

I'm a fan of steam packets.

I'm not sure if that is the name, but it is the name I give to this type of cooking. It is ideal for cooking for 1 and could be used to cook a variety of food for those fussy eaters. I'm not sure why I never used this much when my kids were young. I only remember doing it for fish. This is food wrapped in foil that gives you all you need for 1 meal. I guess you could put two meals in one packet, but much more than that makes it hard to turn.

Steam packet one

1 or 2 Turkey sausage (brat size) – Too much fat from a regular sausage for this.

1 small onion diced

1 small-medium potato diced

1 medium carrot sliced or diced

Salt/Pepper

2 tablespoons of your favorite salsa

wrap all ingredients in foil – Crimp edges well so it doesn't leak too much.

cook in Frying pan over medium heat or on a grill at medium heat or in the oven at 325 degrees (on a cookie sheet). Cook for about 30 minutes. When using Grill or frying pan flip over at 15-20 minutes. Slice open packet, if sausage is not done just cook until it is.

More to come (or look back at the fish recipe) ☐

Not Only Good For Walks

On today's beautiful, sunny, 40+ degree weather I did enjoy the company of my song filled ipod. However, I found an even better use for it. While cleaning the beauty shop, I had it plugged in and it made the time zoom by. Before I had finished, an hour had passed and it seemed like no time at all! The power of music... it is able to transport you to a *"long time ago in a galaxy far, far away"* or to *"Space: the final frontier."* It can also take you to Neverland, Narnia, Krypton, Hogwarts, or Missitucky.

My ipod library is not limited only to film scores or Broadway shows. I do enjoy some popular music pas and present. For every selection from my vast collection of John Williams masterworks (from the 6 *Star Wars* movies (even the prequels), the four Indiana Jones movies (have 'em all), *Superman*, *Hook*, *E.T.*, etc) and James Bond scores there is some Jason Mraz (I think I've read about him [somewhere?](#)) with some Elvis, Beatles, Carrie Underwood, Mariah Carey, and Motown classics thrown in for good measure.

Of course when the (in my humble opinion) best recording of "This is the Moment" popped up... it was NOT the Hoff's butchering, I had to sing along as I walked the sidewalk.

Yep... one of those. I get carried away but still focus on little things like cars at intersections. I did feel like the pied piper on a recent walk as three dogs began following me until I turned around and they went safely back to their home.

And, yes I did stop as a I came upon a school bus which was on its way back from the morning kindergarten return trip ☐

A BIG Scare, But Thankfully, Just a Scare

Last week for date night, we saw Shutter Island – not much to say about that; it was disappointing. We then went out to eat, and my husband mentioned that his fingers were tingling. At the same time, I noticed that he was slurring his words – uh,oh. Although he is only in his mid-30's, I was sure that he had had a stroke; I know those are two of the warning signs. He did not want to go to the hospital, so I agreed that we would drive home, pick up the kids, and I would look up these symptoms on the internet to see if he should indeed get to the hospital. When I looked it up, the info was scarier than I originally thought. It said yes, these are indeed symptoms of a stroke, and a person needs only to exhibit ONE of them, not all. It also said that people who have strokes often refuse to get medical treatment, and their loved ones must INSIST that they seek medical treatment – so I made Hubby go to the ER while I put the kids to bed. Well, before you panic, let me say that the stroke tests all came back negative. Turns out that his arm had gone numb during the movie because it was a long movie and he was giving me backrubs (AWW!), and his “lazy tongue” was a result of his visit to the dentist in the morning – he doesn't like novacaine, so when the dentist re-did one of his fillings, he sprayed some kind of numbing spray which got into my husband's bloodstream and caused him to feel it 9 hours later. PHEW!!! It was a wasted night at the ER, but I'm so glad that he went because otherwise I would STILL be wondering and panicking that he had had a stroke. And besides, it made for a really funny story to tell later... people really seem to like the irony of the directions on the internet: “Expect the person to protest – denial is common. Don't take “no” for an answer. Insist on taking prompt action.” Well, insist I did, and as a result, poor Hubby spent the end of date night in the ER!

