Lady Slipper Orchid, as well as habitats that are home to 34 other Tier 1 plant, mussel, fish, insect, bird and mammal species.

In this project, biological control agents (insects) are released to control noxious weeds on ecologically sensitive sites. The group also conducts annual education and outreach tours and workshops. Releases are prioritized and targeted at places where herbicide use is not desired. Targeted plants are Purple Loosetrife, Leafy Spurge, Salt Cedar and non-native Phrag-

mites. Appropriate insects are used for purple loosetrife and leafy spurge.

The Nebraska Legislature created the Nebraska Environmental Trust in 1992. Using revenue from the Nebraska Lottery, the Trust has provided over \$213 million in grants to more than 1,600 projects across the state. Anyone — citizens, organizations, communities, farmers and businesses — can apply for funding to protect habitat, improve water quality and establish recycling programs in Nebraska. The Nebraska Environmental Trust works to preserve, protect and restore our natural resources for future generations.

## USD

# SGA At USD Spearheads Sustainability Push

VERMILLION — The Student Government Association at the University of South Dakota plans to make sustainability a core goal for the 2014-2015 school year. As part of the effort, senators will use tablets at the meetings instead of printing the agenda and other documents.

To reduce printing cost and carbon footprint, SGA has purchased Samsung Galaxy Tablets for meetings. Meeting documents will be projected on a screen so others

attending the SGA meeting can follow the discussion.

"With sustainability becoming a primary initiative for not only SGA, but also the University, I believe this is an excellent step in the right direction. We're making long term decisions that will provide long term results," says President Tyler Tordsen.

The savings will not only pay for the purchase of the equipment, but also will provide additional funding for

student organizations in the future. This transition will allow SGA to substantially reduce the resources it uses while embracing the use of collaborative technology.

SGA is led by an executive team of five members: President Tyler Tordsen of

Rapid City; Vice President Dustin Santjer of Aberdeen; Business Manager Katie Staley of Charter Oak, Iowa; Office Manager Mackenzie Huber of Vermillion; and External Communications Manager Sami Zoss of Beresford.

## Children's Choir Auditions Set

Auditions for the 2014-15 season of the Yankton Children's Choir will be held Tuesday, May 13, from 6-7:30 p.m. at Mount Marty College in Bede Hall Room 127 (Bistro Second Stage). Auditions will be on a first come, first served basis. Auditions take 15 minutes or less.

Auditions are open to all children in grades 3-8 during the 2014-2015 school year and may be attending any school in the Yankton area. Singers must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Singers will be asked to sing "My Country 'Tis of Thee" and "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

Rehearsals are on Tuesday evenings starting in September and continue weekly through May. Tuition is charged for participation in the choir. A limited number of scholarships are available for those who need it.

For further information, contact Executive Director Dot Stoll at 605-660-1819 or [dotster700@hotmail.com](mailto:dotster700@hotmail.com).

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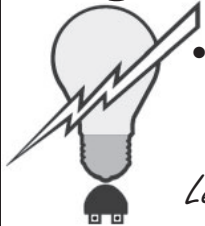
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