

## ON KEEPING WARM

Did you realize that you can buy bags of apples in autumn on East Lake Road (Cty. Rd. 11) for only \$1.00 per bag? These are grounders. You have to fill the grocery bags yourself from the bins by the roadside. I bought five bagsful this fall, and peeled, sliced and dehydrated most of them. Although I only peeled and cored a few at a time, I discovered to my delight that I was always warm as I worked.

For as long as I remember, I've suffered from the cold, especially my legs and feet. However, as the hours passed with the dehydrating activities, I came to realize how it was that 'pioneer' women survived the winters of yore. They had floor-length skirts and petticoats, and they were always up and active, bent over a wood fired cook-stove, adjusting the coals, chipping kindling perhaps, chopping blocks of wood, punching bread and slapping slabs of meat (instead of the kids and hubby), often moving the irons from the woodstove to press some clothes while waiting for the venison to roast and pies to bake (or burn if you're like me). I bet they were almost always warm.

Of course, old sketches show them wearing shawls. You can make one easily. A rectangular blanket, fleece or felt is great because they throw your own body heat right back at you. Just fold it long-wise, and cut it from the middle of one end half way up towards the other end and slip it over your shoulders. Pulling the threads out along the cut will lend you a nice fringe in time, or take it to Sew What and have it hemmed.

Here are some tips on how to keep warm this winter, 2010 style. First, sponsor your partner to take a cooking course, perhaps at the Waring House. It will warm your heart to simply anticipate those tasty meals that you no longer will have to prepare yourself. You have probably cooked 50,000 by now, anyway, haven't you. How will this warm you up, you're wondering. Well, you will now have to wash the stove, the walls, the ceiling and floors, the cupboard doors, the microwave, the convention oven and the big oven, the dishes and enough pots to cover an entire display at Walmart. Every day! You may never have time to feel the cold again.

You will also keep warm getting up to find all the spices and the spatula and the cutting board, the cheese slicer, and the grater, the butter, salt, pepper – well, you know. You will warm up as you re-organize your entire kitchen. Those delicious meals may truly be worth the warming, though.

Laughter is another really good way to warm up. Watch only funny movies and TV programs and you'll feel warm all over. When he asks each morning if you need anything at the store, say 'yes' even if you don't -

(now, didn't that chuckle make you feel warmer? I mean the part about the shopping.)

Wool socks, wet or dry, will always keep your feet warm, I've been told. Smelly, but warm. Also, since feet tend to sweat a bit you might find it advantageous to change your damp socks several times per day. Damp socks will definitely make you feel colder than you really are.

Wearing stretchy workout pants under your slacks, jeans, or dress helps you feel cozy, especially if you also put a pair of leg warmers on over your socks. They keep the ankles from being bothered by the drafts. If, like me, you prefer to sit and play Sudoku and Free Cell, and read books, then might I suggest one of those wonderful little electric lap blankets to tuck over your legs and around your feet.

After having finished up all that kitchen cleaning each morning, you should be warm for a good hour at least. You may even have found, as an added bonus, some wonderfully colourful choice words that have added a little warmth to your morning, as well. Words are just semantics, not to worry.

Maybe you overdid it and worked yourself up into a hot lather. Then it's time to go to the coffee shop if you got to that state because minus 20 is great weather for cooling off in. Search out the funniest customers (the person they're talking to is already smiling or laughing) and listen in. Laugh with them. If you get chastised for eavesdropping, remember, humiliation is just about the warmest feeling you'll ever experience. You can even laugh at that.

Warm up with a walk around the block. Walking warms you up. Swing your arms. Long walks will have you wanting to peel, but, at your age, may I suggest moderation. Hugs are warming. Straight-jackets are not.

Keep Happy. Keep warm and happy.

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(senior counselor of warmth)