What a week

The Thursday before last, I shot all of one car at two dealers- highly unusual, so on Monday that was more than made up for by having 18 cars to do between the same two dealers. Normally this would make me quite happy, but not so much on a Monday following a snowfall. For starters, I knew I couldn't leave as early as normal because the dealers needed time to clean up their lots. The first one was still doing it when I arrived. Monday nights I have small group at my church, so it is the only night I need to finish on time so starting late and then finding I had so many cars to do, some of which would have to be brushed off, was less than thrilling. I finished the second dealer a little before 7PM, then headed back. It was dark and I was traveling 50MPH, so I can probably be excused for not seeing the massive pothole in the right lane. I kept moving, but I feared it would cause my tire to go flat on the way home. It didn't and I was able to drive the car for the rest of the week, but when I brought the car into the shop Saturday because I needed a brake job, surprise! A \$500 repair bill. Actually, it was higher but he gave me a break (on top of the four brakes ☐) because my mother and I were good customers. \$210 was for the brakes, \$30 was for the oil change- that meant the rest was for the new axle and bearings on the potholed wheel. Incidentally, I was an hour late for small group, partly because I stopped to eat on the way.

Tuesday I found myself in supersized district to sub- a rare occurrence these days as I can find few jobs available there even the mornings of. And sub I dd- in bilingual kindergarten. Fortunately there was an assistant with me for both classes- a different one for each class. The morning had

Spanish-speakers who knew very little English. The assistant ended up running most of the morning. It was a struggle. Oddly enough there was a boy who I'm told actually knows English and very little Spanish, yet he was required to do everything in Spanish like the rest of the class! The afternoon was supposedly Polish-speakers (hence the different assistant) but all of them knew English so I was actually able to take charge of this group. I felt I accomplished much more with this group.

Wednesday I had only a half-day in, what do I call it again-next-door district? It was for middle-school math. The website said 7th grade, but when I got there I found out it was 8th grade. Oh well, the system has been wrong before. It was actually quite easy- most of the classes had tests, though I also went over homework answers. This teacher actually teaches five different classes out of her six teaching periods- unusual for middle school. Usually there are no more than three different classes, repeating the same lesson for more than one. Her one repeated class was in the morning so I only had two different lessons, though I did start the 5th-period class which would have been my third different plan. She arrived less than ten minutes in and took over.

Totally forgetting Wednesday when I had that entire afternoon free that there was a dealer in Barrington with two cars, I could kick myself when I realized I had forgotten and would have to fit them in Thursday instead. This is a small dealer that only has a couple of cars every few weeks. At least I did remember. Eventually. So I started off the morning by going there. Of course, there had been some more snow Wednesday night so I didn't get there *too* early. I did the cars and was on my way to the next dealer when- 25-min in I realized I still had a set of keys from the first place.

Oops. I turned around, angry with myself once all over again. The better part of an hour wasted. So I finally arrived at the next place, their lot cleared of snow, and found I had another bunch of cars like Monday. Two of them were too loaded with salt to do (hey, I just used three forms of a homophone/nym!), so I breathed a sigh of relief and headed to the final dealer with a good three hours of light to go, though it would be less by the time I got there. I finished with some light to spare. You are probably wondering about Monday right now. Yes, I did run out of light Monday, but when there is pressure to get things done at the end of the day like that I get all the photos out of the way first before I do the options and print the stickers, which tends to be the bulk of my time spent.

Friday I had only one dealer in the afternoon so I took a morning job in next-door district (still not sure if that's the name I gave it). It was for 3rd/4th grade. When I arrived, I said who I was there for and was handed a folder for a classroom that turned out to be 1st and 2nd grade. I looked at the name and it sounded right when I said it to myself, but while I didn't quite remember the spelling of the name I knew it didn't look right. I asked another teacher if this teacher taught 3rd/4th grade last year as sometimes that info doesn't get updated on the sub system (remember Wednesday). She thought for a few seconds and then informed me there was **another** teacher upstairs with almost the same name! I went back to the office to verify I was in the right class and found out that I was indeed given the wrong folder. Both teachers were out this morning, probably both for the same meeting I knew at least the one was at. I went upstairs to let the other sub know we had been duped. She had almost the same story as me, knowing something wasn't quite right with the room she was in. We traded folders and I finally got a chance to look at the right plans. The morning actually

went quite well. For the afternoon, instead of the usual two or three cars I had nine because for some reason the other photographer either didn't go there the day before like he usually does, or they didn't have any ready when he did which would have been strange considering nine were ready this time. Well, more commission for me I guess- something I will need because of the car repair bill. Sigh.

Saturday I was supposed to go cross-country skiing with a few guys from church, but when I called around Friday I couldn't find anyone who rented skis close by, and the one store that was recommended to me closed at 6PM Friday night, too early for me to go there. Well, I hope the others had a good time. Instead, I stayed home to receive that repair-bill shock...

Well, that was my week. How was yours?

Well, that wasn't the way it was planned.

Second game night last night wasn't. We had the wrap up from the last game we played and then we would start my little session. Nope, we needed some characters made up, and we were hoping to have a few other people show up. In the end, we sat around and talked a bit (a lot) and made up a couple of new characters. Maybe next week.

Today didn't turn out as planned either. I had all sorts of things I was going to do, and ended up doing none of them Oh

well, it will still be there tomorrow.

I really need to go food shopping tomorrow. I don't have much left in the kitchen. I can't get by on chicken or fish with nothing to go with it very long. I need spice, herbs, garlic and onions... Cheese please! Some vegetables. Taters?

Since my youngest went off to college, I don't shop nearly as much. But then when I do go, I need everything. I just don't want to have so much on hand it all goes bad before I can use it. Maybe I should shop every other day or so... I'll have to think about that at least for the fresh stuff.

I've Always Been Crazy, But It's Kept Me From Going Insane

I had to borrow the title of this blog post from one of my favorite Waylon Jennings tunes because I talk to animals, and some people would say that makes me crazy. Crazier yet is when the animals talk back to me...

As it is always tremendous fun for me, yesterday's visit to the zoo did not disappoint. And while we made our way to the exit near closing time, I was turning over in my head the questions I ask myself and my co-visitors after every zoo trip: what was your favorite animal that you saw today and why? I was having a hard time deciding; everything was great, but nothing stood out as being extraordinary... until my chat with the cheetah. He was looking directly at me, and I said, "Hi Cheetah!" and he said, "Mew." I couldn't believe it, so I said it again, to which he gave me another, "Mew." Now I

didn't realize that cheetahs meow and sound just like your average housecat, but upon much research when I got home, this is one thing I learned about an animal that never fascinated me as much as others until it talked to me. From now on, I will always stop by the cheetahs to say "hi" because I think we are now buddies. I also found a cute little video of cheetahs meowing, much like my new friend at the Toledo Zoo!

Snow, driving, drifts and ditches.

Game night 1 of this weekend is finished. Played a couple of fun games, had some fun food (brownies are always good), and fun/good friends. We played/talked well into the early morning.

It was snowing and blowing in the area so I expected a treacherous drive on the way home. The roads were turning nasty on the way there, I only expected them to get worse. But since we didn't have more than 2 or 3 more inches of snow, I thought I would be able to navigate all the roads roads I travel.

Not more than 1/2 mile outside of town, heading west, there was a car in the ditch being pulled out by a wrecker. I had to wait there for a while, since there was nowhere to back up and take a different route. Looks like I had to be a bit more cautious.

I finally headed off the main road and on to the back county road system. Drifts were piling up on the first North/South road I traveled on. Since it looked like they were straight across the road, I didn't think I would have any trouble on the East/West roads. I was wrong, a bigger drift was on that road... Then an even bigger drift on the next North/South road. Obviously the wind was blowing in every direction.

Made it home in one piece. Happy I have the new tires on the truck. Happy I have good friends to talk to. Life while not perfect, for today it is good.

Sanctuary From Pains

It came as a great shock to me to learn that one of the supporting actors of one of my favorite shows growing up had gone missing. Today, after a week long search, his body was found. [Joshua Andrew Koenig](#) played Richard “Boner” Stabone the best friend of Mike Seever (played by Kirk Cameron) on *Growing Pains*.

I’m not sure if I did not know the actor’s name or just did not make the connection, but I just learned Monday that Andrew was the son of Walter Koenig who played Ensign Pavel Chekov on the original *Star Trek* television series. Andrew also has another tie to Trekdom. He played the role of Tumak on the *Deep Space Nine* “[Sanctuary](#).”

May He watch over the family of this young man in their time of remorse.

It’s been a long time...

This weekend should be a fun one. Friday night game night and Saturday night game night. Two game nights in a row. What more could you ask for?

A few good friends will be gathered at taylhis and old-admin’s (ok, now he needs a new tangent’s name – He doesn’t post enough to be known as “Whatever”.) house and play a variety of games. We never really know what will be played, but it is usually fun. (Note to self, I do not like PIT ... ☐)

Saturday is the night I'm really looking forward to. After almost 20 years of non game running (1 night teaching the game was in there, that is why it is almost), I'm going to be running a Dungeons and Dragons game. I'm really looking forward to it. The prep work is done. The back story ready. The Zombies and the other 'Undead' are ready for feasting.

When I started playing D&D back in my college years, the game was almost in its infancy. It and other role-playing games have come a long way from the 'early' days. For the first year, I just played. I always let someone else run the game. But our gamemaster was tired of running and just wanted to play. He asked me to run a campaign or two. I really enjoyed doing it. After a while, the group I played with left college and started going our own ways. Some of us still in the area kept playing. 2 or 3 of us shared the game running duties/experience. During this time I liked running the game the best.

We slowly drifted apart as jobs and or family called us here and there. I ran the game for my girls a few times, only the oldest seemed interested. I flitted in and out of other gaming groups for the next 15 or so years. The game changed and new additions/versions were added. With my family, I never kept up with buying the new material. I played the game and let others run it.

Not all that long ago (just over a year ago if memory serves), I started role-playing again with my oldest daughter and her friends. So this Saturday, I'm going to be running the game for the group. I hope my old skill set is still there. Maybe with the 10+ years of acting experience, that skill set has improved. On top of that, there is a little improv. Should be a good weekend...

How To Get To Carnegie Hall

While at work today, the boss informed me of a spectacular trip her brother and nephew (a seventh grade theatre buff) were recently part of. Her brother is the principal of a high school whose choir just took a trip to the Big Apple. Not only did the group perform at Carnegie Hall (that in itself would be a dream come true) but they saw no less than **3 Broadway Musicals!** (*Phantom of the Opera*, *The Lion King*, and the current smash revival of *West Side Story*). When I was in the BGSU Men's Chorus, the biennial Spring Break tour to New York City afforded us the chance to see one... and MAYBE two shows while living out of the Lakefront Tour buses. I must admit to being a wee bit jealous. Not only do I find it hard to imagine that they were able to see that many shows in 1-2 days, but how did they perform and still have time to sleep? Not that many of them got much sleep. I know from experience. I asked if I could go back to his school next year. I could age myself about 20 years less, right?! That must have been a lot of cheese and sausage sold to take a trip of that magnitude!

The boss remarked that it only took me an hour to come up with *West Side* because she could not and it was my mission to come up with the title of a popular, CURRENT show. So I started rattling off the current musicals on the boards: *Wicked*, *Shrek*, *Mary Poppins*, *Rock of Ages*, *Billy Elliot*, *Hairspray*, *Mamma Mia!*> When none of these worked, I thought... she said CURRENT, but...

Jamiah: West Side Story?!

Di: THAT'S IT!

J: But you said current. West Side Story is indeed on revival but it is hardly current.

Di: Go back to work!

That's gratitude! Next time, I'll let her sweat it out a little more. **HA!**